

# Chapter 33

The chapter opens with the protagonist preparing for a perilous journey, arming herself with a bow, arrows, and daggers despite knowing her weapons are inadequate against faeries. Guided by Alis through silent woods, she reflects on the Suriel's advice to stay with the High Lord, Tamlin, and regrets her earlier decisions. The weight of her mission—to rescue Tamlin from Amarantha—hangs heavy as they traverse the night-shrouded landscape, her legs aching from the relentless pace. The tension builds as they reach a chilling cave entrance, a shortcut to Under the Mountain, where Tamlin is imprisoned.

Alis reveals the cave's dark history and warns the protagonist of the dangers ahead, including poisoned wine, deceitful deals, and untrustworthy allies. The protagonist's fear is palpable as she grapples with the reality of facing Amarantha, whose cruelty surpasses even the Attor's. Despite her terror, she steels herself, determined to free Tamlin. Alis shares cryptic advice about an undisclosed part of the curse, hinting that the protagonist must uncover it herself. Their farewell is bittersweet, with the protagonist offering her family's home as refuge for Alis and her nephews.

Entering the cave, the protagonist navigates the oppressive darkness, her senses heightened as she inches toward distant voices and flickering light. The eerie silence amplifies her dread, reminding her of Alis's warnings about faerie trickery. She squeezes through a narrow fissure into a fire-lit passageway, her heart racing as she prepares to confront the unknown. The stakes are clear: failure means endless torture or death, but her love for Tamlin drives her forward.

The chapter culminates in her cautious advance through the hostile environment, drawing parallels between her past hunts and the deadly game ahead. Her internal struggle—balancing fear with resolve—underscores the gravity of her mission. The narrative leaves her on the threshold of danger, poised to face Amarantha's court,

where every step could be her last. The tension remains unresolved, setting the stage for the challenges to come.

