

Chapter 3

The chapter opens with a vivid description of a snow-covered village, where the protagonist and her sisters, Elain and Nesta, navigate the muddy, trampled road during market day. The scene highlights the bleakness of winter and the modesty of their village life. The protagonist carries hides she plans to sell, hoping to earn enough money to buy something special for her family. The atmosphere is tinged with a sense of routine and hardship, yet there's a hint of hope that good market sales might bring a small comfort amidst their bleak surroundings.

As they proceed into the village square, the arrival of the Children of the Blessed—fanatical worshippers of the High Fae—introduces tension. The young acolyte's attempt to share the Word of the Blessed is met with hostility, especially from Nesta, who is openly dismissive and confrontational. The sisters' reactions reveal their disdain for the fanaticism and the oppressive history of the High Fae, whom they see not as gods but as cruel overlords. The scene underscores the societal divide and the lingering resentment toward the Fae's past tyranny.

The conversation with the acolytes delves into the dangerous allure of the Fae, with the young woman trying to persuade them of the Fae's benevolence and the promise of riches and comfort. The sisters' skeptical responses highlight their mistrust and fear, rooted in historical trauma and personal experience. The acolyte's idealized view of Prythian contrasts sharply with the harsh realities known to the villagers, emphasizing the divide between faith and lived experience. The scene also reveals the tension between the sisters' differing attitudes toward the Fae and their cautious outlook on such religious proselytizing.

As they prepare to leave the market, the protagonist assesses her options for trading and the potential dangers posed by the persistent religious zealots. The chapter ends with a sense of urgency and foreboding, as she plans her departure and considers the

risks of engaging with the market and its inhabitants. The interactions reveal the complex social dynamics, the lingering fears of Fae influence, and the resilience of the villagers amidst a landscape of suspicion and hardship. The scene sets the stage for future conflicts and the ongoing struggle to navigate a world shaped by past traumas and uncertain allegiances.

