

# Chapter 36

Feyre is forcibly brought into a chaotic, torch-lit arena filled with a raucous crowd of faeries and High Fae. The atmosphere is hostile, with the spectators' cruel excitement palpable as they jeer at her. She is unshackled but aware that escape is impossible. The arena's muddy floor and natural cavern-like structure add to the oppressive setting. Feyre is led to a wooden platform where Amarantha and Tamlin sit, surrounded by the other High Lords of Prythian, including Rhysand, whose dark presence she deliberately ignores.

Amarantha silences the crowd with a gesture and addresses Feyre, taunting her about the first task designed to test her human resilience. Feyre remains defiant, though internally terrified, as Amarantha reveals she has learned about Feyre's past as a huntress. The Faerie Queen orders her to look into the muddy trenches below, which form a labyrinthine maze. Before Feyre can react, she is pushed into the trench by the Attor, a winged creature, and left to face an unknown danger.

The trenches are slick and reek of decay, making it difficult for Feyre to keep her footing. Amarantha, now floating above the trench, reveals the task: Feyre must hunt or be hunted by a monstrous worm-like creature with razor-sharp teeth. The crowd bets on her survival as the creature is released. Feyre runs for her life, navigating the maze-like trenches while the worm pursues her relentlessly. She tries to strategize, taking left turns to confuse the creature, but the odds seem insurmountable.

As Feyre races through the trenches, the worm gains ground, its stench and gnashing teeth driving her to near panic. She narrowly escapes into a narrow gap too small for the worm, hoping for a momentary reprieve. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, with Feyre's fate uncertain as she struggles to survive the brutal game Amarantha has orchestrated, all while Tamlin watches impassively, his emotions hidden behind a mask.