

116. Alone

The chapter opens with a reflection on a tragic moral dilemma, quoting the Eila Stele about a people forsaken by their gods and the pity that led to their rescue. This sets a tone of compassion intertwined with guilt and the heavy consequences of mercy. It emphasizes the complex nature of divine justice and the burden of compassion for those considered forlorn or betrayed, hinting at the overarching themes of sacrifice and moral ambiguity that pervade the story. This historical perspective provides a somber backdrop for the personal struggles faced by the characters, especially in their ongoing conflicts and decisions.

Kaladin's internal journey is vividly depicted as he steps away from his past despair into a renewed sense of purpose. His thoughts reveal how far he has come in the last months—transforming from a man who welcomed death to one who actively defies it. With Syl's companionship and the camaraderie of Bridge Four, Kaladin has found meaning and strength. His resolve to protect Dalinar signifies his growth and commitment to something greater than himself, highlighting his evolution from a survivor to a protector amid the chaos of war and impending danger.

The scene shifts to Dalinar, who faces the chaos of battle within Thaylen City. The earth trembles with the arrival of a second thunderclast, and civilians scramble for safety as the city is under siege. Dalinar's leadership is evident as he directs civilians to shelter, despite the absence of his Shardplate and Shards. His internal conflict surfaces as he feels the thrill of battle—an intoxicating mix of passion and danger—yet he struggles to resist the temptation to embrace the thrill of glory, fearing it might lead him down a dark path reminiscent of his past. This internal battle underscores the theme of restraint versus the allure of power.

As the chaos intensifies, Dalinar encounters a colossal stone monster—one of the thunderclasts—ripping through the city walls and attacking the Gemstone Reserve,

which contains invaluable wealth. The scene is filled with destructive fury, with debris and gemstones scattering across the city, symbolizing the loss of riches and stability. Dalinar's quick thinking and Stormlight healing enable him to survive injuries and continue his efforts to understand the enemy's motives. The chapter concludes with the realization that the thunderclast's attack is more than just destruction; it involves a targeted assault on the city's resources, hinting at deeper, strategic intentions behind the chaos.

