

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 94

Xanden POV

I saw my father staring back at me through those green apathetic eyes.

And something in me snapped.

I couldn't just pay witness to all of that and pretend it never happened. Not when I had dreamed for years that someone would defend me the way I did tonight. It wasn't right that I had to stand up to the king in the first place...

But I didn't regret standing up for Eric.

Xaden continued. "Those things you said... I could understand talking back to Isabelle, but... for you to talk like that to my father, of all people, too..." He turned to gape at me. "I've never seen such a side to you before."

I blanched, suddenly feeling horrified. In daring to insult the alpha king, there was a great likelihood that I insulted Xaden in the process, too. Familial issues aside, they were still father and son... and I very possibly showed him a new side of me that he did not approve of.

"Xaden, I-I-"

And then, in a split second, he was kissing me with passionate fervor in the backseat of the car, taking me by complete surprise. "I was right," he purred against my mouth, full of adoration, "I just knew you'd blow us all away tonight."

"y You're not mad?"

"Mad?" he repeated incredulously with a wicked grin, licking his lips. "What you did was the most fearless thing I've ever seen anyone do. Only my mother would dare to confront him with such burning tenacity and not give a damn about the repercussions. It was about time someone else did."

This fearless image he seemed to have of me couldn't have been farther from the truth. I was not proud of myself, by any means. It was merely the reaction of a girl who was at the end of her rope.

I was not brave like Xaden. I was a coward lost in a moment of stupidity and weakness.

"B-But what if he forces us to call off our mating ceremony because of it?"

"Let him try," he declared. "I have every intention of making you mine." His unwavering determination, admittedly, did little to appease me. I wanted so badly to believe him, but in the end, he was powerless against his father's almighty will.

My fate rested in the Alpha King's unforgiving hands tonight.

And my odds were not looking good.

THIRD PERSON POV

An out-of-breath Isabelle tried her best to keep up with the long strides of Alpha King Arlan, whose outrage bounced off the walls of the palace walls. "Your Majesty!" she gasped, maintaining a respectable distance. "I'm utterly appalled at my fellow Luna Princess's behavior tonight!"

That, Arlan could quite agree with. No one dared to talk back to him like that.

No one.

Except... for this girl, for whatever reason.

"I quite think this banquet served its purpose; wouldn't you agree?" Isabelle continued. "We learned just what kind of girl Xaden chose for himself. She's clearly not worthy of marrying into our outstanding bloodline--"

"And I thought I made myself quite clear tonight," King Arlan snapped, swiftly turning around to face his relentless daughter-in law, who paled upon seeing the dangerous look in his eyes. "I did not want to hear another word out of you for the rest of the night. Not during the banquet, and not now."

She flinched, a hurt look crossing her eyes.

"My decision about whether she stays or not is none of your concern, Isabelle," he reaffirmed sternly, not caring if he hurt her feelings. "And I refuse to discuss this with you any longer. Goodnight."

Leaving no room for her to say anything more, Isabelle abruptly left with a huff.

As King Arlan entered his royal quarters, his wife followed closely behind, her mind awl with concern for both him and her future daughter in law. "Dear," she prodded gently, "please, don't be too upset with Maeve. She's been under a lot of stress

"Am I to assume that was the result of your teachings?" he asked gruffly, point-blank.

She blinked, looking affronted. "Of course not," she quickly retorted, before once again growing concerned. "You won't punish her, will you?"

As much as it pained him to admit it, something happened as she scolded him like he was little more than a child. Seeing that unremarkable, shy, pitiful creature who trembled after merely entering a room he occupied suddenly turn red with rage and determination, even in the daunting shadow of his royal crown, was a fascinating sight to behold. It was something he never would have expected from her.

Not even Henry's wife had the audacity to confront him with such spirit.

By all accounts, he should have been furious and demanded to have her removed from the premises. And if she were anyone else, then it would have happened without question.

But, Arlan was... impressed.

"No..." he answered honestly, much to the pleasant surprise of his wife. "But make no mistake, Leonora... I will not tolerate such behavior from that girl again. That, you have my word on."

Impressed or not, Maeve was still nowhere near worthy of marrying his son, and he was determined to watch every move she made henceforth with meticulous perception. If she made a mistake, he would be the first to know.

She would have to be very careful from now on.