Prodigy

Prodigy is the gripping second installment in Marie Lu's *Legend* trilogy, escalating the stakes in a dystopian war between the Republic and the Colonies. After their dramatic escape in *Legend*, **June** and **Day** join the rebel Patriot group, hoping to overthrow the Republic's tyrannical government. But trust is fragile—June's loyalty is questioned due to her elite past, while Day grapples with grief and the weight of becoming a revolutionary symbol.

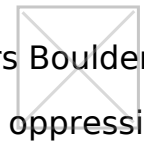
Their mission? Assassinate the newly elected **Elector Primo**, a leader who might actually bring reform—if he's telling the truth. As June infiltrates the government and Day rallies the streets, they must decide: *Is revolution worth the cost?*

With heart-pounding action, political betrayals, and a love triangle that fractures loyalties, *Prodigy* deepens the trilogy's exploration of power, sacrifice, and the blurred line between hero and villain.

Chapter 1: June 1

The chapter opens with Day waking from a nightmare, disoriented and sweating, as he and June travel by railcar to Vegas. Nine days have passed since their escape from Los Angeles, and Day's recurring nightmares reflect the trauma of losing his family and enduring the Republic's brutality. June comforts him, though she struggles with her own grief, particularly over the death of her dog, Ollie, and her brother, Metias. Their journey is fraught with tension, both emotional and physical, as Day's untreated leg wound worsens, and their survival depends on reaching the Patriots, a rebel group they hope will offer aid.

June observes Day’s fragile mental state, worrying about his sanity as he grapples with guilt and loss. Their dynamic is marked by mutual dependence—June relies on Day’s street-smart resilience, while he leans on her strategic mind. Despite their bond, moments of awkwardness arise, such as when June rejects Day’s offer of fried dough, highlighting the class differences between them. The tension underscores their precarious alliance, as both navigate grief and the urgency of their mission.



As the train nears Boulder City, June scans the bleak, rain-soaked slums, noting the familiarity of the oppressive landscape. Day remains focused on finding the Patriots, driven by his need to ensure Tess’s safety and uncover information about his brother, Eden. June questions the practicality of their plan, wary of the Patriots’ demands for payment, but Day’s determination is unwavering. His loyalty to Tess and his family outweighs his fear of the rebels’ unpredictability.

The chapter closes with June and Day confronting their limited resources—only 4,000 Notes to bargain with the Patriots. Their dialogue reveals the stakes: Day’s physical health is deteriorating, and their survival hinges on the rebels’ cooperation. June’s internal conflict mirrors the broader theme of trust versus survival, as both characters grapple with the sacrifices required to defy the Republic. The chapter sets the stage for their impending confrontation with the Patriots, blending urgency with emotional vulnerability.

Chapter 2: Day 1

The chapter opens with the sudden death of the Elector Primo, the leader of the Republic, which is met with surprising indifference. The protagonist reflects on how the government avoids public mourning to maintain an illusion of stability, quickly transitioning to a new leader without ceremony. This lack of fanfare underscores the regime’s fear of appearing weak or uncertain to its citizens. The protagonist’s musings are cut short when a sharp pain in their leg causes them to collapse on the Vegas strip, drawing unwanted attention from nearby soldiers.

As the protagonist struggles to stand, their companion, June, quickly improvises a cover story, claiming they are drunk to avoid suspicion. However, a observant corporal notices their distress and suggests medical attention, which would risk exposing their identities as fugitives. Tension rises as the protagonist and June scramble to deflect the corporal’s concern, knowing a hospital visit would lead to their capture. The situation grows increasingly precarious until an unexpected ally intervenes.

A familiar face, Kaede, appears and seamlessly integrates into the scene, pretending to be an old friend from the air force. Her quick thinking and flirtatious demeanor convince the corporal to leave, saving the protagonists from further scrutiny. Despite her help, Kaede’s tone hints at unresolved tension, and she reluctantly guides them to her barracks for safety. The protagonist notes her unchanged personality and her hidden allegiance to the Patriots, a rebel group.

Inside the barracks, Kaede leads them through the bustling halls, where the Republic’s flags and Elector portraits are being hastily updated. The protagonist remains anxious, fearing recognition, but their injury ironically helps them blend in among other wounded soldiers. Kaede’s nonchalant chatter masks the danger as they navigate the unfamiliar, electricity-powered elevator, highlighting the stark contrast between the Republic’s advanced infrastructure and its oppressive regime. The chapter ends with a

sense of temporary relief but lingering uncertainty about Kaede’s true intentions.



Chapter 3: June 2

The narrator expresses deep distrust toward Razor, a Patriot leader, due to his inexplicable wealth and luxurious living conditions in Vegas. Razor’s officer-like quarters, expensive furnishings, and customized, hacked gun suggest he either holds a high-ranking Republic position or receives funding from a powerful entity like the Colonies. Despite these suspicions, the narrator acknowledges that Razor’s offer to help them reach the Colonies and find Eden is their only viable option, especially given Day’s deteriorating health. The chapter highlights the narrator’s internal conflict as they reluctantly agree to Razor’s demand—assassinating the new Elector, Anden—despite their mixed feelings about the act.

Razor accepts their agreement without acknowledging the narrator’s hesitation and arranges for a Medic to treat Day’s severe leg wound. He instructs Kaede to provide fresh uniforms and showers for the pair, welcoming them into the Patriots. The narrator is struck by the opulence of Razor’s apartment, which surpasses even their former Ruby sector home. Kaede’s cold demeanor hints at lingering resentment, likely over a past altercation. The narrator and Day are left to clean up, with Day struggling to move due to his injury, forcing the narrator to assist him despite his initial embarrassment.

As the narrator tends to Day’s wound, their shared discomfort and unspoken tension underscore the gravity of their situation. Day questions the necessity of joining the Patriots, but the narrator reiterates their lack of alternatives. The conversation shifts to the morality of assassinating Anden, with the narrator deflecting Day’s probing questions about their true feelings. Day’s aversion to violence contrasts with the ruthless demands of their new alliance, leaving both characters grappling with the ethical implications of their decision.

The chapter closes with the narrator and Day preparing for a bath, their interactions marked by awkwardness and unspoken emotions. Day’s vulnerability and the narrator’s guilt over Tess’s separation add layers to their relationship. The narrator’s introspection—questioning their own morality—reflects the moral ambiguity of their choices. The chapter sets the stage for their fraught alliance with the Patriots, blending tension, distrust, and reluctant cooperation as they navigate a dangerous path forward.



