

39. Notes

The chapter begins by emphasizing the peril of multiple Shards occupying the same location, highlighting an agreement among the Shards to avoid interference, which has been largely broken. This sets a tone of tension and caution, underscoring the fragile balance of power and the potential consequences of discord among these powerful entities. The narrative then introduces Shalla-Nal, who is tasked with taking notes during a crucial meeting, reflecting her evolving role within the group and her ongoing recovery from past trauma. Her observations reveal her internal struggle with her identity and the surreal nature of her current circumstances, as she navigates a world where her sense of self is shifting amidst the larger conflict.

The scene shifts to a strategic discussion among key characters—Dalinar, Jasnah, Navani, Kaladin, and others—concerning the threat posed by the Voidbringers and the parshmen. Jasnah advocates for a defensive approach, emphasizing the importance of containing the Voidbringer threat and understanding the true nature of the parshmen, which she suggests are bonded with hostile spren or spirits. Kaladin's perspective introduces a more empathetic view, recognizing that the common parshmen are not inherently enemies, though their leaders pursue destruction. The dialogue reveals a complex debate about morality, strategy, and the necessity of war, with each character weighing the risks of confrontation against the potential for negotiation and understanding.

The chapter explores the deeper implications of the conflict, emphasizing the historical enmity and the strategic importance of defending their homeland. Dalinar's leadership is portrayed as pragmatic yet burdened by the moral dilemmas of war, acknowledging the tragic reality that innocent soldiers often bear the brunt of violence. Kaladin's willingness to assist in opening the Oathgate signifies a proactive stance, while Jasnah remains skeptical about the possibility of peaceful resolution given the ancient

enmities. The discussion reflects the overarching tension between the desire for peace and the necessity of warfare to protect their people, highlighting the difficult choices faced by the leaders.

In conclusion, the chapter underscores the urgency of gathering intelligence and preparing for imminent conflict, with a focus on the uncertain status of Kholinar and the threat of a coordinated attack. The characters consider infiltration and strategic deployment to gather crucial information, recognizing the high stakes involved.

Dalinar's cautious optimism about potential negotiations contrasts with Jasnah's skepticism, illustrating the divergent approaches to resolving the crisis. The chapter ends on a note of anticipation, emphasizing the ongoing struggle to balance morality and strategy in a world teetering on the brink of war, with each character playing a vital role in shaping the coming battles.