

# Chapter Three

Cassian observes Rhysand in the High Lord's study, a space rich with intricate details—hand-knotted carpets, a celestial model, and Feyre's paintings. The room reflects their world's complexity, blending artistry with power. Cassian notes Rhys's meticulous tea-stirring, a contrast to his lethal precision in battle. The study's two levels, filled with books and delicate objects, underscore the duality of their lives—scholarship and violence intertwined. Feyre's paintings, some hauntingly personal, reveal truths that unsettle Cassian, particularly one depicting her own past suffering.

The chapter delves into Cassian's reflections on Feyre's art, which captures raw, painful truths. One painting of an emaciated figure—implied to be Feyre herself—resonates deeply with him, evoking shared experiences of hunger and despair. This moment underscores their unspoken bond and the fragility beneath their hardened exteriors. Meanwhile, Rhys's quiet intensity lingers as he prepares to discuss Cassian's future responsibilities, hinting at a shift in their dynamic. The portrait of Feyre behind Rhys's desk, glowing with life, contrasts with the tension in the room.

Rhys shifts the conversation to Cassian's recent success in pacifying the Illyrians, framing it as a test for greater duties. Cassian, wary but resigned, anticipates the looming challenge: handling Nesta, whose unpredictable nature and latent power unsettle even Rhys. The Bone Carver's cryptic words about Nesta's emergence in Hybern haunt Cassian, hinting at unresolved dangers. Despite Cassian's hope that her power faded with the Cauldron's destruction, the uncertainty lingers, adding weight to Rhys's request.

The chapter closes with Cassian bracing for his new role, acknowledging Nesta's uniqueness and the stakes involved. Rhys's calm demeanor belies the gravity of the task, leaving Cassian to grapple with his own doubts and the shadows of the past. The

interplay of power, trauma, and duty weaves through the scene, setting the stage for future conflicts. The study, a microcosm of their world, mirrors the tensions between order and chaos, past and present, that define their lives.

