Chapter Fifteen

The chapter opens with Yrene sensing Chaol's simmering anger, though it is not directed at the female acolytes who admire him during his combat lesson. Despite the somber mood following the library attack, Chaol remains focused and precise in his teaching, earning smiles from both the students and the volunteer guards. However, Yrene notices his cold demeanor toward her, his eyes glinting with frost whenever she intervenes. The lesson concludes successfully, with the women dispersing and a few lingering to flirt with Chaol, much to Yrene's exasperation.

Yrene attempts to engage Chaol in conversation after the lesson, but he responds with silence or curt replies. His hostility becomes more pronounced during their ride back to the palace, leaving Yrene puzzled and uneasy. She wonders if his mood stems from seeing the active guards, a reminder of his own physical limitations. Upon arrival, Chaol's sarcastic remark about needing assistance from the acolytes further escalates the tension, prompting Yrene to walk away without waiting for him.

As Yrene storms through the palace, Prince Kashin intercepts her, expressing concern about the recent attack and offering additional guards for the Torre. Their conversation is strained, with Yrene aware of Kashin's unrequited feelings and his grief over Tumelun's death. Though Kashin tries to maintain a friendly demeanor, Yrene remains guarded, eager to end the conversation and return to her work with Chaol. The encounter highlights the lingering emotional complexities between them.

The chapter underscores the growing tension between Yrene and Chaol, whose anger and resentment create a palpable divide. Yrene's frustration and confusion are evident as she navigates Chaol's hostility and Kashin's lingering affections. The backdrop of the library attack and Tumelun's death adds layers of unease, emphasizing the precarious dynamics within the Torre and the palace. The chapter leaves their relationship at a crossroads, with unresolved emotions and external threats looming

large.