Chapter 4: Day 2

The chapter opens with the protagonist being prepped for a medical procedure by the Medic, assisted by Razor, Kaede, and Tess. Strapped to a table in a makeshift operating room, the protagonist reflects on Razor’s earlier words about joining the Patriots, fueling his determination to find Eden. June remains by his side, her watchful presence a source of comfort. The tension is palpable as the Medic prepares her instruments, and the protagonist’s impatience grows, aware that time is critical to their mission.

Tess, though nervous, assists the Medic efficiently, avoiding June and displaying a newfound maturity that the protagonist hadn’t noticed before. Their dynamic has shifted, leaving him puzzled by her behavior. June interrupts his thoughts, reminding him to breathe, and he questions her about her past encounter with the Elector. Her vague response stirs his insecurities, as he compares his humble origins to her elite background, doubting whether their relationship can bridge such a divide. The emotional weight of their differences weighs heavily on him.

As the procedure begins, June reassures the protagonist with a kiss, reminding him of her loyalty despite the risks she’s taken for him. Her departure leaves him alone with the Medic, and he drifts into unconsciousness, reflecting on her sacrifice. The narrative then shifts to a flashback of his childhood with his brother John, highlighting their struggles and bond. The memory underscores the protagonist’s resilience and the formative experiences that shaped him, contrasting with his current turmoil.

The chapter closes with the protagonist lost in the haze of anesthesia, his mind drifting between past and present. The flashback to his childhood with John serves as a poignant reminder of his roots, while the impending procedure symbolizes the physical and emotional trials he must endure. The interplay of memory and reality underscores his internal conflict, leaving the reader with a sense of his vulnerability and

determination as he faces an uncertain future.



Chapter 5: June 3

The chapter opens with June reflecting on her first day as an official member of the Patriots, avoiding the sight of Day's surgery to conceal her vulnerability. She grapples with Razor's plan for her to assassinate the Elector, torn between her brother's warning about killing for the right reasons and Day's justification for revolution. The Republic's injustices—Metias's death, the Trials, and the engineered plagues—fuel her resolve, yet her trembling hands betray her inner conflict. The quiet apartment contrasts with the weight of her mission, as she watches muted news cycles, questioning the Republic's propaganda.

June's focus shifts when the new Elector, Anden, delivers his first speech, exuding confidence and echoing his father's rhetoric. She analyzes his sincerity, wondering if he's a pawn of Congress or a power-hungry leader like his predecessor. His youth and potential differences from his father intrigue her, but she forces herself to detach, reminding herself not to humanize her target. The chapter highlights June's internal struggle as she balances her mission's brutality with her curiosity about Anden's character and the Republic's future.

The tension eases as Tess announces Day's recovery, and June enters the bedroom to find him awake and in good spirits. Their playful banter and Day's resilience—evidenced by his paper clip creations—offer a brief respite from the chapter's heavier themes. June's relief at his condition underscores their bond, contrasting sharply with the cold calculation of her impending mission. The moment humanizes both characters, emphasizing the personal stakes amid the political turmoil.

The chapter closes with June checking on Day's healing leg, symbolizing both physical and emotional wounds. Their interaction hints at a deeper connection, while the unresolved tension of Razor's plan looms. June's internal conflict—between duty,

revenge, and morality—remains central, setting the stage for the challenges ahead. The juxtaposition of intimate moments and political machinations creates a compelling narrative tension, leaving the reader questioning June’s next steps.



Chapter 6: Day 3

The chapter "Day 3" begins with the protagonist undergoing a meticulous disguise orchestrated by the Patriots. Kaede transforms their appearance by dyeing their hair, applying brown contact lenses, and adding a synthetic scar, while Razor provides a first-year air force uniform. The protagonist reflects on the luxury of the contacts, which wealthy individuals use for fun but would have been invaluable during their time on the streets. Kaede also equips them with discreet communication devices, ensuring they blend in seamlessly. Meanwhile, Razor and Kaede don their own authentic Republic uniforms, with Kaede’s pilot attire highlighting her expertise. Tess, too young to pose as a soldier, is disguised as a kitchen worker and escorted away.

June remains conspicuously unchanged, observing the protagonist’s transformation silently. Dressed in a cadet uniform, she stands out as the only one without communication gear. The protagonist attempts to engage her, but June remains distant, her tension palpable. The group then travels down the Vegas strip in Razor’s jeep, passing pyramid-shaped docks named after ancient civilizations. The protagonist notes the bustling activity, which aids their cover, but feels uncomfortable in the stiff uniform. June chastises them for fidgeting, revealing her own nervousness, though she quickly withdraws again. A brief moment of connection occurs when the protagonist squeezes her hand, which she reciprocates.

Upon reaching the Pharaoh dock, June abruptly leaves with another soldier, leaving the protagonist feeling hollow. They proceed inside the massive pyramid, where Razor disappears into the crowd, leaving Kaede and the protagonist to devise their own plan to board the RS Dynasty. Kaede explains that they must avoid standard boarding procedures to evade identification. The protagonist recalls past exploits and suggests using the garbage chutes, earning Kaede’s approval. They navigate the crowded terminal, blending in while observing the young, battle-worn soldiers around them. The

protagonist’s focus returns to the Dynasty, mentally mapping the chutes as their potential entry point.

The chapter concludes with Kaede and the protagonist preparing to execute their plan, their camaraderie and shared resolve evident. The protagonist’s street-smart instincts align with Kaede’s strategic thinking, underscoring their adaptability in high-stakes situations. The tension builds as they await their turn at the elevator, their mission’s success hinging on stealth and precision. The absence of June and Razor looms large, but the protagonist remains determined, channeling their nervous energy into focus for the challenges ahead.

Chapter 7: June 4

The chapter begins with the protagonist, June, being led away from Day by a Patriot named Razor, steeling herself for a dangerous mission. She struggles with the fear of potential failure—arrest, torture, or death—but resolves to stay focused. Razor’s plan involves her pretending to hide in a barrack room within the Pharaoh pyramid, where she will be captured by Republic soldiers. The tension is palpable as June enters the chaotic military environment, her thoughts oscillating between determination and dread.

Inside the pyramid, a Patriot guide escorts June through a narrow walkway to a first-floor barrack. He instructs her to resist capture convincingly, ensuring the soldiers believe she is a fugitive. The guide, revealed to be a skilled Hacker, disables the hallway’s security cameras using a modified button, showcasing the Patriots’ technical prowess. June is left alone in a dark barrack room, where she meticulously assesses her surroundings, preparing for the impending confrontation.

