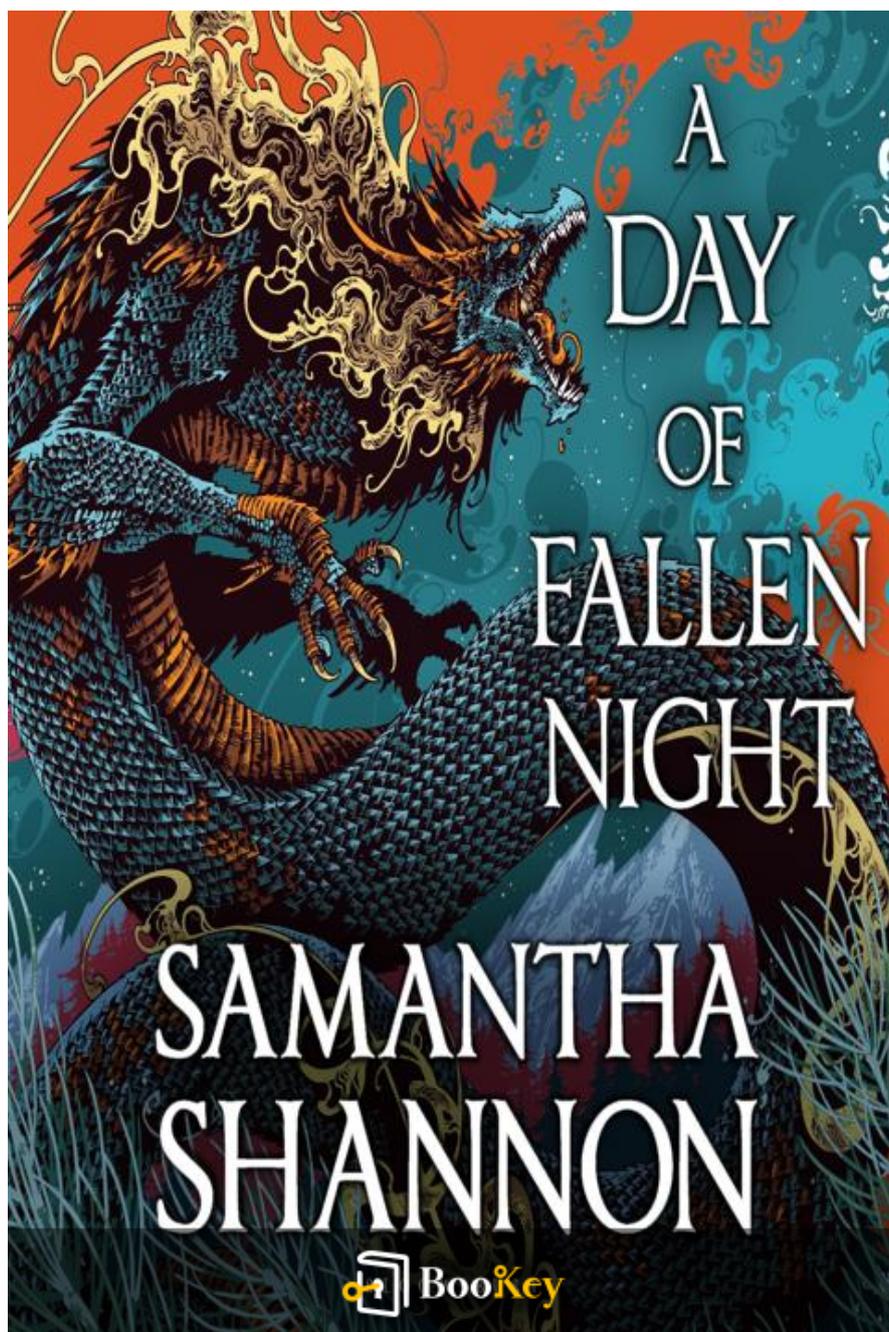


A Day Of Fallen Night PDF (Limited Copy)

Samantha Shannon



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A Day Of Fallen Night Summary

A tale of sacrifice, power, and ancient bonds.

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About the book

In "A Day of Fallen Night," Samantha Shannon transports readers to a breathtaking world where ancient dragons reign and the line between humanity and magical beings blurs into a vibrant tapestry of conflict and camaraderie. Set long before the events of her acclaimed "The Priory of the Orange Tree," this epic novel weaves together the destinies of diverse characters as they confront their own fears, forge alliances, and navigate the turbulent waters of loyalty, betrayal, and the quest for power. As clans unite in the face of a looming threat that could unravel the very fabric of their societies, Shannon deftly explores themes of identity, sacrifice, and the enduring struggle against oppression. Dive into this richly imagined landscape where each choice could spell salvation or ruin, and discover a story that resonates with the timeless complexities of love, war, and the fight for one's place in a world surrounded by both wonder and peril.

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About the author

Samantha Shannon is a celebrated British author known for her imaginative and expansive storytelling, particularly in the realm of fantasy literature.

Born in 1991, she gained prominence with her debut novel, "The Priory of the Orange Tree," which was lauded for its rich world-building and diverse characters. Shannon's writing often explores themes of identity, power, and resistance, infused with a deep understanding of history and mythology.

With a degree in English Language and Literature from St. Anne's College, Oxford, she has established herself as a powerful voice in modern fantasy, and her works have garnered numerous awards and a dedicated readership, solidifying her place in the genre.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Unora

Summary of Chapters: Unora

In the city of Antuma, Dumai, a name derived from a word meaning a dream cut short, was born during the fading days of an era known as the Sunset Years. Among the city's inhabitants was a mysterious young woman named Unora, who arrived with no memories beyond her name and a forbidden desire. Unbeknownst to the people, the tattered garb and hard hands she presented belied her noble heritage; her father was once a powerful figure within the court.

Life in Seiiki was harsh during this time, as a prolonged drought had devastated the land following the gods' retreat. Unlike most who would lament their circumstances, the Governor of Afa worked tirelessly to bring water to his fields, earning the favor of Empress Manai. She admired his dedication, granting him a home in the capital where he raised his daughter, Unora. However, tragedy struck when Empress Manai fell ill and abdicated her throne, leaving her young son, Prince Jorodu, to rule.

The boy emperor made the Governor his River Lord, but soon accused him of summoning a god to flourish his region, resulting in the Governor's banishment. Left alone after her nursemaid smuggled her back to Afa, Unora

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grew up laboring in the parched fields, building resilience amidst despair. Years went by without a single drop of rain, and tragedy struck when illness claimed the lives of her loved ones, leaving her the last survivor of her village.

In Unora's twentieth year, a miracle occurred; rain fell from the sky, reviving the parched earth. Following the storm, she braved the wilderness, driven by a desperate hope to awaken Pajati, the white dragon god who once granted wishes to those brave enough to seek him. Yet awakening the gods was a sacred act, one reserved for emperors and fraught with danger.

Determined to save her father and her home, Unora struck Pajati's ancient bell. As the sound echoed through the air, the god awoke, offering her a price for his eventual aid. With tears drawing a decade of dehydration from her throat, Unora fainted, sealed a pact with the dragon, and soon found herself before the imperial court.

Realizing her unremarkable appearance contrasted starkly with the palace's elegance, Unora carefully concealed her true identity and remained cautious amid the suspicions of those around her. The present empress, Sipwo, mistook her for a spirit and extended kindness, which only deepened Unora's resolve to remain incognito until she reached the emperor.

As she adapted to life in the court, her longing for connection grew. Amid

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her isolation, she began to write poetry directed at a mysterious messenger who seemed to appreciate her spirits, leading to secret meetings with him. Their bond blossomed in shadowy corners of the palace, far removed from the eyes of judgment, until Unora discovered her unexpected pregnancy. Faced with the implications of her condition, and her commitment to protect her child, Unora chose to leave the court behind, clutching only the gold comb given to her by her secret lover as she walked toward Mount Ipyeda, embodying grace and sorrow, like a ghost grieving what was lost.

This nuanced tale of longing, sacrifice, and resilience emphasizes Unora's struggle against a tangled web of political machinations, societal expectations, and divine interventions, all while she remains determined to shape her own destiny.

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Chapter 2 Summary: Sabran

Summary of Chapters Featuring Sabran

Background Context: The narrative unfolds in the magical and tumultuous land of Inys, where the balance of power and the monarchy are crucial to prevent the rise of a sinister force known as the Nameless One. A long-standing dynasty, the Berethnets, holds the key to this balance, having borne the brunt of both power and malice throughout their history.

Queen Sabran's Tyranny: Glorian, later known as Sabran the Fifth, inherits the throne in Ascalun under dire circumstances marked by a legacy of weak queens. From birth, Sabran assumes a weighty responsibility – to keep the Nameless One at bay. She succumbs to avarice, imposing crippling taxes, and ruling with fear, culminating in a period of decay and dread among her subjects. Known as the Malkin Queen for her ferocity against dissenters, her tyrannical reign stifles the spirit of her people, forcing them to live in squalor and fear, with whispers of rebellion brewing beneath the surface.

Generations of Queens: In a twist of fate, Sabran produces an heir—a daughter named Jillian—after a loveless marriage, who mirrors her mother's bitterness. Jillian, subject to Sabran's cruelty, raises her own

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daughter, Marian, a timid and meek figure overshadowed by her family's legacy. Marian ultimately gives birth to yet another daughter, the youngest Sabran, who is expected to further the tyrant's legacy. Unlike her forebears, this young Sabran possesses a strong resolve and dignity, growing up amidst the poisonous atmosphere of the court while being secretly educated by her devoted ladies.

Hope and Rebellion: As Sabran matures, she becomes the embodiment of hope as whispers throughout the court begin to name her the Little Queen. When the Malkin Queen dies at an old age, her lineage continues with Jillian, who faces her own death caused by a vengeful assassin—a haunting reminder of the toxic legacy that binds them. Marian, now queen, rules from fear rather than strength, while Sabran's vision for a new Inys grows ever stronger amidst the rumblings of revolt.

War Within and Without: Meanwhile, the North, specifically Hróth, descends into chaos as clans turn against one another under the leadership of the ambitious Verthing Bloodblade, sharpening the divide amongst the kingdoms. Inys finds itself surrounded by enemies—raiders led by the brutal Heryon Vattenvarg. While Marian is paralyzed with fear, Sabran steps up, advocating for an alliance with the ailing Mentendon to stave off Vattenvarg's threat, arguing eloquently for strength in unity.

Enter Bardholt: As conflicts rise and Hróth finds a new leader in the

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formidable Bardholt Hraustr, he arrives in Inys—a towering figure adorned in furs, commanding respect and fear with equal measure. The court is charged with tension, as Bardholt's past as a warrior and Hróth's brutal traditions loom over their meetings. Yet, amidst this tension, Sabran sees an opportunity for change—through an unexpected alliance that transcends violence and bloodshed.

A Bold Proposal: In a daring move, Sabran seeks a private audience with Bardholt, proposing a pact that aligns Hróth with the virtues and faith of Inys. Her plan is not merely political; it is also personal, as she seeks to form a bond that would unite their kingdoms under a shared vision, ensuring the survival of her house through love instead of conquest. Bardholt, intrigued yet cautious, considers her proposition and ultimately ties their fate with an oath sworn on her blade.

A New Era: Their betrothal signals the forging of a powerful alliance. Following their union, the realm experiences an unprecedented transformation as others pledge fealty to Bardholt's conjoined kingdom—Mentendon converts, sealing the fate of four interconnected realms united under the chain of Virtudom. As Queen Marian steps back, Sabran takes the throne, fortified by her loyalties and the hope for a peaceful future.

Personal Joys: Years pass, and while Sabran rules competently, she is

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also deeply involved with Bardholt, each season spent in different realms—and finally, they produce an heir, Glorian. This new child symbolizes hope and renewal for the dynasty, bringing joy to Sabran and Bardholt. Their legacy is celebrated as they stand united on the balcony of Ascalun Castle, welcomed by the people who now embrace their bond as a beacon of unity and strength.

In summary, Sabran’s journey traverses the tumultuous terrain from oppression to hope, suggesting a burgeoning strength that may redefine not just the future of her dynasty but also the realm of Inys itself. Through her resilience and vision, she transforms a legacy of tyranny into one of unity and love, heralding a new era.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Transformation through Unity and Love

Critical Interpretation: In the face of tyranny and oppression, Queen Sabran's decision to forge an alliance with Bardholt emphasizes the profound power of unity and love in overcoming adversity. This pivotal moment inspires us in our own lives to seek collaboration and understanding in the face of conflict. When we choose to build bridges instead of walls, we not only transform our circumstances but also foster a community bound by mutual respect and shared purpose, ultimately paving the way for a brighter, more harmonious future.

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Chapter 3 Summary: Esbar

Here's a smooth and logical summary of the chapters you provided, retaining the main elements of the plot, character relationships, and important concepts while ensuring clarity and readability.

Summary

Esbar's Birth and Legacy (Chapter Excerpt)

In the Lasian Basin, Esbar du Apaya uq-N ra experie childbirth surrounded by supportive women, including her birthmother and her partner, Tunuva. Finally, the labor culminates in the delivery of a daughter, Siyu, amidst celebrations that honor her as a warrior destined to protect against the Nameless One. Esbar is relieved, feeling an immense bond form between her and her newborn as she names her child in a ceremonial blessing.

Wulf's Farewell (Chapter Excerpt)

As night approaches, Wulf prepares to leave the Priory, accompanied by Tunuva and his younger sister, Lukiri. Their interaction reveals sibling

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affection and deep familial ties. Wulf is given a spear by Tunuva, emphasizing her hopes for his safety. The emotional scene portrays Tunuva's longing and regret over lost time with her son, Wulf, as she reflects on past decisions that led to their separation.

Dumai and Nikeya's Union (Chapter Excerpt)

In a secretive, intimate setting, Dumai confesses her feelings for Nikeya. They express mutual love and an eagerness to keep their union undisclosed for a while. However, they are aware of the broader struggles surrounding them, as the looming threats of war and sacrifice appear imminent. The chapter showcases their deep emotional connection against a backdrop of uncertainty.

Preparations for War (Chapter Excerpt)

War approaches as Tunuva and Denag prepare for a critical defense at Nzene against the forces of Dedalugun. Esbar rallies her sisters to stand united, implying that the Priory will work together to protect their queendom, highlighting their shared commitment and resilience in the face of chaos.

Glorian's Struggle for Survival (Chapter Excerpt)

In the midst of conflict, Glorian Berethnet rides into battle while heavily

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pregnant, invoking the spirit of her lineage and the necessity of safeguarding her newborn child, Sabran. As the struggle escalates, she draws strength from her role as a leader, vowing to protect her queendom.

Dumai's Decision to Confront Danger (Chapter Excerpt)

Having learned alarming truths about her family's peril, Dumai resolutely prepares to confront the River Lord's dangerous ambitions as she sets her sights toward Muysima, the island that bears both her family's legacy and the impending threat of the Nameless One. Despite her mother's protective instinct, Dumai's determination to rescue her sister and thwart the River Lord's maniacal plans takes precedence.

The Climactic Battle (Chapter Excerpt)

As the battle at Cening Moor reaches a critical juncture, Glorian steps forward with Sabran to inspire the warriors fighting to defend their people. Her powerful declaration stirs the soldiers, rallying them in a moment of collective determination against the wyrm threat. In desperate circumstances, familial bonds and the fight for survival intertwine, setting the stage for a decisive clash.

Dumai's Ultimate Sacrifice (Chapter Excerpt)

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Dumai faces the River Lord, determined to save her sister Suzumai from his twisted plans to sacrifice her to the Nameless One. In a moment of recklessness but fierce resolve, she throws herself into the abyss, culminating in a desperate act of defiance against the dark forces threatening her family. The chapter reveals her inner strength and commitment to protecting those she loves, solidifying her role as a connector of past legacies and future hopes.

The summaries reflect the key themes and emotional arcs of the characters, helping to provide context for readers without prior knowledge of the original material. The flow captures the build-up to significant events, allowing for a coherent understanding of the story's progression.

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Chapter 4: 1 East

Chapter 1 Summary: The Ceremony and the Arrival

The story opens with Dumai of Ipyeda, a dedicated godsinger at the High Temple on Mount Ipyeda. Her morning routine is both a spiritual and rigorous preparation for her duties to the gods. She begins her day in darkness, awakening to the divine call as she immerses herself in an ice pool, a symbol of purification and endurance. Dressed in layers to withstand the mountain's harsh conditions, she reminisces about her childhood, recognizing how far she has come since those fragile years.

Dumai's community is physically and spiritually anchored in the high-altitude temple, where the air is thin and life is tough, yet she thrives. The chapter describes her rituals: writing dreams, fasting, and participating in morning ceremonies. All are meant to honor the gods, including the reverent ringing of chimes for Kwiriki and dancing.

As Daylight breaks, Dumai embarks on a journey down the mountain to a hot spring, a sacred reprieve from the chill. There, she learns from her friend Kanifa that guests from Clan Kuposa are arriving—a significant clan in Seiiki known for their political influence. This news is both exciting and daunting for Dumai, as the high temple's reputation could hang on the

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whims of the Kuposa.

Dumai prepares the temple for her guests, navigating the complexities of court politics with caution. Despite Kanifa's warnings about the power of Clan Kuposa, Dumai insists on treating the climber and her attendants with fairness, acknowledging their status but also her own position.

The chapter culminates in their arrival at the temple as evening sets in, with Dumai taking the lead in welcoming them despite her mother Unora's usual role in such ceremonies. Unora, adorned in ceremonial attire, emanates a different aura when dealing with the powerful, reflective of the complexities of their stured relationships.

As Dumai moves through the temple, she strengthens ties with others in her community, including Osipa, a handmaiden who has grown weary with age and chilling conditions, further grounding Dumai in the realities of her environment. With hints of unease about political maneuvering and familial expectations, Dumai's day winds down to a close, filled with dreams and aspirations, concluding with her nightly rituals of prayer.

However, a tension reveals itself when, in the dead of night, Dumai awakens to unsettling sounds outside her room. As she grapples with a creeping fear—the possibility of danger manifesting near her temple—her instincts kick in, revealing her resilience as both a protector and a devout figure of

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authority. The chapter closes on a suspenseful note as she ventures into the stormy night, confronting the unknown.

Chapter 2 Summary: Shadows in the Night

The narrative pivots towards a more haunting atmosphere. After a restless night of prompting visions, Dumai awakes disoriented, feeling the chill of the world outside her bedding. In her effort to stabilize herself, she discovers an open window, a foreboding sign in the midst of a howling storm. It sparks a primal instinct within her; she dons her boots and retrieves a lantern as a source of light and hope.

As Dumai bravely approaches the shadowy figure outside, her fear transforms into resolve. The figure—a man dressed as a saltwalker—collapses before her, shattering her notions of security within the temple walls. His blood staining the snow presents a shocking reminder of the inherent dangers surrounding her mountaintop sanctuary.

The urgency of the situation shifts Dumai's focus from ritualistic practices to immediate action as she tends to the fallen man, showcasing her human compassion layered beneath her spiritual duty. This encounter speaks to the broader themes of vulnerability amid power, the juxtaposition of tradition against sudden upheaval, and the unknown forces at play.

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The cold night air becomes a canvas against which Dumai's character is further painted—a young woman poised on the precipice of awakening to both her responsibilities and the volatile world that lies below her sanctuary. The transition into darkness allows her to confront the shadows not just surrounding the temple but those that exist within her own journey.

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Chapter 5 Summary: 2 West

Chapter Summaries:

Chapter 2: West

At the age of twelve, Glorian first encounters her own blood, unexpectedly finding that it is a dull, rusty brown, rather than the glorious hue she had imagined. This marks her initial realization of her mortality, compounded by tales of Berethnet blood and its mythical power. Three and a half years later, she experiences another trauma when a fall from her horse, Óvarr, leads to a bone piercing her skin. Once again, it is her friend Julain who must summon help, showcasing their strong bond amid the panic that ensues.

As Glorian is carried through the queen's wood to the castle, she reflects on specific folklore shared by her lady-in-waiting, Helisent, about oak galls and their connections to fate — a charm she found enchanting despite it being dismissed by others as 'heathen talk.'

When she arrives at Drouthwick Castle, the gravity of her injury unsettles those around her: Lady Florell, who serves the queen, expresses her concern, and there is a sense of urgency as the Royal Surgeon, Doctor Forthard,

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begins to treat her injury. Glorian's pain escalates as she is prepped for treatment, and she insists on using banewort, a herb she believes may ease her suffering, but is denied by the guard, Dame Erda Lindley, due to the queen's strict orders against it.

Under the surgical care of Doctor Forthard and a bonesetter named Mistress Kell Bourn, Glorian endures a painful procedure to mend her fractured arm. After the ordeal, she drifts in and out of consciousness, with Florell staying by her side to comfort her. Glorian grapples with feelings of neglect, particularly the absence of her mother, Queen Sabran, who is occupied with council business, symbolizing Glorian's struggle for acknowledgment and importance in a world where political duties often overshadow personal ones.

As Glorian recovers, she longingly wishes for her fateful partner of life, Julain, to stay by her side, knowing that their future bond is to mirror the deep connection she has with Florell. Despite her physical pain, Glorian's emotional wounds deepen as she feels the burden of her lineage, understanding the sacrifices that come with being a royal. She fears the day her mother will impart the gravitas of her role as the future Queen of Inys, a transition she feels unprepared for.

Chapter 3: [Title or Number Not Provided]

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(Given the beginning of Chapter 3 follows directly from Chapter 2, ensure the summary encapsulates the continuing narrative.)

Following her injury and subsequent recovery, Glorian remains restless and anxious about her royal duties. She begins to confront the weight of expectation placed upon her as the heir to the throne. Conversations with Julain reveal their contrasting perspectives on duty; while Julain feels a protective instinct over Glorian, Glorian yearns for autonomy and to be seen not just as a future queen but as a person with her own desires and feelings.

Tension arises as Glorian becomes increasingly aware of how the demands of royal life isolate her from the simple comforts and emotional support she craves, particularly that of her mother. She grapples with the duality of her identity: the playful girl at heart versus the poised future monarch. This internal conflict is intensified by her physical limitations post-injury, compelling her to navigate her recovery amidst the expectations of courtly life.

As Glorian's relationship with Julain deepens, they share stories and support one another, often offering a reprieve from the realities they face. Their friendship symbolizes the cherished bonds that exist alongside the rigid roles dictated by their nobility. All the while, Glorian's fear of what lies ahead—the responsibilities, the sacrifices, and her mother's ambitions for

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her—loom over her like a shadow, shaping her understanding of what it truly means to be part of the Berethnet legacy.

As the chapter concludes, Glorian's thoughts are haunted by her inevitable ascent to power and her desire to forge her own path, setting the stage for her growth and the challenges that await her as the future queen.

