

The Hidden Luna Queen

Chapter 4

Maeve POV

The first thing I felt when I woke up was the most splitting headache of my life.

Second, **was** an uncomfortable and unfamiliar soreness. down there. Resisting a groan, I knew I'd have some trouble walking.

And lastly, I was in a bed that was not my own in a room I didn't recognize.

What happened **last night..?**

A light snore suddenly broke **the** silence in the hotel room **and**, for a moment, I froze with alarm. Cautiously, I peered over at the sleeping body next to mine and met the handsome face.

And then the details of last night came flashing back to me.

I slept with a stranger. My mind whirled.

I stifled an abrupt yawn. Admittedly, I hadn't gotten much sleep—most of the night was **spent as** we both worked **out** our primal urges very very thoroughly. I could still feel the graze of his lips against my skin, pressing kisses over every inch of my body that he could reach.. the weight of his muscular, hot body on top of my small frame as he pounded into me...

My face grew hot.

Despite mistaking me for an omega, he displayed the utmost kindness and respect and was willing to help me in my moment of need without a second thought.

I felt a sharp pang in my chest.

I wouldn't have needed his help at all if Sarah hadn't forced that drugged drink down my throat. Why did she do it?

What a predicament I was in. I sighed, glancing towards the window at the far side of the room, fully expecting to still see **the** pitch-black of night but instead saw a muted blue begin to stretch across the sky.

Panic rose within me—it was almost sunrise!

My father is going to be so mad at me.

I sprung out of bed with no time to waste and hastily threw my clothes on. Digging through my skirt pockets, I was desperate to find any amount of money to afford a trip back to Moonstone. I needed to get home before my family woke up and discovered I'd been out all night. With an ecstatic grin, I finally pulled out a few dollar bills and some change—just enough for me to take the bus.

Money in **hand**, I raced to the door as quickly and quietly as possible. The second my fingers touched the knob, however, I paused.

I...never got to thank him for saving me...

With a heavy heart, I couldn't help but look back at his peacefully sleeping face before disappearing with the waning moon.

It was almost six in the morning by the time I returned to Moonstone. With the sun having barely risen and the morning dew still covering the earth, it was much too early for my family to wake up. Usually, this was when the omega servants began to prepare the packhouse for the events of the day.

Nothing that Alphas or Lunas needed to bother themselves with.

Quietly, I slid in through the front door and pushed it closed with a triumphant sigh. Finally, I was-

“Look who finally decided to come home.”

A cold chill crept up my spine. That was a voice that should not have been **awake** yet. A thick hand wrapped around my arm and twisted me to **face its** owner. In front of me **stood** my livid father, with my sly sister right behind him, and Victoria seated on one of the armchairs wearing a tight scowl.

I was caught and there was nowhere to hide.

“Where the hell were you all night?” Father demanded.

I sealed my lips. Nothing good would come from telling him the truth.

“I **told** you, Daddy!” Sarah latched onto his arm. “She ran off to play around with strange men! Oh, I said you’d be **so** displeased if she didn’t come home but she wouldn’t listen!”

What a lying, little brat!

Trembling, my fists balled at my sides. “That’s not what-”

Father grabbed **me** harshly by my jaw, forcing me to look at him. With a quivering gasp, I froze—I couldn’t move.. I didn’t dare to even breathe in his presence. And for a few moments, he just stood there, staring at me intently sniffing me, before he suddenly released me with a sharp recoil.

“It’s true,” **he** mumbled, initially looking mortified but quickly growing more furious with every passing second, and I **couldn’t** help but cower silently where I stood. “I smell another wolf all over **you.**”

In the background, I heard startled sounds of delight.

“But-”

“You—Father pointed his finger, cold and accusatory at me. He was red with rage, something I’d never seen on him before. “You have disgraced the entire **pack** with your shameless actions!”

I paled, lowering my gaze. Maybe none of this would’ve happened if I’d taken the time to shower, bathe—whatever I had to do to wash off that scent before coming home. “I.. I didn’t mean for-

“We can’t let her ruin Moonstone with this disgusting scandal,” Sarah insisted, her eyes radiating a sinister, **dark** glow. “She should be banished forever and exposed as the slut she is. A true Alpha’s daughter would never behave like this.”