As June waits, she hears the bark of her dog, Ollie, and realizes Thomas—her brother’s murderer—is leading the patrol searching for her. The revelation shocks her, as Thomas’s involvement was orchestrated by Razor to ensure her capture by a specific unit. The emotional weight of facing Thomas, combined with the joy of hearing Ollie alive, leaves June shaken. Her hands tremble at the thought of confronting the man who killed her brother, adding a personal layer of tension to the mission.

The chapter ends with June bracing herself for the inevitable encounter, her mind racing with conflicting emotions. The arrival of Ollie and Thomas signals the next phase of Razor’s plan, but June’s personal trauma threatens to undermine her focus. The stage is set for a high-stakes confrontation, blending tactical execution with deep emotional stakes.

Chapter 8: Day 4

The chapter opens with the protagonists, Razor, Kaede, and the narrator, arriving in Lamar, Colorado, on a cold, rainy morning. They discreetly exit their ship, blending in with Republic soldiers to avoid detection. The setting is grim: a war-torn base with rows of black pyramid docks, crumbling skyscrapers, and soldiers marked with black eye stripes. The atmosphere is oppressive, with icy rain and a stale, wet smell permeating the air. The narrator notes the stark contrast to their previous surroundings, emphasizing the devastation and lack of civilian life.

As they navigate the ruined streets, the narrator questions Kaede about the bombed-out buildings, revealing their naivety about the war's progression. Kaede explains that the Colonies have been advancing for years, gaining significant ground against the Republic. She bluntly states that the Colonies are winning, a revelation that shocks the narrator, who has been fed Republic propaganda. Kaede's cynical tone hints at her personal grievances, though she claims to be motivated solely by money. The narrator contemplates a future where the Colonies triumph, ending the Republic's oppressive regime.

The pair follow railroad tracks to a desolate street corner, where Kaede hints at an impending resumption of fighting. She mentions the advantage of hiding underground, foreshadowing their next move. A mysterious soldier passes by, exchanging a subtle signal with Kaede, adding to the tension. They then enter a narrow alley, where Kaede reveals a hidden grating leading to a tunnel. The narrator follows her into the dark, damp passage, noting the eerie atmosphere and the tunnel's deliberate concealment.

Kaede explains that such tunnels were once used for clandestine purposes, though her explanation is cut short. The chapter ends with the pair navigating the tunnel, shrouded in darkness and secrecy. The narrator's reflections on their father's past hardships as a warfront worker underscore the grim reality of life in the conflict zone.

The chapter effectively builds suspense, highlighting the protagonists’ precarious situation and the broader war’s looming consequences.



Chapter 9: June 5

The chapter opens with the protagonist arriving in Denver by train during a snowstorm, greeted by a crowd of poor civilians braving the cold to catch a glimpse of her. Despite her status as a prisoner, marked by a yellow vest and shackles, the crowd’s fascination with her suggests her reputation precedes her, likely due to her association with Day. Military patrols struggle to control the onlookers, emphasizing the tension between authority and the public. The protagonist observes their poverty, feeling a pang of guilt when given a coat, highlighting the stark contrast between her treatment and their suffering.

As she is escorted off the train, the crowd’s silence underscores their curiosity and reverence. A boy’s desperate shout—"Is Day alive?"—triggers a moment of defiance from the protagonist, who smiles in response before the guards violently suppress the interaction. The crowd erupts into chants of "Day lives!" reinforcing the rumor of his survival. This scene reveals the protagonist’s subtle resistance and the public’s hope, even as the military attempts to maintain control. Her internal thoughts suggest she is playing along with the Patriots’ narrative, using the moment to her advantage.

The journey through Denver reveals a heavily fortified city, with towering skyscrapers, military aircraft, and the imposing Armor wall. The protagonist’s awe at the capital’s advanced technology and oppressive architecture contrasts with her earlier observations of the impoverished crowd. The city’s grandeur underscores the regime’s power, yet her fascination with details like the experimental fighter jets hints at her technical expertise and curiosity. The setting reinforces the dystopian tension between the elite and the oppressed.

Finally, Thomas informs her they are heading to Colburn Hall, a prestigious dining venue where the Elector will meet her. The shift from a penitentiary to a high-profile location suggests a change in her status or the Elector’s intentions. Thomas’s rigid

demeanor contrasts with the protagonist’s sarcastic reply, revealing her lingering defiance. The chapter ends with her anticipation of the meeting, leaving her true intentions ambiguous but hinting at her strategic maneuvering within the power dynamics of the capital.



Chapter 10: Day 5

The chapter opens with a poignant flashback to the protagonist's eighth birthday, where he wakes early to find his father preparing to return to the warfront. The emotional reunion is brief, as his father insists on leaving immediately, urging him to return home quietly. This moment marks the last time the protagonist sees his father, leaving a lasting impact on him. The vivid imagery of their farewell—his father’s weary demeanor and the protagonist’s tearful protests—highlights the recurring theme of loss and separation in his life.

In the present, the protagonist, now a member of the Patriots, reflects on his traumatic past while sitting alone in his bunk. Haunted by nightmares of his family’s suffering, he grapples with anger and helplessness. His focus shifts to his mission: assassinating Elector Anden to rescue his brother, Eden, with the Patriots’ help. Despite his internal turmoil, he steels himself for the task, acknowledging the symbolic weight of his role as the "people’s hero" who will kill the tyrant. The chapter underscores his conflicted emotions and the moral ambiguity of his actions.

The narrative shifts when Tess interrupts his solitude, informing him that Razor wants to speak to him about a live feed of June. The protagonist’s immediate excitement at the prospect of seeing June reveals his lingering attachment to her, contrasting with his current allegiance to the Patriots. Tess’s warm interactions with other Patriots suggest she has integrated well into the group, while Kaede’s playful affection toward her hints at a deeper camaraderie among the members. This moment briefly lightens the chapter’s tense atmosphere.

As the protagonist and Tess head to the main room, the chapter balances his personal struggles with the larger plot. His anticipation of seeing June clashes with his commitment to the Patriots’ violent agenda, foreshadowing potential conflicts ahead. The juxtaposition of his past trauma, present mission, and unresolved feelings for June

creates a layered narrative, emphasizing the protagonist’s internal and external battles. The chapter ends on a note of suspense, leaving readers eager to see how these tensions will unfold.



Chapter 11: June 6

The chapter opens with June Iparis recounting a vivid nightmare in which Day is pardoned by Elector Anden only to be executed by the Patriots. The dream leaves her shaken, foreshadowing her anxiety about Day's fate and her precarious position. Shortly after, June is taken to a lie detection room, where she mentally prepares for the interrogation by suppressing her emotional vulnerabilities, including her grief for Metias and her concern for Day. The oppressive atmosphere of the Republic's capital is highlighted as she observes the militarized streets and towering propaganda screens, reinforcing the regime's control.

