

# The Hidden Luna Queen

## Chapter 75

### THIRD PERSON POV

Little did Maeve know that the answer to her question lurked closer than she realized.

As she and her two companions gathered themselves and left the bistro, Bella sat at a not-so-distant table, hidden in plain sight behind a large potted plant and a carefully placed menu. She watched as the three women left the vicinity, but did not make a move to follow them.

Once she was certain she was alone, she lowered her menu and huffed, struggling to make sense of some of what she overheard.

Without a doubt, that had been Maeve she had trailed for the past hour. That could no longer be put into question. And the older woman she was in company with was indeed Prince **Xaden's** housekeeper. Whether the third **woman** was, in fact, Princess Charlotte was yet to be proven, though,

Not that it particularly mattered here. Bella was able to identify that Maeve was still located in the heart of the capital, But.. there was something **that** she **couldn't** wrap her mind around.

A name, to be more specific

Burke.

It **was a** name she was very familiar with. Anyone who **knew** anything about the royal family had to **learn** what they could that pertained to them,

whether that meant familiarizing themselves with their mannerisms, royal duties.. or the people they surrounded themselves with on a daily basis.

Anyone who took the time to study Prince Xaden knew about his most trusted righthand man

He was hardly ever seen in public without **Prime Beta Burke**, which put almost as big a target on his back as that of his superior, especially when it came to the young ladies of the kingdom. He was no alpha prince, but he was quite a looker himself.

**With** short hair the color of chestnuts in winter and bright brown eyes like molten chocolate, hidden behind thin-rimmed glasses, as **well as** a toned body that women would kill to touch, it was difficult not to pay attention to the beta, even with Kaden by his side.

**Yes**, she was well aware of **Burke**, but his was not a name **she** expected to hear. Especially not when it came to Little Miss Mundy Mac.

Stumped, Bella crossed her arms, trying to make sense of things.

Her last encounter with Prince Xaden had left a lasting mark on her. She was made painfully aware **that** Maeve **was** not one to be trifled with, lest Bella **wanted** to get on the prince's bad **side** again.

For goodness sake, he had admitted to the pregnancy, himself!

Why would **he** choose not to publicly acknowledge the woman whom he defended so fervently in his mansion that **day**?

Suddenly, Bella found herself venturing down a rabbit hole that she was not eager to explore, but was something she could not just turn a blind eye to. Things that previously evaded her were now becoming clear, **and** that scared her.

What if it was no coincidence that they could **not** get any dirt or information on Maeve!

What if the royal family's refusal to officially acknowledge her, as well as Princess Charlotte's silence, and now the abrupt mention of Prime Beta Burke was because Maeve was, in actuality, no longer involved with Prince Xaden...

But rather, with his righthand man!

Of course, she could not ignore the rumors that circulated throughout the kingdom, but there were many, many women who matched Maeve's description. It would not be hard to find a woman with long black hair and blue eyes. And even if it truly was Maeve at the center of those rumors, all of those sightings dated back from weeks ago. There had yet to be a single rumor within the last few **days** that involved the two lovebirds.

It was almost as if there was never anything between them

And when Maeve had gotten up to leave, Bella made sure to pay very close attention to the area around her waist for any sign of a growing belly. It had been some weeks since she'd last seen her, and based on what Victoria had told her some time ago, the suspected conception date was roughly two weeks prior to Sarah's birthday party.

**As a** werewolf, her pregnancy was expected to last only about five months, so Bella had fully expected to see something,

But as Bella realized with a sinking feeling, she was not able to definitively see proof of a pregnancy.

That damn black dress Maeve wore had made it virtually impossible to tell. For all she knew, the pregnancy was just very well hidden, but Bella could not afford to make assumptions, and it wasn't like she could just waltz up to her and demand answers. Not in a **public** space like this.

Sinking into her chair in the middle of a cafe, surrounded by a cheerful and bustling crowd on all fronts, Bella felt stuck. The plan she had hatched with Luna Victoria depended entirely on Maeve's social disgrace. It was no longer

purely because of Prince Xaden. This was a matter of revenge **against** a pathetic girl who did not deserve the life she'd been practically gifted.

But if there was no longer a relationship for them to destroy, a pregnancy too difficult to prove existed, and **Marve** was living happily in the capital with another man... it became more and more apparent she would not find the answers she needed.

What was Bella supposed to do?

What did that mean for their plan! How would they get their revenge and be able to restore Sarah's freedom?

How Isabella seethed, shaking with unfathomable **rage**. How did her plan fail this time?

After encountering Xaden in the palace hallway mere hours ago, she isolated herself in the closest, most serene space she could find where she felt no one else would dare to intrude on her.

So, here she was, pacing in the gardens surrounding the palace, which the royal family seldom visited at this time of day. Isabelle often liked to lose herself in the maze of lush trees, topiary, and flowers of every species imaginable. Such a paradise was normally enough to lift her spirits.

But not this time.

She had been so careful, so meticulous in designing the plan to incite a confrontation of sorts between Maeve and Xaden's former flame. It was nothing like her humiliation-by-vomit plan or the attempt to spoil her relationship with the Luna Queen, who, for some reason, had taken to Maeve remarkably well

It was perfect. Nary a flaw to be seen anywhere. And, **oh**, how well it had done the job

Maeve was grossly shaken by that encounter. Isabelle saw it with her own eyes, and being able to watch it all unfold filled her **with** a giddy sort of joy that she hadn't felt in a long time.

Possibly not since she'd first become a Luna Princess

The way Maeve had closed herself off to Kaden as soon as he tried to explain himself. How she had deliberately shifted further away from him. The **ensuing** desperation that marred his face to repair the situation.

It **was** her plan come to life, and it was glorious.

It should **have been** enough—more than enough—to make Maeve realize just how far out of her league Prince Xaden was, and **how** little she befit the title of **Luna** Princess. The servant-girl she knew from all those years ago would **have run** off in an instant.

She would have been long, **long** gone.

**And** Xaden should be on his knees, thanking her for trying to help free him from a lifetime of shame and disappointment. But instead, he went out of his way to rub in her face that her **plan** failed, that their stupid relationship was still going on strong

Isabelle let out a frustrated huff and kicked the nearest bush, rattling leaves off its branches

She couldn't understand it. How and why—was **that** damned man so determined to keep Maeve, of all possible contenders, as his Luna? She was not competent by any means and the most pitiful excuse of an alpha's daughter that Isabelle ever had the displeasure of meeting

**A** true Luna was meant to be one who commanded any room she walked into.

A true Luna was **a** role model for fellow women and girls alike.

A true Luna was a perfect reflection of her Alpha male.

And Maeve was none of those things. Isabelle refused to be lumped in with the likes of her, her supposed sister-in-duty. The very thought made her sick to her stomach. It was an insult to lump them together, even if the sentiment came from the Luna Queen herself.

There must be some way to convince Maeve to leave, but...

Surrounded by the most beautiful gardens in the entire kingdom, as the bright sun warmed her skin with its **air** overfilled with the scent of the most exquisite flowers, Isabelle felt no joy nor tranquility. All she could feel was bitter hopelessness.

There had to be a way to pull this off... but how?