

# Chapter 7: Rhysand

The chapter opens with Rhysand in his private study at the House of Wind, reflecting on the tense atmosphere surrounding the political and military tensions in Prythian. He is burdened by sleeplessness, haunted by warnings about Tamlin's borders, and preoccupied with the delicate balance of power. Azriel, his loyal spymaster, arrives with crucial intelligence, and their conversation reveals the gravity of the situation. Rhysand's focus on gathering information underscores the fragile peace and the potential for unrest among the different factions, especially the Illyrian clans, whose loyalty and internal conflicts pose a significant threat to stability.

The dialogue between Rhysand and Azriel delves into the complexities of Illyrian society and military strength. Azriel's shadows, born from a dark past, symbolize his deep connection to hidden knowledge and power. They discuss the state of the Illyrian clans, noting the growing discontent and the spread of dissent, particularly among certain women who oppose the war. Azriel's blunt assessment of the Illyrians as hypocrites highlights the internal struggles and contradictions within their society, emphasizing the challenge of maintaining unity and control over their formidable army.

Rhysand emphasizes the precariousness of the current peace, pointing out that the human queens remain in their shared palace, and Hybern's population is restless after losing the war. With the wall destroyed, the risk of other territories attempting to seize human lands increases, making the situation volatile. He stresses that the Illyrians might need to be called upon again to defend their borders, even if it means shedding blood. The chapter underscores the strategic considerations Rhysand must weigh, balancing military readiness with political diplomacy to prevent further chaos.

Throughout the chapter, there is an undercurrent of secrecy and cautious planning. Rhysand and Azriel agree to monitor dissent within the Illyrian camps and to keep

certain information from Cassian until after the Solstice holiday, recognizing that he has enough on his plate. They avoid discussing Nesta openly, hinting at underlying tensions and unresolved issues. The chapter concludes with a sense of ongoing vigilance, as Rhysand and Azriel prepare for the uncertain future, knowing that alliances must be maintained and threats contained to preserve the fragile peace in Prythian.

