

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The chapter opens with a reflection on the dangers faced by instructors and cadets in mastering their powers, highlighting past tragedies where signets malfunctioned and resulted in fatalities. This sets a tone of tension and caution, emphasizing the unpredictable nature of channeling and the high stakes involved in training new riders. The narrative underscores the importance of control and the devastating consequences when powers backfire, illustrating the fragile balance between mastery and disaster in their world.

The protagonist, Sorrengail, shares a moment of vulnerability and introspection while sitting with Rhiannon. She reveals her recent emotional turmoil, largely due to her relationship with Liam and the physical and mental strain from her training. Despite her desire to explore her feelings, she's haunted by the potential implications for her career and her responsibilities as a rider. Their conversation reflects the complex interplay between personal desires and the rigid expectations of their environment, as well as the challenges of balancing love, duty, and ambition.

As the scene progresses, the focus shifts to the dynamics of relationships and the logistical difficulties faced by the riders. Sorrengail discusses the uncertainty of future assignments, the difficulty of maintaining bonds across distances, and the strategic considerations of being stationed apart from loved ones. Rhiannon suggests that the most powerful riders, like Xaden, may need to remain flexible in their duties, hinting at the transient nature of leadership and influence. The conversation reveals underlying tensions about loyalty, effectiveness, and the sacrifices required for their roles.

The chapter concludes with a moment of surprise and wonder, as Rhiannon demonstrates her newfound ability to summon objects, a significant magical development. This revelation underscores the growing mastery of their powers and hints at the expanding possibilities within their world. The scene is infused with

excitement and a sense of progress, emphasizing that their abilities are evolving and that new frontiers in magic are opening. The chapter ends on a note of anticipation, highlighting both personal growth and the ongoing challenges of their training and relationships.

