

Chapter Twenty-Five

Yrene and Chaol visit the Torre library after lunch, where Chaol demonstrates improved mobility by mounting his horse with ease. Yrene feels a deep sense of belonging upon entering the Torre, as if the tower itself welcomes her. The library's lower levels are accessible via ramps, though Yrene must occasionally help Chaol navigate stairs, marking the first time she physically assists his wheelchair. Their camaraderie is evident as Chaol interacts with Yrene's peers, and Yrene reflects on his progress—his foot now regaining sensation and movement, a promising sign for his recovery.

The pair seeks out Nousha, the head librarian, who initially eyes Chaol's weapons with suspicion before guiding them to ancient Eyllwe texts. A watchful Baast Cat observes their exchange, adding an air of mystique to the scene. As they descend deeper into the library, Chaol marvels at its vastness and age, comparing it favorably to Rifthold's royal library. Yrene shares the Torre's history—a 1,500-year-old gift from a grateful queen to a healer, surviving countless conquests due to the enduring value of healers in any regime.

The atmosphere grows more solemn as they reach a dusty corridor housing the sought-after scrolls. Nousha's curt departure leaves them to explore the shelves alone, where Chaol is stunned by the Torre's antiquity. Yrene explains how the tower's purpose has remained unchanged through centuries of political upheaval, its preservation a testament to the universal need for healing. Chaol's creative swearing underscores his awe, while Yrene remains focused on the task at hand, scanning the texts for answers.

The chapter blends moments of lightheartedness—like Chaol's amused reaction to Nousha's sternness—with deeper themes of resilience and legacy. Yrene's emotional connection to the Torre contrasts with her clinical focus on Chaol's recovery,

highlighting her dual role as both healer and protector. The library's ancient knowledge and the watchful presence of the Baast Cats suggest hidden depths yet to be uncovered, setting the stage for future discoveries. The chapter ends with a sense of anticipation, as Yrene and Chaol stand on the brink of unraveling secrets buried for centuries.