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Chapter 6 Summary: 3 South

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 3: The Recklessness of Youth

The story opens in the Lasian Basin, where a young woman named Siyu scales a sacred orange tree, prompting concern from Tunuva, her older sister, and Imsurin, a fellow sister. The orange tree, with its gnarled trunk and fragrant leaves, symbolizes sanctity; its fruit had once empowered the legendary Cleolind Onjenyu to defeat the Nameless One—a dark figure of folklore. Concern for Siyu's safety grows as she revels in her ascent, her laughter echoing through the valley. Tunuva and Imsurin share the dread of the Prioress's possible wrath, knowing that climbing the tree is a sign of disrespect.

Finally, Siyu jumps from the branch into the rushing waters of the Minara River below. Both Tunuva and Imsurin rush toward the river's edge in a panicked desire to catch her, but she surfaces, surprisingly unscathed, delighting in the thrill of the water. Tunuva's heart eases only slightly as she scolds Siyu for her recklessness but cannot help but share in the joy of her spirited nature.

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As they walk back to the Priory together, tensions simmer over the potential punishment Siyu might face from the Prioress. The Priory, a secretive sanctuary founded centuries ago for women warriors, exists to guard against the return of the Nameless One. Built within cave systems, it has been beautified over the years but is not without its tensions.

Tunuva reflects on Siyu's immaturity and audaciousness at seventeen. Siyu's remarks reveal her defiance and innocence about the rules they've been taught. After they reach their chambers, Tunuva encourages Siyu to accept her punishment with dignity, positing that reflection on her actions might lead to greater understanding.

The chapter transitions into Tunuva's inner conflict, highlighting her duty as a sister and her long-standing dedication to the Priory. She seeks advice and guidance from Saghul Yedanya, the Prioress, regarding Siyu's indiscretion. The dynamic between them showcases Tunuva's loyalty to the Priory's values despite the nagging feeling that its quest may no longer resonate with the younger generation.

Saghul's wisdom sheds light on how the passage of time has eroded the fear and respect that the sisters once had for the tree and the legend of the Nameless One, suggesting a deeper rot within the Priory itself. Tunuva thinks back to her youth, recalling her first journey outside the Priory and her friendship with Esbar, a fellow sister. This journey sparked something in

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her, instilling a sense of duty rooted in understanding the beauty and dangers of the wider world.

Their conversation touches on the theme of balance between worldly pleasures and sacred duties. Ultimately, the Prioress implies that there is a need to remain vigilant, reinforcing the notion that the younger sisters must respect the history and traditions of the Priory, balancing the allure of the outside world with their sacred Guardians' oaths.

As Tunuva shares her hopes for Siyu—thinking that perhaps experiences beyond their secluded life could instill a deeper respect for their purpose—Saghul warns of the consequences of recklessness, both in climbing the orange tree and in pursuing worldly pleasures without caution. The chapter closes ominously, with Saghul symbolically spilling sun wine, marking the fragility of their balance between duty and desire.

Chapter 4: The Weight of Expectations

[Summary pending, but this chapter will likely develop the themes of Tunuva's and Saghul's contrasting views on addressing the younger generation's behavior and the fine line between tradition and individual choice within the Priory.]

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This summary presents the events and themes in a concise manner while embedding necessary context to ensure clarity for the reader. The transitions between character actions and the historical backdrop have been framed to maintain a smooth narrative flow.

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Chapter 7 Summary: 4 East

Chapter 4 Summary: The Stranger Arrives

With a brutal snowstorm ravaging the landscape, Dumai manages to pull a mysterious stranger from its clutches after he's been unconscious for two days. Unora, Dumai's mother and the Maiden Officiant for the High Temple of Kwiriki, quickly tends to his frostbitten body with her healing skills acquired over years in the mountains. While the stranger's identity remains unknown, he appears to be a saltwalker—individuals who wander from shrine to shrine and have a particular affinity for the ocean. Meanwhile, another guest, a climber from court known as Kuposa, remains in the Inner Hall, unable to attempt the mountain's summit due to the storm.

Dumai, curious about this climber, feels an invisible barrier between herself and the court, as her mother advises her to stay free of political intrigues. Despite her desire to connect with the glamorous visitor, she respects the teachings of her mother, who warns her to keep her mind pure and focused on their life on the mountain.

When Dumai checks on the stranger, she learns from Kanifa, a temple attendant, that the court climber has been inquiring about the Grand Empress, raising suspicions about her motives. Dumai playfully teases

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Kanifa, noting he seems uninterested in women, for he is deeply devoted to the temple.

Upon entering the stranger's room, she finds him waking briefly and realizing that he recognizes her as he fights against mountain sickness. The saltwalker admits to having dreamt of the gods calling to him. Unora comforts him and introduces Dumai as a godsinger, but the man seems confused by his own condition. Their conversation is cut short when Unora sends Dumai to help procure ice for further care of the guest. As Dumai goes, she notices a weight in the atmosphere, feeling a strange connection to the saltwalker.

Later, Dumai experiences a poignant dream while meditating where she longs for stars to descend. In this dream, the Grand Empress, once a regal figure now changed by illness, listens intently. After Dumai admits that something ominous lurks if the stars do not come, the Empress encourages her to embrace her path while safeguarding her heart from earthly distractions.

Dumai's thoughts drift to her mother's role and the implications of being related to an esteemed Maiden Officiant, contemplating whether Unora's choice to identify her simply as a godsinger to the stranger was to protect her. The Grand Empress reminds her that Unora's guidance is meant to keep her intentions pure and focused on their mountain life.

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As Dumai leaves the Empress's quarters, she unexpectedly encounters the court guest, a striking woman named Nikeya. They share a polite exchange that highlights their differing worlds, with Nikeya expressing her admiration for Dumai's simple devotion to the temple. Despite the lightness of their interaction, Dumai feels an underlying tension and encourages Nikeya to return to the refectory for the evening meal.

The chapter closes as Dumai checks on the saltwalker again, only to find he has disappeared into the snowstorm, leaving behind a trail of footprints that she feels compelled to follow. In a desperate attempt to save him, she races into the treacherous winter night. However, her frantic search takes a devastating turn when she discovers Unora collapsed in the snow, desperately calling for help.

Chapter 5 Summary: The Cost of Devotion

The aftermath of Unora's collapse becomes the focal point of this chapter. Dumai, overwhelmed with fear and urgency, wrestles with the dual challenge of keeping her mother safe as well as the stranger she had just uncovered. The stakes are high; her mother is desperately cold, and the raging storm threatens both their lives.

In her frantic attempts to revive Unora, Dumai grapples with the intensity of

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her devotion. The bond they share is palpable, forged of love, fear, and the weight of unspoken expectations. As Dumai calls out for help, elements of their world—the mountain and the spiritual realms—seem to hover around them, echoing the earlier themes of connection to the gods and the reverberation of their fates through dreams.

Kanifa and other temple attendants arrive, bringing with them a frantic urgency to save Unora, highlighting the deep-rooted connections and communal responsibility within the temple. Together, they work to bring Unora back from the brink, but the severity of the situation prompts reflection on the nature of sacrifice and the burdens of duty placed upon the Maiden Officiant and her daughter.

In the wake of this crisis, Dumai's priorities become clearer—her devotion to both her mother and their sacred path on the mountain defines her identity. As the chapter culminates in this critical moment of vulnerability and care, the latent questions surrounding the saltwalker, the climber, and their broader implications for Dumai and the temple's future continue to linger, setting the stage for the challenges and revelations to come.

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Chapter 8: 5 West

Chapter 5: West

As the Longstride ship approached the shores of Inys, Wulfert Glenn stood on deck, absorbing the beauty of the rugged cliffs and the splashing waves beneath a clear blue sky. It had been three long years since he had last seen his homeland. The air was alive with the sounds of gulls, the slap of sails, and a feeling of anticipation. His friend Regny, a formidable figure and heir to Skiri Longstride, joined him, expressing her indifference to their destination.

When King Bardholt approached, towering and powerful in his presence, Wulf immediately dropped to a respectful stance, acknowledging the honor bestowed upon him. The king praised the successful voyage and expressed longing for his daughter Glorian, whom they were about to celebrate. The king's promise to make Wulf his cupbearer was significant, as this role was typically held by individuals of high trust. The playful exchange revealed both their camaraderie and the heavy expectations of Wulf to maintain propriety, particularly regarding his unsanctioned flirtation with Regny.

As they sailed further, the gravity of their duties began to settle on Wulf. He longed to reconnect with his family but also felt the weight of his revelations

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concerning Regny's future. This desire for human connection contrasted sharply with the king's aversion to scandal, especially regarding his daughter's impending commendation, which was due to unfold shortly.

Meanwhile, in a bathing chamber filled with warmth and sunlight, Glorian, Bardholt's daughter, navigated her own struggles. Recently injured in a riding accident, she found herself unable to participate fully in the ceremonial dance that awaited her as her formal introduction to society. As she prepared for her commendation, her companions—a mixture of noble friends and skilled attendants—engaged her in light-hearted banter, which masked deeper currents of tension surrounding the upcoming political event.

Bound by duty, Glorian learned that tomorrow would not only mark the commencement of her public life as an eligible princess but also the arrival of a delegation from the controversial state of Carmentum. Her mother, Queen Sabran, expected the commendation to display strength and unity amidst growing republican sentiments, which her mother believed were a threat to their monarchy and the virtues it upheld.

Glorian sensed her mother's relentless ambition and the strategic calculations at play. In a private moment, Queen Sabran imparted the need for her daughter to remain poised and graceful, especially in the face of potential suitors who would be present. Despite Glorian's reluctance to step into this world of courtly politics and expectations, she vowed to honor her family's

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legacy and the Saint, whose virtues governed their lives.

As Glorian sat in the bath, her thoughts turned to the weight of her responsibilities and how she would navigate the impending event. Her mother's stern expectations chafed against her youthful desires for freedom

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Chapter 9 Summary: 6 South

Chapter 6 Summary

In a quiet part of the Priory, Tunuva and Esbar find solace in each other's arms as they explore their passionate connection. The incense from a bird-shaped burner fills the air, creating an intimate atmosphere that reflects their heightened desires. Both young women navigate the complexities of their bodies and emotions, sharing their struggles and joys. Tunuva's recent conversation with Saghul, their Prioress, had sparked a wave of reflection about their purpose and the sacrifices they make.

Their bond deepens as they recount memories, particularly a time they were separated due to Saghul's reprimand for their affection. The Prioress had sought to ensure they understood the gravity of their roles as brides of the Mother Tree, emphasizing that their love must not eclipse their duty. Esbar's resolute and fiery nature complements Tunuva's quiet strength, and they reflect on the lighter and heavier burdens of their choices, including their feelings toward the rebellious young woman, Siyu, who has recently faced punishment for her defiance.

As they share food and wine, Tunuva and Esbar discuss their duties and the repercussions of straying from the rules. Esbar's protective nature comes

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through as she acknowledges her role in raising Siyu, who struggles with her own burdens and the consequences of a youthful rebellion against their strict society's rules. Tunuva expresses a wish to see Siyu, showing her nurturing disposition as she forms a deeper understanding of their youngest sister's turmoil.

The chapter explores themes of love, duty, and sacrifice in a setting governed by tradition and the expectations of the Mother. Tunuva's positions as both a lover and a tomb keeper highlight her ties to the past, as she reflects on her responsibilities toward her sisters and the legacy of Cleolind Onjenyu, the Mother who once vanquished the terrifying Nameless One.

Through these intimate moments and discussions, we gain insight into the struggles faced by women within the Priory as they balance personal desires with communal obligations. Tunuva remains dedicated not just to her duties, but to the nurturing of their relationships and the remembrance of shared histories that bind them all together.

Chapter 7 Summary

Tunuva's duties as the tomb keeper continue as she honors the memory of

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Cleolind Onjenyu, the Mother of the Priory. Each night, she descends to the burial chamber, guided by her ichneumon, Ninuru, who represents loyalty and the connection to their sacred duty. In this intimate ritual, Tunuva performs the final rites, lighting lamps and offering prayers, embodying the deep reverence they hold for their heritage and the lives lost during the reign of the Nameless One.

The rich, ceremonial atmosphere encapsulates the Priory's values, where duty to the Mother and remembrance of sacrifices shape their lives. Tunuva reflects on the history of the Nameless One's reign of terror and the means by which Cleolind had liberated her people, intertwining their personal struggles with the broader narrative of their society. The chapter emphasizes Tunuva's commitment to preserve the stories of their past, encapsulated in traditional rites and rituals that resonate deeply within the shared identity of the sisters.

After tending to her responsibilities, Tunuva seeks connection with her sister Siyu, who faces her own challenges. Despite the punishment imposed on her for her reckless behavior, Tunuva's instinct to comfort stems from her deep affection and understanding of the young woman's need for redemption and guidance. In seeking to uplift Siyu, Tunuva not only addresses the immediate concerns of her sister's distress but reaffirms their familial bond amidst their struggles within the rigid structures of the Priory.

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The chapter culminates in a powerful storytelling moment as Tunuva listens to Siyu recount the legend of Cleolind battling the Nameless One. This tale is foundational to their identity and serves as a reminder of their purpose as protectors. Cleolind's tale encapsulates the ideals they strive to uphold—courage, sacrifice, and the indomitable spirit that unites them against chaos.

Ultimately, the chapter weaves together the themes of duty, familial love, and the confluence of personal and collective histories, solidifying the foundation on which their identities within the Priory stand. It evokes a sense of historical continuity that would guide them in facing the unknown future and the lurking threats to their tranquility.

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Chapter 10 Summary: 7 West

Summary of Chapters 7 & 8

Chapter 7 opens with Princess Glorian Hraustr Berethnet anxiously awaiting her commendation, an event marking her transition into adulthood. Ideally, she imagines feeling blessed and ready for her forthcoming betrothal, but the reality is vastly different. Despite her clear lineage to the revered Saint Halgalant, Glorian still feels like an imposter, tormented by physical pain from a recent injury and a complete disinterest in her suitors.

Her friend Helisent joins her, imparting her own experience of unmet expectations surrounding maturity and royal duties. Soon, they are joined by Florell and others to prepare Glorian for the big day. Meanwhile, in a nearby village, Wulf and his companion Regny discuss their lives as they prepare to serve King Bardholt at the Feast of Late Autumn, an event that promises to be full of significance.

As the festivities kick off at Drouthwick Castle, Glorian is overwhelmed by the splendid banquet laid out before her. Guests fill the Great Hall, and the atmosphere is filled with excitement. Among the attendees is the Decreeer, Numun, and her advisor, Arpa Nerafriss, representing the Carmentum delegation. Their arrival symbolizes the intricate political ties existing in the

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realm.

Glorian observes the festivities with mixed feelings — pride, discomfort, and ultimately disappointment as her first suitor proves socially inept and an outsider among seasoned courtiers. Moments of levity quickly turn to discomfort when her broken arm is accidentally knocked, triggering a painful episode that drives her to seek refuge from the chaotic scene.

Stumbling upon a private encounter in the musician's gallery, she harshly confronts the young couple lurking there, only to suffer from pain and nausea shortly afterward. In an attempt to escape the crowd's mounting concern, she darts into a less populated area of the castle, where she becomes ill, her earlier hope of finding acceptance overshadowed by embarrassment and physical agony.

Later, as the evening continues, Glorian finds herself at the high table amidst a formal gathering. Eventually seated next to Magnaust Vatten, another of her suitors, she endures his unrelenting criticisms of other territories — a conversation riddled with tension and disinterest. Glorian remains distracted, longing for more gallant and entertaining interactions, especially as her mother, Queen Sabran, navigates through complex politics with deftness.

The chapter culminates in a sudden twist as King Bardholt surprises everyone by entering the hall to join the festivities, thrilling Glorian with his

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unexpected appearance. His arrival is met with enthusiasm from the guests, and he immediately seeks out his daughter, honoring her commendation in front of all. The emotional surge at this moment contrasts sharply with Glorian's earlier anxieties, filling her with joy and pride as she embraces her long-awaited connection to her father, affirming her place within the royal family and reigniting her hope for the future.

Chapter 8 centers on the explorations of alliances and familial bonds. Glorian's feelings of connection run deep as she adjusts to the affection and pride extended toward her by both her father and guests. This chapter establishes the importance of loyalty and image within the royal context, as well as the struggles youth face in embodying their lineage.

Thus, as the complex web of relationships deepens, intertwined with the expectations laid upon Glorian as a princess, her journey into womanhood continues to evolve, marked by trials of pain yet illuminated by bonds of love, duty, and burgeoning agency. The story captures the tensions and richness of court life, setting the stage for Glorian's growth amid external and internal conflicts.

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Chapter 11 Summary: 8 South

Chapter 8: South

In the heart of the mystical Lasian Basin, Tunuva, accompanied by her loyal ichneumons Ninuru and Hidat Janudin, embarks on a hunt. The dense forest is a living entity, lush with history and interconnected ecosystems, forming a backdrop that even the most gifted poets struggle to capture. As they navigate through the undergrowth, the sight of a white-tailed longhorn breaks the tranquility, inspiring a rush of adrenaline in the hunters.

The chase intensifies, with the ichneumons deftly maneuvering through the terrain. Tunuva, a skilled archer, readies her bow as the majestic longhorn flees. Despite her depleted magic, her accuracy remains sharp; she lands a hit, allowing Esbar, another skilled hunter, to execute the kill. The act is visceral and primal, a testament to their survival skills. As they prepare to gather their prize, Tunuva notices subtle indicators that her mentee, Hidat, is troubled. In a conversation away from the excitement of the hunt, Hidat expresses her insecurities regarding her future fruit-bearing, influenced by the earlier decision to remove a crucial rope from a sacred tree.

Meanwhile, the comrades share a moment of camaraderie and introspection by the River Minara, with Tunuva nurturing Hidat's fears while wishing

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Esbar would pay attention to the softer needs of their group. The bond among these women forms a tapestry of trust, strength, and personal battles, reflective of their deep commitments to one another and to their roles.

As Tunuva heads toward the Priory to fulfill her duties, she traverses through hidden wardings that keep the sacred enclave safe. Entering the Bridal Chamber, she finds Saghul, the Prioress, discussing plans regarding the wayward Siyu uq-N ra. The pivotal decision emerges to the court, an opportunity fraught with promise and risk. Tunuva's relief is palpable; she knows Siyu is capable and will make them proud. However, Saghul highlights the importance of Tunuva's role in guiding Esbar, hinting at a deeper understanding of influence and responsibility.

In the deep quiet of night, Tunuva engages in a ritual that echoes her past, seeking strength from the sacred tree. As she consumes the enriching fruit, she feels rejuvenated—connected to the core of her power. The serene night amplifies her senses, illuminating the depths of her emotions as she seeks balance in her role as both a guardian and a guide.

Chapter 9

Later, Tunuva's visit to Siyu reveals a darker turn of events. Stepping into the initiates' quarters, she seeks to encourage Siyu about her impending kindling. However, what she discovers instead sends shockwaves through

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her. Siyu, battling the physical effects of illness, reveals that she has missed two menstrual cycles—an indication that she may be pregnant.

The conversation quickly escalates as Tunuva grapples with the implications of Siyu's revelation. The rules of the Priory are clear: an initiate must not bear children before her kindling. The urgency of the situation hangs heavy in the air as Tunuva seeks the identity of the father, realizing that he is from outside their sacred community. This knowledge complicates their circumstances, casting a shadow over the hopes Tunuva harbored for Siyu's future.

In this chapter, the plot thickens as Tunuva navigates her role as a mentor, grappling with protecting Siyu while adhering to the strict customs of their community. The intensity of personal and communal responsibility heightens the tension, reflecting the complexities of their lives interwoven with passion, duty, and the looming threat of societal consequences. As Tunuva's protective instincts clash with the reality of Siyu's situation, the stakes rise, setting the path for inevitable conflict and choice.

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Chapter 12: 9 East

In Chapter 9, "East," the story follows Dumai and Kanifa as they ascend Mount Ipyeda, a sacred site tied to their duties as caretakers of the Queen Bell. Dumai is determined to prove her strength in the shadow of the mountain and to Kanifa, the aging bellkeeper she admires. Their shared history reveals that while Kanifa was brought to the temple as a boy to escape disaster, Dumai was encouraged by him to climb, despite her young age and inexperience. The Queen Bell, a monumental iron prayer bell with a mysterious inscription, serves as their ultimate destination, and their routine maintenance of it underlines the bond formed through trust and shared responsibility.

After reaching the summit, Dumai's thoughts drift towards her mother, Unora, who seems to have taken reckless actions by following a mysterious saltwalker through the night. This behavior puzzles Dumai, especially given Unora's normally cautious nature. Upon returning home, Dumai finds her mother in disarray, having injured herself while chasing after her concerns. Unora's worry about losing her family, a fear stemming from past traumas, has pushed her to act impulsively, revealing a deeper layer of vulnerability.

As Dumai cares for Unora, she reflects on her mother's well-being and their home. Their conversation hints at Unora's desire for change, suggesting a longing for escape to different temples or warmer seas, but Dumai feels a

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deep connection to their familiar surroundings. The chapter builds tension as Kanifa leaves to track down the Kuposa lady, who has gone missing at Unora's persistent urging.

The following day presents new challenges when Dumai learns of Kanifa's

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Chapter 13 Summary: 10 West

Chapter 10 Summary: "10 West"

In the royal court of Inys, Glorian, the young princess, savors every moment spent with her father, King Bardholt. Their shared meals on the balcony and discussions about his adventures fill her with joy despite the looming pressures of royalty. As guests depart after her commendation, the Carmentis linger until their final dinner, hosted by Queen Sabran and the Virtues Council.

During this meal in the dim Old Hall, Bardholt's hearty storytelling captivates Glorian as he recounts his exploits, unlike the uninspiring suitors she recently met. As they delve into a discussion about Magnaust Vatten, Glorian expresses her disinterest, leading to a lighthearted exchange that reveals her father's protective nature. It is here that they are introduced to Wulfert Glenn, a former childhood playmate and now her father's cupbearer. Their conversation sparks memories of carefree days spent with him and offers a connection to her past, shrouded in nostalgia.

The dinner takes a political turn when the Decree Numun from Carmentum questions the relevance of monarchy, instigating a tense dialogue that evokes Bardholt's pride. Queen Sabran intervenes skillfully, articulating the sacred

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role of the Berethnets in protecting the realm from the Nameless One, thus reinforcing the weight of their royal lineage.

After dinner, boredom sets in for Glorian, confined due to her broken arm. When invited by her mother for supper, she is apprehensive, reflecting on her complicated feelings towards her suitors, particularly Magnaust Vatten. A conversation with her ladies reveals lingering memories of Wulf, reigniting an old friendship amidst her current discontent.

Later, Glorian accompanies her mother to a sanctuary where a sanctarian reads a sacred story deeply tied to their lineage. As the congregation prayerfully acknowledges their legacy, Glorian grapples with the pressure of expectations within their royal bloodline.

In a private conversation after the service, her mother confronts her about her opinions on Magnaust, hinting at an impending betrothal that has been arranged to solidify political alliances. Glorian feels the weight of duty crushing her spirit; her mother insists on the importance of continuing their royal lineage, emphasizing that their roles require sacrifices for the good of the realm.

