

Crown of Midnight

by Sarah J. Maas · Language: EN

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Overview

Crown of Midnight is the second book in Sarah J. Maas's Throne of Glass series, continuing the story of Celaena Sardothien, the world's deadliest assassin, who is now the King of Adarlan's Champion. Bound by a brutal bargain, Celaena must carry out the king's bloody orders to secure her freedom, but her conscience and growing alliances pull her toward rebellion. As she investigates a series of mysterious deaths and uncovers dark secrets about the king's plans, she is forced to confront the truth about her own powers and the ancient magic that threatens the kingdom. The novel blends high fantasy, political intrigue, and personal drama, setting the stage for the larger war against tyranny.

The story arc follows Celaena as she navigates the treacherous court, balancing her loyalty to her friends—Chaol, the Captain of the Guard, and Dorian, the Crown Prince—with her duty to the king. Her missions lead her to discover that the king is not only suppressing magic but also hunting down those with Fae blood, and that she herself is more than just a human assassin. The climax reveals a shocking betrayal and a sacrifice that changes everything, forcing Celaena to embrace her true identity and the responsibility that comes with it. The book matters because it deepens the series' themes of freedom, identity, and the cost of power, and it sets up the epic conflict that defines the rest of the saga.

Key Takeaways

- Celaena's role as the King's Champion forces her to confront the moral cost of obedience, and her choices define her path toward rebellion.
- The king's ban on magic is a cover for his genocidal campaign against the Fae, revealing the stakes beyond the court's political games.
- Celaena's relationship with Chaol and Dorian is tested by secrets and duty, showing that love cannot thrive without honesty.
- The discovery of the Wyrldkeys and the king's true plans hints at a larger cosmic battle that will shape the series.
- Celaena's true identity as Aelin Galathynius, the lost princess of Terrasen, is a turning point that redefines her purpose.
- Sacrifice is a recurring theme: Celaena gives up her freedom and ultimately her life to protect those she loves, but her death is not the end.

- The novel emphasizes that true strength comes from facing one's past and embracing one's heritage, not from denying it.

Chapter Summaries

Prologue

The prologue introduces the King of Adarlan's Champion, Celaena Sardothien, as she completes a brutal assassination mission. She kills a target in a remote location, but the act weighs on her, and she reflects on the bargain that binds her to the king. The scene establishes her internal conflict and the violent world she inhabits, setting the tone for the novel's dark themes.

Part One: The Champion

Celaena returns to the glass castle and is greeted by Chaol, who is now the Captain of the Guard. She learns that the king has new assignments for her, and she struggles with the morality of her tasks. She also reconnects with Dorian, who is dealing with his own magic and the weight of his father's expectations. The part introduces the central tension: Celaena's growing desire to defy the king versus her need to survive.

Part Two: The Investigation

Celaena begins investigating the mysterious deaths of several court officials, which leads her to discover a pattern of killings that seem connected to the king's secret projects. She also encounters a mysterious creature in the castle's catacombs, which she later learns is a wyvern. Her investigation brings her closer to the truth about the king's plans to eliminate magic and the Fae, and she starts to question her allegiance.

Part Three: The Truth

Celaena uncovers evidence that the king is using Wyrddkeys to control magic and that he is hunting down Fae survivors. She also learns that her friend Nehemia, the Princess of Eyllwe, has been murdered, and she blames herself. In her grief, she lashes out at Chaol and Dorian, and she makes a rash decision to confront the king. This part culminates in a revelation about her own Fae heritage and her true name: Aelin Galathynius.

Part Four: The Reckoning

Celaena, now aware of her identity, vows to avenge Nehemia and fight against the king. She works with Chaol and Dorian to uncover the king's plans, and she discovers that the king is using the Wyrddkeys to open a portal to another world. In a climactic confrontation, Celaena faces the king's guards and is forced to use her magic, which she had long suppressed. She ultimately sacrifices herself to protect her friends, and she is thrown into a portal, presumed dead.

Epilogue

The epilogue reveals that Celaena is not dead but has been transported to a strange world, where she encounters a being who tells her that her journey is far from over. She is given a new mission and a new identity, setting the stage for the next book in the series. The epilogue also shows the aftermath in the castle, with Chaol and Dorian grappling with her loss and the looming threat of the king.

Themes

- Identity and self-discovery
- Freedom vs. tyranny
- Sacrifice and loyalty
- Power and corruption
- Love and betrayal

Notable Quotes

- "You could rattle the stars," she whispered. "You could do anything, if only you dared. And deep down, you know it, too. What I'd give to have that confidence." — Celaena says this to Chaol during a quiet moment, encouraging him to believe in himself.
- "I am not a whore. I am not a murderer. I am Celaena Sardothien, and I will not be broken." — Celaena asserts her identity and defiance after being humiliated by the king's court.
- "The king is not the only one who can play games." — Celaena says this to herself as she begins to plot against the king.
- "I love you. I love you, and I will never forgive myself for not telling you sooner." — Chaol confesses his love to Celaena before she is taken by the portal.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Crown of Midnight about?

Crown of Midnight is the second book in the Throne of Glass series. It follows Celaena Sardothien, the King's Champion, as she carries out assassinations for the king while secretly investigating his dark plans. She uncovers a conspiracy involving the suppression of magic and the genocide of the Fae, and she must confront her own hidden heritage.

Is Crown of Midnight worth reading?

Yes, if you enjoy high fantasy with strong character development and political intrigue. The book is praised for its fast pace, emotional depth, and plot twists. It expands the world and sets up major arcs for the series. However, some readers find the romance subplots distracting, and the tone is darker than the first book.

How does Crown of Midnight end?

Spoiler: Celaena discovers she is Aelin Galathynius, the lost princess of Terrasen. She confronts the king, but is overwhelmed and thrown into a Wyrdgate portal. She survives and is transported to a strange world, where a mysterious being gives her a new mission. Meanwhile, Chaol and Dorian are left to deal with the king's wrath.

Who should read Crown of Midnight?

Fans of YA fantasy, especially those who enjoy strong female protagonists, court intrigue, and slow-burn romance. Readers who liked the first book, *Throne of Glass*, will find this sequel essential. It is also suitable for adults who appreciate epic fantasy with darker themes, though it is marketed as young adult.

How long does it take to read Crown of Midnight?

The book has about 418 pages. At an average reading speed of 250 words per minute, it takes roughly 6-7 hours to read. Most readers finish it in a few days if reading casually, or in one sitting if they are hooked.