Despite the tension and my dignity being at risk, Sarah’s words perked me up a bit.

Banishment from the pack—it sounded like a bittersweet dream come true! This might be my chance to finally escape this nightmare of a house. For once, I eagerly awaited what my father had **to say**.

Instead, he shook his head firmly. “Out of the question,” he said in a tone that left no room for debate, shocking the whole room, including myself. “We cannot let this information leave this household.”

“B—But—how?” Sarah sputtered. “How is that not grounds for banishment?”

“I have put blood, sweat, **and** tears towards building the honor of **this** pack. All it takes is a scandal to burn it all to the ground.. and thanks to your brazen big sister, we now have two to worry about her little nightly escapade in the capital and her illegitimacy,” he paused with a glare directed at me. “To protect this family, she can never be allowed to roam free as long as I am Alpha.”

A chill forced its way into my hopeful heart, and my world came crashing down. His words rang in my ears like a cruel bell. Now I understood why he always refused to meet with me or have any discussion about my freedom.

He was never going to let me go.

would always be their prisoner.

And, for the first time in a long time, a lone tear dropped down my cheek in front of my family.

Father continued to speak, either painfully oblivious to my sorrow or he simply didn't care. With all my broken heart, I believed the latter. "Maeve is to be confined to her room until the day of Sarah's birthday party. Effective immediately."

Silence.

"Is that understood?"

My mouth quivered. "Y-Yes, sir.."

He turned to my sister, who fumed quietly in her seat. "And you, Sarah?"

"...Yes, Daddy."

And just like that, I was dismissed

The walk to my room seemed especially long this time around. What was normally a safe haven quickly transformed into a foreboding space and I stood in front of the entryway for the longest time, feeling an all-consuming dread. The moment I opened that door and crossed the threshold, I said goodbye to the rest of my life.

Inhale...

One foot entered the **room**, followed by the other. I shut the door behind me.

Exhale.

Like the flip of a switch, I was overcome by tears as they cascaded down my face and I threw myself onto my bed, lost in my misery. I blindly reached under my pillow for a little cotton satchel, gently pulling out a purple crystal pendant that lay protected within. Father had forbidden me from ever wearing it, so I'd **hidden** it.

The last and only reminder I had of my real mother.

I wasn't sure where she'd gone or why she'd abandoned me, but I felt the truth in my heart as clear as day—any life with her would've been a dream compared to what I endured here.

“Had fun last night?”

I jerked my head towards the door and saw Sarah, for once with a blank expression. My **immediate** reaction was fury—I didn't have the patience for her little games. “Why did you do it? I've never done a thing to you.”

“Don't you dare play the victim with me, you filthy mutt,” she spat as she **jabbed** her finger at me. “I **am** a pureblood daughter of the great Alpha Burton and his Luna. Why should you—his bastard child—get the same treatment as PP You don't deserve **nice** dresses, you don't deserve to meet the prince, and you certainly don't deserve Father's love.”

“What?”

“I know what I see—you desire his approval so badly that it pains you. He should've just tossed you out. I can't understand why he didn't.”

Her logic only exasperated me even further. All of this burning jealousy she harbored toward me was completely unfounded. I had no place in our parents' hearts and I wanted nothing of hers.

Thanks to **Sarah**, everything I ever wanted had been painfully torn away from me. I closed myself off to her.

There was nothing left to say.

Having gotten no further response, she let out a bored huff. “At least Father completely loathes you after what happened, and that’s enough for me.”

Before leaving my room, **she** paused and lingered by the door. “Things could still be worse. After all, you might end up pregnant.” Upon **hearing** those haunting words, my eyes immediately snapped to hers in alarm. She gave me a sly smile in response and shut the door behind her.

Pregnant? Suddenly, it was all I could think about.

That’s impossible, I tried to reason, **frantic** for **any** sort of consolation. That would only make sense if we didn’t use protection-

And the sinking realization hit me. I couldn’t remember if we used any sort of protection.