Fueled by frustration and a longing for autonomy, Glorian lashes out, revealing her true feelings about marriage and duty. The confrontation escalates, causing her mother to articulate the grave responsibilities they

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bear as protectors against darkness. As mentions of future generations emerge, Glorian's rebellion against her mom's expectations leads her to flee, overwhelmed by the emotions she can no longer contain.

Chapter 11 Summary

In the aftermath of her heated exchange with Queen Sabran, Glorian is engulfed in a whirlwind of emotion. As she runs through the castle, tears streaming down her face, she inadvertently encounters her father, who is alarmed by her distress. His tender concern touches her deeply, prompting an eruption of grief that she had kept hidden. Glorian realizes the immense pressure of her royal obligations threatens her sense of identity and desires.

Feeling trapped within the expectations of her royal lineage, Glorian's longing for freedom and autonomy collides fiercely with the demands of her role as a princess. As she contemplates her future, the weight of her family's legacy becomes increasingly suffocating, fueling her desire to break free from the predetermined path laid out before her.

Through these emotional struggles, Glorian begins to acknowledge the conflict between her personal aspirations and the burdens of royalty, setting the stage for her journey towards self-discovery amidst the political

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machinations and expectations of her mother's choices.

As her father holds her close, Glorian's vulnerability grounds the chapter in familial love, even as she grapples with her reality as the heir to a burdened throne. The themes of duty, identity, and personal desire weave through her character development, revealing the complexity of royal life and the sacrifices it demands.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The conflict between personal desires and societal expectations

Critical Interpretation: In the midst of Glorian's tumultuous struggle with her royal duties, you may find inspiration in her journey of self-discovery and the courage to confront societal expectations. This chapter reminds you that it's okay to acknowledge your feelings of frustration and desire for autonomy. Just like Glorian, you can learn to navigate the pressures imposed by family, culture, or career, allowing your personal dreams and aspirations to coexist with your responsibilities. Embracing your true self while acknowledging your obligations can lead to profound growth, encouraging you to carve a path that honors both your identity and the legacies entrusted to you.

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Chapter 14 Summary: 11 South

In Chapter 11, titled "South," the narrative shifts to a tense conversation between Tunuva and Esbar in the Priory. Esbar is relaxing with a drink when Tunuva arrives, visibly distressed about a troubling situation involving Siyu, a young woman from their community. Esbar's companion, Jeda, has just woken from a nightmare, setting a somber tone as Esbar expresses her concern for the girl.

Tunuva lays out a dire revelation: Siyu has become involved with an outsider named Anyso, a boy from Carmentum, who she encountered after a perilous incident by the river. Tunuva recounts how Siyu met Anyso while he was trying to mend a raft to explore the Lasian Basin—a risky endeavor that suggests his intentions are innocent. However, the stakes are high; Siyu is pregnant and has been secretly meeting Anyso, which, according to the Priory's teachings, is considered a catastrophic breach of their rules about secrecy and isolation.

Esbar, shocked and angered by the news, confronts Tunuva about the implications of Siyu's decisions. She argues that maintaining the secrecy of the Priory is paramount, as the exposure of their existence could lead to dire consequences. Tunuva, however, defends Siyu, suggesting that she felt trapped and yearning for freedom, perhaps feeling stifled by the Priory's restrictive environment.



Their discussion escalates, highlighting their differing perspectives—Esbar's hardline adherence to tradition versus Tunuva's empathy for Siyu. Esbar insists on informing Saghul, the leader of the Priory, arguing that Siyu's actions jeopardize their very existence. Tunuva, desperate to protect her friend, proposes an alternative: to offer Siyu a way to end the pregnancy using herbs, thus concealing the encounters from the Prioress.

Esbar reluctantly agrees but conditions her acceptance on the death of Anyso to ensure the safety of the Priory, a demand that weighs heavily on Tunuva. She struggles with the moral implications, recognizing that this would shatter Siyu's heart when she learns the truth. Ultimately, Tunuva commits to speaking with Siyu, vowing to support her friend through the turmoil.

The mood shifts as Tunuva searches for Siyu, realizing she is missing. After a brief encounter with Imsurin, who points her toward the spring where Siyu may be hiding, Tunuva descends into the cavern. There, she senses something is amiss as the water behaves erratically, indicating that trouble is brewing.

Tension rises as Tunuva discovers her ichneumon, Ninuru, is aware of Siyu's whereabouts, revealing that she has left the Priory with Lalhar and Yeleni, heading eastward. This revelation leaves Tunuva uneasy, setting the stage for potential conflict and further complications in the narrative.

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In Chapter 12, tension continues to mount as the focus shifts towards the consequences of Siyu's choices. Her departure with Lalhar and Yeleni threatens the delicate balance the characters have maintained. With their secretive way of life now compromised, all the characters must grapple with the repercussions of their actions, pushing themes of loyalty, love, and sacrifice in a world where tradition conflicts with personal desires. As Tunuva confronts the unfolding crisis, the stage is set for a deeper exploration of the characters' motivations and the lengths they will go to protect what they hold dear.

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Chapter 15 Summary: 12 East

Chapter 12 Summary: East

As the Emperor of Seiiki approaches the High Temple of Kwiriki, preparations ensue among its inhabitants to welcome him. This unannounced visit raises questions about his intentions and duration of stay. The Grand Empress, who had long since relinquished her throne to her son, joins her aides Dumai and Kanifa on a sky platform to ensure everything is ready for his arrival.

While the hot spring nearby signifies both beauty and danger—its once-boiling waters now a warning—the Grand Empress reminds Dumai to care for her mother, Unora, who is suffering from severe burns caused by an accident. Unora lies injured in her room, having numbed her pain with wine and drifting in and out of consciousness. Dumai, focused on her mother's needs, can't shake her curiosity about the Emperor's visit and the events unfolding in the temple.

Upon the Emperor's arrival, Dumai maneuvers her way through the shadows, keeping her distance as she guides her mother and the Grand Empress towards the Inner Hall. Unora's trembling reveals her anxiety about a mysterious connection to the Emperor; unknown to Dumai, they share a past



linked by lineage and loss.

The Emperor, Jorodu, converses with Unora, revealing intricate histories. He speaks of lost connections and exiled kin, and it becomes clear he believes Unora is the daughter of his ancestor, the River Lord. This revelation stirs deep feelings of longing and regret. Unora communicates her wish for a better future for her and Dumai, asking Jorodu to keep the past buried and allow them peace.

The dialogue intensifies as Unora confesses that Dumai's safety is at risk, particularly with other forces at play, namely spies posing threats to their family. The Emperor's intentions grow clearer; he understands the layers of the situation and seeks a way to protect them.

As tensions mount, Dumai captivates the moment where her mother silently urges her to flee to safety, igniting her thoughts about potential escape routes down the mountain. However, a powerful need for understanding draws Dumai to the Inner Hall, where she utilizes a hidden passage to eavesdrop, ultimately discovering more intimate truths about herself and her lineage.

In a pivotal and emotional confrontation, Dumai finally meets her father, the Emperor. Their meeting paints an ominous picture of longing and complex familial ties. As Dumai looks into his eyes, she recognizes her own features—a reflection of lost connections and shared destiny. With her heart

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racing, she confronts the truth of her identity, ushering in a moment that will irrevocably change their lives.

Chapter 13 Summary Preview (if applicable)

As tensions from the revelation in Chapter 12 permeate the atmosphere, the next chapter explores the repercussions of Dumai's newfound identity, her relationship with her mother and the Emperor, and the broader implications of lineage and duty. The fragile balance of power and familial bonds deepens, exploring themes of belonging, identity, and the struggle for autonomy amidst the expectations that come with royal heritage. The stakes escalate as external threats loom, forcing Dumai to navigate a world fraught with danger while seeking her own path in the unfolding narrative of her family's legacy.

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Chapter 16: 13 South

In Chapter 13, titled "South," Tunuva grapples with the gravity of Siyu's disappearance, clinging to the comfort offered by Esbar and her ichneumon companions. Tunuva recalls haunting memories of loss—particularly the tragic day she lost her family, which starkly contrasts her current determination to rescue Siyu. Esbar, recognizing the urgency of the situation, vows to inform Saghul and get Tunuva back to Siyu, assuring her of their joint strength in this mission. Tunuva's trust in Esbar is rekindled through their shared bond.

As they prepare for their journey, Esbar informs Tunuva that they must travel across the Ersyr River and suggests using horses despite Tunuva's frustrations about their speed and intelligence. Tunuva quickly outfits herself to blend in with salt traders, emphasizing the need for haste as every moment brings Siyu further from them. She meticulously packs essentials for the journey along with her crafted folding spear—an emblem of her readiness to face whatever dangers lie ahead.

Esbar introduces a new ally, Apaya, a commanding woman from Tunuva's past known for her endurance and connection to their shared heritage. With her grizzled ichneumon by her side, Apaya is prepared to lead them to the Harmur Pass. Acknowledging the risk and shame that could come from Siyu's actions, Esbar resolves to not let their lineage suffer further

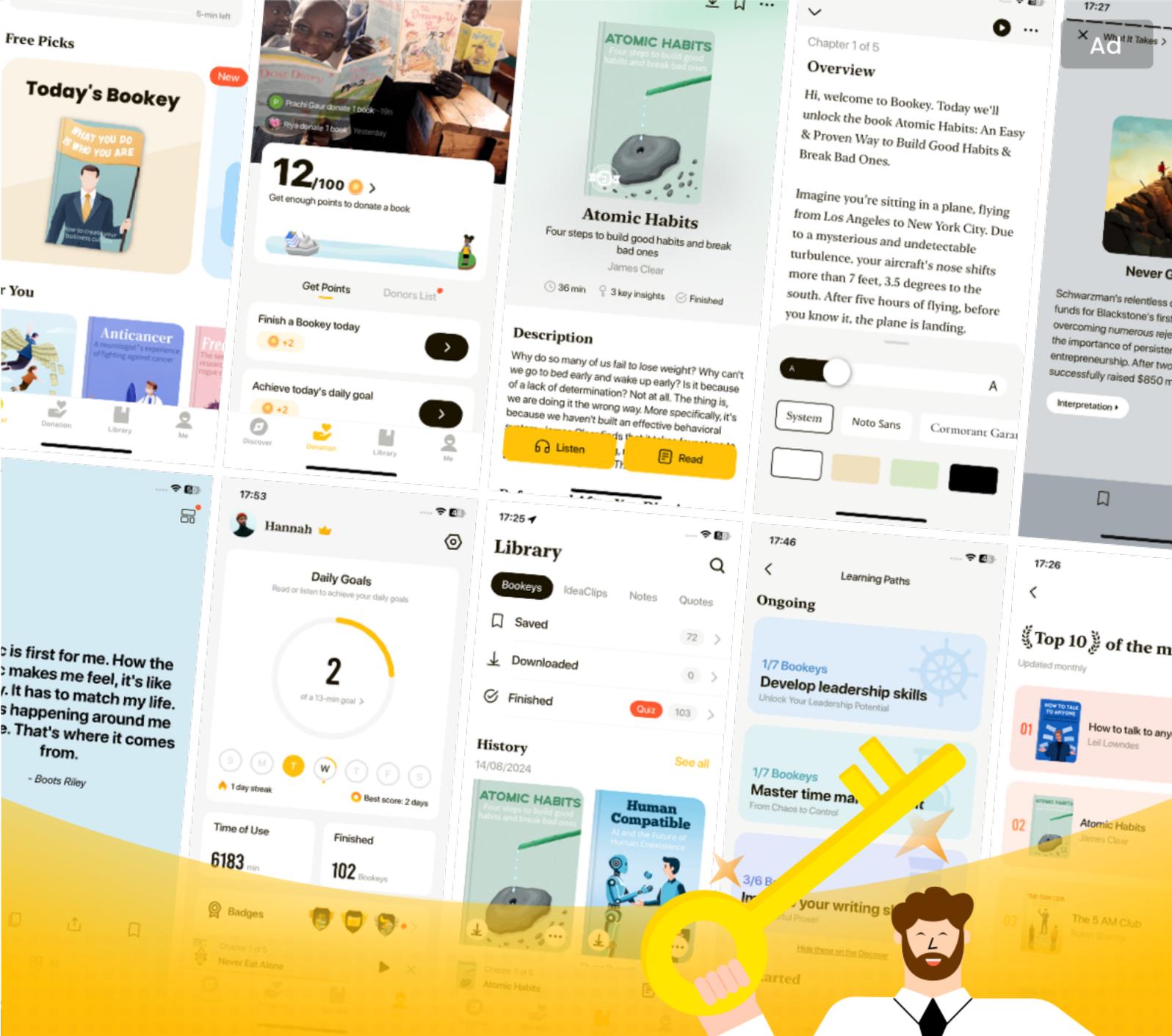


humiliation. The chapter closes with a palpable sense of urgency as they set off toward Yikala, marking the beginning of their arduous quest to reclaim Siyu.

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Chapter 17 Summary: 14 East

Chapter 14: East

The chapter opens with Noziken pa Dumai, the Princess of Seiiki, grappling with her identity and conflicted feelings about her past. She is in a private meeting with her mother, Unora, and the Grand Empress, her grandmother, surrounded by flickering lanterns that cast eerie shadows. Dumai asks Unora about her origins, starting a conversation that unveils a tumultuous family history steeped in power struggles and sacrifice.

Unora reveals that she hails from Afa Province, where she was raised by her father, Saguresi, following her mother's death caused by thirst. She explains how her father's determination and competence led him to rise from humble beginnings to become the Governor of Afa, a position normally reserved for noble families. The Grand Empress shares that Saguresi's promotion was controversial, inciting the ire of clan Kuposa, who historically held the River Lord position.

As tensions mount, Unora recounts how the emperors and clans manipulated power dynamics to maintain control. After Saguresi's zealous efforts to improve Afa, he is unjustly accused and banished to Muysima, leaving Unora to face a harsh reality without his guidance. She describes her



desperation during a period when a deadly sickness swept through her village, leading her to pray at the pool of a local dragon deity, Pajati. This act of prayer unintentionally ends with her being taken to court, where she meets the emperor—Dumai’s father—without understanding his significance.

Unora's life in court becomes fraught with danger as she discovers she is pregnant with Dumai, prompting her to flee for her daughter's safety. The bond between mother and daughter deepens as Unora reveals how she has hidden Dumai from the court to protect her. Dumai recognizes her own resemblance to her father, which might expose her lineage and create peril.

The emotional weight of Unora's choices hangs heavily as she bemoans her decision to stay close to Dumai’s father, wishing instead she'd sought refuge across the sea. The Grand Empress then steps in, revealing her own role in keeping Dumai hidden from the emperor, out of fear for her safety.

As dawn breaks, the Grand Empress recounts the history of past uprisings and the manipulative tactics of the clan Kuposa, detailing how they gained power and influenced the throne. She reveals that Dumai's cousin, the late empress, was molded to comply with Kuposa control, only to perish tragically. The narrative unfolds that Dumai's family has historically struggled against the political machinations of Kuposa, with her father facing continuous threats against his reign.

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Dumai learns of the ominous implications of her lineage: her younger sister, Suzumai, is slated to be the next heiress, reinforcing the Kuposa's grip on royal power if Dumai does not take her rightful place. The Grand Empress underscores the importance of reclaiming authority and fortifying the family's connection to the gods, revealing the weight of the responsibility Dumai must now bear.

Caught in a whirlwind of revelation, Dumai realizes that she has no choice but to step into the role of a ruler. The Grand Empress shares a careful plan, in which Dumai would ascend to the throne while her father rules from afar, upholding the family's legacy while bolstering resistance against clan Kuposa.

As Dumai absorbs the enormity of this new destiny, doubts churn within her. Despite her reluctance, she recognizes that she must embrace her fate for the sake of Seiiki and its connection to the gods. The chapter concludes with Dumai, feeling both vulnerable and resolute, emerging into the light of dawn. She rushes to Kanifa, seeking comfort in his embrace, signaling her emotional turmoil and the heavy burdens that lie ahead.

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Chapter 18 Summary: 15 West

Chapter 15: West

Wulf's journey begins as he travels south from Drouthwick Castle to Langarth, which is located near Hallow Lake. To save time, he opts to take a riverboat instead of riding, parting with some hacksilver to cover the cost. As he reflects on his memories, he recalls the young princess Glorian Berethnet, who bears an uncanny resemblance to her mother, sharing features like green eyes and long black hair with a notable forelock. During his voyage, memories of playing at Glowan Castle with her flood back, reminding him of their carefree childhood.

After a night of travel, Wulf arrives in the bustling port of Marcott-on-Hallow, where the vibrant market and commotion bring life to the area. By dawn, he hires a horse and rides through misty hills toward Witherling Water, feeling a chill at the sight of the haithwood forest—a place shrouded in dark tales of witches. For Wulf, the haithwood holds personal significance, deepening his apprehension as he approaches the moated estate where he grew up.

Upon arrival, he is joyfully welcomed by Riksard, a Mentish groom, and heads to find his sister, Mara, who is joyfully shocked by his visit. Their



bond remains strong as they share affectionate memories from their childhood. Wulf learns that their father, Lord Edrick, is occupied with estate matters but will be delighted to see him. Mara mentions their elder brother Roland, who is putting on airs as the heir apparent.

Wulf finds Lord Edrick in his study, where the aging baron has been poring over documents. Their reunion is warm and emotional, as Edrick expresses pride in Wulf's growth and accomplishments. They discuss the state of affairs within their family, with Edrick stressing the importance of duty and service to the realm.

Despite Wulf's brief visit, he relishes the familiar sights and scents of Langarth. He joins his family for supper, where lighthearted conversations and banter ensue over food and wine. Lord Mansell Shore and Roland enter, enthusiastically welcoming Wulf home and launching into tales that highlight the camaraderie within the family. They share stories about political tensions, including reports of boiling hot pools in the Marshes, reflecting on the potential dangers and superstitions surrounding their land.

Later that night, Wulf struggles to sleep and is haunted by childhood fears of a mysterious woman known as the Lady of the Woods, who was said to haunt children. Memories of the deathwatch beetles sound as he lies in bed, prompting him to confront his fears. Committing to stand firm against the chilling histories associated with the haithwood, he lights a candle and gazes

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out at the forest, feeling as though he is being watched. The haunting atmosphere evokes a familiar whisper calling him back into the depths of the woods.

Chapter 16

(Note: There is no text provided for Chapter 16. To summarize, please provide the content or context of Chapter 16.)

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Chapter 19 Summary: 16 East

In Chapter 16, titled "East," the tranquil yet poignant atmosphere of Mount Ipyeda serves as the backdrop for Dumai's final night before she embarks on a significant journey. Sitting atop a temple roof, Dumai reflects on her years of camaraderie with Kanifa, her steadfast friend who has been a comforting presence throughout her life. Their bond deepens as she grapples with the impending separation, filled with uncertainty about the future.

Seeking solace, Dumai visits her mother, Unora, whose red eyes reveal her emotional turmoil. Unora expresses her remorse over past decisions, particularly regarding Dumai's upbringing and the harsh realities of court life that lie ahead. Despite their shared love, Dumai reassures her mother that she values the life and lessons learned at Mount Ipyeda, asking Unora to join her in her departure. However, Unora declines, knowing her presence could place Dumai at greater risk.

As dawn breaks, Dumai prepares to leave the mountain. Accompanied by the Grand Empress, her formidable grandmother, she learns about the challenges ahead, particularly in dealing with the ambitious River Lord, Kuposa pa Fotaja. Dumai is reminded that allies are scarce, yet she finds comfort in the knowledge that Osipa, a family friend, will accompany her.

A crucial moment arises when Kanifa expresses a desire to protect Dumai by

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joining the palace guard, despite her concerns about him being recognized. He gives her a piece of their shared rope, symbolizing their unwavering connection and promise. Their intimate goodbye is filled with hope and determination as they prepare to navigate the treacherous court together.

In Chapter 17, the narrative shifts to Dumai's arrival in the unfamiliar world outside Mount Ipyeda. She awakens to the sensation of solid ground beneath her—an entirely new experience. Lady Taporo, her cousin, greets her with surprise and warmth, bridging the gap between family and the court life Dumai is destined to enter. Osipa, by Dumai's side, offers her witty perspective on the complexities of court, hinting at the dangers and intrigue that await.

Lady Taporo welcomes them to her home, where she promises to help them acclimatize to life away from the mountain and prepare them for the lurking rivalries at court. With a sense of awe, Dumai looks back at Mount Ipyeda, the majestic mountain symbolizing both her past and the challenges that lie ahead as she steps into a world filled with uncertainty and political machinations.

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Chapter 20: 17 West

Chapter 17: Farewell at Dawn

As the sun rises over the province of Inys, Wulf prepares to leave, attended by his sister Mara. Despite their playful banter, a heavy air surrounds Wulf, weighed down by brooding thoughts about his recent defiance of Regny, a woman of noble rank, and King's Bardholt's fragile forgiveness. Wulf grapples with feelings of inadequacy, questioning his worthiness of the family legacy and the virtues they uphold. Mara offers him wisdom, urging him to be kind to himself and accept that their father's and their past actions do not define their futures.

Meanwhile, in the Dearn Chamber, the atmosphere is lighter as Adela recovers from dental pain and Julain announces she may soon be betrothed to Lord Osbert Combe. This development raises discussions about the implications of Julain's potential title as Duchess of Courtesy and the sacrifices that come with such an alliance.

Later, Glorian, Bardholt's daughter, receives a surprise invitation to ride with her father. Despite her broken arm, his desire for closeness prevails as they venture into the beautiful queenswood, reminiscent of her childhood. At the secluded Twiring Pools, they share candid dialogue about fear, duty, and the

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challenges of being bound to the royal lineage. Bardholt provides a valuable lesson about the responsibilities of leadership, encouraging Glorian to embrace her destiny.

Their conversation touches on Glorian's impending marriage to Magnaust Vatten—a decision she grapples with deeply, fearing loss of self. Although her father shares his own fears about love and sacrifice within marriage, Glorian finally submits to the notion of her betrothal, contemplating future obligations rather than personal desires.

King Bardholt bestows a sword upon her as a symbol of her potential and lineage, solidifying her role as a princess and champion of Inys. He reassures her, saying that while she might forfeit some personal freedoms, love can find a place even in the most guarded hearts.

After their emotional farewell, Glorian shows concern for her father's journey, promising to be a strong presence for Inys. Outside the gatehouse, she interacts with Wulf, reminiscing about childhood and their familial ties. He expresses his loyalty, revealing a shared bond formed in youth. As they bid each other adieu, Glorian unexpectedly falls, tasting blood—a moment suggesting she may be more deeply affected by these changes than she realizes.

Chapter 18: The Weight of Legacy

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The following chapter continues to explore Glorian's emotional turmoil as she processes the heavy expectations placed upon her. While she prepares for the betrothal and her burgeoning responsibilities, she is overwhelmed by

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Chapter 21 Summary: 18 South

Chapter 18: South

Tunuva and her companions, Ninuru, Jeda, Esbar, and Apaya, journey through the scorching landscape south of the Spindles, known as the Grove of Stone. As they trek across the sun-blasted expanse, they grapple with the emotional weight of their mission—tracking missing ichneumons who might have run off with a boy. The conversation turns to Yeleni, a girl revered by her peers; her involvement with the ichneumons raises concerns among the group, prompting reflections on young love and the complications that come with it, especially in their treacherous world.

