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Vin stands in Elend's darkened room, watching him sleep as mist pours through the balcony doorway. OreSeur, her kandra companion, informs her that Elend ventured alone into the koloss camp, returning with valuable information despite failing to deter their attack. Vin grapples with her inability to protect Elend, feeling a deep sense of helplessness and isolation. Her fear for his safety manifests physically, leaving her hands unsteady as she reflects on the futility of keeping even one person safe in their perilous world.

Zane, Elend's enigmatic half-brother, suddenly appears on the balcony, warning Vin of a traitor in their midst. He accuses Demoux, one of their trusted men, of conspiring with Straff Venture to betray the city. Zane claims Demoux attempted to provoke Straff into attacking during the Assembly vote, a move that would have allowed Cett to seize power as a savior. Vin is skeptical but recalls evidence linking Cett to previous assassination attempts, including the one she thwarted during the Assembly.

Vin's internal conflict intensifies as she weighs Zane's claims against her own observations. She acknowledges the possibility of a kandra impostor posing as Demoux, which would explain his suspicious behavior. The chapter highlights her growing paranoia and the overwhelming threats surrounding Luthadel: Straff's army, the koloss, and now potential betrayal from within. Zane's revelation adds another layer of complexity to the already dire situation.

The chapter ends with Vin caught between distrust and desperation, unsure whom to believe. Zane's warning forces her to confront the reality that Elend's safety is increasingly untenable, no matter how fiercely she protects him. The political machinations of Cett, Straff, and potential traitors underscore the fragility of their hold on the city. Vin's emotional turmoil mirrors the chaos of a kingdom on the brink of collapse, leaving her feeling more isolated than ever.