

Chapter 37

The chapter opens with the protagonist suffering from a severe arm injury in her dungeon cell, left untreated and in excruciating pain. The wound continues to bleed, raising fears of infection, while the filthy conditions and rotten food exacerbate her deteriorating state. Feverish and weak, she struggles to stay alert, her body and mind overwhelmed by the agony and isolation. The dire circumstances highlight her vulnerability and the brutal neglect she endures in captivity.

Her suffering intensifies as hallucinations and fever distort her perception, making it hard to distinguish reality. The arrival of Rhysand, who materializes from the shadows, adds to her distress. He mocks her condition, taunting her about Tamlin's inability to help and her status as a failed champion. Despite her defiance, her physical weakness is evident, and Rhysand's presence introduces a new layer of psychological torment as he probes her injuries and mental state.

Rhysand offers a sinister bargain: he will heal her arm in exchange for her spending two weeks each month with him at the Night Court. The protagonist refuses, distrusting his motives and unwilling to make another dangerous deal. Rhysand, however, manipulates her further by revealing Lucien's punishment—twenty lashes—and implying that no one else will come to her aid. His words plant seeds of doubt, forcing her to weigh her options while her body and spirit falter.

The chapter culminates in a tense standoff, with Rhysand presenting her with a grim choice: accept his help or risk death and doom Tamlin's fate. Her refusal stems from pride and distrust, but the escalating stakes—her life, Tamlin's freedom, and Lucien's suffering—leave her trapped between desperation and defiance. The encounter underscores the cruel power dynamics of the faerie world and the protagonist's resilience amid overwhelming adversity.