

173 She Is Still Your Wife

Hades 1

You could have heard a pin drop from thru bearable weight of the silence at the round table. The expression of every Governor and ambassador was the same: shock.

I glanced at Montegue, gauging his reaction to the news. He was as pale as parchment, his eyes distance and his knuckles white. This news would hit him the hardest. It was yet another betrayal.

Surprising, Gallinti, spoke up first, the youngest at the round table seemed to break from his haze of astonishment and cleared his throat. "The werewolf princess is your mate?"

"Yes, Ellen Valmont is my mate," I reiterated.

His eyes widened, his brows bunching. "A Lycan and a werewolf," he muttered. "This is... unprecedented."

"Unprecedented is too tame a term for this," Governor Silas bellowed, pushing back his chair as he shot to his feet. "This is an abomination!" 2

The word cracked like a whip through the

chamber. The tension thickened, pressing in like a suffocating weight.

"This has to be a mistake," Ambassador Morrison interjected, his voice less loud but no less vehement. He leaned forward, his gray eyes narrowed with suspicion. "A Lycan and a werewolf have never bonded in recorded history. The bloodlines have always repelled one another. Even an attempt at a union would result in violent rejection. Your very nature should make this impossible."

Silas seized on that. "Exactly! This is unnatural. Forbidden. There's no telling what this could mean for the stability of our people. If Lycans and werewolves begin to—" 1

"It is not a mistake," I interrupted, my voice cutting through the rising furor like a blade. "This is not some misalignment of fate. It is the result of an anomaly—two, to be precise."

Another beat of silence. Then, Gallinti leaned forward, his sharp eyes gleaming with renewed interest. "An anomaly?"

I nodded. "The Vassir's Vein within me. The Fenrir's Marker within Ellen." I let the weight of those words settle before continuing. "These



two anomalies—their nature, their essence—have bonded. It is a rare, perhaps even unique, case of absolute compatibility." 1

A gasp rippled through the table. Even Morrison, ever composed, seemed shaken by the implications.

Silas, however, remained unconvinced. His eyes blazed with defiance, his hands braced against the table as if the very foundation beneath him had begun to crumble. "A 'rare compatibility' does not change the fact that this should not be possible. This—" he gestured sharply, almost accusingly—"is dangerous. Do you have any idea what that could mean?"

Before I could answer, another voice entered the fray.

Kael.

My Beta's presence had been silent until now, his green eyes calculating as he listened. But now he leaned forward, his tone firm. "It means," he said, addressing the table with a level of conviction that quieted even Silas's anger, "that we finally have the means to unlock the full potential of Ellen's Fenrir's Marker."

Silas let out a derisive scoff. "And that is



supposed to reassure me?"

Kael ignored him and turned to me instead. "We've discussed this before. Ellen's wolf—her true power—has remained dormant because her bloodline was severed, incomplete. But a mate-bond with you, Hades, with your Vassir's Vein, will act as the catalyst to draw out her wolf. It will mature the Fenrir's Marker." 1

His words settled over the council like the final piece of an unfinished puzzle.

Gallinti exhaled sharply. "So you're saying... this bond isn't just some anomaly or accident. It's necessary."

Kael nodded. "If we are to survive what's coming, then yes."

Another heavy silence.

Morrison leaned back in his chair, his expression unreadable, though I could see the gears turning in his mind. Gallinti, ever the strategist, had already begun to analyze the implications. But Silas—Silas's hands curled into fists, his rage barely leashed.

I met his gaze, unflinching. "You can call it unnatural, an abomination, a mistake. But the



truth remains—Ellen Valmont is my mate. And there is no force in this world or the next that will change that."

His nostrils flared, but he said nothing.

They all knew what it meant.

This was what we needed no matter how stubborn they wanted to be this was what we needed.

"So you will mark her as your mate," Came Montegue's voice.

The whole table went still, all eyes turning to him.

He looked to have aged another decade in the span of a few seconds. The table went silent and for the first time, it was not shock or ire on everyone's faces, it was sympathy. 3

Everyone knew that my dead mate, Danielle was his princess. His most loved daughter. He used to be a high handed man, with a consistently dark expression, unless Danielle was in his vicinity, she was his light as much as she had been mine.

Ellen was the daughter of the man who ripped her away from him. A lump formed in my throat. 1



His eyes were hollow, haunted, he looked sick as he stared at me, his expression grave. There was no hatred on his face as they had been since the day that Danielle died. Only despair..

And now, I would mark the daughter of her murderer.

The ache in my throat deepened, but I forced myself to meet his gaze. He deserved that much.

"Yes," I said, my voice rougher than I intended. "I will mark her." 3

Montegue swallowed, his throat working visibly, though no words came for a long, agonizing moment. The war waging in his eyes was stark, a battlefield of grief and duty, past and present. I could see the ghosts haunting him, see the weight of his loss pressing against his soul, demanding that he reject this—to call me a traitor, to see this bond as yet another knife buried in his back.

But he didn't.

Instead, he turned his gaze to the rest of the table, shoulders squared, voice steady despite the turmoil he barely kept at bay.

"He must do what he must," he said, the words



carrying an unexpected finality, "for the sake of Obsidian."

The room collectively exhaled, as if they had been bracing for an explosion that never came. Even Silas, who had been poised to argue, hesitated, thrown off course.

Montegue continued, his voice gaining strength. "This bond... as unnatural as it may seem, as much as it may wound me to accept it, is the key to ending this futile bloodshed that has lasted centuries. If Ellen Valmont is truly the key to awakening the Fenrir's Marker, and if Hades is the only one who can unlock it, then we have no choice but to see this through."