The heat is stifling, and Tunuva is acutely aware of the effects of the desert post-fruit. After a brief encounter with deer, Jeda's enthusiastic but impulsive chase leads to comedic banter amongst the group, highlighting the intimacy and camaraderie among them. Tunuva, feeling the oppressive heat, voices a humorous desire to escape their current existence, revealing her frustrations with the monotonous fare of dried mutton.

As they rest by a lake, Tunuva contemplates the weight of their task ahead, especially the potential fate awaiting Siyu, who lacks magic and is thus perceived as less of a threat. Conversations with Apaya reveal stark contrasts

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in love stories between themselves and the broader societal constraints others face—they treat love as fragile in a world rife with a history of hardship and loss.

Their dialogue meanders through royal affairs, with Apaya discussing her role in protecting Queen Daraniya, who delightfully embraces eccentricities within her court as she navigates political tensions, particularly with Yscalin.

Subtle hints arise about a seer named Raucta, whose garnered newfound attention, despite the ancient Ersyr's lingering ties to older beliefs.

As night draws near, the air becomes solemn. Apaya shares the legend of the Melancholy King, who, seduced by the illusions of love in a desert landscape, succumbed to his fate—offering a poignant parable on the dangers of desire unanchored by reality. Tunuva ruminates on this story as the group prepares to enter the foreboding Desert of the Unquiet Dream.

Days pass as they navigate treacherous terrain, finally arriving at the Harmur Pass, flanked by watchtowers, symbols of vigilance against the Vatten.

Apaya provides them with coins for their travels, cautioning against potential earthquakes and other dangers, while urging Tunuva and Esbar to keep each other informed about Siyu's fate.

After bidding farewell to their ichneumons, the two young women embark

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through the pass. Encounters with various travelers en route to Mentendon reveal a mix of hope and danger, emblematic of their fraught quest. Tunuva learns from a water merchant that one of the missing girls was seen recently in a green cloak, highlighting their separation and urging them to continue their pursuit.

By dawn, they pass through the gates of Virtudom, confronting the uneasy reality that they now find themselves amidst those who espouse beliefs they oppose. As they step into Mentendon, both Tunuva and Esbar feel the weight of guilt and rebellion against this new environment, resolving to leave it behind swiftly, aware of the precarious line they walk between duty and morality.

Chapter 19: The Pursuit Continues

(Continue summarizing the next chapter following the same logical and contextual structure, building upon the established themes of love, loyalty, and the conflict with societal norms.)

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Chapter 22 Summary: 19 West

Chapter 19 Summary – West

As the journey northward continued, Tunuva and Esbar traveled under the cover of night along the salt road towards Sadyrr, evading detection. Despite the absence of their tracking ichneumons, they relied on logic; the salt road was the most direct route. After several days, they paused at Svartal, a mining settlement known for its black salt, where the remnants of the region's diverse cultural history contrasted with the current oppressive religious dominance of the Six Virtues.

While resting in the inn, Esbar noticed a disheveled sanctarian, which prompted Tunuva to argue against her fear. Their brief respite concluded with a bizarre sense of foreboding, mirroring Tunuva's anxiety regarding Siyu's possible refusal to return to the Priory. Esbar reassured her that Owl would have to return despite her intentions.

The next day, as they resumed their journey, they encountered remnants of the once-great Buried City of Gulthaga, while the Dreadmount, a volcanic peak representing the epitome of fear among the Ments, loomed ominously nearby. Tunuva reflected on the power the mountain held, a harbinger of destruction that had once laid waste to the city with a catastrophic eruption.

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Attempting to make sense of their ominous surroundings, the sisters spotted Yeleni Janudin, a young sister who had foolishly chased after adventure against the Mother's teachings. Yeleni revealed that she had set out with Siyu and another sister, but they had not ventured towards Sadyrr as planned. The ground began to tremble ominously, sparking panic.

Suddenly, the Dreadmount erupted violently, spewing lava and ash, sending the three women scrambling for safety. Tunuva instinctively harnessed her burgeoning magical powers and protected Yeleni while urging them to move amid the chaos. The eruption's intensity brought up the primal instincts tied to her lineage, invoking a potent rush of *siden*, the magic binding their world.

Just as disaster struck, their *ichneumons*, Ninuru and Jeda, appeared, allowing them a frantic escape from the wrath of the mountain. Tunuva's command over the reigns slipped as lava cascaded down towards them, but guided by their instincts and the *ichneumons*' speed, they narrowly evaded destruction.

As they regrouped and fled to higher ground, the sisters looked back at Dreadmount, witnessing not just a natural calamity but also a manifestation of the dark forces they had sensed before. Thunderous sounds signaled something ancient awakening from the fiery ruin. Five shadowy forms

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emerged from the mountain, deepening the sense of dread that loomed over Mentendon.

Chapter 20 Summary – The Awakening

In the distant Drouthwick Castle, Glorian Berethnet awoke from a troubling dream. As she was consoled by Lady Florell Glade, she whispered ominously that "it's risen," suggesting an unsettling connection to the chaos unleashed at Dreadmount. This phrase, though fleeting in Glorian's memory, hinted at a significant and possibly catastrophic unfolding of events linked to the erupting mountain and the dark forces now at play across the realms.

Together, these chapters illustrate the duality of adventure and dread, focusing on the physical journey through a treacherous landscape and the metaphysical repercussions of the ancient evil resurgent—a theme that intertwines personal choice, heritage, and the looming specters of fate.

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Chapter 23 Summary: 21 East

Chapter 21: East

As Dumai approaches Antuma Palace, she is adorned in a grand ensemble reflecting the colors of the rainbow, a ceremonial outfit designed to make her visible and acknowledged by the people. With each layer heavy upon her, and her face adorned with pearl dust, she is reminded of the importance of her presence as the lost Princess of Seiiki. Although she struggles against a lingering illness – known as earth sickness – she must maintain an appearance of strength and composure before the court as she rides along the Avenue of the Dawn, where thousands gather to witness her return.

Dumai contemplates her mother, Unora, who grew up in this vibrant city, which is painted in a multitude of colors. Now at the doorstep of her new life, she prepares to meet her sister, Princess Suzumai, and their father, Emperor Jorodu. The emperor plans to confirm Dumai as his heir in three years, during which she must prove her capability to rule, as political alliances and the interests of the Kuposa would otherwise threaten her claim.

Upon arriving at the palace, Dumai is met with a grand reception, including her stepmother, Empress Sipwo, and her sister, Suzumai, both of whom regard her with varying degrees of warmth and scrutiny. The rich history of

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the Rainbow Throne, a symbol of unity between humans and dragons, looms in her mind as both an aspiration and a responsibility. She learns that her sister, like her, is a child of complex lineage, and is introduced to various courtiers, including the imposing River Lord, who immediately sets a confrontational tone with Dumai.

The River Lord, large in presence and influence, engages in a verbal sparring match with Dumai, probing her past and her legitimacy with pointed questions. Among those present is Lady Nikeya, daughter of the River Lord, who recognizes Dumai from their prior encounter at Mount Ipyeda, revealing the political maneuvering and surveillance at play within the palace.

As introductions wind down, Dumai receives twelve attendants, but is wary of the loyalties among them, particularly as rumors swirled during her absence. Osipa, one of her attendants, quickly asserts authority and advises Dumai on the dangerous game of palace politics. She tells Dumai that a step towards the throne is also a step into a battlefield fraught with intrigue, warning that her sister and the River Lord will leverage their positions against her.

Their conversation reveals the stakes of Dumai's quest for power: if Dumai fails to produce an heir, her younger sister could ascend the throne or perhaps another distant cousin could be installed by the Kuposa. Dumai feels

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the weight of her lineage and the need to serve the great Kwiriki, the dragon spirit at the heart of Seiikinese beliefs.

Determined not to surrender to her fears or retreat from the pressing responsibilities, she acknowledges the challenge ahead. The chapter closes with her reaffirming her commitment to serve Kwiriki and asserting her resolve to claim her rightful place, reshaping her perception of power and legacy in a world where flesh and fate intertwine deeply.

Chapter 22: [Summary Placeholder for Further Context]

(As requested, the summary for Chapter 22 can be completed in the same manner when the content becomes available.)

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Chapter 24: 22 South

In Chapter 22, titled "22 South," Tunuva and Esbar report disturbing news to the Prioress, Saghul, regarding an ominous eruption from the Dreadmount that has unleashed new, winged creatures upon their realm. Tunuva, still bearing the remnants of ash and the scent of destruction, reveals that during the eruption, she and Esbar conjured a unique form of fire, described as "red fire," which indicates an alarming surge of a magical energy known as *siden*—typically associated with the ancient elemental forces of their world. This powerful energy appears to be much greater than what they have previously sensed, akin to the legendary Womb of Fire being unleashed.

Saghul, taken aback by the potential implications of this newfound power, expresses concern that they may be facing a dire threat from the creatures, possibly tied to the foreboding figure they refer to as the Nameless One. She instructs Tunuva to extinguish the fire, cautioning against the use of powers they do not fully comprehend. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Saghul commands Esbar to rally the initiates for intensified training, emphasizing the importance of preparing for an imminent battle.

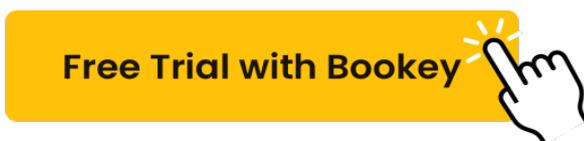
In a bid to protect their realm, Saghul assigns Tunuva the critical task of gathering intelligence on the creatures. They discuss the necessity of informing allies, including Gashan and Kediko, who govern adjacent territories. While Gashan might be preoccupied with her new role, Tunuva is



encouraged to personally reach out to her and Kediko to convey the gravity of the situation. The chapter also reveals internal tensions, as Tunuva learns that another individual, Siyu, will face consequence for bearing a child out of wedlock and will be temporarily secluded for reflection. The severity of her confinement and uncertain fates for other characters hints at the harsh realities facing them all.

This chapter not only builds tension with the introduction of monstrous threats but deepens character relations and sets the stage for both political maneuvering and personal sacrifices as they brace for potentially life-altering challenges ahead.

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Chapter 25 Summary: 23 East

In Chapter 23, titled "East," the narrative delves into Dumai's isolation and anxiety as she finds herself trapped in a palace filled with attendants, contrasting with her previous life on Mount Ipyeda, where trust was abundant. She struggles with the lingering effects of a debilitating sickness while holding her only trusted handmaiden, Osipa, close, especially as rumors swirl around her father's royal intentions.

In the haunting stillness of the night, Dumai feels a profound sense of foreboding, triggered by a taste of steel in her mouth. Something is not right, and this unsettling feeling is confirmed when Osipa informs her that Emperor Jorodu wishes to see her in the East Courtyard. Summoning her strength despite feeling weak, Dumai dons a robe and mantle, stepping out into the night, where moths cling to the lantern light.

Meeting her father, Dumai learns that they are to venture to a forbidden area reserved for the imperial family known as Nirai's Hills. The location is steeped in history, serving as a boundary to the Rayonti Basin, home to mystical sundrop trees and a quiet lake, rumored to hide a sleeping dragon beneath its dark waters. Emperor Jorodu, filled with remorse, reveals his love for Dumai's late mother and his worries about their family's waning power in the face of external threats, particularly from the Kuposa—a group threatening their rule. He articulates the significance of Dumai in restoring

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their family's lost connection with the gods, whom they once relied upon.

As they approach a small island within the lake, Dumai is confronted with the imposing presence of a large bronze bell, known as the Queen Bell, which holds the power to awaken dragons. Emperor Jorodu explains its importance: if rung, it prompts dragons throughout Seiiki to awaken for assistance, which is crucial for their survival, given the threat to their lineage.

Jorodu reveals past encounters with another dragon, Furtia Stormcaller, emphasizing the weight of Dumai's lineage and the legacy she carries. With resolve, he instructs his servant, Epabo, to ring the bell, unleashing a deep, resonant call that disrupts the night. From the lake, a shimmering dragon emerges, and Dumai experiences a rush of awe and tears as she witnesses the majestic creature arise.

Furtia Stormcaller addresses them both, inquiring about their motives. The emperor expresses his desire for wisdom and clarification on Dumai's worthiness as his heir, leading to a moment of recognition between the dragon and Dumai. Furtia perceives a powerful light within Dumai, identifying her potential and affirming that she carries the legacy of a "woken star," suggesting great promise for the future.

This chapter intertwines themes of legacy, trust, and the burdens of royal

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duty, propelling Dumai toward her destiny while revealing the deep historical connections between the land, its rulers, and the mystical forces that have shaped their fates.

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Chapter 26 Summary: 24 North

Chapter 24: North

In the heart of the hall, a vibrant feast unfolds under the gaze of King Bardholt and the Chieftain of Solnótt. The tables are filled with sumptuous dishes, and the air is thick with laughter and storytelling, drawing Wulf into the warmth of camaraderie. Sitting among his lith—his household troop—he feels comforted but also burdensome thoughts of his family back in Inys. Wulf, alongside his friends Vell, Sauma, Thrit, and others, enjoys the lively tales shared by older warriors from the North, but an uneasy tension lingers in the backdrop, brought on by recent volcanic eruptions from the Dreadmount and fears surrounding Bardholt's leadership.

Sauma, the keenest archer and a chieftain's daughter, shares her thoughts with Wulf, highlighting the uncertainty caused by Bardholt's alliance with the queen, whose divinity is questioned. Their mood shifts when the storytelling takes a darker turn, with an elder recounting the tale of a witch he claimed to have slain, leading to a heated exchange about witch hunts and tribal bonds. Tensions rise when Karlsten, a fellow lith member, cruelly confronts Wulf about his family's dark history, provoking a conflict that leaves Wulf feeling isolated and angry. He retreats into the cold night, grappling with his identity and familial connections as he remembers his

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sister Mara's encouraging letter, which provides brief comfort but heightens his longing for home.

The night is filled with haunting memories of the past, marked by a recent harrowing event that caused widespread fear—the Dreadmount's eruption. Wulf contemplates the possibility of the Nameless One, a dark figure rumored to have been awakened by the eruption, and the potential horrors it could bring upon their land.

In search of clarity, Wulf steps outside for fresh air, reflecting on his troubled past and feeling the weight of his reputation as the son of a supposed witch. He wrestles with the fear others have of him, particularly Karlsten's prejudice against his lineage. As he tries to ground himself, he finds solace in Mara's letter, describing her domestic challenges and reminding him of their familial bonds, further intensifying his sense of homesickness.

Later, the group is informed about a strange sickness reported in the village of Ófandauth, which has prompted Bardholt to send them to assess the situation. Despite Regny's leadership and bravado, Wulf senses her underlying anxiety as they prepare to journey into the unknown. The landscape is harsh, a reminder of their dire circumstances as they traverse the bleak Barrowmark, home to isolated communities that have been impacted by the oppressive darkness and the fallout from the Dreadmount.

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Upon their arrival in Ófandauth, they find the village eerily quiet and devoid of life. Locals have shuttered their homes as fear and illness permeate the atmosphere. Regny's determination to confront the situation leads them forth, but tension brews as they face foreboding signs, including the absence of livestock and the distinct scent of decay. The sanctarian they encounter warns them against proceeding, indicating they may be entering a realm of danger.

Wulf and his companions venture deeper into the village, their grim surroundings echoing tales of old curses, and as Wulf investigates a waterfall leading into a cave, he uncovers remnants of dark magic. His discovery fills him with dread as he realizes the potential malevolence residing in the caverns connected to the Dreadmount.

The chapter culminates in urgency and fear, with Wulf racing back to the group after his unsettling revelation, prompting them to evade whatever dark force may be awakening—realigning their resolve to prioritize the safety of the Issýn and the village as they struggle against the widening threats of their world.

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Chapter 27 Summary: 25 South

Chapter 25: South

Nzene, a vibrant city nestled amid mountains, was alive with summer's spirit, its inhabitants seemingly undisturbed by the ominous threat of the Dreadmount's eruption. Tunuva, a warrior from the Priory of the Orange Tree, stood atop a rooftop, witnessing the bustling life below in Abaso Place, renowned for its public baths and the bronze fountain dedicated to the high divinity of water, Abaso. The air, shrouded by a peculiar, persistent haze, hinted at darker times ahead, a season of unease shaped by lingering dust from the Burlah Desert that rarely clung for so long.

Despite a sense of impending danger, the people appeared carefree, a testament to their leader, Kediko Onjenyu. However, Tunuva harbored doubts about Kediko's awareness of the peril posed by the Dreadmount. Gashan Janudin, Tunuva's sister and Kediko's protector, was the first contact she aimed to engage. Gashan had once been a fierce warrior of the Priory, but years of court life had tempered her resolve, drawing her away from her roots.

As Tunuva walked through the city adorned with trelliswork and shaded by flowering vines, she felt the weight of familial strife. Greetings among court

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members were terse; the bond between Tunuva and Gashan had frayed under the pressures of duty, and Gashan had seemingly embraced the privileges of her role on the Royal Council, much to the disappointment of their kindred at the Priory.

Upon reaching the Upper Palace, Tunuva prepared herself for an uncomfortable reunion with Gashan, who, now adorned in courtly finery, barely acknowledged their familial ties. Their conversation revealed deep rifts: Gashan's pragmatic acceptance of her position clashed with Tunuva's fervent commitment to their familial and religious duties. Gashan, now enmeshed in the court's political intricacies, was reluctant to view the Dreadmount's eruption as a genuine threat.

Tunuva tried to impress the gravity of the situation upon her sister, but Gashan remained dismissive, questioning the validity of Tunuva's alarming claims regarding the emergence of wings from the mountain. Despite Tunuva's insistence that their duty to protect Lasia required urgency, Gashan's allegiance appeared split, as she prioritized her obligations to Kediko over their family's sacred mission.

When Tunuva finally met Kediko, she found him seemingly apathetic, dismissing her warnings about the Dreadmount. His humor masked a simmering disdain for the Priory, an institution he regarded as increasingly separatist and potentially dangerous. As Tunuva pressed for action to



safeguard Lasia, Kediko brushed her concerns aside, revealing his intentions to confront the dangers of leadership on his own terms.

The conversation spiraled into an uncomfortable stalemate, as Tunuva's insistence on the need for defense clashed with Kediko's refusal to acknowledge any threat. He doubted the Priory's intentions and chastised Tunuva for suggesting an armed presence at court. Their dialogue, fraught with tension, underscored the widening gulf between the ruling class and the guardians of Lasian tradition.

In a fit of frustration, Tunuva confronted Gashan outside, imploring her to recognize the gravity of elements that threatened their home—elements Gashan was unwilling to confront. Tunuva's passionate plea hinted at an urgency that brought their fragile relationship to a breaking point as Gashan demonstrated a profound dissonance between her current life and their shared heritage.

As tensions escalated, Tunuva resolved to report Gashan's apparent neglect of duty back to the Prioress, a decision marking a poignant divide in their familial bond. The chapter concluded with Tunuva's sense of loss as she grappled with the realization that her familial loyalties were crumbling under the weight of court politics and personal ambitions, leaving her to wonder how to unite the fractured elements within her family and defend a realm that seemed resigned to fate.

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Chapter 26: [Your summary for this chapter goes here.]

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Chapter 28: 26 East

Chapter 26: East Summary

Dumai, a princess accustomed to the cold mountain summers of her home, now faces the sweltering heat of the plains. The transition is jarring, and she reflects on the upcoming Day of the Golden Catch, a significant cultural event amidst the haze of oppressive warmth. After awakening from troubling dreams, she slips away to the Floating Gardens for some solitude, finding comfort in her friend Kanifa's presence. Despite her strength, Dumai feels vulnerable as she prepares for the day's ceremonial rites, particularly concerned about Kuposa pa Fotaja, a charming yet dangerous nobleman who has been vying for her attention.

Their conversation reveals concerns over Kuposa's daughter, Lady Nikeya, who lurks in the court and could threaten Dumai's tenuous position. Dumai relies on Kanifa's support as she navigates court intrigues and strives to outmaneuver those who may seek to undermine her.

Later, Dumai meets with her father, Emperor Jorodu, in the Water Pavilion. He expresses admiration for her scholarly progress but also reveals a deep sadness over their lost time together. They discuss the current political landscape and the enigmatic ambitions of the Kuposa clan, hinting at their

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influence and the potential dangers they pose. Dumai's determination to support her father and fend off threats from within the court solidifies her resolve, even as she still grapples with her childhood memories of her mother.

As the Day of the Golden Catch arrives, Dumai is excited yet aware of her obligations. The procession towards Lake Jasiro, a rare inland sea created by a former god, is monumental. Upon arrival, a grand ceremony is held, reflecting both the loss of divine favor and the richness of the cultural traditions amidst the growing tensions at court. As the offerings are made, Dumai's connection to the divine manifests unexpectedly when a dragon named Furtia Stormcaller emerges from the depths of the lake.

The spectacle stirs the crowd and rekindles hope in the emperor, while Dumai herself is drawn into a moment of destiny as she touches the dragon. Furtia calls her, pulling her spirit into a flight across the skies, fulfilling Dumai's lifelong dreams. Yet, this profound moment is laden with foreboding as the chaos brewing beneath Seiiki's surface is unveiled. Furtia warns Dumai of disastrous upheavals unless she responds to the call of the gods.

As the chapter closes, Dumai wrestles with her responsibilities to her family and her role as a godsinger, vowing allegiance to Furtia. This intertwining of personal duty and divine purpose sets the stage for her impending

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challenges.

Chapter 27: Summary

(Note: As the content of Chapter 27 is not provided, a summary cannot be generated for this chapter. If the content of Chapter 27 is available, please share it for further summarization.)

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Chapter 29 Summary: 27 North

Chapter 27: North

King Bardholt has spent hours in discussion with the Issýn, a mysterious group once known as snowseers, shrouded in shadows and secrets. Wulf, feeling restless, lays awake with his friend Thrit in the dim hall. As worries about a grave sickness looms, Thrit wonders what is being said within the private chambers, fearing for the future. The mention of the "Nameless One" and his visitation of destruction links back to dark tales of an ancient plague that still haunts the land.

As dawn breaks, the royal party begins their journey back to the capital, heading along the amber road toward River Dreyri. Tension fills the air; there are whispers of a village, Ófandauth, that is to be burned down due to potential sickness. Wulf is troubled by the news of the villagers fleeing and questions the decision to act so decisively, fearing for those who may still be unaccounted for. Meanwhile, the party travels through frost and snow, Wulf grappling with an unsettling bond growing between himself and Thrit.

Upon reaching an inland port, they encounter cogs from the Vatten, who have been sending ships in the wake of a devastating flood. Wulf makes his way to see the king, but before that, he shares a moment with Karlsten,

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whose cynical view on witches contrasts Wulf's skepticism. Their conversation hints at deeper mysteries surrounding their past and the dark forces at play.