As June is transported through the city, she notices headlines about Day's execution and an upcoming announcement by the Elector, which unsettle her. Protesters demanding her innocence and Day's whereabouts add to the tension, but she is quickly ushered into a government building. The scene underscores the public's unrest and the Republic's efforts to maintain authority. The lie detection room is described in meticulous detail, with its intimidating machinery and heavy security, emphasizing the high stakes of the interrogation and June's isolation.

The examination begins with Dr. Sadhwani, the lead examiner, attempting to intimidate June by emphasizing the precision of the lie detector. June remains composed, using her training to manipulate her physiological responses during control questions. Her calm demeanor contrasts with the doctor's nervousness, revealing June's expertise and the pressure on the examiner. The chapter builds suspense as the interrogation progresses, with June's strategic responses hinting at her resilience and determination to outmaneuver her captors.

Throughout the chapter, June's internal strength and tactical thinking are central themes. Her ability to compartmentalize her emotions and exploit her knowledge of Republic systems showcases her as a formidable opponent. The oppressive setting and

the looming threat of the lie detector create a tense atmosphere, while the public protests and propaganda underscore the broader conflict. The chapter sets the stage for a high-stakes psychological battle, with June’s fate hanging in the balance.



Chapter 12: Day 6

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, joining a group of Patriots in a conference room to discuss the next phase of their mission. Razor, the leader, addresses the crowd while Day observes the diverse and scarred members of the group, including Hackers analyzing building structures. Day spots Tess, a Medic, who seems preoccupied with her duties, and hesitates to apologize for a previous conflict. Their brief interaction reveals Tess's concern for Day's safety as she hands him pills and bandages, urging him to stay safe during the mission. Despite their earlier tension, Tess's quick forgiveness leaves Day with mixed emotions.

Razor shifts the focus to a grainy video showing soldiers near Lamar train tracks, revealing that their plans are progressing. The Elector's itinerary has changed, and Patriots will now accompany him to Pierra instead of Lamar. Day's attention is diverted when footage of June, a key figure from his past, appears on screen. She is shown in a comfortable bedroom, which contrasts with Day's expectations of her imprisonment. Tess's earlier reminder that June killed Day's mother resurfaces, adding complexity to his feelings. Meanwhile, Razor continues outlining the mission, but Day struggles to concentrate.

Pascao, another Patriot, interrupts Day to brief him on a critical mission: sabotaging a train shipment carrying weapons and lab equipment. The goal is to destroy grenades and steal supplies, serving as a decoy to validate June's warnings to the Elector. Pascao emphasizes Day's unique role in the mission, hinting that his involvement is meant to prove his survival to the Republic. Day's dyed hair has been stripped to make his identity unmistakable, signaling the Patriots' intent to leverage his reputation. Despite the mission's urgency, Day remains distracted by thoughts of June and the unresolved tension with Tess.

The chapter concludes with Pascao detailing the plan further, highlighting Day’s responsibility to distract soldiers while others execute the sabotage. Day’s internal conflict is palpable as he grapples with his past, his loyalty to the Patriots, and his personal relationships. The mission represents a pivotal moment for Day, both as a symbol of resistance and as an individual reconciling his emotions. The chapter sets the stage for high-stakes action while delving into Day’s psychological turmoil and the broader political intrigue at play.



Chapter 13: June 7

The chapter opens with the protagonist, a former prisoner now traveling as a guest of the Elector, boarding a train to Pierra with less than thirty hours to prevent his assassination. Dressed in luxurious attire and treated with unexpected courtesy, she reflects on the surreal contrast to her past imprisonment. Despite the comfort, she remains acutely aware of the looming threat and the delicate balance of her loyalties. The train departs in silence, its secrecy underscoring the gravity of the situation, while her physical discomfort and fever hint at deeper turmoil.

Assigned a lavish private railcar, the protagonist observes the opulence with detachment, as if revisiting her privileged past. Guards treat her with wary respect, their nervousness betraying their unease around her. She scans the soldiers for potential Patriots, questioning whether they suspect her shifting allegiances. The snowy landscape outside evokes memories of her brother Metias's funeral, blending past grief with present tension. As the train speeds through Denver's Armor wall, she notes the unchecked privilege of the Elector's entourage compared to the scrutiny faced by others.

Her thoughts spiral into the central conflict: how to warn Elector Anden of the assassination plot without endangering Day, the rebel she cares for. Torn between loyalty and survival, she debates the timing of her actions, fearing Razor's retaliation against Day. A subtle signal—touching her brow—serves as a desperate attempt to communicate with Day if he's nearby. Physical exhaustion and illness cloud her judgment, yet she resists medical help, clinging to her self-reliant instincts. The weight of her decisions and memories of Metias haunt her, blurring the line between past and present.

The chapter culminates in a tense exchange between Anden and Senator Kamion, overheard by the protagonist. Kamion urges harsh suppression of unrest in Los

Angeles, arguing that leniency undermines Anden’s authority. Anden, however, refuses to escalate violence, prioritizing his reformist vision over brute force. The protagonist listens intently, recognizing the stakes of Anden’s leadership style amid growing dissent. The Senator’s frustration and Anden’s resolve highlight the political fissures that mirror her own internal conflict, setting the stage for the impending crisis.



Chapter 14: Day 7

After a tense train mission, Day and Pascao evade soldiers before returning to the Patriots' underground hideout. Day is visibly disturbed, though he brushes off Jordan's concern. The group prepares to relocate to Pierra, destroying documents and wiping computers. Pascao distracts Day by showing him footage of a city square where graffiti proclaims "Day lives!"—a sign of his growing influence. Despite the public's enthusiasm, Day remains preoccupied with thoughts of Eden, June, and Tess, unable to share Pascao's excitement.

Tensions rise when Day encounters Baxter harassing Tess. Baxter provokes Day with insults, accusing him of being a traitor and mocking his relationship with June. When Baxter shoves Tess, Day's pent-up anger erupts, leading to a violent fistfight. The Patriots spectate, placing bets as the two brawl. Day's rage is fueled by memories of past trauma, including his family's suffering at the hands of the Republic. The fight escalates until Baxter gains the upper hand, pinning Day and threatening him.

