

9. The Threads of a Screw

The chapter opens with Shallan reflecting on her new status as Brightness Radiant, which grants her a sense of inclusion in significant events, contrasting her previous outsider status. Amidst the chaos of an investigation into a murder, she observes the scene with a mixture of curiosity and exhaustion, especially after using her Stormlight supply on a map that disintegrated. Her perspective offers insight into her feelings of being both a participant and an outsider in the tense environment of the palace and the ongoing political and military turmoil.

As the investigation progresses, the scene shifts to the discovery of a murdered lighteyed officer, Vedekar Perel, found in a chamber with peculiar structural features resembling a screw thread. The body bears signs of a brutal fight, with a precise and disturbing kill—stabbed through the eye—mirroring the earlier death of Highprince Sadeas. This pattern suggests a deliberate and methodical killer, raising fears that the murders are interconnected and possibly orchestrated by a single perpetrator, which alarms the characters and complicates their understanding of the threat.

Dalinar, Navani, and their guards examine the crime scene, noting the similarities in the method of murder and the room's unusual architecture, which includes stone sculptures resembling spouts and a bathing chamber. Navani's detailed observations underscore the meticulous nature of the killer's work, hinting at a level of intelligence and intent behind the murders. The scene highlights the unsettling precision with which the killer operates, adding a layer of menace to an already tense political landscape, and emphasizing the difficulty of uncovering the perpetrator amidst ongoing chaos.

The chapter concludes with Dalinar's leadership focus shifting to the broader threat facing Roshar, as he orders the withdrawal of troops and the dissemination of warnings to potential allies. Meanwhile, Shallan's interactions with Renarin and Adolin reveal her

internal tension and her awareness of the dangerous environment around her.

Dalinar's somber reflection on the loss of most investigative personnel underscores the gravity of the situation, where the murder investigation becomes just one facet of a much larger, existential conflict that demands their full attention and resilience.

