

# Chapter 60

The chapter opens with Rhysand assuring that Velaris remains protected, with the city's wards restored after the recent attack. The characters, exhausted and covered in dirt and blood, reflect on the brutal conflict and their efforts to heal both physically and emotionally. Rhysand's leadership is evident as he oversees the rebuilding process, while others like Cassian, Mor, and Azriel show signs of the toll taken by the battle. Amren's role in using illusions to deceive the enemy and cause chaos highlights the strategic use of dark powers to weaken their foes, emphasizing the ongoing threat and the necessity of cunning tactics.

Despite the temporary safety of Velaris, concerns linger about the future. Cassian questions how long their defenses will hold, given that Hybern is aware of Velaris's vulnerabilities thanks to the worm-queens' intelligence. Rhysand's inner burden weighs heavily on him, as he contemplates the possibility of having to leave the city to confront Hybern directly. Amren volunteers to stay and defend Velaris if Rhysand departs, asserting that her unique powers position her as the best protector of their home in his absence. The group recognizes the need for rest and recovery, but the underlying tension about future threats remains palpable.

Later, Rhysand and the narrator share a quiet, intimate moment on the roof, away from the chaos. Rhys reflects on his feelings of guilt and self-blame for the destruction and vulnerability of Velaris. Their conversation reveals the depth of their bond and mutual support, as Rhys admits feeling unworthy and conflicted. The narrator reassures him, emphasizing their shared right to happiness despite the ongoing peril. Their tender exchange culminates in a passionate moment under the stars, symbolizing hope and resilience amid ongoing darkness. This scene underscores the importance of emotional connection in the face of external chaos.

The chapter concludes with the discovery of a crucial but ominous revelation: Amren's decoding of the Book of Breathings. She explains that to nullify the Cauldron's destructive power, they must directly touch it and speak specific words. However, combining the two halves of the Book would unleash a destructive force capable of awakening ancient, malevolent entities. Rhysand and the others grapple with the dangerous implications of this knowledge, contemplating whether to proceed with their plan. The narrative ends with a sense of urgency and foreboding, as they prepare to move forward with their next strategic step, fully aware of the risks involved in their quest to defeat Hybern.