

Chapter 16

In Chapter 16, the protagonist reflects on her recent experiences, finding solace in a warm bath and a comforting moment with Alis, who brushes her damp hair and offers her molten chocolate. This scene highlights a rare moment of relaxation amid ongoing tensions and danger. The protagonist's thoughts shift to concerns about the faerie border crossings and attacks, raising fears of an impending war that could spill into the human world. Her curiosity about the political situation and the faerie realm's stability underscores her growing awareness of the larger conflict looming beyond her immediate surroundings.

The conversation between the protagonist and Alis reveals deeper insights into the complex political landscape of the faerie courts. Alis dismisses her questions about the border crossings and the threat of war, advising her to leave such matters to Lord Tamlin. The protagonist's insistence on understanding the situation reflects her sense of responsibility and desire to warn her family about potential danger. Alis's stern responses emphasize the importance of secrecy and the dangerous consequences of meddling in faerie affairs, illustrating the delicate balance of power and knowledge in their world.

Alis shares her personal history, revealing that her sister and her mate were murdered decades ago, and she works tirelessly to care for her young nephews. This background provides a glimpse into the sacrifices and hardships faced by faeries, highlighting themes of loyalty and loss. The conversation also touches on the nature of faerie children, their aging process, and the rarity of their offspring. Alis's protective attitude and her deep dedication to her family contrast with the protagonist's more naive curiosity, adding emotional depth and illustrating the stakes involved in faerie life.

As the chapter progresses, the protagonist joins Lucien and Tamlin at dinner, where subtle truths and lies about faerie nature are exchanged. Lucien's revelation that

faeries are skilled liars complicates her understanding of their honesty, prompting her to question the reliability of everything she has been told. The conversation underscores the theme of deception in the faerie realm, contrasting the apparent sincerity of Tamlin with the cunning nature of his companions. The chapter ends with the protagonist feeling the weight of the dangerous political and personal secrets surrounding her, aware that she is now more entangled in the intricate web of faerie diplomacy than ever before.

