

3. The Fourth Bridge

The chapter opens with an epigraph from Navani Kholin's lecture on fabrial mechanics, detailing the challenges of capturing spren by removing Stormlight from gemstones. She mentions the near-extinct larkin as a potential solution, hinting at the political conflicts over these creatures. This sets the stage for the chapter's focus on technological innovation and the delicate balance of power in the world of Roshar.

Navani, aboard her flying platform, reflects on the lush landscape of Alethkar, contrasting it with the barren Shattered Plains and Urithiru. Her playful defiance of Velat's motherly warnings showcases her bold personality and the freedom her authority affords. The scene highlights her excitement and pride as she oversees the landing of her groundbreaking creation, a flying ship powered by advanced fabrial technology.

The chapter delves into the mechanics of the flying platform, explaining how it operates through paired gemstones and pulleys controlled from Urithiru. Navani's team uses spanreeds to communicate with engineers on the ground, coordinating the ship's movements. The innovation lies in using aluminum to isolate and redirect forces, allowing the ship to soar despite the limitations of distance and resistance. This technical achievement underscores Navani's brilliance and the collaborative effort behind the project.

Navani's personal reflections add emotional depth, as she wistfully remembers her son Elhokar, who would have cherished the view from the ship. The project served as a coping mechanism after his death, though she humbly acknowledges that the breakthrough came from collective discovery rather than her alone. The chapter blends technological marvel with personal triumph, capturing Navani's resilience and visionary leadership.