The confrontation is interrupted when Pascao and Tess intervene, pulling Baxter away. Day, nursing a severe headache and injuries, is helped by Tess, who reassures him she's unharmed. The Patriots quickly disperse, their entertainment over. Tess leads Day to a makeshift infirmary, where they can tend to his wounds in private. The chapter highlights Day's internal turmoil and the growing friction within the group, as his loyalty and motives are questioned.

The chapter underscores Day's emotional strain and the consequences of his rising notoriety. While the public celebrates him as a symbol of resistance, his personal struggles—protecting Tess, finding Eden, and deciphering June's actions—weigh heavily. The fight with Baxter exposes the distrust among the Patriots and Day's vulnerability. The scene closes with Tess caring for Day, hinting at their bond and the unresolved tensions that threaten the group's cohesion.

Chapter 15: June 8

The chapter opens with June Iparis preparing for the assassination of Elector Anden, orchestrated by the Patriots. A guard informs her of the plan: after her pardon at Pierra’s Olan Court Hall, she must separate Anden from his convoy during their return to the military base. The Patriots will trigger an explosion, prompting June to redirect Anden’s jeep, isolating him for execution. June spends the night restless, anticipating the mission while noting the cold, tense atmosphere of the court hall and the hidden presence of Patriots among the crowds.

As June enters the courtroom, she scans for Patriots, hoping Day—her ally with distinctive blue eyes—understands her signal to flee. The hall is frigid, and June’s anxiety is palpable. Guards treat her with uncertainty, torn between guarding her as a criminal or deferring to her as a pardoned Agent. June, weakened by illness, struggles to focus but meticulously memorizes escape routes and observes potential Patriot spies among the soldiers and civilians.

The pardon ceremony begins with Anden and reluctant Senators, some visibly displeased. Anden formally pardons June on probationary terms, assigning her to capital patrols under close surveillance. Senators warn her of their distrust, but June maintains composure, acknowledging their "mercy." Anden’s gratitude carries a double meaning, hinting at his reliance on June and Day’s aid. June avoids his gaze, haunted by the knowledge that Day is outside, poised for the Patriots’ attack.

The chapter closes as June’s group prepares to leave the hall, the tension mounting. Her internal conflict—between loyalty to Anden and the Patriots’ demands—mirrors the physical unease of her illness. The impending assassination looms, with June’s role as the linchpin in the plan leaving her emotionally and physically strained. The stage is set for the convoy’s departure, where the Patriots’ trap awaits.

Chapter 16: Day 8

The chapter "Day 8" centers on the protagonist's tense anticipation of the Elector’s assassination, a pivotal event orchestrated by the Patriots. Dressed as Republic soldiers, the Patriots are strategically positioned across Pierra, with the protagonist perched in an abandoned building, armed and ready. Despite his readiness, he grapples with conflicting emotions—excitement for the Elector’s death and dread over June’s mysterious signal. His trust in June wavers as he questions her motives, wondering if she uncovered hidden truths or betrayed the Patriots. The chapter underscores his internal struggle between loyalty to the cause and his faith in June.

The protagonist’s role in the assassination plan is clear: June is to isolate the Elector’s jeep, allowing the Patriots to corner and execute him. The plan hinges on precise timing, with explosions cutting off escape routes. As the countdown begins, the protagonist’s anxiety mounts, his mind racing with doubts about June’s intentions and the morality of killing the Elector. He also worries about the aftermath—potential chaos in the Republic and the Colonies' possible invasion. The weight of his actions and their far-reaching consequences leaves him unsettled, even as he tries to focus on the mission.

As the minutes tick by, tension escalates. The protagonist’s unease is compounded by memories of his past, contrasting his current turmoil with simpler times. He rehearses the plan repeatedly, but his fingers tremble as he touches his grenades, symbolizing his inner conflict. The uncertainty surrounding June’s actions gnaws at him, and he questions whether he’s prepared to kill the Elector or spare him based on June’s influence. The chapter masterfully captures his psychological turmoil, blending suspense with moral ambiguity.

The climax arrives when Pascao announces a delay—June has fainted, disrupting the plan. The protagonist instinctively suspects this is a deliberate move by June,

heightening the suspense. His sixth sense warns him that the mission’s outcome now hinges on her next actions. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, leaving readers questioning June’s true motives and the protagonist’s next steps. The delay amplifies the stakes, setting the stage for a dramatic confrontation or revelation in the following chapters.



Chapter 17: June 9

The chapter opens with a poignant flashback to June's childhood, where her older brother Metias takes her to visit their parents' graves. Despite his young age, Metias carries the weight of grief, paying for an elaborate memorial in a society where most are granted only minimal burial rights. This memory parallels Day's current sorrow over his brother John's death, emphasizing the shared burden of loss between the two characters. The scene sets a somber tone, highlighting the emotional scars that shape their actions and relationships.

June and Day flee through a dark, wet underground tunnel, escaping the aftermath of a violent confrontation between the Patriots and Republic soldiers. The oppressive atmosphere is underscored by the sounds of their ragged breathing and dripping water, as well as the uncertainty of their pursuers' fate. June's feverish state and Day's silent determination reflect their physical and emotional exhaustion. Their tight grip on each other symbolizes their reliance on one another amidst the chaos, even as unanswered questions about Tess and Anden's survival linger in June's mind.

Upon discovering a hidden chamber in the tunnel, the pair finds temporary refuge. The room, equipped with outdated technology and cryptic graffiti, suggests a history of desperate escapes. Day's familiarity with such spaces hints at his past experiences, while June's observations reveal her analytical nature. The tension between them is palpable—Day's hesitation to kiss June and his withdrawn demeanor signal an unspoken shift in their relationship. Their silent meal in the kitchen further underscores the emotional distance, despite their physical closeness.

The chapter closes with an unresolved tension between June and Day. Their reunion is marked by fleeting moments of intimacy, yet Day's silence and restrained actions suggest deeper conflicts. June's internal monologue reveals her guilt over past betrayals and her fear of causing harm to those she cares about. The chapter leaves

their future uncertain, with the weight of their shared trauma and unspoken emotions hanging heavily between them.



Chapter 18: Day 9

The chapter opens with the protagonist grappling with guilt after yelling at June, though they refuse to apologize. Their anger stems from June's dismissive attitude toward money, which triggers memories of childhood poverty—specifically, a moment when their younger brother, Eden, was caught stealing leftover food. The protagonist recalls taking the blame for Eden, enduring punishment to protect him. This fuels their resentment toward June, who has never experienced such hardship, and toward the Republic, which they believe has failed people like them.

