

20. The Unseen Court

The chapter opens with Radiant, one of Shallan's personas, navigating the depths of Urithiru while grappling with the complexities of their mission. Shallan has agreed to visit the honorspren in Shadesmar, a task that aligns with Mraize's demands from the Ghostbloods. Radiant distrusts Mraize but respects the agreement between Shallan's personas—Veil's enthusiasm for the Ghostbloods and Shallan's desire to uncover their secrets. This internal harmony is crucial for their functionality, even as Radiant acknowledges the risks of their dual objectives.

Radiant's internal conflict mirrors Shallan's deeper fears. She reflects on Shallan's terror that loved ones like Dalinar and Jasnah will reject her if they learn the full extent of her past crimes. Radiant views this as a necessary truth to confront, likening it to the pain required to break through a plateau in strength training. Meanwhile, Veil's perspective emphasizes the need to uncover Mraize's interest in Restares, a secret they believe could be leveraged. Radiant balances these priorities, focusing on preparing for the Shadesmar mission while ensuring the official diplomatic efforts remain intact.

The setting shifts to Radiant overseeing Lightweaver training in a secluded chamber beneath Urithiru. She wears traditional Veden warrior attire, a deliberate choice that challenges Alethi norms and asserts her identity. The rushing water in the reservoir symbolizes control and mastery, a theme paralleled in Radiant's efforts to guide her trainees. She critiques Beryl and Darcira for over-relying on Lightweaving disguises during combat, urging them to prioritize swordplay and maintain focus. Their tendency to adopt aggressive personas when disguised highlights the Lightweavers' struggle between performance and self-control.

Radiant's leadership underscores the tension between deception and authenticity. While she acknowledges the Lightweavers' role as spies, she insists on combat

proficiency as a last resort for survival. The chapter closes with Radiant reinforcing the importance of discipline, a reflection of her own journey to harmonize Shallan's fractured personas. The training session encapsulates the broader themes of identity, control, and the sacrifices required for growth, setting the stage for the impending mission into Shadesmar.

