



230 Crown Or Chains

Hades 1

"Deception in this Council will be detrimental to this pack," Gallinti said pointedly, though his gaze was not on me.

"She had been marked, her wolf awakened, and we were lied to," Silas added, his voice laced with venom. "Your Majesty, you do know why this council exists in the first place."

"I am aware," I replied simply.

Silas swerved his head toward me. "Is that all?" he ground out through gritted teeth. "There are rules in place. Transparency is one of our core values."

"I recall, Ambassador. I take full responsibility." My voice was level, inscrutable.

"You lied to us. Your only allies in a pack that did not want you on the Obsidian throne. I hope you recall that every sector and quadrant pack wanted that throne. They all opposed your rule. Every attempted assassination, every uprising



against the Beta they didn't want on the throne. They called you young and ruthless. The protests... the riots in the Southern Quadrant... the blood spilled to secure your place. And still, we stood beside you." His voice trembled with restrained fury. "Gallinti and I vouched for you when others spat your name like venom in those chambers."

I remained still, my hands clasped in front of me, my gaze steady.

"And yet," Silas continued, slamming his palm on the marble table, "you hid this from us! Cloaked it in secrecy! And now we learn she was marked long before — that her wolf had awakened in silence under your protection. Why?" His voice cracked, desperate. "Why would you gamble with the very trust we bled for?"

Gallinti exhaled slowly, his expression carefully measured. "Silas," he said, his tone softer but firm, "we were not the ones who placed His Majesty on the Obsidian throne."

He turned to me, his eyes meeting mine with the weight of long-shared history. "You ascended by your own hand. By steel and strategy. You



outmaneuvered rivals twice your age and left them grasping at shadows. You quelled rebellions before they could catch flame. You stood unshaken through council inquiries and tribunal hearings. You earned that throne."

He paused, letting the weight of his words settle.

"But," Gallinti continued carefully, "we backed you. We vouched for you. We staked our honor, our sectors, and the loyalty of those beneath us on your word. We silenced whispers of treachery and recklessness. We answered for decisions we did not make, trusting you had reasons beyond what could be shared."

His gaze flicked briefly toward Silas before returning to me. "All we ask now... is that those reasons do not undo the foundation we've helped steady."

Montegue said nothing. His eyes remained far away, as though seeing something beyond the council chamber — perhaps a memory, perhaps a warning only he could sense. His silence was heavier than any accusation.

"It was necessary," I finally spoke. "Her family hollowed her out for a reason. They knew that



her abilities would become a liability to them... but an asset to someone else. They returned to take her back the moment the first stirrings of her wolf were felt. They were informed. Therefore, I could not take chances until I understood the depth of what we were dealing with."

I let the silence stretch, letting them feel the weight of that truth wrapped in a necessary lie.

"If I had brought this to the council prematurely," I continued, my voice calm but edged with steel, "we would not be sitting here in debate. We would be sifting through ashes. The fear, the whispers, the political vultures waiting for a crack to exploit... they would have torn her apart, been more insistent on taking her back. And with her, any chance we had of controlling what she carries."

Silas's face twisted, torn between understanding and resentment. "So now... the charade of a coronation will not happen. She will not be—"

"She will still be crowned." I cut him off. I made sure our eyes met across the black marble table. "She will be the Luna of Obsidian."



The entire table seemed to freeze.

I doubled down. "She will be crowned."

The silence was suffocating. No one moved.

Silas's breath hitched first — sharp, incredulous laughter broke through his clenched teeth.

"You cannot be serious," he spat. "We allowed her presence because it was strategic. A containment. But crowning her? No. You would make a hollowed werewolf princess our Luna? Over purebloods who have fought, bled, and died for this pack?"

His voice rose, echoing in the chamber. "She is a liability, not a queen! You would bind her to the throne and call it duty when all it will be is madness disguised as loyalty."

Gallinti shifted, his face controlled but troubled. "Your Majesty... even if we reason it out —" he paused carefully, "— there will be unrest. The other sectors barely tolerate her presence. Crowning her might secure her place, but at the price of stability. You said so yourself: political vultures wait for cracks. This will become one." 1



I remained calm, hands still clasped.

"I understand your concerns. But it is precisely because the vultures are circling that she must be crowned. Without a title, she is a tool – and tools can be discarded. With a crown, she becomes part of the throne itself. Bound to it. Bound to me."

Silas's nostrils flared. "Or perhaps you bind yourself to her." His voice sharpened, heavy with accusation. "Is this strategy... or sentiment, Your Majesty?"

Gallinti shot Silas a warning glance, but the words had already landed.

I met Silas's gaze without flinching. "It is strategy. And necessity."

Gallinti exhaled. "Still... even necessity reveals cracks." He did not say more, but his meaning hung between us.

Silas pressed forward, bitter frustration coloring every word. "So we are to place a chain on her neck and call it a crown. Fine. But are you certain she will see it the same way?"



Before I could respond, Montegue finally stirred.

His voice cut through the tension — smooth, deliberate, unexpected.

"The werewolf princess would not make too bad of a Luna." 3

The room went deathly still.

All heads turned toward him, shock rippling across faces long used to his silence.

Montegue's eyes, once distant, were now sharp — and for the first time in a long while, filled with intent.

"Chains or crowns," he murmured, "sometimes they are the same thing. But it depends on who wears them." 2

His gaze flicked to me. "And on who places them."

"Montegue... I know you to be wise... but this..." Silas was practically trembling, his eyes wide with disbelief. 1

Montegue's gaze drifted briefly, unreadable, before settling back on Silas with a weight that



silenced him completely.

"That werewolf," Montegue began slowly, deliberately, "single-handedly ripped apart more than forty fully grown, trained ferals. All for what?" His voice dropped to a near whisper. "My grandchild."

He stroked his chin thoughtfully, almost musing aloud. "No hesitation. No thought of consequence. Loyalty. Protection. Instinct born from something far deeper than politics or personal gain."

The chamber held its breath.

"She is powerful," Montegue said softly. "But sentimental. Good, even." He glanced around the table, his expression darkening. "And goodness is rare in this room... and even rarer in a throne room."

He sat back, tapping his fingers once on the armrest.

"Kind people make predictable decisions. They protect. They nurture. They obey duty when it's framed as service. They can be... steered."



Gallinti stiffened beside him but stayed silent.

"And when you give a girl like that," Montegue continued, his voice dropping into something conspiratorial, "a role... a function... an obligation larger than herself — you chain her to it. She will not betray the pack. She will not betray him. Because that crown will not sit on her head... it will sit on her heart."

He looked at me. I understood.

"You are not wrong, Your Majesty," Montegue concluded. "A crown is not a prize for her. It is an anchor. She will bind herself tighter than any of us ever could."

A cold, shrewd smile touched his lips.

"And anchors do not drift."

He glanced at me once more, just as the chamber doors burst open with a loud crash.

Kael stormed inside, pale as death, his breath ragged.

His eyes were wide — wild with terror.

"Your Majesty!" he gasped, the words tumbling



230 Crown Or Chains



out, choked with panic. "It's... it's the princess.
You – you have to come. Now!"

His horror was palpable, his voice cracking.

"I think... its her wolf. Its mutating." 3

Comment ¹⁸

View All



Post your first comment!



Vote



Fandom



Send Gift