The protagonist's frustration escalates as they reflect on their failed mission to assassinate the Elector, a plan that could have destabilized the Republic. They feel betrayed by June's interference and despair over their inability to rescue Eden. As they pack supplies for their journey through the tunnel to the Colonies, they question whether they'll find help or face further danger. The weight of their failures leaves them feeling trapped and hopeless.

June reappears, offering technical observations about the tunnel's power source, but the protagonist responds with indifference. When June shifts the conversation to combat techniques, her awkward attempt at reconciliation irritates the protagonist further. Despite their anger, they recognize her effort to mend the rift between them. June's critique of their fighting style—pointing out their reliance on arm strength rather than leveraging their speed and balance—highlights her analytical nature and military training.

The chapter ends with a tense but collaborative moment as June begins teaching the protagonist combat strategies. Their dynamic remains strained, yet there's an underlying willingness to work together. The protagonist's sarcasm and June's persistence reveal their contrasting personalities, but the shared goal of survival forces them to navigate their unresolved conflict. The interaction hints at the

complexity of their relationship, blending resentment with reluctant trust.



Chapter 19: June 10

The chapter opens with June, severely ill and disoriented, being carried by Day as they cross into the Colonies. Despite her exhaustion, she pushes forward, supported by Day's encouragement. They arrive at a bustling warfront city, its skyline dominated by towering buildings adorned with unfamiliar flags and advanced fighter jets. The city's technological superiority over the Republic is evident, particularly in its air force capabilities, with jets designed for vertical takeoffs and landings. The scene sets the stage for a stark contrast between the Republic and the Colonies.

As they navigate the crowded streets, June observes the chaotic vibrancy of the Colonies. Neon lights tint the faces of civilians and soldiers, while walls are plastered with overwhelming advertisements promoting everything from schools to holidays. The ads lack the uniformity of the Republic's propaganda, suggesting a decentralized or corporate-run society. June is particularly struck by the commercialization of services like policing and healthcare, which are branded under corporate names, hinting at a society where corporations hold significant power.

Day remarks on the city's glittering appearance, echoing his father's description, but both are baffled by the ads' disorderly nature. June notes the absence of a central government aesthetic, further emphasizing the Colonies' divergence from the Republic. They encounter bizarre ads, including one for "SwapShop," which seems to commodify children, deepening June's confusion about the Colonies' social structures. A recurring symbol in the ads reveals the four major corporations governing the Colonies, reinforcing the theme of corporate dominance.

The chapter takes a tense turn when Day suspects they're being followed, though the pursuer vanishes into the crowd. Their paranoia is compounded by the unfamiliar, overwhelming environment. A "Street Proctor" approaches them, questioning their affiliation, leaving the encounter unresolved. The chapter ends with June and Day

grappling with the Colonies’ alien culture, their physical exhaustion mirroring their mental strain as they navigate this corporate-dominated world.



Chapter 20: Day 10

The chapter opens with June in a fragile state, heavily sedated after sobbing over her brother's death. The narrator, Daniel, watches her with empathy, recalling his own loss of an older brother. He tries to comfort her by smoothing her hair and kissing her forehead, though it seems futile. The hospital is quiet, filled with distant noises and a news broadcast interspersed with unfamiliar commercials. Daniel reflects on his mother's care for his brother Eden during his illness, drawing parallels to June's grief and his own past.

A Colonies soldier enters the room, treating Daniel with unexpected respect, as if he's a high-ranking officer. She informs him that June must remain hospitalized until she recovers and offers additional accommodations. Daniel accepts, wary but grateful for the preferential treatment. The soldier's demeanor shifts to curiosity as she questions him about his reputation in the Colonies, referencing exaggerated tabloid stories about his exploits. Daniel deflects her questions, but her mention of a firing squad execution triggers painful memories of his brother's sacrifice.

The soldier explains the history of the war and the Colonies, detailing how catastrophic floods reshaped the continent, leading to mass migrations and territorial conflicts. She boasts about the Colonies' impending victory, claiming the war is rooted in land disputes. Daniel recalls Kaede's earlier remarks about the Colonies' dominance, now hearing it confirmed. The conversation highlights the stark contrast between the Republic's and Colonies' narratives, leaving Daniel to ponder the truth amid propaganda.

As the discussion ends, the noise outside the hospital grows louder, hinting at unrest or activity in the city. The chapter closes with Daniel's lingering thoughts on the war's origins and the soldier's confident claims, leaving him unsettled. The tension between personal grief and broader political conflict underscores the chapter's emotional and

thematic weight, setting the stage for further developments.



Chapter 21: June 11

The chapter "June 11" begins with the protagonist dreaming of her deceased brother, Metias, as they walk through the chaotic streets of Pierra. Despite the surrounding explosions and Republic soldiers, the scene feels surreal and slow-motion, as if they are invincible or invisible. The protagonist expresses unease about the situation, particularly questioning Razor's presence on a rooftop, observing the chaos. Metias encourages her to analyze her suspicions, prompting her to recall inconsistencies in Razor's actions during a failed assassination attempt on Anden, the Elector.

The protagonist recounts how Razor ignored Anden's direct orders to divert the jeep to a hospital, instead insisting on the assassination route. This defiance would have exposed Razor's role in the plot, risking his position. She also notes how effortlessly Razor maneuvered Patriots in and out of secure locations, suggesting he had unusual privileges. Metias theorizes that Razor's abilities might stem from sponsorship by the Colonies, but the protagonist remains skeptical, unable to reconcile why Razor would proceed with a risky plan if failure was imminent.

As the dream continues, the protagonist reflects on Anden's progressive policies and his strained relationship with Congress. These thoughts lead her to a sudden realization: the Colonies are not behind Razor's actions. Instead, she deduces that Razor was hired by the Republic itself to assassinate Anden. This explains his lack of fear of exposure and his ability to operate with impunity. The dream shatters as the protagonist awakens, finally understanding the true nature of Razor's allegiance.

The chapter concludes with the protagonist's epiphany, revealing a deeper conspiracy within the Republic. Razor's actions were not driven by Patriot or Colonial agendas but by a covert operation orchestrated by the Republic to eliminate Anden. This twist underscores the political intrigue and betrayal at the heart of the story, leaving the protagonist—and the reader—to grapple with the implications of this revelation.

Chapter 22: Day 11

The chapter "Day 11: Prodigy" begins with the protagonist securing their hospital room after a chaotic event, ensuring guards are posted and requesting supplies for June, who is recovering. The noise from the crowd outside fades, leaving them in silence. The protagonist reflects on their precarious situation, noting the lack of weapons and the need for a stealthy escape if necessary. Their unease grows as they ponder Kaede’s cryptic message to return to the Republic, questioning whether it’s a warning or a trap.

