

# The Hidden Luna Queen

## Chapter 68

### XADEN POV

**Back** to the **present** day, the morning following the banquet...

Morning had finally come, bringing an end to that ridiculously long banquet, and I wasted no time in hurrying over to the palace training room. My body thrummed with pent-up tension, threatening to burst if left unattended. It had been a good while **since** my last training session and, after the tumultuous events of the previous day. I'd figured there was no better time like the present

I was ready to destroy something. Cover the training room with blood and tears if that **was what** it took to calm myself down.

I was not jealous. Far from it. I descended from the greatest alpha bloodline in the entire damn kingdom. But hearing that scoundrel Nicholas **speak** so boldly about Maeve like that... did things to me.

The urge to claim her, to **make** her mine was all-consuming. Almost unbearable. It was like I was in heat without losing complete control of myself.

However, seeing the fear that lingered in her eyes., feeling the way her delicate body trembled against mine when she admitted how frightened she was to rush **things**, I just couldn't do it. I couldn't, in good conscience, force it on her like that, even if it was everything I wanted

I wanted her to **want** me just as much as **I wanted** her, without fear or shame... and that was already such a high bar to **scale**.

That night, during our **date** as we lay together under the stars, I had tried to tell her how I felt about her... only to discover that she **had** fallen asleep. I was not sure how much she had heard or if she even knew I **had** said it, but it was never brought up again.

I didn't hold it against her. How could I?

With every passing hour, I grew more and more certain of my feelings for her. I knew I had meant it that night and, more than anything, I wanted another chance to try again. But I wanted the timing to be right for her, as well.

I needed her to believe me with absolute certainty, leaving no room for even **a** shred of doubt. Because she was the first woman I-

"Xaden." Isabelle's aggravating voice suddenly snapped me out of my stupor.  
"Good morning"

I regarded her with wariness as she walked down the hall in my direction, though it didn't appear that she headed straight for me. seemed to be a mere unfortunate happenstance that we crossed paths this morning.

Just my luck.

"Isabelle," I acknowledged her stiffly, maintaining my pace.

"You look absolutely terrible," she remarked as she came to **a** stop, sounding surprised, which was completely contrary to the pleased expression that rested on her face "Like you hardly slept a wink the whole night."

I suppressed a groan. I was not in the mood for any of her antics **this** morning. Yesterday had taken a massive toll on me, **and all** I wanted was to get to the training **room** and let off some much-needed steam

“**With** all due respect, Isabelle,” I **said, trying** to maintain some semblance of cordiality, “I cannot do this right now. I’m busy this morning.”

And with that, I kept going straight for the training room. Part of me hoped she would realize how serious I was and keep to herself until I **was** well out of range.

However, it seemed that Isabelle had different **plans**.

“Now that I **think** about it,” she drawled, the haughty tone in her shrill voice making me slow to a halt in the hallway against my better judgment. “Maeve looked rather upset about something during yesterday’s banquet,” she commented, and I couldn’t help but flinch a little at the unwelcome reminder of our small spat. “Could it be **that** something happened between the two of you yesterday?”

There was something about the way she addressed me that rubbed me the wrong way.

Why would she have been paying such close attention to Maeve and me during an important dinner if she wanted nothing to do with her? Surely, she **must** have **had** more pressing matters to attend to. It was almost **as** if she’d been waiting for something

I’d been wondering how Delaney **knew** to target Maeve, but maybe the answer laid closer to home **than** I’d thought.

Fuck Henry, Fuck treating his wife with respect.

I **was** not about to let her think she had any impact whatsoever on my relationship with **Maeve**

“How very unlike you to be so interested in the details of my love life, Isabelle,” I said slowly, as I **cast** a glare in her direction, locking with her dubious stare dead on. If she was so eager to play dirty with me or my

growing family, then I had no qualms in meeting her challenge. “Is there something that you’re hoping to **hear**?”

She narrowed her eyes at me. “Not everything is a plot against you or your precious little mate, you know,” she snapped, trying to turn the tables **back** around to me. “What’s wrong with me wanting to make sure my little brother-in-law is alright?”