In his audience with King Bardholt, Wulf recounts disturbing visions tied to the Issýn's presence and sightings of blood by the river. The king dismisses Wulf's fears, attributing the disturbances to a dormant volcano and the natural world's quirks rather than anything sinister. Bardholt's need for secrecy becomes evident, as he orders Wulf to courier an important message to Queen Sabran upon reaching Eldyng, emphasizing discretion.

However, as Wulf leaves, chaos erupts on deck. Struck by horror and dread, he witnesses the Issýn in a fit of desperation, tormented by a sickness she cannot escape. Her frantic pleas and destruction lead Wulf to make a fateful choice; in a split second, he drives his sword into her, silencing her suffering but carrying the weight of her demise. The ship is steeped in silence as Bardholt, realizing the implications, issues an urgent command to isolate anyone who has come in contact with the sick woman, leading to a grim atmosphere of foreboding and impending doom.

Chapter 28: [Content not provided for summary]

Note: The summary for Chapter 28 cannot be created due to lack of content provided.

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Chapter 30 Summary: 28 West

Chapter 28 Summary

In late summer, Glorian found herself in a state of inner turmoil, caught between the joy of the approaching Feast of Courage, which promised days of jousting and merriment, and the bittersweet reminder of her father's absence. Compounding her worries were unsettling dreams of a mysterious figure shrouded in mist, which left her feeling cold and disquieted.

As the summer days languished, Glorian's sixteenth birthday passed quietly and modestly, devoid of any lavish celebrations or courtly suitors. While her peers, like Julain, looked forward to marriages, Glorian felt increasingly alienated from the notion, wishing for the uncomplicated desires of animals, rather than the obligations set forth by the Knight of Fellowship, who dictated all souls should be wed.

Her introspection was interrupted by a visit from Sylva Yelarigas, a lovely Yscali woman, who sought her friend Helisent. Amidst the lighthearted conversation, Glorian learned of troubling news: a drought had ravaged the land, threatening the crops and the very fabric of Inys. This climate shift followed the eruption of the Dreadmount, an event that brought dread and concern given the apocalyptic history tied to the mountain.

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Later, a messenger addressed Glorian, announcing Queen Sabran's request for her presence. Her mother was preparing for a significant announcement, one that could change Glorian's future. In their meeting, Queen Sabran revealed that Glorian's betrothal to Lord Magnaust Vatten was annulled—delivering unexpected relief as the prince was to wed Princess Idrega of Yscalin instead. However, this relief was tempered by the realization that Glorian herself was still expected to fulfill her duty to marry.

The queen reminisced about her own marriage to Glorian's father, emphasizing the need for stability and alliances in troubling times. Meanwhile, Glorian contemplated her continuing isolation—remarking that her mother's own love story had emerged from desperation rather than romantic ideals.

Further plunging into her new responsibilities, Glorian found herself beside her mother on the throne as they welcomed a line of petitioners seeking justice and assistance regarding various grievances. While navigating the bureaucratic intricacies of court life, Glorian confronted a pressing and alarming matter concerning a series of livestock disappearances in the haithwood. A Lady Annes Haster recounted the disturbing events surrounding a missing knight and mysterious boulders that emitted an ominous heat.

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As the exchanges progressed, the tension mounted significantly when a man suddenly launched an attack on Glorian with a knife. In a moment of heroism, Queen Sabran shielded her daughter, resulting in chaos as guards intervened. The assailant was felled by Sir Bramel Stathworth, leaving Glorian traumatized yet safe in her mother's protective embrace. In this harrowing moment, the consequences of courtly intrigue and the harsh reality of their world crystallized, showcasing the ever-watchful dangers lurking within the castle walls.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The power of protection and bravery in difficult circumstances

Critical Interpretation: In the face of danger and uncertainty, the courage displayed by Queen Sabran to shield Glorian serves as a profound reminder that love can manifest in the most powerful ways. This act of protection amidst chaos illuminates the essential human instinct to safeguard those we care about, urging you to value the relationships in your life. Embrace the moments of adversity not as defeats, but as opportunities to exhibit bravery for yourself and others, cultivating a strength that not only supports those around you but also reinforces your resilience in overcoming challenges.

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Chapter 31 Summary: 29 South

Chapter 29 Summary

As autumn arrives in the forest, Tunuva returns home from her long journey, feeling the familiar damp warmth that clings to the trees. She and her companion, Hidat, are greeted by Denag, the elder healer, who informs them that Tunuva is summoned by the Prioress, Saghul. Tunuva is eager to bathe but is reminded that the spring is still hot. Inquiring about Siyu, a friend who is about to give birth, Tunuva learns that the Prioress has ordered no one to speak to Siyu during this time except for Denag and Lalhar, her companion ichneumon.

After cleaning themselves and their ichneumons at a pool in the valley, Tunuva returns to her sunroom, where she finds a warm welcome prepared for her. There, she encounters Esbar, her lover, who shares in her relief at Tunuva's return but mentions the unexpected arrival of a guest: Canthe, a woman from Inysca, a mysterious region. Tunuva feels an unsettling, inexplicable pull towards Canthe, along with an odd sense of nausea.

During their meeting, Saghul introduces Canthe, revealing that she is a mage and the last caretaker of a long-dead hawthorn siden tree. Canthe's presence invites discussions about the potential implications of accepting an outsider

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into their ranks, especially given the Priory's historical resistance to outsiders and recent concerns about their own safety due to the threats posed by magical elements linked to the Dreadmount.

Tunuva shares her experiences from her journey, mentioning disappearances near fire mountains and sensing dark, powerful rocks imbued with *siden*, suggesting a need to return to investigate further. Saghul ultimately decides to keep Canthe while Tunuva is entrusted to provide a detailed report, although she is forbidden to visit Siyu during her time of reflection—except during the birth. This brings Tunuva a sense of relief, knowing she can be present for her friend.

That evening, Tunuva is visited again by Esbar, who brings supper and inquires about Tunuva's well-being. They discuss the undercurrents of change within their family, namely Siyu's predicament, Saghul's frailty, and the arrival of Canthe. Esbar reassures Tunuva of their bond and the enduring strength of their community, trying to calm her worries as they find comfort in each other's presence.

Chapter 30 Summary

As the narrative proceeds, Tunuva grapples with the mounting pressure and changes threatening her family at the Priory. With the birth of Siyu's child approaching, the emotional stakes rise, emphasizing the responsibility that

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weighs on Tunuva as a protector and leader. The dynamic between Tunuva, Esbar, Saghul, and emerging figures like Canthe set the stage for internal conflict, especially regarding trusts and alliances.

With the weight of new threats and the fear of loss affecting every interaction, Tunuva's reflections culminate in a mix of hope and foreboding, showcasing her strength and vulnerability as she seeks to navigate her place within this intricate web of relationships. Tunuva clings to the belief that the bonds and commitments they've forged can withstand the trials ahead, ultimately instilling a sense of resilience within her.

In the essence of the Priory's philosophy of nurturing and protecting nature, the stories intertwine, leaving Tunuva prepared to face whatever challenges lie in her path—whether from within the sanctuary of the Priory or the external dangers beyond its boundaries.

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Chapter 32: 30 East

Chapter 30: Night Banquet at White Peak Hall

Situated grandly on the outskirts of Antuma, White Peak Hall—owned by the River Lord—hosted its yearly Night Banquet. Held under the stars beside a gently flowing stream, the festival was vibrant with courtiers enjoying various festivities while the imperial family, including Dumai and her sister Suzumai, savored the atmosphere. However, Dumai’s mind was preoccupied with the recent visit of Furtia, the dragon who promised to return when the moon was full, signaling a journey northward to explore the mysterious, sinister rocks spotted at Mount Izaripwi. Despite her father's encouragement to bond with Furtia, Dumai felt the weight of unresolved thoughts pressing upon her.

Empress Sipwo commented on the beauty of the banquet, and conversations danced around the enchanting ambiance of autumn. The River Lord, with his extravagant attire, entered the storm haven, greeting the imperial family enthusiastically. He expressed regret over Dumai’s absence during a recent hunt, followed by a veiled compliment that hung heavily between them, suggesting his insight into her intentions regarding her little sister, Suzumai. The River Lord's presence cultivated a tense atmosphere, especially when he alluded to Dumai’s dedication to her studies, hinting at his ulterior motives.



As the banquet continued, the River Lord introduced a poetic game that Dumai would participate in, where poems delivered by miniature boats would serve as a means to identify a hidden partner. This game aimed to further captivate the court's attention, while also allowing Dumai an opportunity to showcase her talents publicly. Amidst the merriment, Dumai grappled with the implications of competing against Lady Nikeya, the River Lord's daughter, who radiated confidence and skill in her dance performance.

Throughout the game, Dumai exchanged poems infused with strategic hints, all while remaining aware of the River Lord's keen observations and the hidden stakes—her family's standing at court and her own burgeoning destiny as a dragonrider. Each poetic exchange revealed the intricacies of her relationships within the court, including her complex feelings toward Kanifa, the guard who appeared drawn into the unfolding drama.

As the evening progressed, all eyes turned to Emperor Jorodu, who took the opportunity to announce significant changes regarding Dumai's status. He proclaimed that she would go to seek alliance with the House of Kozol of the Queendom of Sepul, only to follow that declaration with a shocking revelation: upon her return, she would be named Crown Princess of Seiiki. The unexpected announcement left Dumai in a state of disbelief, confronting her father's intentions, which ultimately stripped her of her agency, thrusting

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her into the spotlight of a legacy she had not yet embraced.

Chapter 31: The Consequences of Ambition

In this chapter, tension escalates from Dumai's public revelation as Crown Princess. The responses from those at court reveal the seismic shifts the announcement could generate: intrigue, envy, and support from various factions. While Dumai grapples with her newfound status, her relationship with her father—who now seems more political than paternal—becomes increasingly strained. Empress Sipwo's pale reaction indicates the potential upheaval within the royal dynamic and sparks discussions of loyalty and survival at court.

Dumai must navigate the precarious balance between her personal desires and her responsibilities as a forthcoming leader, especially as the court's whispers grow louder. Visions of her future with Furtia and the impending mission weigh heavily on her. As she prepares to embark on her journey, Dumai faces the duality of being a dragonrider: holding both the divine power and the potential downfall that comes with it.

The chapter concludes by establishing the heart of Dumai's internal conflict. She stands at a crossroads, bearing the weight of expectations and the hope of a prosperous future, yet mindful of the burdens intertwined with her lineage. As the Night Banquet draws to a close, the path ahead remains

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fraught with uncertainties, setting the stage for both challenges and adventures to come.

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Chapter 33 Summary: 31 South

Chapter 31: South

In the grand War Hall of the Priory, Tunuva prepares herself for a duel against Esbar, sharpening her focus amid an ornate environment dominated by the stunning Eryri mirrorwork and columns representing the nine handmaidens of Cleolind. Each column is not just a piece of art but a lineage, with the names of women etched below, signifying generational ties. Tunuva takes pride in having etched her own name among her ancestors, particularly Narha, renowned for comforting the Mother during her dark dreams of the Nameless One.

As the duel commences, Tunuva is haunted by a recent nightmare where Esbar, her lover and rival, fatally wounds her. Despite the tormenting visions, she hides her fears from Esbar while engaging in a dance-like sparring match, their connection deepened by years of shared history and competitive spirit. Tunuva's reflections during the duel reveal the tenderness underlying their rivalry; their pasts intertwine both intimately and fiercely.

Esbar is relentless in her attack, embodying the spirit of a warrior, while Tunuva employs patience and skill, drawing enjoyment from the fight as much as from Esbar's presence. Ultimately, with a swift maneuver, Tunuva

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gains the upper hand, pinning Esbar down. Their playful banter and physical closeness add depth to their relationship, suggesting that despite the harshness of training, warmth exists beneath their armored exteriors.

The sparring session is suddenly interrupted by a postulant bearing urgent news about Siyu, who is preparing to give birth. Tunuva hastily leaves to be by Siyu's side, demonstrating her loyalty and the bonds of sisterhood that permeate the Priory.

Upon entering the dimly lit birthing chamber, Tunuva is engulfed by memories of her own childbirth experience, mingled with pain and love. Siyu, the expectant mother, is distressed and in pain, seeking Tunuva's comfort. Tunuva musters all her strength to support Siyu through the birthing process, drawing on her past experiences and the lessons learned from both her own birth and her sisterhood.

As Denag, the midwife, prepares to assist in the delivery, tension rises; Siyu grapples with fears and physical pain that threaten to overwhelm her. Tunuva embraces her, encouraging her to push through each wave of agony. The atmosphere is charged with the invocation of Gedali, the deity of childbirth, underscoring the sacred nature of this moment.

After a lengthy struggle, Siyu finally brings forth her child, a daughter, eliciting a mix of relief and joy. However, the occasion also stirs deep



sorrow within Tunuva, as she is reminded of her own lost child, whose memory is etched in her heart. This emotional resurgence culminates in Tunuva stepping outside, where she is overtaken by grief.

The chapter closes on a poignant note, with Canthe, a newly acquainted figure, approaching Tunuva. Canthe offers empathy and solace, sharing an unspoken understanding of loss that prompts Tunuva to lean on her for support, their bond deepening amid shared sorrow. This connection illustrates the theme of collective grief and the strength found in companionship during personal struggles.

Chapter 32

(At this moment, details for Chapter 32 are not available for summarization.)

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Chapter 34 Summary: 32 East

Summary of Chapters 32 & 33

As dusk sets in the Rain Pavilion, Dumai, a princess and a godsinger, pens a letter to her mother, acutely aware that the River Lord keeps a careful watch over her communications. Her handmaidens gather around a brazier, immersing themselves in tales from "Recollections of the North," which speak of adventure beyond the Abyss. With the upcoming arrival of Furtia, the dragon she serves, Dumai resolves to set aside her worries and focus fully on her duties. However, ominous dreams and an unfamiliar sense of impending danger plague her thoughts.

Osipa, her trusted companion, seeks to comfort Dumai while secretly planning for a mysterious request to procure fictitious fickleberries, foreshadowing a need for cunning. Dumai's responsibilities call her to visit the Sepuli queen, a delicate yet crucial diplomatic endeavor, particularly with potential threats looming from the Kuposa clan. It is vital for her to secure alliances to combat these dangers.

Lady Imwo, another gentle figure at court, interrupts to inform Dumai that Lady Nikeya, the River Lord's daughter, wishes to speak with her. Despite Osipa's warnings against facing Nikeya alone—known for her deceptive and

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charming demeanor—Dumai decides it is necessary to meet her. The interaction reveals increasing tension, as Nikeya slyly insinuates interest in Dumai's friend, Kanifa, while ultimately expressing a desire to accompany Dumai to Sepul. This proposition is laden with risk; Dumai acknowledges that it could lead to complications.

Back in the hatchery, Dumai confides in Kanifa about Nikeya's intentions, urging him to leave the court for his safety. Kanifa surprises her with a declaration of his feelings, which complicates her emotional landscape. Despite the risks, he insists on accompanying her, citing their deep bond. Dumai reluctantly agrees, intending to use this journey not only for necessities but also as an opportunity to gather intelligence on Nikeya's motives.

As night falls and the moon shines brighter than before, Dumai prepares for departure. Her father, Emperor Jorodu, expresses concern over her safety but supports her decision, recognizing the importance of the mission. He equips her with a pair of finely-crafted gauntlets, signifying his trust in her. Furtia, the dragon, gracefully approaches, having come to take Dumai and her companions on their journey. Dumai and Kanifa ascend to Furtia's back, and just before they take off into the night sky, Nikeya, after some hesitation, manages to join them, securing her place despite the chaos of the moment.

Dumai feels both anticipation and apprehension as they ascend, gazing down

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at the receding lights of the city. As they soar into the unknown, she reflects on how fragile her world has become, a sentiment amplified by her father's distant figure, small and isolated against the grandeur of their surroundings.

With their destinies intertwined on this journey, Dumai, Kanifa, and Nikeya brace themselves for whatever challenges lie ahead in the enigmatic realm of Sepul.

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Chapter 35 Summary: 33 North

Chapter 33: 33 North

Eydag sat in a dimly lit cabin, her hazel eyes glazed over as she faced an unseen reality. Her hands, once strong and pink, were now red and lifeless, signaling the impact of a mysterious affliction that had claimed her vitality, much like it had done to two others before her. Wulf, watching her torment, reeled from the emotional weight of her situation. Despite a massacre he had survived, including the slaughter of the oppressive Issýn, Wulf remained unmarked by the same curse that was consuming Eydag.

Desperation filled the air as Eydag pleaded for Wulf to end her suffering, acknowledging the pain she would inevitably bring to others. Their bond was deep; Eydag had always offered him comfort in times of distress. Sharing a heart-wrenching moment, Eydag gifted him a sunstone, symbolizing hope and truth, as she faced the grim uncertainty of death. Vell, another companion, observed the scene in agony. The men confined with them had succumbed to the madness of the Issýn, causing panic as their bodies writhed in anguish.

As the situation devolved, Eydag's physical state deteriorated dramatically, prompting Vell to act. In a moment of sorrow-driven madness, he took her

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life to spare her further agony, shattering Wulf's world. In silence, they witnessed Eydag's spirit depart, burdening Wulf with a tapestry of grief. He threw his weapon into the fray that followed, ultimately leading to a haunted stillness in the cabin.

When daylight broke, Wulf barely recognized the outside world; his thoughts were clouded with sorrow and memories of Eydag's warmth. Regny and Karlsten entered, the reality of her death settling heavily in the room. Regny, who bore the weight of leadership, guided Wulf from the gruesome scene. Stepping outside, he saw the vibrant trade city of Eldyng, bustling and unaware of the plague shadows lurking nearby.

As the group moved towards safety, Wulf was acutely aware of his surroundings—the smells, sounds, and sights of life continuing while his inner self was fractured with despair. Vell sat beside him, grappling with the ramifications of their recent choices. Acknowledging their harrowing past, Vell spoke of honor and sacrifice, but Wulf felt the burden of guilt pressing down on him, fearing exposure of his dark actions.

They arrived at the grand stronghold of Bithandun, where neglectful echoes of Eydag's heroic spirit resonated in a hall filled with reminders of loyalty, loss, and the struggles they faced. King Bardholt confronted them, and Wulf felt the king's disappointment linger in the air. The king's demeanor shifted as he spoke of the necessity of sacrifice in leadership, validating Wulf's

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place in the narrative—but also highlighting the severity of their truth.

Wulf wrestled with his guilt, realizing his survival could be seen as unnatural—a gift or a curse from a Saint willing to shield him from darkness. Bardholt revealed the need for a funeral pyre for Eydag, a warrior he honored. Wulf felt heavy with grief but remained steadfast in his loyalty to those who had sacrificed, including Eydag. As the king ordered preparations, Wulf found himself wrestling with emotions that begged for release.

Exiting the hall, Wulf’s spirit was weighed down with the loss of Eydag and the burden of unspoken regret. But in the dark world around him, a familiar voice called him back to reality. Thrit, embodying warmth and compassion, offered support. Wulf, sharing in the embrace, broke down, finding solace momentarily in connection, even amidst the lingering shadows of death.

Chapter 34: [Though not provided, this introduces an emotional transition as Wulf grapples with the aftermath of loss and what it means for his future, as well as the evolving dynamics with his surviving companions.]

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Chapter 36: 34 South

In Chapter 34, titled "South," Siyu has completed her time of confinement following her recent childbirth and is now experiencing the joys and challenges of new motherhood. Saghul, who appears as a supportive figure, has reinstated Siyu's freedoms, allowing her to bond with her newborn daughter, Lukiri, in the sunroom. As the family unites to support her, Tunuva prepares to embark on a dangerous journey to the Vale of Yaud with Hidat, necessitating a visit to Siyu before her departure. Tunuva finds Siyu coping with the challenges of breastfeeding and offers reassurance, discussing the infant's name, which means "orchard child" in an old Selinyi tongue, reflecting both cultural depth and personal significance.

As Tunuva comforts Siyu, concern arises about Anyso, a young man who harbors feelings for Siyu but cannot be allowed to remain freely among them due to the risks associated with their hidden existence. Siyu feels trapped by the situation but expresses a desire for Anyso's well-being. Tunuva recognizes the peril they are all in and hopes for a favorable resolution from the ailing Prioress, who currently cannot perform the child's anointment.

Tunuva later encounters Imsurin, who confirms that Siyu is recovering well and discusses preparing longhorn milk for the baby. Their conversation reveals a supportive community response to the new life, as well as concern for the Prioress's health. They discuss the importance of the Priory's

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secluded operations in protecting their way of life, revealing layers of duty and loyalty within their sisterhood.

Introducing a new character, Canthe, who is exploring the Priory after being drawn there, Tunuva takes her on a tour, explaining the infrastructure, roles, and magical connections that define their community. The dialogue reveals insights into their societal structures, including the separation of paths for initiates and the significance of each role in their larger mission to ward off dark forces, particularly the Nameless One—a malevolent force banished by their ancestors. Canthe's intrigue grows as Tunuva explains the dangers posed by the Dreadmount, a volcano linked to dark magic, hinting at a dire threat to their existence.

During their exploration, Tunuva shares personal experiences regarding the emotional ties within the community and the weight of loss, specifically referencing her own heartbreak over the loss of her birth son. Canthe's compassion draws Tunuva into revealing her past in a moment of vulnerability that deepens their connection.

The chapter culminates in a tense scene where Tunuva senses a disturbance linked to the Dreadmount. She squares off against a mysterious stone that housed an unknown creature, leading to the appearance of a terrifying beast—a creature forged from dark magic and molten rock, setting the stage for an imminent confrontation.

