

Chapter Three

The chapter opens with Nesryn in shock, overwhelmed by recent events, and Chaol's inability to comfort her directly. She retreats silently into a private suite, shutting herself away, illustrating her deep emotional turmoil. Chaol, meanwhile, is left to observe the luxurious surroundings, feeling helpless and concerned for her well-being. The scene emphasizes the emotional distance and the weight of unspoken fears between them, highlighting the gravity of Nesryn's trauma and Chaol's helplessness in the face of her distress.

Chaol reflects on the situation outside their immediate circle, contemplating Dorian's safety and the broader political landscape. He reassures himself that Dorian is alive and on the move, though he remains anxious about the lack of concrete information. Chaol's thoughts also drift to the fragile alliances and debts they owe, especially considering the attack on their city by witches and the uncertain loyalties of their allies. His internal monologue reveals his strategic mindset and the ongoing tension between hope and doubt.

The narrative then shifts to a formal diplomatic encounter with Prince Kashin, who arrives confidently, embodying strength and authority. Kashin's demeanor and words reveal underlying tensions, as he discusses the security of their court and the presence of spies. His candidness about the potential infiltration by enemies underscores the dangerous political environment they navigate. Kashin's mention of his family's loss and grief adds a personal dimension, illustrating the human toll behind these political conflicts.

The chapter concludes with Kashin sharing the tragic death of his sister Tumelun, which he suspects was not a simple suicide but possibly foul play. His grief and conviction that Tumelun would not have jumped highlight the dangerous intrigue surrounding their royal family. Chaol's probing questions about potential enemies and

motives reflect the pervasive atmosphere of suspicion and the complex web of alliances, betrayals, and hidden threats that threaten stability in their world. This segment underscores the themes of loyalty, grief, and political deception.

