

Chapter 20

In Chapter 20 of "A Court of Thorns and Roses," the protagonist, Feyre, experiences a tense and isolating day following a strained dinner with Tamlin, during which she seeks solace by lighting candles to dispel shadows. Her emotional state is reflected in her artwork, which depicts a terrifying, skeletal creature with bat-like ears and enormous wings, symbolizing her inner fears and the dark atmosphere she perceives. To avoid the dangers lurking outside, particularly the Attor, she attempts to stay within the safety of her room, highlighting her sense of vulnerability and the growing tension within the household.

As Fire Night, or Calanmai, approaches, Feyre notices the increasing intensity of the preparations and the distant, rhythmic drumbeats that summon the faerie community. The sounds evoke a primal call, stirring her curiosity and a strange compulsion to investigate the festivities. She observes the distant bonfires and the smoke rising into the sky, feeling an inexplicable pull towards the celebration, despite her awareness that she is not invited. The atmosphere is thick with magic and anticipation, heightening her sense of foreboding and her desire to understand what is happening beyond the confines of the estate.

Tamlin's sudden appearance, dressed as a warrior, underscores the seriousness of the occasion. He warns Feyre to stay inside and lock her doors, explaining that he must participate in the Great Rite, a significant and potentially brutal faerie ritual associated with Calanmai. His commanding tone and the transformation of his features reveal the gravity of the event, emphasizing the danger and the sacrifices involved. His urgent plea for her to remain safe highlights the peril she faces and the unpredictable nature of faerie customs, which are rooted in ancient and violent traditions.

Driven by an irresistible force, Feyre eventually disobeys Tamlin's instructions and follows the sound of the drums on horseback. Her journey takes her to a hilltop where

a large bonfire and a gathering of High Fae are visible. She is concealed by magic glamours that distort her perception, yet her curiosity propels her deeper into the festivities. The scene is charged with magic, mystery, and anticipation, as Feyre navigates the complex, secretive world of the faeries and the powerful rituals taking place, hinting at deeper conflicts and the dangerous allure of the faerie realm.