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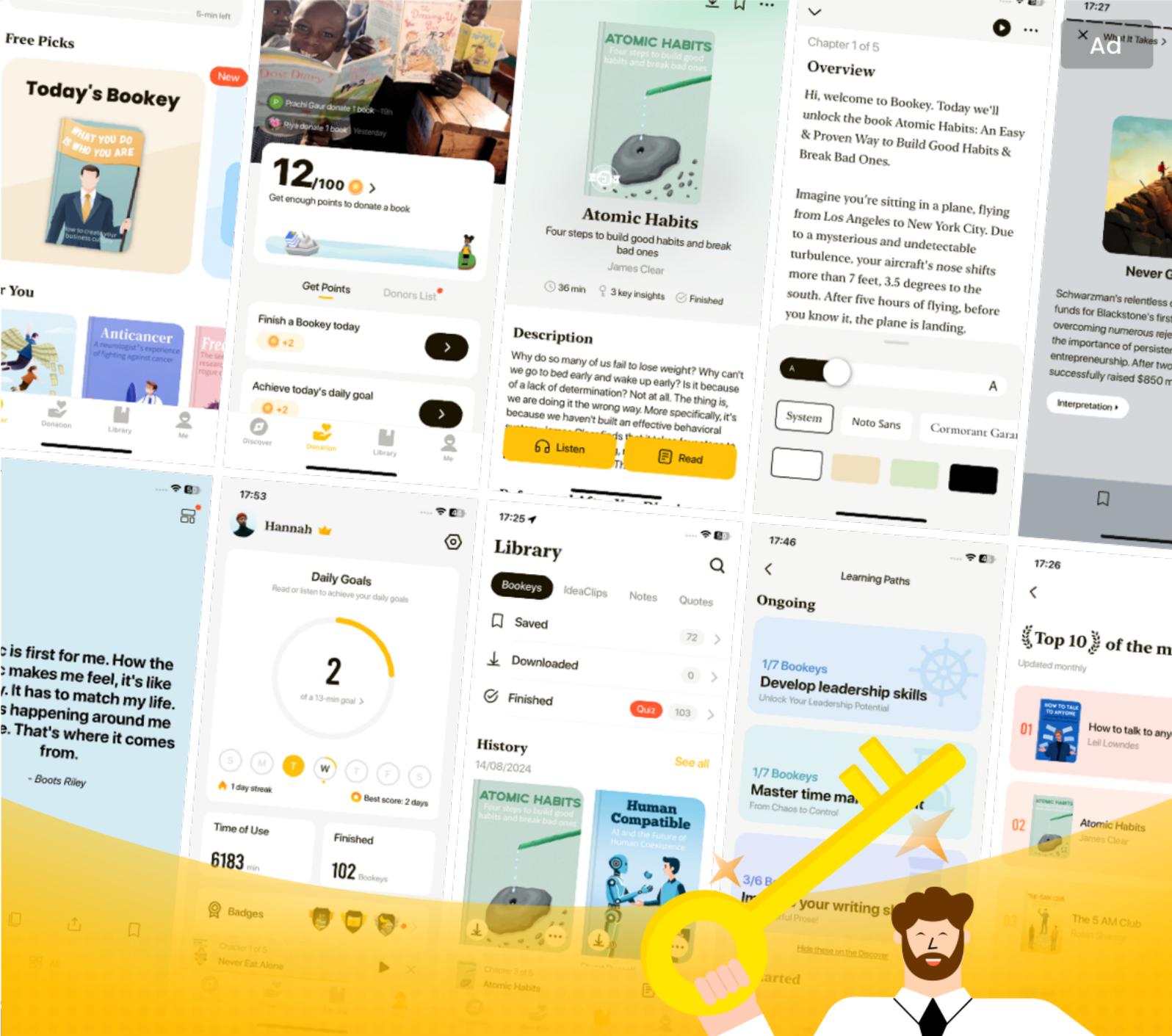
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Chapter 35, still pending a full exploration, should address the consequences of this encounter and unravel the ensuing chaos, further examining the stakes at play as they contend with the monsters lurking in the shadows of their existence.

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Chapter 37 Summary: 35 West

Summary of Chapters 35 & 36

In the ethereal setting of a dream, Glorian encounters a faceless figure engulfed in grey mist, exchanging cryptic dialogue that suggests a shared experience of dreaming. Their conversation hints at themes of loneliness and existential questioning, ultimately leading Glorian to awaken with a sense of dread. Having been plagued by a nightmare, Glorian finds comfort beside her loyal lady-in-waiting, Helisent, who senses her unease and offers a bath to soothe her. Despite the chill of her dream, Glorian's reluctance to venture outside hints at her internal turmoil following an assassination attempt on her life.

Her interactions throughout the morning reveal a stark contrast between her mother, Queen Sabran, who embodies stoicism and strength, and her father, King Bardholt, who brings warmth and support. The tension between Glorian's desires for parental affection and the demands of her status as a royal comes to the fore during their discussion, where she expresses fear and vulnerability in the wake of trauma.

King Bardholt reassures Glorian of her strength and resilience, sharing a personal story of his own childhood fears. As their bond deepens, Glorian

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grapples with her mother's cold demeanor, wondering why she feels less loved compared to her father. This illustrates the complexity of her familial relationships and the burdens carried by royal lineage.

Meanwhile, Glorian's curiosity about her father's earlier absence leads her to explore deeper truths about her pending responsibilities as heir. A conversation with Helisent reveals ominous tales surrounding Wulf, a boy adopted by Baron Glenn after being found near the haunted haithwood, as unsettling folklore intertwines with reality, casting doubt upon his origins.

Later that night, under the guise of meditation in the Royal Sanctuary, Glorian secretly attempts to uncover hidden truths about her father's missed visit. The secret passage she discovers leads her to overhear a tense conversation between her parents about political dangers, particularly the threat of an illness stemming from Ófandauth that has already claimed a peacekeeper's life. Here, themes of duty and expectation resonate as Queen Sabran insists on toughening Glorian, contrasting with King Bardholt's desire to provide her the childhood they never had.

Glorian is caught in a moment of emotional turmoil as she witnesses her parents' passionate connection and struggles to comprehend the complexities of their relationship, longing for her own understanding of love. This pivotal moment both deepens her isolation and fuels her determination to navigate her impending duties as a queen, even as personal fears and political

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intrigues loom large.

In Chapter 36, the upheaval of Glorian's internal world continues as Wulf, sensing her distress, attempts to accompany her back to safety. This interaction emphasizes her struggle for independence while underscoring the connections and tensions in her relationships, as she grapples with the duality of fear and courage that defines her immediate future. Glorian's journey unfolds against the backdrop of a brewing conflict that endangers her kingdom, propelling her toward a path of leadership she must learn to embrace.

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Chapter 38 Summary: 36 South

In Chapter 36, titled "South," Tunuva confronts the aftermath of a horrific encounter with a monstrous creature, the Nameless One, connected to the ominous Dreadmount. This eerie being, resembling a bullock with an elongated serpentine tail and iron-sheathed horns, was discovered dead in a storeroom, its blood dark and tar-like, evidence of the torment it suffered. Izi Tamuten's analysis revealed its unique anatomy, suggesting a blend of natural and unnatural forces at play.

Tunuva, shaken by the creature's presence, seeks comfort with Esbar, her confidante, as they discuss the broader implications of their findings. They anticipate the potential threat of similar beasts lurking within the rocks they had previously identified across their territory—almost fifty in the Vale of Yaud alone. Esbar expresses concern over the possible existence of these creatures beyond the South, drawing parallels between their own magic and that of the Dreadmount. This shared source of power leads them to question the nature of their abilities, particularly the destructive potential of the fire magic they wield.

Their deepening bond is tested when Hidat arrives with unsettling news regarding Anyso, a boy from Carmentum. The elder Prioress, Saghul, who had been bedridden, supposedly ordered Anyso's assassination to protect the Priory, a decision triggered by mysterious circumstances. This revelation

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devastates Tunuva and Esbar, who grapple with the moral implications of the act. Conflict arises as they process the discrepancy between Hidat's account and Saghul's physical state during the supposed order, leading to an atmosphere suffused with tension and uncertainty.

As the chapter unfolds, Tunuva's anxiety heightens. They surmise that perhaps Saghul found a final reserve of strength to issue her order without any of them knowing. Esbar and Tunuva come to grips with the heart-wrenching reality of Anyso's death, deciding to keep it a secret from Siyu, the younger sister, to shield her from further pain. The weight of their deception looms ominously over them, as Tunuva faces the moral dilemma of lying to someone they love while wrestling with her own grief.

The chapter concludes with Tunuva sitting vigil beside Saghul, who is now frail and unwell, and later finding Anyso's body, reflecting on the sorrow and forgiveness needed for their choices. Her silent prayers for forgiveness echo the profound sense of loss that permeates the chapter, illustrating the turbulent blend of duty, love, and the darker shadows of their reality. In the face of looming peril and internal strife, the sisters must navigate their magical legacy and the weight of the secrets they now carry.

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Chapter 39 Summary: 37 East

Chapter 37: East

Beyond the city of Mozom Alph, Dumai, a young princess with a connection to dragons, enjoys a refreshing swim in a cold waterfall pool, reminiscing about her childhood among hot springs. She is accompanied by Kanifa, a skilled dragon rider who has been mentoring her. As they wait for Queen Arkoro, the ruler of Sepul, to meet them, a sense of urgency permeates their conversation. Furtia, a dragon who has recently awakened from a long slumber, communicates with Dumai, expressing impatience about starting a search for something that threatens their realm.

As Dumai prepares for her meeting with the queen at the temple dedicated to a Queen of Spring, she grapples with her role as an untested leader and her duty to seek the queen's permission to act on Furtia's concerns. The temple brings her comfort but also reminds her of her absent mother. After a brief and tense encounter with Lady Nikeya, a member of the Royal Guard with a history of undermining Dumai, she tries to navigate the complexities of palace politics, maintaining her composure amid lingering tension.

That evening, Dumai dreams of a mysterious presence, suggesting a connection that transcends their physical separation. This dream hints at a

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recent catastrophe involving a fire mountain that has thrown nature into disarray. Awakening, Dumai confronts her feelings of longing and desire, then prepares diligently for her audience with Queen Arkoro the next day, further motivated by the underlying threat that looms.

Dressed in royal garb sent from the palace, Dumai makes her way to the palace of Queen Arkoro. The journey through Mozom Alph reveals the city's breathtaking beauty, characterized by marvelously crafted buildings symbolizing a long-lost unity among seasons. Upon arriving at the palace, Dumai is filled with awe and trepidation about the impending interaction with the queen.

Inside the palace, Queen Arkoro and her consort, King Padar, greet Dumai warmly, and a delicate balance of formality and familial connection unfolds. Dumai presents herself as an ambassador of her father's wishes, revealing her purpose related to the awakening of Furtia and the impending danger posed by malignant black rocks that have begun to disturb the natural order. The royal couple reacts with concern, disclosing their own experiences of unrest tied to awakening gods.

Together, they discuss the potential repercussions of Dumai's warning, particularly concerning the ominous fire mountain, Mount Yeltalay. As the conversation sharpens, urgency mounts when Furtia's presence is announced outside the palace. The stakes are clear: a journey to the Broken Valley is

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imminent in seeking the truth behind the disturbances.

Queen Arkoro grants Dumai permission to embark on this dangerous journey with the support of Sepuli dragons, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a relationship between their realms. In a moment of emotional solidarity, the queen conveys her desire for enduring friendship as Dumai prepares to leave, indicating the weight of her responsibilities not just as a princess, but as a figure entwined in the fate of both their lands.

Chapter 38: [Summary Placeholder, as the text is not provided]

In this chapter, the dynamics between Dumai and the royal family of Sepul are illustrated against a backdrop of unfolding plots concerning dragon awakenings and natural disasters. Themes of duty, connection, and the delicate art of diplomacy manifest, setting the stage for both personal growth and potential political upheaval.

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Chapter 40: 38 West

Chapter 38 Summary

As winter's chill envelops the landscape, Wulf trains fiercely with Regny in the queenswood, determined to sharpen his skills in preparation for an impending wedding—his own voyage to Vattengard feels imminent despite his longing for a return to Langarth. Their mock battle, set against the backdrop of a drifting snow, reveals the intensity of their relationship; their playful banter mingles with the stakes of their training. Regny, fierce and skilled, urges Wulf to awaken from the shadow of past loss, particularly regarding the recent death of her friend Eydag. Their playful combat soon escalates into an unexpected kiss, one filled with a raw passion that Wulf struggles to reconcile with his fears of intimacy and the weight of his sorrow.

Wulf's resolve to protect Regny through distance is swiftly dismantled by their shared moment of vulnerability, signaling a complicated bond overshadowed by grief and yearning. Regny expresses frustration over Wulf's self-imposed barriers, challenging him to confront his fears of loss and isolation. The scene culminates with Regny asserting her strength, emphasizing the tenacity of their people, the Hróthi, as she prepares to depart for a hunt, urging Wulf to see the physician, Doctor Forthard.

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Upon his visit to the infirmary, he encounters Forthard and the new assistant, Mastress Bourn. An examination of Wulf reveals the lingering effects of a mysterious sickness plaguing the realm, linked to a past incident where others had perished after contact with an afflicted individual. While the physicians collect samples and express gratitude, Wulf reflects on his precarious situation as the threat of illness looms over him and his companions.

Outside, the atmosphere is charged with tension as he meets Thrit, Karlsten, and Sauma, who are grappling with the weight of recent tragedies within their ranks. The stark contrast of the winter landscape and the urgency of their preparations for the upcoming wedding deepen the stakes of their camaraderie and battles.

As the story shifts, the arrival of Glorian, the Crown Princess of Inys, hints at the complexities of royal life and the constraints placed upon her. Their playful banter during sparring reveals both youth and the burdens of their respective roles in a world fraught with expectation. With hints of Glorian's own fears regarding impending marriage, the chapter opens a space for their friendship and possible solidarity against the backdrop of political necessity.

Chapter 39 Summary

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The atmosphere shifts as the royal wedding approaches, bringing with it the weight of Glorian's impending marriage. With her seventeenth birthday and the pressures of royal duty closing in, Glorian grapples with feelings of dread about her future and the dreams plaguing her sleep. Her lessons in Yscali become a struggle against the constraints of her royal existence and the interconnectedness of her fate with the natural world, particularly the whispers of the spirits woven into the fabric of her kingdom's folklore.

Determined to seek solace from her worries, Glorian decides to walk along Blair Lake, where she finds Wulf alone. Their light-hearted exchange about the frozen lakes and the Hróthi traditions showcases the deepening bond between them, characterized by mutual respect and understanding. She attempts to apologize for a past confrontation, seeking to navigate her own insecurities while also tenderly acknowledging Wulf's past, reaffirming the goodwill they share.

However, their moment is disrupted by the unexpected appearance of Lord Robart, serving as a reminder of the political machinations shaping their lives. Glorian's questions about the mysterious sickness afflicting Hróth elicit a guarded response from Wulf, emphasizing his loyalty to the king and the secrets that loom over them.

Their conversation grows somber as they reflect on their differing worlds; Glorian feels the burden of her royal obligations, while Wulf grapples with

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the weight of mortality and disease among his kin. The tension between them is palpable, revealing a connection that is both tender and fraught with the realities of their respective duties.

The chapter culminates in a moment of disquiet as Glorian finds an

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Chapter 41 Summary: 39 East

Chapter 39: East

The journey to the Broken Valley consumed nearly an entire day. Dumai, along with Furtia and King Padar, rode on dragons with scales reminiscent of polished iron. Padar, a member of the powerful House of Kozol, wielded a staff made of pure dragonbone that attracted wisps of cloud, underscoring his royal lineage.

As they flew along the coast, Dumai eagerly called out to Lady Nikeya, but the latter could barely conceal her discomfort due to the strain of flying. With a nose bruised from bleeding, she forced a laugh, commenting wryly on the refreshing nature of flight. The clouds obscured their view until they soared above a dense pine forest, where the dragons brushed the vapor away, revealing a grisly landscape below.

Mount Yeltalay emerged from the clouds, surrounded by a halo of fog. The pungent smell of decay enveloped them, mirroring the horrific sights Dumai had encountered earlier. King Padar dismounted cautiously and guided the group towards a stone gateway embellished with ominous Sepuli and Lacustrine inscriptions that warned of danger.

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As they entered the valley, they walked through an atmosphere thick with steam and a stench so foul it nearly overwhelmed their senses. All around them were remnants of a once-thriving settlement, now decayed. They discovered that this outpost served as a haven for scholars and practitioners, drawn by the earth's mysteries. King Padar recounted how they had come seeking knowledge but had left in a hurry, leaving behind valuable instruments.

Dumai's curiosity heightened when she spotted a cave adorned with an ancient mural depicting fire and a climactic struggle to reach the stars. Their exploration was interrupted when Nikeya inadvertently stepped into a hot pool of mud, narrowly escaping injury thanks to Kanifa's quick assistance. As they continued deeper into the valley, they spotted a rickety boardwalk leading to a gaping rift in the earth, where molten lava bubbled ominously.

Seeing the glow emanating from the rift prompted Padar to advise Dumai to return to Seiiki and warn the people of impending danger. He prepared to confront the brewing crisis. In a moment of anxiety, Dumai realized the magnitude of their predicament—exotic beings of fire and earth stirred restlessly below, signifying the potential for catastrophe.

Suddenly, from within the rift, a massive, frightening shape emerged, engulfed in steam and exuding an overwhelming sense of dread. Dumai was petrified as she gazed into its fiery eyes. Furtia roared in warning: the

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creature was too powerful for them to combat alone.

In the ensuing chaos, one of the Sepuli dragons soared to Padar's side, and he vanished from view, leaving Dumai, Kanifa, and the trembling Nikeya frantically fleeing toward Furtia. Behind them, the monstrous entity unleashed a deafening roar, igniting the boardwalk in flames, sending them into a desperate scramble for safety as the valley itself began to unleash its fury.

Chapter 40: Unfolding Danger

(Note: Chapter 40 hasn't been summarized yet, but it will continue from the climax established in Chapter 39, likely revealing the fallout from the dragon's awakening and the urgency of their quest.)

The tension in Broken Valley signals a pivotal moment, where the stakes evolve from exploration to survival, emphasizing themes of knowledge versus ignorance and the consequences of tampering with nature's forces.

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Chapter 42 Summary: 40 West

Chapter 40 Summary: "40 40 West"

In the middle of a mysterious illness, Glorian, the protagonist, is bedridden and surrounded by uncertainty regarding her condition. Initially diagnosed with winter gripe, she fears it may be something more serious. Her father, a comforting presence, tries to reassure her before departing for a royal wedding, promising that they will all be together again in the future. However, the conversation hints at deeper emotional frictions within their family. As Glorian's mother, Queen Sabran, comes in to say goodbye, her own struggles with motherhood and the burdens of queenship are unveiled. Sabran admits to being unfeeling but expresses her cares masked as strength. She speaks of visions and voices linked to the Saint, emphasizing the need for Glorian to keep her dreams secret to avoid being labeled a witch.

After their emotional goodbyes, Sabran departs on the royal ship, the Conviction, which symbolizes the unity of the realms. Unlike other ships, it is richly detailed, representing power and prosperity. As Queen Sabran settles into her new environment aboard the ship, she reflects on her past burdens and fears for Glorian. Together with her partner, Bardholt, she envisions a future bright with possibility for their daughter, who is determined to prove her strength as a future ruler despite lingering doubts

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about her health.

Meanwhile, tensions rise on board as Wulfert Glenn, a close friend to Glorian, is summoned by Bardholt. The king expresses concern regarding Glorian's fainting fits, which coincided with Wulf's presence, raising suspicions about his character. Bardholt wishes to send Wulf for scrutiny by the sanctarians to clear any doubts about him being a witch. This leads Wulf to confront his past, his fears, and the weight of potential isolation from the royal family he has grown close to.

The atmosphere shifts drastically when ominous drums sound through the fog, leading to the unexpected emergence of a monstrous wyrm. This creature, embodying ancient fears, attacks the ship with a fierce wrath—devouring Bardholt and Sabran in a moment of horror and cataclysmic fire. Wulf desperately navigates devastation, witnessing the calamitous destruction around him as flames consume his friends and the ship itself. Clutching Regny, a fellow crew member, the flames threaten to engulf them both, but Wulf resolves to fight back against the impending doom, seeking hope in the shadow of despair.

Chapter 41 Summary to Follow

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(As the content of Chapter 41 wasn't provided, I cannot summarize this chapter. If you'd like to share that part, I can help summarize it as well.)

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Chapter 43 Summary: 41 East

In Chapter 41, titled "41 East," we follow Dumai as she returns to Mount Ipyeda after an absence of over a year, grappling with the weight of her responsibility to protect Seiiki, a land connected to her cultural beliefs and divine figures. Upon her arrival, she instinctively makes her way to the bell tower, a significant location that embodies tradition and spiritual connection. Below her, the sorrowers—a community deeply affected by loss—mourn quietly, underscoring the somber tone of her return.

Dumai approaches the towering bell, reflecting on its inscription: "TO HOLD THE RISEN FIRE AT BAY UNTIL THE NIGHT DESCENDS." This phrase signifies her understanding of the immense power and responsibility she bears. Prepared to call for help, she uses her strength to sound the Queen Bell, a pivotal act meant to summon the gods and invoke their presence to aid her people.

As Dumai struggles to ring the bell, her actions resonate throughout Seiiki, reaching various regions like Sidupi and Ginura, and extending all the way to the southern coast of Ampiki. With each toll, she channels every ounce of energy, her efforts symbolically bridging the gap between the mortal realm and the divine. The sound of the bell echoes through the night, eventually awakening the gods who dwell in the rivers, lakes, and forests, reinforcing Dumai's role as the beacon of hope in times of despair.

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The chapter culminates with a poignant moment, as a woman awakens in distress, realizing that a significant connection—a bond shaped by shared dreams and destinies—has been severed. This thread, now broken, marks a profound shift, leaving her alone, isolated from a sense of belonging. The imagery of dragons in the sky adds a mystical layer, symbolizing the unleashed power of the gods in response to Dumai's call, hinting at the unfolding events that may arise from this resurgence of divine influence.

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Chapter 44: 42 South

Chapter 42: 42 South

The chapter opens with Tunuva reflecting in sorrow as preparations are made for a significant event: the dawn investment of Esbar as Prioress following the death of Saghul Yedanya, Tunuva's dear friend and the tomb keeper. As she reminisces about Saghul's life and funeral rites, Tunuva wrestles with her grief while understanding her duty to support Esbar. The ritualistic washing of the body and the subsequent burial are portrayed with reverence as the family honors their deceased matriarch, ensuring that Saghul's legacy lives on through the fruit of the orange tree she loved.

Hidat, another sister in their order, helps Tunuva prepare for the ceremony, and a sense of camaraderie is evident as they discuss the duties ahead. New initiate Siyu enters, beaming with excitement for Esbar, unaware of the gravity of recent events and the loss of Anyso, her partner. As the procession to the Vale of Blood commences, Tunuva feels conflicted but is resolute in carrying out her responsibilities.

The somber ceremony is laid out beautifully, highlighting the weight of the rituals and Esbar's acceptance of her role. As Esbar takes on the mantle of leadership, she receives tokens of her new position: the death cloak of their



Mother, symbolic of the sacrifices made in the face of their enemy, the Nameless One, and the iron spear, Mulsub, which affirms her strength as the Prioress. This significant moment culminates in a pledge of loyalty to the Mother and the Priory, marking a transition in leadership and the beginning of what promises to be a tumultuous time.

However, the great joy of the ceremony takes a dark turn with news of a plague affecting their allies—an illness reminiscent of curses connected to the Nameless One. The implications of this news weigh heavy as Esbar addresses the Priory, rallying them for action while Tunuva remains at her side, providing support. Esbar's resolve to protect their home and prepare for war signifies the urgent need for unity and strength in a time of uncertainty.

As the Prioress, Esbar brings a new energy to the Priory, empowering her sisters not only to defend against threats but to embrace their lineage as formidable warriors known as Red Damsels—a response to their historical struggles against oppression. The chapter is both a profound reflection on loss and a powerful call to arms, as the characters are compelled to confront external threats while grappling with their internal fears and responsibilities.

