

114. The Cost

In this chapter, Dalinar awakens suddenly in a stormwagon cabin, disoriented and questioning the nature of his recent drunkenness and the memories he cannot recall. His mind is troubled by the strange experience, and he is determined to seek out the Nightwatcher, a mysterious entity, despite the risks involved. As he prepares to leave, his soldiers understand his intent, and Felt, a loyal companion, accompanies him. Dalinar's decision to venture into the unknown reflects his internal struggle, balancing duty, personal beliefs, and a desire for guidance from supernatural forces, even amid the chaos of his circumstances.

Dalinar and Felt travel through a stark, unfamiliar landscape that sharply contrasts with his homeland. The terrain is characterized by wrinkled, crusty ground, sparse and bent trees, and a raw, blasted mountainside. The land's harshness symbolizes the internal turmoil Dalinar faces, as he contemplates the spiritual and physical challenges ahead. Despite the discomfort, Dalinar remains resolute, determined to reach the place where he hopes to encounter the Nightwatcher, aware that this journey is as much about confronting his fears as it is about seeking answers.

As they approach the valley, Dalinar observes the lush, overgrown nature of the terrain, which is teeming with life and tangled vegetation. The dense, tangled flora resembles a battlefield, symbolizing the ongoing conflict within him and the larger struggles of his world. Felt explains that entry into the valley requires navigating hidden trails and that the environment itself seems alive, almost resisting outsiders. Dalinar's curiosity and resolve push him to enter the dense, humid valley alone, despite Felt's warnings about the risks and the potential cost of summoning the supernatural entity.

In the darkness of the valley, Dalinar ventures deeper, driven by a mixture of anticipation and skepticism. The natural sounds and the oppressive atmosphere

reinforce the sense of an otherworldly challenge. He hopes for a spiritual thrill or divine sign but is met with emptiness, leaving him to question the purpose of his quest. The chapter ends with Dalinar reflecting on his actions, contemplating whether his pursuit of the Nightwatcher is a distraction from the urgent political and personal crises he faces, highlighting the tension between faith and duty in his journey.

