

## 76. An Animal

The chapter opens with Dalinar reflecting on a recent, brutal day of battle, emphasizing his physical and emotional exhaustion. Despite washing up and consulting a surgeon for his wounds, he remains haunted by the red mist in his vision and the persistent inability to sleep. His focus is on military strategy, where he inspects the new plans for taking the city walls, signaling a shift in tactics. Dalinar's decisiveness is clear as he orders the suspension of plans to march into the city, indicating he has a more calculated and potentially destructive plan in mind, hinting at the brutal nature of his approach to conquest.

Dalinar's interactions with Sadeas reveal political tension and underlying mistrust. They discuss the delicate balance of power, with Sadeas revealing that he has managed to stall the scribes to keep certain information secret from Gavilar, Dalinar's brother. Their conversation exposes the complex web of alliances and betrayals, with Sadeas expressing loyalty to Gavilar and Dalinar contemplating the brutal lessons of war. Dalinar's reflections on leadership, loyalty, and the necessity of doing what must be done underscore the moral ambiguities faced by these military leaders, foreshadowing the devastating actions they are preparing to undertake.

As night falls, Dalinar prepares for an assault on the city walls, ordering his troops to use oil and flaming brands for a nighttime attack. The chapter describes the gritty, relentless assault by ordinary soldiers, with no heroic Shardbearers leading, emphasizing the brutal, unglamorous reality of war. Dalinar's weariness persists as he waits for the chaos of battle to unfold, passing through the battlefield littered with fallen soldiers. The scene underscores the human cost of war, highlighting Dalinar's internal conflict—his desire to make a statement through destruction versus the toll it exacts on soldiers and civilians alike.

The chapter concludes with Dalinar's strategic decision to burn the city of the rebels within the Rift, viewing it as a necessary display of power and punishment for rebellion. Despite concerns about civilian casualties, Dalinar emphasizes the importance of sending a message to the kingdom about obedience and consequences. Sadeas's remarks about the traitors and the political machinations behind the scenes reveal a landscape of deception and ruthless pragmatism. The chapter ends with Dalinar reaffirming his resolve to enforce his will through force, illustrating the harsh realities of leadership in a time of war and rebellion.



Summaryer