

Chapter 25

The chapter opens with a vivid scene set in a snow-laden forest, where the narrator reflects on the quietness of the woods and questions whether it is due to their presence or that of Rhysand, the High Lord. Rhysand, slightly disgruntled, suggests a warmer, more interesting training location in the Illyrian Steppes, hinting at the importance of strategic training grounds. They discuss maps and territorial boundaries, with Rhysand revealing a map that shows key locations like Velaris and the Illyrian territories, emphasizing the importance of knowledge and careful planning in their world. The conversation underscores the tension between trust and secrecy, as the narrator recalls a time when maps were blank and used for espionage.

The scene shifts to their training session, where Rhysand encourages the narrator to focus on developing specific powers, such as shape-shifting, fire, water, and air. The narrator, feeling frustrated and distracted by Rhysand's presence, requests him to leave so they can concentrate, revealing a desire for independence and privacy in their training. Rhysand, in response, teases and offers humorous suggestions, like shouting at a tattoo or rubbing it on body parts for faster communication, illustrating their playful and intimate relationship. The narrator's internal struggle with their powers and the desire for solitude is contrasted with Rhysand's confident, commanding presence, highlighting their dynamic and the ongoing challenge of mastering their abilities.

As the chapter progresses, the narrator attempts to test their powers, specifically focusing on fire, but encounters no sparks or progress despite their frustration. They reflect on their emotional turmoil, including feelings of anger and resentment toward Iltane and the oppressive atmosphere surrounding them. During this period of quiet and introspection, the narrator finds comfort in a playful exchange of notes with Rhysand, who is depicted as watching over them from afar. The exchange reveals their

close bond, humor, and mutual affection amid the underlying tension of their circumstances, providing a glimpse into their personal connection and the importance of small moments of levity.

The chapter concludes with a sudden, intense interruption as an unknown hand covers the narrator's mouth and pulls them into a dangerous confrontation. The narrator recognizes the voice as that of the Attor, a terrifying entity from their nightmares, threatening violence and revealing the peril that lurks behind their seemingly peaceful training day. This unexpected attack shifts the tone to one of immediate danger, emphasizing the ever-present threats they face. The scene leaves the reader with a sense of foreboding, highlighting the constant tension between moments of normalcy and the lurking menace of powerful enemies in their world.