

Chapter 14

The chapter follows the protagonist as she ventures into the ancient western woods of the Spring Court, armed with a bow, knives, and a dead chicken to set a snare for the Suriel. Guided by Lucien's instructions, she navigates the untamed forest, noting its eerie, living presence and the occasional glimpses of supernatural beings. The atmosphere is thick with tension as she prepares her trap near a stream, aware of the dangers lurking in daylight despite reassurances. Her internal monologue reveals her curiosity about Tamlin's court and the political dynamics involving the High Lord, while her focus remains on the hunt.

After setting the snare in a birch glen, she waits hidden in an oak tree, observing the forest's unnatural silence as something approaches. The tension escalates as the creatures of the woods fall silent, and the trees seem to conspire against her. Despite her fear, she holds her position, arrow nocked, until the Suriel is caught in her trap. The creature's enraged screams freeze her in place, but she gathers the courage to confront it, questioning whether Lucien intended this as a deadly test.

Upon encountering the Suriel, the protagonist is met with a terrifying, veiled figure in tattered robes, its grotesque appearance triggering her instinct to flee. Despite her terror, she maintains her composure and addresses the creature directly, asking if it is indeed the Suriel. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger as the Suriel turns toward her, its face hidden but its presence ominous, leaving the reader anticipating the consequences of this dangerous encounter.

The chapter masterfully blends suspense, world-building, and character development, highlighting the protagonist's bravery and resourcefulness in the face of the unknown. The vivid descriptions of the forest and the Suriel create a haunting atmosphere, while her internal reflections provide insight into the broader political tensions of the Spring Court. The encounter with the Suriel sets the stage for potential revelations, leaving

the reader eager to discover what truths or dangers lie ahead.

