

Chapter 42

In Chapter 42 of **Crown of Midnight**, the narrative shifts between Celaena's tense encounters with Mort and Chaol's discovery of her secret. Mort teases Celaena about her recent actions, recognizing her as the Witch Slayer and noting her wounds from Yellowlegs. Mort reveals the significance of her marks, indicating she has been marked by a witch and potentially risking her safety due to her killing of Baba Yellowlegs, a powerful witch leader. The chapter underscores the dangerous political and magical alliances that still exist beneath the surface, highlighting the ongoing threat posed by the witch clans and their loyalty to ancient oaths, which may soon be activated upon Yellowlegs's death.

Celaena's investigation into the tomb's riddles and the mysterious Wyrddkeys underscores her quest to understand the king's dark power. She contemplates the potential threat if the king possesses one or more of these keys, which could grant him immense and possibly destructive power. Her discovery of the riddle and the clues about Wyrddgates deepen her sense of unease, as she begins to grasp the magnitude of what is at stake. Despite her exhaustion, her determination to uncover the truth drives her to seek an ancient book in the library catacombs, aiming to find a spell that might unlock the secrets she needs. Her focus remains on understanding and possibly thwarting the king's plans, even as the danger intensifies.

Meanwhile, Chaol's perspective reveals a moment of personal vulnerability and revelation. Wandering into Celaena's cluttered quarters, he notices strange symbols reminiscent of her past and the mark burned on her forehead, hinting at deeper connections to her history. His curiosity is piqued when he finds her will, signed before Nehemia's death, which leaves her entire estate to him, along with a request to consider giving some assets to Philippa. This gesture signifies her trust and affection, but also hints at her awareness of her own mortality and the precariousness of their

situation. Chaol's emotional response underscores the complex relationship between them, layered with loyalty, love, and unspoken fears.

The chapter concludes with Chaol's realization of Celaena's sacrificial gesture. Her decision to leave him her wealth is not just an act of generosity but a strategic move, ensuring he has security if he is ever dismissed or forced to confront harsh realities. Her comment about him falling back on her assets if he is sacked reveals her understanding of his vulnerabilities and her desire to protect him in her own way. The chapter ends with a sense of foreboding, as Chaol contemplates the implications of her will and the dangerous political landscape they navigate. Celaena's actions and the secrets she keeps hint at the greater stakes involved, setting the stage for the coming conflicts.