I shrugged. “Nothing,” I hummed, feigning innocence. “Nothing **at all**... though you were surprisingly quick to defend yourself when I never accused you of anything

Her face flushed, and we both knew I got her. “That’s not true,” she weakly protested. “You-”

“I simply asked if there was something you wanted to hear,” I pointed out, **taking** pleasure in the way her **smug** face shifted into that of chagrin. “Not once did I say you were plotting against me or Maeve. Is there something I should know,” I enunciated, slow and clear for her to hear, “dear sister-in-**law**?”

To her credit, Isabelle knew better than to dig herself into an even deeper hole than she already was in. She would do nothing that directly incriminated her, so she seemed to think it best to keep silent, albeit begrudgingly. That, I thought, was the smartest move she **had** made thus far.

“For your information,” I added, displaying a defiant smirk for her to see, I am perfectly fine. As is the beautiful mother of my child,”

Isabelle **gave** me a tight smile. “What a relief to hear,” she said through gritted teeth, briskly turning around and scurrying along, leaving me in total blissful silence and solitude.

Thank fucking goodness for that, I thought exhaustedly and proceeded on my way to the training room.

The moment I entered, however, it became very clear that I was not alone.

Standing in the center of the room, surrounded by exercise equipment and going to town on a punching bag was my younger brother Lucas, who seemed to be enthralled in throwing punch after punch.

His presence was unexpected, admittedly, but not unwanted. I thought it would be nice to have the company of a wolf who could hold **his** own

“Good morning, Lucas.” I **said**, wrapping tape around my knuckles “Want to train together?”

To my surprise, however, he did not answer. As a matter of fact, he did not seem to even register that we were in the same room together. If he did, he chose to completely disregard my presence, putting all of his focus into destroying the punching bag in front of him, swinging with force and weeping **sand** with every powerful blow of his fists.

That was... odd. He hardly ever got so worked up over something. Especially enough to lose himself in his training like this.

“Lucas?” I called out, stepping closer to him.

No response. He simply continued to swing at the punching bag in front of him.

Grunting, I closed the distance between us until I was within feet of him.

“Lucas!” I shouted, which finally seemed to startle him awake.

Upon seeing me, he let out a breath, wiping at his forehead. I’m sorry. Xaden. I didn’t see you there.”

I eyed him carefully, unable to help but notice just how out of sorts he seemed with those dark circles under **his** eyes. “You were really in the zone there. It was like you couldn’t even hear me

He refused to look at me, further proof that something **was** indeed wrong.  
“I’m fine.”

I scoffed, tired of this meaningless back and forth “**Bullshit**”

“Can I please just **have** some **space**?” he **asked**, looking tired. In that moment, I felt pity for him. Whatever was going on, it was **fairly** significant.

“Not this time,” I **said**, not caring if I was annoying **him**. The growing irritation on his face quickly told me that **that** was, indeed, the case. “I have no intentions of leaving just yet, so you have no choice but to deal with me for the next few hours)

Lucas squared up to me. “If you want me to tell you, you’re going to have to fight me for it.”

I set my jaw. If that was how I would get him to open up, then so be it.  
“Alright,” I said with a firm nod,

He took a pause and blinked, almost as if he hadn’t expected me to so readily agree. What?”

“You want me to fight you?” I pushed with a nonchalant shrug, calling out his bluff I’m game. I admit I could use a **good** sparring match right about now... so who better to take advantage of than my stubborn little brother?

The fire that burned in his eyes was hard to miss. He was definitely stuck in a **battle** with his own demons... but it seemed that he was not completely void of common sense. Even with his blind fury, it seemed he had the decency to remember just who he was challenging Lucas might have been my younger brother, but that did not mean I ever went easy on him in the slightest.

If we were going to **spar**, I would give it my absolute all. And he knew this.

“Forget it.” Lucas mumbled, swinging another punch at the bag. “I’m not going to fight you, Xaden.”

“I suppose that’s to be expected.” I muttered, feigning thoughtfulness, “since it is you, we’re talking about.” I snuck a glance at him, hoping my less-than-subtle emphasis on the word ‘you would get his attention, which, sure enough, seemed to intensify the power behind his punches. “You might have our father’s alpha blood coursing through your veins, but I doubt even you could get me to break a **sweat**

His eyes narrowed. But still, he said nothing

“After all,” I dared to goad him further, itching for a fight, “you’re the only one out of us all who lets others push you around.” I took a lazy step closer to him. “If there was anyone to take one for the team, then of course it had to be you-“

And then, without warning, **Lucas’s** fist, came flying- right at my face.