

60 Round Table Meeting

Hades~ 1

The door closed automatically, sealing us off from the rest of the world as Kael and I sat at the head of the table. Around us, the governors and ambassadors of the Obsidian pack filled the remaining seats. They sat in silence, awaiting my command.

"Shall we begin, gentlemen?" I asked, my voice low but carrying the weight of authority.

"Yes, Your Majesty," they echoed in unison.

I turned to Ambassador Morrison, a shrewd-looking man whose lined face gave the impression he had witnessed the Lycan-Werewolf War of the Dark Centuries firsthand. His hair, streaked with gray, lent him an air of somber wisdom. He met my gaze with a curt nod.

"Ambassador Morrison," I said, leaning forward, my fingers steepling beneath my chin. "What are the results of the spyware you planted in Lunar Heights?"

Morrison adjusted his collar, his face calm,

Morrison adjusted his collar, his face calm, though a spark of satisfaction flashed in his sharp eyes. "Your Majesty, the spyware has been transmitting without detection. The Silverpine pack remains entirely unaware of our breach. We've gathered a substantial amount of intel, including troop movements, supply routes, and—most intriguingly—private communications within the royal family."

A murmur rippled through the room, but I raised my hand to silence it.

"What of the royal family?" I asked. Lycans were banned from Lunar Heights. Their state-of-the-art detection systems had kept my men at bay for years. Only our recent diplomatic talks had provided a legitimate way inside their heavily fortified walls. Countless of my warriors had fallen to silver bullets over the years—such a nuisance to be so powerful yet vulnerable to a single element.

Morrison rose from his seat and walked to the far end of the room, where a large screen was embedded in the wall. With a quick gesture, he activated it, and the dimly lit chamber was suddenly illuminated with images and video footage.

"Allow me to show you, Your Majesty," he said as the screen flickered to life. He tapped a few commands into the console, and a series of photos and recordings appeared. The first was an aerial view of the Silverpine pack's compound, highlighting several key buildings and marked locations.

"Here," he began, "are the troop movements. As you can see, they've been increasing patrols along their southern borders. It seems they're preparing for something—or someone."

The next image displayed a close-up shot of Queen Lyra, speaking in a dimly lit room with several council members.

"The queen," Morrison continued, "has been in talks with her council about uniting with rogue packs from the east. If successful, they could present a formidable threat to your rule over the Northern Sector."

The room grew still. I narrowed my eyes at the screen, focusing on Queen Lyra's face. It didn't make sense. She had lost her daughter only recently—surely, she would still be in mourning. Was this how she chose to grieve?

"And what of Alpha Darius?" I asked, turning my gaze to Morrison.

Morrison smirked slightly as he pulled up a video feed of the alpha sitting in a council room. "Alpha Darius appears either unaware or uninterested in his queen's dealings. His focus has been on internal disputes, particularly their ongoing border conflict with the Redmoor pack. A minor pack that was formed not too long ago. They refuse to pay taxes, claiming they are no longer civilians under him. His attention is divided."

I leaned back in my chair, absorbing the information. "Good. Keep the spyware active, and ensure it stays undetected. Continue gathering everything you can. I want to know their every move before they make it." 3

Morrison gave a slight bow of his head. "Of course, Your Majesty." He tapped the console again, and the screen went dark. 2

I glanced around the table, the dim light casting shadows on the faces of my governors and ambassadors. "We will not act rashly," I said, my voice cold. "Let them think they are ahead. We'll make our move when the time is right."

"Of course, Your Majesty," came the replies.

I turned to Governor Gallinti. "The device your

I turned to Governor Gallinti. "The device your sector designed was given to Princess Ellen when she arrived. She has been using it, I'm sure," I said, my jaw clenching. "What information have you tapped from her phone calls?"

The blond younger man, with an aristocratic nose and a penchant for touching his hair, rose. He had only recently taken over from his late father. Overall, I have had no complaints.

"There has been none," he replied smoothly, standing up.

I raised a brow. "Nothing at all?" I asked. I remembered when she had a conversation over the phone with her mother and how distraught she had seemed afterward.

"Nothing, Your Majesty. That is because she has made no phone calls."

My blood turned to ice. "What?" I drawled, my eyes narrowing with suspicion.

I stared at Governor Gallinti, my patience slipping by the second. He fidgeted under my gaze, his hand compulsively brushing through his blond hair, the once calm confidence evaporating in the face of my growing fury.



"Governor," I said, my voice low and controlled, but the warning in my tone was unmistakable, "you are about to have a very serious problem."

Gallinti gulped, beads of sweat forming at his temple. "Your Majesty, I swear, it's not possible. The device is state of the art. We have safeguards in place—encryption layers no one could easily bypass."

I slammed my hand on the table, causing several of the governors to flinch. "And yet," I growled, leaning forward, "I saw Princess Ellen on the phone with my own eyes. She was speaking with her mother. You expect me to believe she made no phone calls?"

The room was deathly silent, the tension thick enough to choke on. Gallinti's face paled, his bravado crumbling as he stammered, "I—I don't know, Your Majesty. The device must have been —"

"Compromised," I cut him off, my voice cold. I straightened in my seat, my mind racing. "The device was bugged."

Kael shifted beside me, his dark eyes narrowing as the implications sank in. Someone had tampered with our technology, slipping past the

Kael shifted beside me, his dark eyes narrowing as the implications sank in. Someone had tampered with our technology, slipping past the layers of security that had been carefully designed to give us the upper hand. My blood simmered with anger, but beneath it, a colder realization settled in.

I was out of my seat within the blink of an eye. She was being watched and tracked—but by someone other than me. 4

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