

Chapter Four

The chapter opens with Cassian observing Mor at a riverside café, where she basks in the sunlight, a stark contrast to her dark past in the Hewn City. Her appreciation for the sun reflects her liberation from her oppressive upbringing, a theme that lingers beneath their interaction. Cassian joins her, exchanging pleasantries with onlookers before settling into a familiar dynamic of playful banter. Their conversation quickly shifts to Nesta, with Mor making a sharp comment about her potential fit in the Court of Nightmares, which Cassian dismisses, revealing his concern for Nesta's well-being and strained family relationships.

Cassian's introspection reveals his guilt over past mistakes, including a regretted night with Mor that had lasting consequences for their friendship and their relationships with Rhys and Azriel. Despite this history, their bond has evolved into a familial connection, marked by honesty and mutual respect. Mor's ability to read Cassian's emotions underscores their deep understanding of each other, as she gently probes his feelings about Nesta's destructive behavior and its impact on Feyre. Cassian admits his pain over the situation but avoids delving deeper, preferring to shift the focus elsewhere.

The conversation turns to Mor's recent diplomatic mission to Vallahan, where she faced resistance to a proposed peace treaty. The Fae kingdom's refusal stems from their opportunistic ambitions, as they eye potential territorial gains from human lands. Mor's frustration is palpable as she recounts the Vallahan queen's dismissive attitude, hinting at broader political instability. Cassian's reaction—a mix of anger and concern—highlights the precarious balance of power in their world, with Vallahan's warmongering posing a threat to Prythian's fragile peace.

The chapter closes with Mor's disdain for Vallahan's leaders, who she believes are motivated by boredom rather than necessity. Their disregard for diplomacy and eagerness to exploit weaker human territories suggest looming conflict. Cassian's

tension mirrors the broader stakes, as the chapter sets the stage for future political maneuvering. The interplay between personal struggles and larger geopolitical tensions weaves together the characters' intimate dynamics with the looming threats to their world, leaving the reader anticipating the consequences of these unresolved conflicts.