Chapter 43: 43

Tunuva wakes in an unfamiliar space, after a night spent comforting Esbar and celebrating her new role as Prioress. Despite the joyous end to a

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profound ceremony, unease lurks as Tunuva considers the troubling news relayed by Apaya about a violent plague that has struck nearby. Escalating worries about the health and safety of their community fuel Esbar's determination to meet the challenge head-on, leading her to call upon the Priory to prepare for potential dangers.

As preparations commence, Tunuva finds herself alongside Esbar, whose concerns weigh heavily on her shoulders. She is determined to lead and protect her sisters while navigating her own fears of inadequacy now that she has taken on the mantle of leadership. Tensions rise with the pressing threat of disease, and the necessity to consult ancient knowledge about cures becomes paramount. The urgency of action underscores their collective goal: to safeguard their way of life against encroaching dangers.

In a twist of fate, news emerges that Siyu has departed to find Anyso's family, setting off alarm bells for both Tunuva and Esbar. The situation rapidly escalates as Tunuva becomes increasingly anxious over Siyu's safety, acknowledging the precariousness of her departure amidst rising threats. Esbar's authority is put to the test as the dynamics shift between her responsibilities as Prioress and her role as a mother. Esbar feels a strong urge to let Siyu navigate her grief alone in the hopes she will return, but Tunuva's instincts compel her to act.

Ultimately, Tunuva resolves to pursue Siyu, advocating that she can bring

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her back before any harm befalls her. Esbar's hesitation illustrates the weight of leadership, particularly when it pits personal ties against the broader needs of their kin. The chapter closes with Tunuva's defiant decision to seek out Siyu without Esbar's blessing, foreshadowing potential conflicts and further journeys that lie ahead. This tension serves to highlight the intricate balance between duty, love, and the unpredictable paths that lay in wait for them all.

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Chapter 45 Summary: 43 West

Chapter Summary: 43 - 44 West

As winter envelops the land, Glorian finds solace in the rare snowfall, embracing the season's final thrills alongside her companions. The Feast of High Winter had recently concluded, yet the mood is subdued, apparent in both the less extravagant celebrations and in Glorian's heavy heart, haunted by dreams that have notably ceased after unsettling revelations from her mother, Queen Sabran. The joy of winter activities, such as building snow sculptures and skating, briefly distracts her from her longing for the distant Hróth and the love she has for her family.

The warmth of the castle is a stark contrast to the chilling news that arrives unexpectedly. Florell, the First Lady of the Great Chamber, enters looking distraught—her typically elegant demeanor replaced by distress. She kneels before Glorian to deliver the devastating news: her parents' ship, the Conviction, has not arrived as scheduled in Hróth, accompanied by reports that wreckage from several ships has been discovered in the Ashen Sea, igniting the possibility of a great tragedy. As details unfold, Florell conveys that the wreckage had been found charred, indicating a catastrophic fire, suggesting dire circumstances for Glorian's parents.

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Refusing to believe the worst, Glorian's emotions spiral into despair as she grapples with the possibility of their deaths. She insists on a search, desperate to find any survivors, especially her father, known as the Hammer of the North, and her mother, the formidable Queen Sabran. Despite Florell's attempts to comfort Glorian, the overwhelming sense of loss and anger leads her to a breaking point, and she is engulfed in grief, feeling as if she has lost a fundamental part of herself.

In the days that follow, news of the disaster sparks fear in the West and North, creating tremors that will affect the stability of the throne. The council gathers, acknowledging the potential fallout from the tragedy. As Glorian slowly emerges from her grief, she is summoned to meet with the Dukes Spiritual, powerful figures who advise the monarchy. They inform her that her mother's absence could soon lead to claims of her death, triggering a custody of the crown that she is not yet of age to hold.

Glorian steps into the meeting with the council, adorned in a deep blue gown—a sign of both her nobility and the somber reality confronting her. Tension fills the room as she asserts her place as the heir to the throne, declaring that while she is not of age, she is the rightful successor. The council explains the gravity of their situation, and she learns of impending pretenders and the possibility of unrest should rumors of the tragedy leak, especially those suggesting dark forces at play, such as the Nameless One, a figure associated with chaos and destruction.



As discussions unfold, a plan is devised for Glorian's safety and the potential succession, with Lord Robart acting as regent until she comes of age. They agree to relocate the court to the capital of Ascalun for added security. Though the decision involves sailing across the treacherous waters that claimed her family, Glorian must confront her fears as the storm of political unrest looms ever closer.

Both chapters illustrate a blend of personal grief and political maneuvering, encapsulating Glorian's journey from innocence to the harsh realities of leadership in the face of tragedy and uncertainty. The interplay of winter's beauty against her internal turmoil evokes a poignant image of a young princess on the precipice of maturity, grappling with loss while preparing to step into a role she never anticipated taking on so soon.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embracing resilience in times of adversity

Critical Interpretation: In this chapter, Glorian faces unimaginable loss yet shows remarkable resilience as she navigates the turbulent waters of grief and political instability. This reminds us that while we may be beset by challenges and sorrow, it is our ability to confront these difficulties head-on that defines our strength. Just as Glorian steps into her role despite her fears, we too can embrace our own struggles with grace. By standing firm and taking decisive action in moments of disaster, we inspire ourselves to grow beyond our circumstances, finding inner strength that can help not only us but also those around us.

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Chapter 46 Summary: 44 East

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 44: 44 East

In the tranquil setting of snow-covered Antuma Palace, Dumai gazes at two looming dragons, embodiments of chaos that manifest in the skies above. These dragons are remnants of a time long past, adding to Dumai's sense of unease as their presence awakens dormant gods. Dumai feels a call echoing within her, her body reacting to the dragons' return. This marks a moment of transition as she grapples with the implications of their awakening.

Meeting with Kanifa, Dumai learns that the dragons do not seem hostile, leading her to wonder about their intentions. The urgency increases when she finds her father, Emperor Jorodu, alongside her mother, Unora, who has come to conduct rituals to welcome the primal forces back now that they have awoken. They discuss the aftermath of Dumai's earlier actions—in particular, ringing the Queen Bell, a decision she made without the Emperor's guidance.

Her father reveals an alarming connection between a rising threat from deep within the earth and a fire reported in Sepul. This danger hints at a mythical

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creature, the 'Nameless One,' reminiscent of a dragon terrorizing the lands across the Abyss. Unora's discovery of an ancient tale relating to this creature raises the prospect of a deep-rooted peril that must be addressed.

The dialog reveals familial conflict, especially as Dumai's motivations for acting as she did are questioned. Despite her parents' concerns and conflicting opinions about sending her on another mission, Emperor Jorodu acknowledges her connection with Furtia, a dragon, and delegates Dumai to find an alchemist named Kiprun in the distant Empire of the Twelve Lakes—an expert who might hold answers to the brewing threat.

The conversation turns grim when they receive a disturbing gift from the River Lord: a sorrower, a bird associated with dark omens, suggesting Dumai's life could still be in danger as political tensions mount. Unora urges Dumai to seek the alchemist while the Emperor promises to protect their domain as best as he can.

In a fit of determination, Dumai storms through the palace seeking Lady Nikeya, the daughter of the River Lord. Rather than receiving comfort or understanding, she faces Nikeya's indifference towards the dangerous rumors surrounding her. Dumai struggles with feelings of desperation and the growing intensity of political scheming, both around her and within her heart, as she resolves to confront the complexities of her situation.

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This chapter elegantly situates Dumai in a world rife with peril and intrigue. Her personal bonds, alongside the weight of prophecy and divine influence, shape her quest—one that is both outward, seeking knowledge, and inward, grappling with her blossoming feelings toward Nikeya, a character who emerges as both ally and adversary.

Chapter 45: 45

Continuing from her prior frustration, Dumai resolves to travel to the City of the Thousand Flowers, intent on consulting the alchemist. Her encounter with Nikeya has left a mark on her thoughts, as she struggles between her emotions and the pressing dangers around her. Still, Dumai's resolve is redirected into a commitment to uncover the truth behind the threats looming over Seiiki.

In her quest, Dumai reflects on the need for unity against a common danger while battling the deepening rumors and suspicions concerning her abilities and motivations. As she prepares to embark on her journey, the emerging relationship with Nikeya becomes increasingly complex, underscoring the tensions of their connection amidst the larger chaos of their world.

Ultimately, this journey serves as a backdrop for Dumai's internal growth, juxtaposing her existential fears with the palpable excitement of forging alliances. The larger narrative veers towards the necessity of collaboration,

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both among the characters and the ancient powers they represent, while Dumai's growing connection to Nikeya hints at personal stakes that may impact their fates.

This chapter enhances the motivation and backdrop of the characters, embedding their dilemmas in a tapestry of mythic significance while propelling the story towards imminent threats and the bonds that can either save or doom them.

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Chapter 47 Summary: 45 South

Chapter 45: 45 South

In the wake of winter rains, Tunuva and her ichneumon companion, Ninuru, travel through the lush yet quiet landscapes of Lasia, evading daytime travelers and settlements for safety. Once vibrant farming communities have been partly abandoned over the centuries due to shifting populations toward the coast, yet many still rely on the life-giving waters from the far-off White-Haired Mountains, now stripped of their snowy caps. Tunuva finds herself haunted by dreams of Esbar, filled with conflict and separation, as she and Esbar have chosen diverging paths for the first time in decades.

The landscape shifts as they journey south, traversing Suttu's Highway, a well-maintained road that leads them closer to their destination. Tunuva, meanwhile, grapples with her worries regarding Siyu, who is presumably with a baby, Lukiri. Encounters with strange remnants—a withered lake, remnants of a fire, and Ninguru's keen sense of smell—heighten her sense of urgency to locate them.

Eventually, they reach the fishing town of Bujato, a bustling hub where Tunuva buys provisions while Ninuru draws attention from the local children, reminiscent of her own daughter Siyu. Amidst her brief respite,

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Tunuva learns from an orchardist that Siyu visited just the previous evening but seemed fatigued and with an unsettled child. With this new information, she resolves to cross the potentially treacherous River Gedunyu immediately, unable to delay in her search.

As Tunuva prepares to navigate the river, Canthe, a fellow mage from the Priory, unexpectedly appears. Unbeknownst to Tunuva at first, Canthe had ventured out without permission in a bid to join the quest for Siyu. Recognizing the value of her companionship, Tunuva reluctantly allows her to ride alongside. They cross the river together, leading to the tawny cliffs beyond, where Tunuva seeks a safe place to rest away from the town's notice.

In the shadows of a cave, Tunuva and Canthe reflect on their plans while sharing their scant supplies. Tunuva learns of Canthe's previous experiences in Carmentum, a city Tunuva has never sought to enter, and they discuss the stakes of locating Siyu within the sprawling urban landscape. Canthe's wisdom shines through as they share stories from their pasts. Tunuva begins to trust her more, appreciating the camaraderie in their shared goal.

As night descends, the chilling winds and haunting sounds of the valley—a place said to be cursed—fill the air, reminding them of the dangers that lie both outside and within their hearts. Despite the cold, they find warmth in their proximity to one another as they huddle close with Ninuru, hopeful that

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their next steps will lead them to the missing Siyu.

Chapter 46 (Continued in a subsequent chapter).

This summarization maintains the integrity and emotion of the characters' journey while providing contextual background on their motivations and feelings, ensuring coherence and enhancing understanding for readers unfamiliar with the details.

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Chapter 48: 46 West

Chapter 46 Summary: "46 West"

Glorian stands at the edge of the Ashen Sea, deeply fatigued but yearning for connection to her past as she recalls her mother and father. They have just survived a perilous sea crossing aboard the Shearwater, and as they approach Summerport, she is momentarily comforted by the warm, honey-yellow façade of the sandstone buildings. However, the rainy and harsh winter weather reflects her sorrow for her lost family.

As she and her protector, Lord Robart, navigate through the streets of Summerport, Glorian is mistaken for her mother, Queen Sabran, which elicits a tumultuous but warm response from the townsfolk. Their cheer is bittersweet, as she grapples with the weight of her mother's legacy and her own untested identity. When they arrive in Ascalun, the capital of the Queendom of Inys, the heavy atmosphere intensifies her internal conflict; she is expected to be the beacon of hope amid growing unrest.

Once greeted inside the castle, old memories flood back as Glorian settles into her former bedchamber, where she feels both comforted and haunted. Conversations with Lady Florell, her mother's friend, reveal the looming responsibilities she faces as she prepares to be crowned queen, along with the expectations to secure loyalty from her regent, Lord Robart, during this

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dangerous regency period.

Florell warns Glorian that her youth may render her vulnerable to being overshadowed by Lord Robart's authority. However, Glorian is determined to honor her lineage, pondering how she can invoke love and respect as her mother did, preparing her for a future where she must stake her claim to the throne. Despite her wavering self-worth, she acknowledges the strength she must summon to uphold her responsibilities amidst the rumors of darkness surrounding her kingdom.

As the days drag on, Glorian confronts her fears of abandonment and inadequacy. On the eleventh day, she meets with the councillors, learning about the tragic announcement of her parents' presumed deaths. This meeting is pivotal, as the details surrounding the announcement of her ascension reflect the harsh realities of her new role and the gravity of the responsibilities that accompany it.

In their discussions, ominous war plans and rumors circulate, yet Glorian finds herself making difficult choices, like relinquishing her birthright to the Kingdom of Hróth to strengthen her cousin's claim. During a tense moment, she learns of the impending arrangement with Prince Therico of House Vetalda, cementing her fate without any say in her future. As she grapples with the demands of her role, it becomes clear that her journey will not only test her strength and resilience but also challenge her to carve out her

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identity under the shadow of her mother.

Chapter 47 Summary: "47"

As Glorian navigates her new life as the queen-to-be, the tension in her kingdom continues to escalate. The discussions around the potential threats from other regions, particularly regarding the mysterious circumstances surrounding her parents' deaths, deepen. While the council debates various conspiracies, ranging from an external attack to a potential internal coup, Glorian must wrestle with the reality of her powerlessness in a world so full of intrigue and peril.

The need for urgency swells as the council emphasizes the necessity for her to present strength and stability to the realm. Glorian learns that her inability to produce an heir could leave the queendom vulnerable, exacerbating the danger stemming from external threats. The marriage to Prince Therico is presented not merely as a union of love but rather as a strategic move necessary to consolidate power and ensure the survival of the House of Berethnet.

Glorian's struggle with her perceived inadequacies and the demands of her role lead to moments of doubt. Still, she recognizes the gravity of her situation and the importance of showing herself a capable and fierce ruler. The insights from Florell serve as a reminder that she is not alone in her path toward leadership; her past and the legacy of her mother rest heavily upon

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her shoulders, demanding her unwavering commitment to the queendom's future.

As her appointment approaches, Glorian must reconcile her fears with the resolve needed to become the leader her people deserve. Her evolution from a grieving daughter into a queen who embodies strength becomes the crux of her journey, laying the groundwork for conflicts that will shape her reign and the fate of Inys. The chapter closes with a sense of impending confrontation, hinting at the trials that await as Glorian steps into her destiny.

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Chapter 49 Summary: 47 North

Chapter 47: 47 North

In the desolate winters of Hróth, the sun would barely make its presence known, casting a pallid light over a landscape shrouded in sea mist. A prominent cliff, known as Hólrhorn, stood solitary against the horizon, a haunting landmark few dared to approach. Below it stretched a desolate, black beach where the powerful waves rolled in, slashing the sand with ice-cold foam, and retreating in a thunderous roar, leaving behind a glassy surface that mirrored the foreboding cliffs and the grey skies above.

These cliffs watched over a spectral sight: the remains of the dead emerging from the sea. Days passed as lifeless bodies, charred and broken, washed ashore, their final resting place alongside the iconic rock formations known as the Six Virtues of the Sea—an ancient name steeped in the lore of the region.

Among the dead was a young woman with brown hair, a victim of tragedy, her body burned save for a face that remained untouched, pale as ice. Beside her lay the last survivor, a weary man who coughed seawater and fought to stay conscious. As he dragged himself towards her, each movement exacerbated his wounds, but driven by a desperate will to honor her



memory, he painstakingly pulled his body closer to hers, collapsing next to her once he reached his limit. Despite his physical agony, a fleeting kiss on her brow signified his undying affection. His greatest pain, however, lay in an unanswered question: why was he left alone in the woods when everything had gone awry?

As dawn broke, illuminating the scene with muted light, he faced the reality of survival, grappling with feelings of failure for not saving his king. Yet, he realized he had a duty to fulfill—not just to his dead beloved but also to two figures of significance in the North and West, who needed to hear the truth about the brewing darkness: the Nameless One could not return, but a new and ominous force had emerged.

Two days later, a family of Bálva herders, impacted by a plague threatening their camp, discovered the devastation on the beach. Among the four hundred and thirteen lifeless bodies littering the shore, one man was still alive. Struggling to call for help using a horn that belonged to the dead woman, Regny, he barely managed to get a sound out before hope seemed to flicker out.

A nearby elkhound recognized the weak call, drawing the attention of others who rushed to the scene and quickly started to care for him. He was wrapped in warm furs and given water, even as his grief for Regny consumed him. The elder of the group tried to reach out to him, demanding to know what

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had transpired.

The survivor, Wulfert Glenn, managed to utter the devastating news through clenched teeth. “Tell Einlek Óthling,” he gasped, “The king... is dead.”

In that moment, the tragic weight of loss hung heavily in the air, marking the beginning of uncertainty and potential turmoil in a land already plagued by dread.

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Chapter 50 Summary: 48 South

Chapter 48: South

As Tunuva and her companion, Canthe, continue their journey south towards Carmentum, they pass through the arid landscape where two monumental statues—Suttu the Dreamer and Jeda the Merciful—watch over the entrance to the Valley of the Joyful Few. They ride for three days, often stopping to rest in whatever shade they can find, as the heat is oppressive. Along the way, they encounter remnants of a long-lost civilization, such as ruined bone towers and basalt fragments.

Eventually, they arrive at the Erian Pass, an impressive site where the inner walls are filled with dwellings carved from rock, connected by rope bridges. Beyond the pass, Tunuva catches sight of a distant city and senses the presence of Lalhar, someone they are searching for. As the sun begins to set, they head towards the Halassa Sea, known for its vastness and the danger of crossing it.

They stumble upon an underground cavern with a rare spring. Canthe instructs Tunuva to leave her sword behind since the Carmenti people do not carry weapons. Shortly after, Tunuva bids goodbye to her ichneumon, Ninuru, who insists on staying behind. Canthe and Tunuva proceed on foot,

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with Tunuva taken aback by the oppressive heat that Canthe seems unaffected by.

Along the way, Canthe recounts the history of Carmentum, established by those who fled from the grief of their past lives after the Nameless One's devastation. The city thrives as a port and a young republic, a testament to audacity and change, contrasting sharply with the monarchies of the time.

When they finally reach Carmentum, they get a glimpse of its vibrant life, bustling with citizens and filled with news announcements. Tunuva strains to find Siyu among the crowd but is urged by Canthe to seek an inn first, knowing that Siyu will not stray far.

As night falls and they settle into their lodging, Tunuva finds herself enveloped in the city's enchanting sights and sounds. A realization dawns on her that Lalhar may be crucial to her quest, and she is determined to find her quickly. The inn is cool and welcoming. After indulging in a meal rich in local flavors, conversations shift to their pasts: Tunuva's connection to the mysterious key given to her by Saghul and Canthe's memories of a lost child.

Their discussion touches deeper themes of loss and maternal love, revealing bonds that transcend the pain they carry. Tunuva finds solace in Canthe's understanding gaze, feeling a stir of emotional warmth as they traverse the

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uncharted territory of grief together. The chapter closes with Tunuva drifting off to sleep, thoughts heavy yet intertwined with the promise of hope amidst the darkness.

In summary, this chapter establishes the significance of Carmentum as a haven of change and freedom, while intertwining Tunuva and Canthe's personal journeys through grief and determination, ultimately setting the stage for their search for Siyu and deeper exploration of their characters' backgrounds.

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Chapter 51 Summary: 49 South

Chapter 49: South

Tunuva awakes from troubled dreams to find her friend Canthe by her side in the dim room, stirring feelings of warmth contrasted by fears stemming from her nightmares about Esbar, a figure she deeply admires. The conversation unveils Tunuva's anxieties and hidden emotions; Canthe shares wisdom from her past, hinting at the complex relationship between duty and love that weighs on Tunuva's mind.

In their discussions, Canthe also shares insights about the Womb of Fire, where magic is generated, revealing the dangers of misuse and corruption represented by the monstrous Nameless One. Tunuva's tumultuous thoughts further reveal her concern for the child Siyu, whom she cannot abandon. As dawn breaks, Canthe surprises Tunuva with a gift of clothing and the unique sea wool wrap, symbolizing her respect and budding friendship.

Their day begins as they set out to search for Siyu, who has gone missing. The bustling streets of Carmentum are both overwhelming and vibrant as they head towards the bakers' guild. Despite Tunuva's unease in the city, Canthe acts as a confident guide. Their efforts lead them to a grieving family, Hazen and her baby brother, Lukiri, who inform them that Siyu had



been living with them while initially searching for Hazen's sibling, Anyso.

From the girl, Tunuva learns that tragedy struck when a Master of Beasts captured the ichneumon, Lalhar, and took both Siyu and her parents under violent circumstances. Faced with the reality of their perilous situation, Tunuva and Canthe resolve to rescue Siyu and the family, but time is critical.

As they find themselves nearing the Liongarden, where beasts are cruelly pitted against one another, they are confronted with a grotesque, brutal world. Tunuva feels a deep sense of dread at the sight of the fighting spectacle, but she is bolstered by the two young girls, knowing they have to act decisively. When chaos erupts as a wyrm, a fierce dragon-like creature, emerges and begins wreaking havoc upon the city, their plight turns dire.

In the midst of the destruction, Tunuva races to save Siyu, and the intense battle against the wyrm leads her to ultimately confront memories of her training with Esbar and the teachings of the Mother. All hope hangs in balance as Tunuva strives to protect the ones she loves, drawing upon her magical capabilities in a desperate stand against the monstrous dragons that now threaten their world.

Their environment transforms into a battleground as the wailing of injured Carmenti fills the air. Nearing their escape, the group faces an even greater

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threat, the Nameless One resurrected in greater numbers and ferocity. As Siyu's companion, Lalhar, is attacked, Tunuva's protective instincts kick in, channeling all her strength and magic in a brave resistance.

The chapter culminates in a breathless encounter, with Canthe unleashing an unfamiliar raw power, a force of cold and light that strikes at the wyrm. The trio fights back against the growing turmoil until the ash and smoke finally settle, signaling a grim new reality they must face: a world forever marred by their experiences, but one that still invites hope for recovery and resilience as they plot their next trajectory through the fractured landscape of Carmentum.

Chapter 50: [Summary Pending]

Note: Chapter 50 can be summarized when additional context is provided.

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Chapter 52: 50 East

Chapter 50: 50 East

Dumai awoke to the chill of early morning while flying over the Empire of the Twelve Lakes, a vast realm currently fractured between the ancient House of Lakseng and the Bertak tribe of the Hüran people, who had seized the northern territories. Following a treaty that exchanged heirs to maintain peace, Dumai had come to consult the elusive alchemist, Master Kiprun, about the alarming emergence of a wurm—the monster threatening various lands.

