

Chapter Sixty-Six

In this chapter, Nesryn is depicted as emotionally exhausted yet determined, walking alone toward Kadara's minaret after a period of intense upheaval. She is acutely aware of the impending events surrounding Sartaq's father, Hasar, and the delicate situation with Chaol and Yrene, prompting her to consider her own living arrangements. The chapter emphasizes her sense of responsibility and the emotional toll her recent experiences have taken, highlighting her desire for solitude amidst chaos. Her journey through the city reflects her internal struggle to find clarity and resolve amid the turmoil of war and personal loss.

The narrative shifts to Nesryn's swift and daring flight on her ruk, Salkhi, as she races toward Antica after receiving a mysterious, long-overdue letter from her uncle. The scene vividly captures the awe and wonder of the city's inhabitants as the ruk soars overhead, symbolizing Nesryn's connection to her roots and her past. Her bond with Salkhi is deeply personal; she formally claims him as her own, establishing a new rider-ruk relationship rooted in trust and shared history. This act signifies her readiness to confront her future and the challenges ahead with renewed purpose.

Upon landing outside her family's home, Nesryn is overwhelmed with emotion, falling to her knees and weeping as she reunites with her father, sister, and children. The scene is charged with joy, relief, and tears, illustrating her deep familial ties and the significance of her return. Her family's stories of their perilous voyage and their decision to remain in Antica during wartime underscore themes of resilience and unity. Nesryn's emotional vulnerability is palpable, revealing her longing for connection and stability after her tumultuous journey.

The chapter concludes with a poignant moment as Sartaq appears, greeted by her family, and approaches Nesryn's father with respect. The interaction between Sartaq and her family highlights the cultural importance of honor and recognition among the

rukhin and humans alike. The scene is lively, with children excitedly reaching out to Kadara and Salkhi, symbolizing innocence and the blending of worlds. Nesryn's subtle flirtation with her sister and the prince's warm reception reinforce themes of hope, belonging, and the bridging of different communities amid ongoing conflict.

