

24. Men of Blood and Sorrow

The chapter opens with Dalinar reflecting on his past, specifically recalling his relationship with Evi, a woman of striking pale yellow hair whom he courted out of political necessity rather than love. These memories surface amidst the chaos of his current duties, prompting questions about why he is only now remembering her and the painful years after her death. Dalinar's introspection hints at deeper, unresolved grief, and his dealings with the Nightwatcher, which he believes may have taken some of his memories as part of a bargain, leaving him haunted by fragmented recollections. This introspection sets a tone of internal conflict and the lingering impact of his past.

As Dalinar stands on the Urithiru plateau with his guards, he observes the ongoing efforts to harness Stormlight through technological devices and the unpredictable weather patterns that threaten their stability. The Weeping storm has disrupted centuries of record-keeping, complicating their understanding of climate and impacting vital aspects like agriculture and trade. Despite these challenges, the focus remains on maintaining the city's defenses and technological advancements, emphasizing the precariousness of their situation amid the Everstorm and the Voidbringers' threat.

The scene shifts to a diplomatic meeting at Urithiru, where Dalinar welcomes representatives from other kingdoms, notably Taravangian of Kharbranth and Adrotagia, the head scribe. The political dynamics are evident as Dalinar navigates alliances and reconfirms relationships. Taravangian's appearance reveals a figure affected by illness, now more subdued and less sharp than before, while the introduction of a new Knight Radiant, Malata, signifies the ongoing evolution of their military and spiritual strength. The interactions highlight the fragile yet strategic alliances forming in the face of external threats.

In the final scene, Taravangian and Dalinar ascend the tower, with Taravangian expressing genuine curiosity about the technological marvels around him, such as the lifts powered by Stormlight. Their conversation exposes Taravangian's admiration for the engineering and the mysteries behind it, contrasting with his usual political cunning. The chapter underscores the political complexity of their alliance, Taravangian's personal struggles, and the technological innovations that symbolize hope and resilience. Overall, the chapter blends personal reflection, political diplomacy, and technological progress, illustrating the multifaceted efforts to confront impending calamities.



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