Silas slammed a fist on the table. "You would just accept this? Montegue, this is—"

"This is war," Montegue cut him off sharply. His eyes burned with something else now, something colder, deadlier. "And I will see it ended. I will see Darius run into the ground for what he has done to my family—to our people."

The air thickened, heavy with the weight of his words.

And now, his own daughter—his blood—was bonded to me.

Gallinti let out a slow breath, shaking his head in astonishment. "So this... this is it, then. The moment that changes everything."

Morrison, ever pragmatic, adjusted his cuffs, his expression unreadable. "If you truly intend to mark her, then we must move quickly. Darius can't know " 3

"He won't," I agreed.

Silas still looked mutinous, but he remained silent, his fingers digging into the table as if trying to ground himself. 3

Montegue exhaled slowly, his expression grim. "I won't lie and say I approve of this. I will never forgive Darius for what he's done. But if marking Ellen means an end to this war—if it means avenging Danielle in a way that truly matters—then so be it. If it means we get to the beast of the night, then it will be done. No more Obsidian Pack father's will lose their daughters." 2

His eyes met mine again, dark and storm-tossed. "See this through, Hades. Do what needs to be done."

I inclined my head, understanding the unspoken weight behind his words.



This was no longer just about fate or bonds or rare compatibilities.

This was about vengeance. About war. About ending the centuries-long bloodshed that had defined our people for too long.

"There will be a knotting between you and the girl," Silas said evenly. "What if she does not allow?"

"Yes, she might be adverse to knotting with a Lycan," Morrison said snidely.

"It's a possibility."

"She can be manipulated," I assured. I fought back the warmth of her phantom touches on my skin. 2

"Of course, she can," Morrison scoffed. "And if she won't submit, do what I did to my Eliza and simply rape the mutt." 9

The silence that followed was deafening. 1

A slow, deadly silence choked the air, suffocating the very breath from the room. The tension before had been thick, but this—this was different. This was the kind of silence that came before the breaking of bones, before the splatter of blood on cold stone.



Every muscle in my body coiled tight. I could feel the heat rising beneath my skin, a smoldering ember of something violent, something ancient. The Flux stirred.

Morrison leaned back in his chair, oblivious to the danger he had just invited upon himself, a smirk curling his thin lips. "What?" he drawled, feigning innocence, as if the venom of his words hadn't already seeped into the room. "Do you think she would willingly submit to you, Hades? The daughter of Darius Valmont? A werewolf bitch? No, you'll have to break her. That's what they're made for, aren't they?" 10

The walls groaned, or maybe that was the sound of my own restraint fracturing.

A sharp snap echoed through the chamber—wood, cracking beneath the pressure of Kael's grip on the table. His face was unreadable, but his knuckles had gone bone-white.

Gallinti stiffened, his lips pressed into a thin line, calculating. Silas looked disgusted, but whether it was at Morrison's words or the thought of a werewolf in my bed, I couldn't tell. Montegue, though... Montegue did not move. Did not blink. He sat there, his body eerily still, his gaze locked onto Morrison like a predator sizing up prey.

It was only then that Morrison seemed to sense the shift in the air. His smirk faltered, his confidence wavering. "What?" he repeated, but this time, there was something else in his voice.

Something akin to fear.

I moved first.

One moment, I was seated at the table. The next, I was across it, my hand wrapped around Morrison's throat, lifting him clean off the ground. His eyes bulged, fingers clawing at my wrist, feet kicking against empty air.

"You should have kept your mouth shut," I murmured.

The Flux, the pulsing corruption within me, roared in satisfaction, curling around me like a living thing. It bled into my voice, dark and echoing. I felt it seep into Morrison, felt the way his veins shrieked in protest as its tendrils licked at his mind.

He choked, his body convulsing as the Flux invaded his senses, dragging his worst fears from the depths of his soul.

I leaned in, close enough that he could see the abyss staring back at him in my eyes. "You



touched your mate with force?" I whispered, my voice dripping with the promise of pain. "You defiled your own mate." 2

Morrison made a strangled sound, somewhere between a plea and a sob.

I tightened my grip. "Tell me, how does it feel to be powerless?"

His mind shattered.

He let out a raw, gurgling scream as his eyes rolled back, his body convulsing violently. I could feel his terror, could taste it on my tongue like bitter iron. The Flux did not just show nightmares. It made them real. 1

A hand rested lightly on my shoulder. Not to stop me. Just a reminder.

Montegue.

I turned my head slightly, meeting his gaze. There was no judgment there. No pity. Only understanding.

"Let him go," Montegue said softly. "He's not worth it." 1

I considered it. For a breath, for two. Then, with a growl, I released Morrison.



He collapsed to the ground in a twitching, whimpering heap, his breath coming in shallow gasps. His eyes darted around wildly, seeing things none of us could. His fears would haunt him for weeks. Maybe months. Maybe forever.

The table remained silent.

Gallinti was the first to move, exhaling sharply as if to break the spell. "Well," he muttered. "That was... thorough."

Kael smirked, shaking out his fingers. "That's why he's king."

Silas looked unimpressed, but he did not argue. Morrison, for his part, did not rise. He stayed curled on the floor, trembling.

Montegue finally turned to me. "Do not let his words taint your mind," he said, voice low but edged with grief. "Do not even contemplate what he said, Danielle will never forgive you if you sunk so fucking low. She is still your wife." 1

I did not understand exactly what it was saying but I nodded caught off guard. Which wife was he speaking about? 12

"When we are done here, I want to show you a place," he revealed. 1