

Chapter 19

The chapter opens with a scene of tense camaraderie among the main characters, highlighting Rhys's teasing demeanor contrasted with the underlying tension in the room. Rhys mocks the others about waiting for him, and Cassian responds with a vulgar gesture, emphasizing their familiarity and the relaxed yet alert atmosphere. Azriel remains in the shadows, observing silently, while Amren's absence leaves the narrator feeling uncertain about her whereabouts and the necklace she possesses. The environment is damp and cold, reflecting the aftermath of their recent hardships, as they settle into a moment of regrouping and strategizing after their encounters with the Prison.

The narrative then shifts to a discussion about their recent intelligence gathering, particularly focusing on Rhys's interaction with the Bone Carver. Rhys describes the Carver as a gossip who also provides valuable information, indicating that they need to leverage their strengths and start acting on their plans. The characters deliberate over the significance of the Cauldron and the recent temple pillaging by Hybern, revealing that Hybern's king has already made aggressive moves, which they interpret as an act of war. Rhys's plan involves retaliating by infiltrating Hybern's territory, either to retrieve or neutralize the Cauldron, signaling a bold escalation in their ongoing conflict.

The conversation then turns to the strategic implications of their mission, especially concerning the Book of Breathings and the potential for their own powers to serve as a tracking mechanism. Rhys suggests that the protagonist's unique ability might allow them to locate the Book, which is spell-bound to the High Lords, making it difficult to find. The others are skeptical but intrigued by the possibility. Rhys proposes a test to verify whether her abilities can indeed serve as a magical detector, leading to a tense moment where the characters weigh the risks and benefits of this plan. This sets the stage for a new, high-stakes pursuit rooted in their combined powers and strategic

ingenuity.

In the final part, Rhys reveals an additional plan to test the protagonist's abilities further by sending her on a preliminary mission to locate a personal, valuable object—specifically, a missing item of his. This task involves traveling to the Weaver, hinting at the complexity and danger of the upcoming endeavors. Mor's apprehension and Azriel's calm response underscore the seriousness of the situation. Rhys's decision to proceed cautiously reflects their overarching need for precision and trust in their collective abilities as they prepare for the next phase of their covert operations. The chapter ends with a sense of anticipation about the challenges ahead.