

48. Rhythm of Work

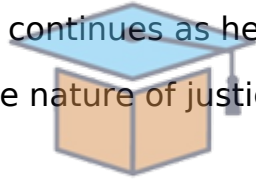
The chapter opens with Moash reflecting on his current situation, emphasizing a sense of resignation and a desire for simplicity. He is tasked with pulling a sledge in a march led by the Voidbringers, a stark contrast to his previous life, where he was burdened by political scheming and concern over the kingdom's fate. His new role as a worker pulling a broken-wheeled cart provides a rare sense of physical relief and mental quietude, offering him a temporary escape from his past worries. The environment around him is fertile and alive, and the scene is painted with a mixture of hardship and a surprising note of order and fairness in the treatment of the workers.

As the march progresses, Moash observes the human caravan and the soldiers' preparation for war. He notes the strength and discipline of the Voidbringers' forces, including their use of warform parshmen, who are being trained for combat. Despite their lack of experience, their approach is efficient and purposeful, and Moash begins to question the morality of the conflict. His thoughts drift toward the city of Kholinar, which is the ultimate destination, and he reflects on its history and the corruption he perceives there. His disillusionment with humankind's leadership deepens as he considers the cycle of violence, betrayal, and the false gods that have dominated their history.

Moash's internal reflections turn darker as he contemplates the return of the Voidbringers and their apparent effectiveness. He recognizes their strategic intelligence and the disciplined nature of their armies, which contrasts sharply with the disorganized and corrupt human armies he has known. His admiration is tinged with a sense of despair, as he believes humankind's downfall is inevitable due to their own failures. Despite this, he notices an unsettling disparity: a small group of parshman slaves pulling a sledge, treated with contempt and brutality. This observation raises questions about the supposed egalitarian nature of the Voidbringers' forces and hints

at underlying divisions and injustices within their ranks.

The chapter concludes with a moment of pause as Moash and the others rest during the march. He observes the burned village nearby, contemplating the reasons behind its destruction—whether it was to send a message or to prevent enemy flanking. The scene emphasizes the brutal reality of the ongoing conflict and the suffering inflicted upon innocent civilians. Moash remains detached yet contemplative, aware of the cruel realities of war and the complex moral landscape in which he now finds himself. His internal conflict continues as he grapples with the harsh truths of the world around him, questioning the nature of justice and loyalty amidst chaos and destruction.



Summary