As time drags on, the protagonist grows restless until a sudden thud against the balcony door startles them. Discovering a note tied to a rock, they read Kaede’s urgent plea to meet outside. Despite skepticism, the protagonist decides to hear her out, leaving June guarded but vulnerable. They stealthily exit the balcony, dropping to the snow-covered ground below, and cautiously scan the empty streets for Kaede. The tension is palpable as they prepare for a potential confrontation.

Kaede emerges from the shadows, urging the protagonist to follow her. They navigate alleys and streets, the protagonist remaining alert for danger. Kaede’s appearance is altered, her military attire replaced with civilian clothing, and her demeanor is uncharacteristically anxious. She reassures the protagonist that June is safe and insists their meeting is urgent. The protagonist presses for answers, questioning Kaede’s motives and the whereabouts of the other Patriots.

Kaede reveals she came alone to deliver a warning, though the chapter cuts off before she can elaborate. The protagonist’s suspicion lingers, especially when Kaede mentions Tess, heightening the stakes. The encounter leaves the protagonist torn between distrust and the need for information, setting the stage for a critical decision. The chapter ends with unresolved tension, emphasizing the precariousness of their situation and the uncertainty of Kaede’s intentions.

Chapter 23: June 12

June wakes abruptly in a hospital room, disoriented and alone, only to find herself surrounded by Colonies soldiers. They recognize her as June Iparis, the Republic's famed prodigy, and demand information about Day's whereabouts. The soldiers restrain her, planning to hand her over to DesCon Corp for interrogation. June's confusion and dizziness linger, but she realizes the Patriots' ties to the Republic too late, piecing together clues she'd overlooked. Time is running out as the soldiers prepare to transport her.

With her hands cuffed and gagged, June devises a desperate escape plan using a twisted paper clip ring. She painstakingly straightens and bends the clip to pick the lock, all while soldiers monitor her and a gurney approaches. As the lock clicks open, a soldier notices her movements, forcing June to act. She kicks over the gurney, dodges grabs, and bolts for the balcony, but her weakened state hinders her. A soldier tackles her, thwarting her escape just as reinforcements arrive.

At the critical moment, Day and Kaede burst through the shattered balcony door, launching a counterattack. Kaede disables a soldier while Day frees June, pulling her toward the balcony ledge. Despite their efforts, June's strength fails her, and she collapses. Kaede holds off more soldiers, shouting for Day to go, but Day refuses to leave June behind, kneeling beside her as chaos ensues.

The chapter climaxes with June's failed escape and dramatic rescue, highlighting her resourcefulness and Day's loyalty. The soldiers' insistence on capturing them alive underscores their value as prisoners, while June's physical struggle mirrors her mental clarity returning too late. The abrupt ending leaves tension high as Day and Kaede fight to save her, setting the stage for the next confrontation.

Chapter 24: Day 12

The chapter opens with Kaede swiftly leading the group toward a fighter jet on a rooftop while soldiers pursue them. June, weakened from her injuries, is carried by Day as they rush up the ramp. Kaede starts the jet’s engines, urging them to hurry as soldiers close in. June regains her footing and climbs into the cockpit, but Day is momentarily held back by a soldier. Using June’s combat lessons, he incapacitates the attacker before scrambling aboard as Kaede prepares for takeoff.

As the jet lifts off, Kaede reveals she’s been wounded but remains determined to evade their pursuers. The group faces immediate danger as another jet gives chase, demanding their surrender. Kaede ignores the threats and maneuvers violently, causing intense pressure changes that nearly overwhelm Day and June. She then executes a daring mid-air turn, firing at the pursuing jet and destroying it in a fiery explosion, securing their escape.

With the immediate threat neutralized, Kaede accelerates toward the Republic, aiming to cross the warfront. Day reflects on the Colonies’ skyline, contrasting its beauty with the chaos they’ve left behind. Kaede confirms their destination—Denver—and Day reveals his plan to publicly support Anden at the Capitol Tower, signaling a pivotal shift in his mission.

The chapter concludes with June sensing Day’s resolve, despite her fatigue. His calm declaration underscores a strategic turning point, as he prepares to align with Anden and challenge the Republic’s leadership. The group’s harrowing escape sets the stage for a bold political move, blending action with the promise of impending confrontation.

Chapter 25: June 13

The chapter opens with the protagonists racing toward the Republic’s border in a high-speed jet, traveling at over 800 miles per hour. Day shares critical information with June about the Patriots, Razor’s betrayal, and the political turmoil surrounding the Elector. Despite the initial disorientation from their sudden escape, June’s mind clears as they ascend, allowing her to assess their dire situation. Kaede, their pilot, reveals they are nearing the warfront, marked by distant explosions, and maneuvers the jet to avoid ground missiles while joining a Colonies squadron for cover.

As they climb higher, June observes the chaotic battlefield below, filled with Republic and Colonies airships engaged in fierce combat. Kaede’s jet is soon challenged by a Colonies controller demanding an immediate landing, but she defiantly refuses. The tension escalates as two enemy jets pursue them, leading to a heart-stopping aerial chase. Kaede executes a daring split-S maneuver, causing the pursuing jets to crash into a Colonies airship, creating a diversion that allows them to cross into Republic airspace. The adrenaline-fueled sequence leaves June momentarily unconscious, highlighting the perilous nature of their escape.

Approaching Denver, the group faces another hurdle: the city’s impenetrable Armor, a massive wall lined with missiles. Republic jets now tail them, firing relentlessly. Kaede remains confident, insisting she can navigate the danger, but June is skeptical, fearing they’ll be shot down before breaching the defenses. The chapter builds suspense as the jet descends toward the Armor, with June bracing for the worst. Kaede’s reckless yet skillful flying keeps them alive, but the odds of survival seem slim as they close in on the towering barrier.

The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, with the group’s fate hanging in the balance. June’s internal monologue reflects her doubt and fear, visualizing a missile strike ejecting them over the city. Kaede’s determination and audacity drive the narrative, but the

overwhelming defenses of Denver leave the reader questioning whether their daring plan will succeed. The intense action and high stakes underscore the desperation of their mission, setting the stage for the next chapter’s resolution.



Chapter 26: Day 13

The chapter "Day 13" follows the protagonist, Day, as he arrives at the Capitol Tower, exhausted and in pain, amidst a chaotic protest. The young Elector, Anden, attempts to calm the crowd with promises of reform, but his political rhetoric fails to resonate. Day observes the distrust among the people and suspects Congress and Razor are manipulating the situation. He climbs the building, recalling June’s support, and prepares to address the nation through the wired speaker system, mirroring his first encounter with June. The tension is palpable as he risks being shot by soldiers while navigating the ledge.

Day reaches the tenth floor, overlooking a sea of protesters with scarlet-streaked hair, a symbol of defiance against the Republic. Despite the violent suppression by riot police, no shots are fired, which Day hopes is Anden’s doing. He steels himself, whispering, “Don’t be afraid,” before stepping onto a balcony to face the crowd. His bright hair catches attention, and soon, more people turn to look. The soldiers aim their weapons but hesitate to shoot, creating a tense standoff. Day resists his instinct to flee, determined to stand his ground for the first time in years.

As the crowd recognizes him, their chants of “Day! Day! Day!” grow louder, drowning out the chaos. Even Anden turns to watch, leaving Day uncertain whether he’s an ally or a threat. Using the speaker system, Day addresses the Republic, his voice amplified across the square. The crowd erupts in cheers, but a lone bullet strikes the balcony glass, heightening the tension. Day remains unfazed, warning Congress against provoking an uprising. He demands the release of arrested Patriots, threatening to incite a revolution if they refuse.

The chapter culminates in a powerful moment as Day asserts his leadership, challenging the corrupt regime. His speech unites the protesters, and their collective energy shakes the square. The Elector’s ambiguous stance adds suspense, leaving

Day to wonder if he’ll be protected or betrayed. The scene captures the climax of Day’s transformation from a fugitive to a revolutionary figure, ready to confront the Republic’s oppression head-on. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, with the crowd’s fate hanging in the balance.



Chapter 27: June 14

The chapter opens with June reflecting on Day’s pivotal speech from the Capitol Tower, which solidified Elector Anden’s power and united the Republic. She vividly recalls Day’s presence and the impact of his words, as well as the lingering memory of their last kiss. Now, two days later, June and Day are separated in a Denver hospital, undergoing rigorous medical tests to ensure they weren’t compromised by the Colonies. June is frustrated by the surveillance and separation but finds solace in watching Day through a monitor, longing to reconnect with him despite the Republic’s precautions.

June’s doctor conducts tests to assess her mental and physical stability, emphasizing the Republic’s need to ensure her loyalty. She endures uncomfortable procedures, including a gel mask that triggers claustrophobia, while worrying about Day’s condition. The doctor hints at Day’s delayed release, sparking June’s suspicion that something is being withheld. After hours of testing, she’s informed she can be discharged, but her focus remains on Day’s well-being, revealing her deep concern for him and impatience to reunite.

Elector Anden visits June, offering her a reinstatement as an Agent in Denver instead of Los Angeles, where key figures like Commander Jameson have been arrested for treason. June acknowledges the honor but senses Anden’s lingering attraction, despite rumors of her relationship with Day. Anden praises June and Day for their role in stabilizing the Republic, noting how Day’s influence has shifted power dynamics. The chapter highlights the tension between June’s loyalty to the Republic and her personal connection to Day, who now holds significant sway over public sentiment.

The chapter concludes with Anden hinting at a new proposition for June, leaving the nature of his offer unresolved. June’s internal conflict is palpable as she balances her duty to the Republic with her desire to protect Day. The scene underscores the

political stakes and personal sacrifices both characters face, setting the stage for further developments in their relationship and the Republic’s future. The chapter blends emotional depth with political intrigue, maintaining a tense and introspective tone.



Chapter 28: Day 14

The chapter begins with the protagonist, Day, recounting his hostile reception at the hospital after being rescued from Denver’s Capitol Tower. He resists medical treatment, threatening staff and demanding to see his brother, Eden, as well as June and proof of the Patriots’ release. His outbursts are broadcast live, fueling public concern, but he eventually calms, easing tensions among the crowds. The doctor informs Day he’s been pardoned and that Eden will arrive soon, though their mutual distrust is evident.

Day’s emotions shift when he learns Eden is nearby. Overwhelmed by the prospect of reuniting with his brother after their separation during the plague, he disregards the doctor’s attempt to discuss concerning X-ray results. When Eden arrives, Day is struck by his improved health, though Eden’s vision is severely impaired. Their reunion is emotional, with Eden clinging to Day, who cherishes the moment as a rare victory amid their struggles.

The doctor interrupts, urging Day to return for a private discussion. Reluctantly, Day agrees after ensuring Eden’s safety, though he remains wary of the doctor’s intentions. Inside the room, the doctor reveals a troubling discovery in Day’s brain scan, pointing to an anomaly near his hippocampus. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, leaving the nature and implications of this finding unresolved.

Throughout the chapter, Day’s fierce protectiveness of Eden and his distrust of authority figures are central themes. The reunion with Eden offers a fleeting sense of hope, contrasted by the ominous medical revelation. The tension between personal joy and looming uncertainty underscores the fragility of Day’s newfound stability, leaving readers anticipating the consequences of the doctor’s discovery.

Chapter 29: June 15

The chapter opens with June reflecting on her recent release from the hospital and her return to a luxurious apartment in Denver. She anxiously awaits Day's arrival, preoccupied with thoughts of what he wants to discuss. The return of her dog, Ollie, a remnant of her past life, brings her comfort, but she remains unsettled by the opulence surrounding her and the unresolved tension with Thomas, her former captor. Outside, a light snow falls, mirroring her quiet unease as she grapples with her new reality and the emotional weight of recent events.

June's thoughts drift to Kaede's recent burial, a moment she insisted on honoring with a proper gravesite. She wonders if Day blames himself for Kaede's death, just as she does, and if this guilt has delayed their reunion. Her introspection is interrupted by Day's arrival, and she is struck by his transformed appearance in a formal Republic uniform. His beauty, accentuated by the elegant attire, leaves her momentarily speechless, highlighting the unfamiliarity between them despite their shared history.

Day explains the uniform was for a photo with the Elector, a gesture of his reluctant alignment with the Republic. He presents June with a lavish ruby pendant, a stark contrast to the paper clip ring he once gave her. The gift, funded by the Republic, symbolizes their changed circumstances, yet June cherishes the memory of the simpler token. Their conversation is polite but strained, with Day maintaining a reserved demeanor that keeps June at arm's length, leaving her uncertain about his true feelings.

The chapter closes with June tentatively asking about Day's brother, Eden, whose survival comes at the cost of his vision. Day's terse response underscores his lingering grief and the emotional distance between them. June's attempts to bridge the gap are met with quiet resistance, leaving both characters suspended in a moment of unspoken tension as they navigate their complicated relationship and the uncertain

future ahead.