As Dumai gazed down from her dragon, Furtia Stormcaller, she admired the breathtaking landscape below. They approached the vibrant City of the Thousand Flowers, where the Munificent Empress ruled. The city, known for its resplendent blossoms, stood in stark contrast to the wintry surroundings. Upon landing at the nearly finished Black Lake Palace, Dumai and her companions were greeted by officials, who acknowledged her royal lineage and showed her inside.

After expressing her need for an urgent meeting with the Empress, Dumai learned that the Empress was unavailable, but her formidable consort, Jekhen, would speak with her soon. Before that, Dumai hoped to consult

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with Master Kiprun about her pressing concerns. As Dumai acclimatized to her surroundings, she felt the weight of her responsibilities at home where her father maintained their court.

Later in her chambers, Dumai entered a dreamlike state, where she connected with a mysterious figure who professed to be bound to her. Their conversation revealed an unspoken bond and an urgency for Dumai to remain vigilant against an approaching beast—the wyrm. Awoken by Kanifa, her guard, Dumai proceeded to prepare herself for the evening, adjusting to the Lacustrine court's unique customs.

Dumai summoned Lady Nikeya, her companion from earlier escapades, to help her prepare for the upcoming audience. A moment of intimacy bloomed as Nikeya skillfully combed Dumai's hair, their banter nurturing both camaraderie and tension. The chapter hinted at an evolving relationship underscored by secrets, as Dumai asked Nikeya for insight on Consort Jekhen, revealing the layered dynamics of the palace's aristocracy.

As night fell, Dumai was escorted along the Inner Shim river, where the lively atmosphere of the palace nightlife further heightened her anticipation. In a meeting with Consort Jekhen, she learned of emerging threats from the North—the death of King Bardholt of Hróth, which deepened the shadow of war—and the potential to awaken the slumbering dragons whose power had once protected the realm.

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Their audience was interrupted by the arrival of Princess Irebül, who bore news of unforeseen developments—a powerful dragon, Nayimathun of the Deep Snows, had returned alongside grim tidings. The chapter concluded with the suggestion that the Empire of the Twelve Lakes might soon be

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Chapter 53 Summary: 51 West

Chapter 51: In Mourning and Terror

In the aftermath of Queen Sabran's death, her daughter, Glorian, prepares for her entombment while dressed in stark gray attire, symbolizing mourning. The chapter opens with Glorian in her chambers surrounded by attendants, Florell and Helisent, who help her get ready. Glorian feels an overwhelming sense of grief and responsibility, as she recalls her mother's absence on this somber occasion and the warnings of an impending threat conveyed to her by the Saint. The atmosphere is heavy with sorrow and ritual, as they prepare to honor the former queen.

Outside, a somber crowd assembles in the Royal Garden, including dignitaries and noble families, all donned in gray to pay respect. Lord Robart, the Lord Protector, leads the procession as they navigate to the Royal Barge, which now drapes a gray canopy in mourning. Glorian faces her subjects, the weight of her new role settling heavily upon her. The memory of Queen Sabran, the guiding light of her people, looms large as the river barge glides silently through the dark waters, flanked by mourners bearing candles.

The Sanctuary of Queens, located on Rose Island, is the chosen resting place

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for the late queen, and as they arrive, Glorian is struck by the historic weight of the location and the legacy she is about to inherit. The ceremony is tinged with apprehension, especially following recent violence at Drouthwick. Inside the sanctuary, Glorian is granted a moment of solitude to reflect and pray among the tombs of her ancestors, feeling the presence of her beloved parents amid marble effigies.

The Arch Sanctarian leads the mourning ceremony, recounting the legacy of Queen Sabran and King Bardholt. They honor the fallen with songs, before sealing their tombs with the last remnants of their existence—a tooth each, a chilling reminder of mortality. As dawn breaks and the rituals conclude, Glorian finds herself overwhelmed with sorrow for the loss of her parents, reflecting on how they deserved a more glorious tribute.

In the moments that follow, as Glorian rides back through Ascalun alongside Lord Robart and the gathered crowd, she begins to sing a mournful yet triumphant song, channeling the strength of her ancestors. Yet amidst the grief, a new terror emerges from the skies. A massive wyrm, Fýredel, descends upon the city, its very presence eliciting panic and chaos. This creature, heralded as the cause of her parents' tragic end, instills fear as it demands Glorian's attention with a voice that shakes the very air.

In a stand-off between the wyrm and Glorian, the creature reveals its intentions: destruction and vengeance for the past. Unnerved yet resolute,

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Glorian confronts the beast, asserting her lineage and heritage, vowing to protect her people and land. Fýredel, however, warns her of impending doom, its fiery breath igniting the rooftops of Ascalun and prompting Glorian to act.

As chaos erupts, Glorian's strength is tested, and she is forcibly pulled from the scene, her resolve shaken as fear sweeps through the city like wildfire. As the wyrm flies away, leaving devastation in its wake, the chapter ends on a cliffhanger, leaving readers anxious about Glorian's fate and the future of Inys. The intertwining of grief, newfound responsibility, and the threat of a powerful enemy set the stage for the trials that await the young queen.

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Chapter 54 Summary: 52 North

Chapter Summary: 52 North

In this chapter, we meet Einlek Óthling, described as gaunt and pale, as he sits on the throne of the North, wearing the pelt of a beast over his chainmail, symbolizing his status and strength. Einlek, known as Ironside, has not only made a name for himself through his lineage but also through a harrowing past where he lost his arm to escape captivity. At just seven years old, he severed his hand to break free from shackles, preventing himself from being leveraged against Bardholt, a powerful figure at the time. Now, with the death of his uncle, he faces the heavy burden of leadership amidst ominous threats.

Wulf, a survivor of a recent calamity at sea, is struggling with the aftermath of a catastrophic encounter with a species of wyrm believed to be associated with the ancient Dreadmount. While recovering from frostbite and other traumas inflicted by the merciless sea, Wulf reveals to Einlek the fate of their fleet, confirming that all but he and an unfortunate woman met their end—some burned, others drowned—while under the assault of monstrous creatures.

Einlek learns from Wulf that a new plague, brought by the Nameless One

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from the Womb of Fire, is spreading, sinisterly tying their kingdom to an ancient enemy. Despite the circumstances, Einlek expresses an unwavering determination to fight, establishing a need for allies as he aims to protect the young Queen Glorian, who has recently ascended to the throne.

Wulf, though hesitant and stricken with the weight of grief for his lost comrades, pledges loyalty to Einlek. The chapter culminates as Wulf, feeling the mental scars from his journey and weighing the burden of his past failures, agrees to serve under Einlek to support Glorian, thus marking a pivotal moment of rebirth and new purpose for him.

Chapter Summary: 53

The following chapter begins with Wulf confronting the remnants of his crew as they prepare to board the Wave Steed, the ship that will take them back into perilous waters. The atmosphere is fraught with tension as Wulf encounters three familiar faces from his lith—Karlsten, Thrit, and Sauma—each encapsulating his strained relationships and shared trauma from their recent losses.

Wulf, feeling the weight of responsibility and guilt, struggles to meet their eyes, especially when their anger is directed towards him for the deaths of their companions. Karlsten, filled with rage, accuses Wulf of being the cause of their demise, while Thrit's touch reflects concern and tenderness as he



reassures Wulf that he is no longer alone.

Sauma attempts to mediate the brewing conflict, reminding them all of their pledge to support Einlek and Queen Glorian. Despite her efforts, tension simmers, showcasing the fragility of their unity as they grapple with their shared grief and unspoken fears about the impending struggles they must face together.

As Wulf grapples with the lingering horrors of what transpired at sea, there's an understanding that he is not yet ready to divulge the full extent of his traumatic experience. The chapter ends on a note of collective determination, albeit underlined by the unspoken horrors that continue to haunt each character.

Through these two chapters, themes of leadership, survival, and the burden of past traumas intertwine, setting the stage for the characters' journeys ahead as they face external threats and their own inner demons.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The importance of resilience in leadership

Critical Interpretation: As you navigate through life's challenges, take inspiration from Einlek Óthling's unwavering determination and resilience despite his harrowing past. His ability to rise above personal trauma and take on the heavy mantle of leadership reminds you that true strength lies not in the absence of struggle, but in your capacity to confront and adapt to adversity. Embrace your trials as opportunities for growth and commitment to those who depend on you, just as Einlek protects Queen Glorian and rallies others to his cause.

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Chapter 55 Summary: 53 South

Chapter 53 Summary

In the somber aftermath of their harrowing journey, Tunuva finds herself amidst the towering teaks of the Lasian Basin, haunted by the stench of smoke and the devastation wrought by the wurm's brutal attack on Carmentum. The Nameless One, a powerful and malevolent entity, has left its mark on the land, with Tunuva recognizing the Priory's crucial role in opposing this dark force. She is accompanied by Siyu, who seems despondent and withdrawn after the loss of her ichneumon, Lalhar, who was killed in the fight against the wurm.

As they travel, Tunuva tends to Canthe, whose frail state has worsened, leaving her weak and unable to summon her magic. At dusk, they arrive back at the sanctuary of Esbar's home, a place that evokes both solace and trepidation in Tunuva as she prepares to face the harsh realities of their situation.

After dismounting, Tunuva requests assistance for Canthe from a young man named Sulzi. She and Siyu then proceed to meet Esbar, the Prioress, who immediately senses the weight of tragedy in their return. As they reveal the catastrophic events of Carmentum, tensions rise—especially as Esbar

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confronts Siyu about her actions that led to the capture of her ichneumon. In a charged exchange, the two women air their grievances about responsibility and consequences, revealing the deep fissures in their relationships.

Esbar's wrath reflects her concern for the safety of the Priory and emphasizes the gravity of their losses. She reprimands Siyu and expresses fear over the impact of her decisions on their community and on the wider struggle against the Nameless One and its wyrms.

After addressing her daughter, Esbar takes time to confront Tunuva, who left the Priory during her absence. Yet, despite initial tension, they find a moment of reconnection, acknowledging their deep affection amidst the chaos of their surroundings.

The chapter highlights the emotional turmoil and emotional interlacing of these characters, illustrating their struggles in the face of overwhelming loss and the shadow of an impending war. As they navigate these complex feelings, they are reminded of their duty to face the threats approaching the horizon, underscoring the bonds of love, duty, and the urgency of their mission.

Chapter 54 Summary

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The narrative picks up with Tunuva, feeling a sense of deeper kinship and conflict with Canthe, who is recovering from her ordeal with the wyrm. The lingering effects of the creature's attack are felt both physically and emotionally, with Canthe revealing her unique magical power—sterrein, which stands in opposition to the dark magic of siden. This revelation evokes Tunuva's memories of her own child, stirring feelings of loss as she struggles with the complexities of her past.

Their conversation reveals the deep-rooted history of their world, in which magic intertwines with politics, power, and identity, culminating in a lore-driven moment of realization. Canthe shares her memories of a boy named Wulfert, whom she encountered twelve years prior, a child shunned due to his perceived connection to witchcraft—a label that evokes superstitions surrounding magic in their society.

As Tunuva reflects on Canthe's story, she begins to tie together the threads of her past with the present. The name Wulfert Glenn resonates deeply within her, hinting at far-reaching connections that may redefine her understanding of her own identity as well as the stakes of their conflict with the wyrms.

With the threat of war looming, Tunuva's resolve strengthens. The alliances forged through shared struggles and the secrets of their past lead her down a

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path of determination. This chapter highlights the intertwining of personal history and collective destiny, as the bonds between the characters evolve against the backdrop of impending disaster, setting the stage for their roles in the conflict to come.

Together, Tunuva and Canthe navigate their pasts, grounding their emerging quest in a sense of shared legacy that binds them to their fate and to each other, reflecting the themes of unity, sacrifice, and the search for truth amidst chaos.

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Chapter 56: 54 West

Chapter 54 Summary: West

As the journey on the Wave Steed progresses toward the ominous Inys, Wulf is haunted by memories and the lingering stench of death from a war-ravaged land. Accompanied by companions Thrit and Sauma, the atmosphere aboard the ship is heavy with unspoken fears, exacerbated when a floating corpse drifts by, underscoring the peril they face.

On the sixth night, Wulf, still recovering from past traumas and injuries, engages in a poignant conversation with Thrit, who has ensured the safety of his family from the plague. They discuss the ominous legends tied to wyrms—mythical creatures believed to possess magical prowess, a power long gone. Thrit shares an amulet given by his grandfather, depicting a water wyrm, which Wulf urges him to keep secret due to its potential to incite disbelief and fear among their companions.

Their ship finally reaches Inys, but what should be a moment of jubilant arrival turns into a struggle against a violent storm and the chaotic seas of the Ashen Sea. Wulf, overwhelmed with fear from his previous experiences, remains below deck, unable to muster the strength to assist in navigating the turbulent waters. As the ship lands, Wulf vomits from both anxiety and

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physical distress, but there's little time to rest before Sauma proposes they continue their quest for safety.

Wulf, weary of the sea and its dangers, resolutely chooses to journey south by land to Ascalun. Sauma bids them farewell, while Wulf and Thrit set off toward familiar territory, navigating through bleak landscapes and memories of Wulf's past, including recollections of his aunt near the coast.

They spot a long-abandoned Hróthi longship, wrecked and beached—a grim sight that signals the pervasive danger of the storm. As Wulf climbs aboard, he is met with a horrific scene: the cargo ship is filled with corpses, victims of violence, mingling horror with the anticipation of their own perilous journey ahead.

Chapter 55 Summary: Glorian

In the midst of mounting chaos and devastation in the city of Ascalun, Glorian finds herself trapped within the sovereign safety of the Queens' Tower, tormented by the calamity unfolding outside. The relentless fire ravages the city, incinerating lives and hope, as she grapples with the overwhelming scent of smoke that clings to her.

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Initially rescued by Sir Bramel and burdened by guilt over her perceived shortcomings as a protector, Glorian watches helplessly as chaos spreads, witnessing moments of unimaginable tragedy—a bridge collapsing under the weight of desperate citizens, homes engulfed in flames, and raging crowds turning against one another.

The city is ablaze not just with fire but also with fear and despair, challenging her role as heir and protector. Despite her initial boldness to assert leadership, she ultimately learns from her trusted servant, Florell, that her safety is paramount during such unrest. Glorian's inner turmoil intensifies, wrestling with feelings of inadequacy as she laments the apparent absence of divine intervention from the Saint, emboldened further by her mother's legacy.

Determined not to remain sidelined, Glorian requests that Prince Therico be summoned to Inys, clinging to the hope that marriage and motherhood may empower her position to protect the realm. As she grapples with her fate and responsibilities, an unexpected flash of lightning heralds a sudden downpour, breaking the choking heat of the crisis.

Amidst this deluge, Glorian experiences a moment of clarity and spiritual connection as rain washes over the embers of fear and confusion—a welcomed promise of renewal in a landscape starved for hope. The

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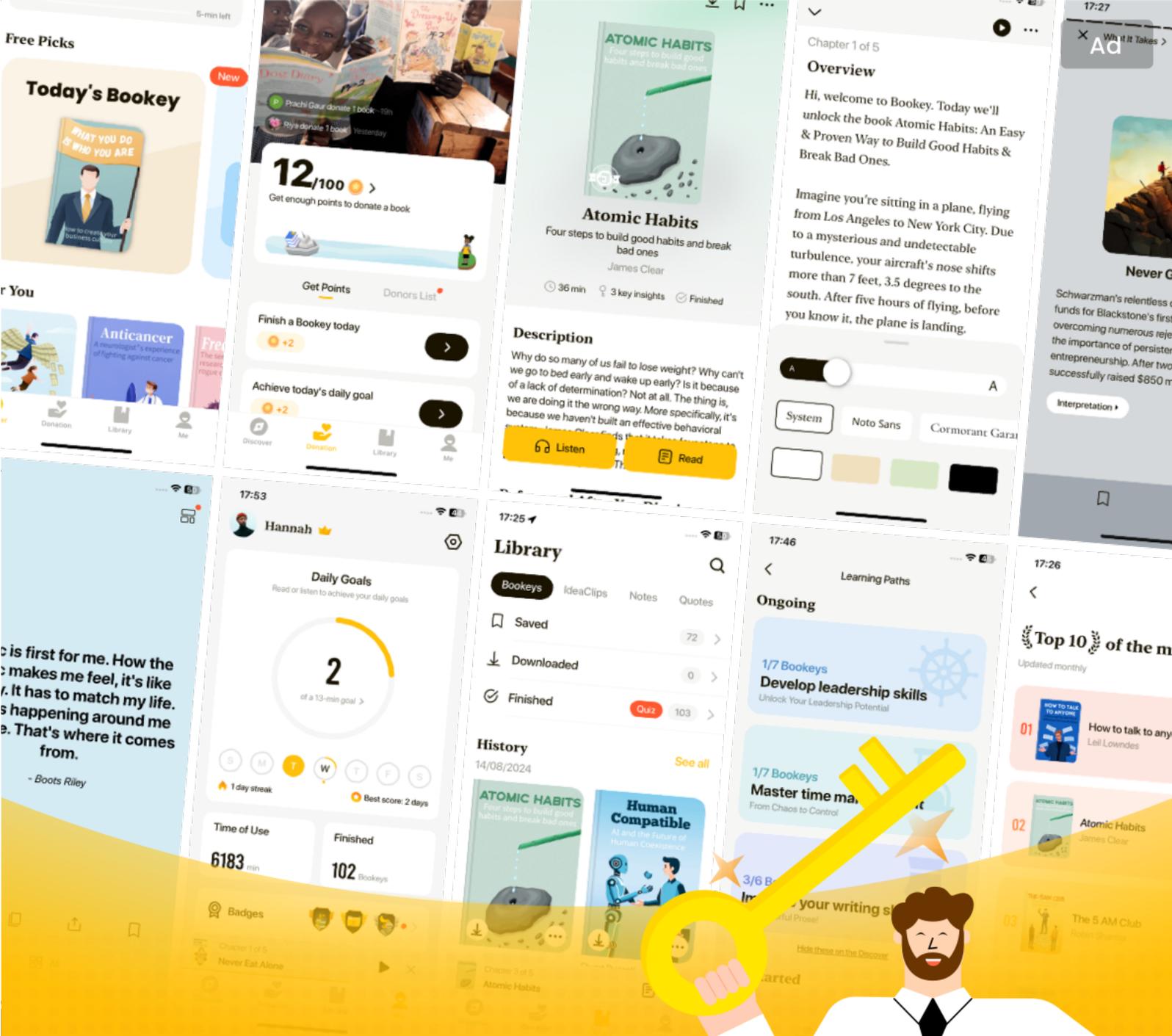
convergence of fire and rain serves as a foreboding omen and a wash of relief, hinting at the delicate balance of destruction and creation that governs the fate of her realm.

These chapters weave together themes of survival, the struggle for agency against chaotic forces, and the enduring bonds of friendship and duty amidst rising darkness, emphasizing the characters' intertwined destinies in a world teetering on the brink of despair.

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Chapter 57 Summary: 55 East

Chapter 55: East

Dumai awakens in a state of panic, drenched with sweat from a dream filled with urgency. She is haunted by the voice of a woman calling for help, demanding rain. Memories of the Lacustrine court race through her mind, where she has spent sleepless nights among music and laughter. After a dreamless period, she feels the weight of her responsibilities as a princess, especially with the ominous thought of a creature similar to what she saw previously, possibly threatening their land.

Meeting her friend Kanifa in the courtyard, they discuss the whereabouts of Master Kiprun, the alchemist whose wisdom they seek regarding potential threats to their realm, compounded by the mysterious awakening of Nayimathun, an ancient hideaway dragon revered in their culture. They receive word that Kiprun is ready to meet them and, guided by a servant, make their way through the labyrinthine Black Lake Palace, a place filled with secrets and obscured pathways.

Upon meeting Kiprun, Dumai is taken aback by his eccentric nature. He is excitable, irritated by a lack of proper materials in his alchemical experiments. His gruff demeanor contrasts with his knowledge, and as



Dumai presents her findings about the wyrms in the Broken Valley, he challenges her comprehension of the danger before them.

Master Kiprun reveals that dragons have not awakened because a celestial balance exists, wherein the forces of fire and water oppose each other—their time is not yet due. He indicates that the current devastation stems from something awakening from the depths of the earth, suggesting that the world's stability is threatened by the emergence of fire-based creatures like the wyrms.

The conversation is interrupted as an urgent alarm signals trouble outside, and Dumai rushes to respond. She finds herself confronted with chaos as the city is engulfed in flames and fear, a response to the very creatures they were discussing. Furtia, a dragon ally, arrives to assist, and together they attempt to combat the fire and the looming threats from above.

In the thick of smoke and panic, Dumai realizes she must confront the dangers head-on. She mounts Furtia and exhilaration mixes with fear as she witnesses devastation below. However, the dire situation escalates when a larger and more fearsome creature appears, one so magnificent in its malevolence that it freezes her in terror. The situation spirals into chaos with Furtia sustaining a grievous injury in battle.

When Dumai is thrown from her dragon's back, she finds herself amidst the

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ruins of her city, injured and desperate. Ignoring her pain, she dodges monstrous creatures transformed by the upheaval, each reflecting the loss of balance within nature. An ancient, revered dragon, Nayimathun, emerges to rescue her amidst the ashes, symbolizing the need for unity between nature and humanity against overwhelming adversity.

Chapter 56:

As Nayimathun lifts Dumai from the battlefield, their reunion highlights the interconnection between the old magic of dragons and the current plight facing their world. The chaos in the city deepens, yet this gesture is one of hope; there lies a potential alliance in confronting the beasts threatening their lives.

Although battered and shaken, Dumai's resolve strengthens as she embraces the wisdom and power of the dragons. Her journey blends elements of desperation and courage, forcing her to adapt quickly and embrace her identity as a bridge between humans and these majestic creatures.

The chapter culminates with Dumai's fraught yet determined struggle to forge a path of understanding with the dragons, balancing the urgency of their current crisis with deeper themes of equilibrium and connection within their realm. She realizes that the battle for their future will rely not only on strength but also on the unity and shared determination to bring harmony



back to a world spiraling into chaos.

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Chapter 58 Summary: 56 West

Chapter 56: 56 West

As the rain poured over Inys for three relentless days, Lord Robart faced the aftermath of a devastating wurm attack on the provinces, which left the fields of Leas in ruin and terror spread among the populace. In the sanctuary of the Queens' Tower, Princess Glorian yearned to comfort her agitated subjects but found herself confined.

Amidst this turmoil, Florell, Glorian's lady-in-waiting, summoned her, citing a royal messenger's arrival. Glorian, anxious for news from her betrothed, Prince Therico, prepared herself for a more active role in her queendom. Despite Florell's pleas to consider her well-being, Glorian's determination to be on the battlefield intensified. She donned a padded coat as armor, feeling the weight of responsibility settle on her shoulders.

In the castle gardens, she walked with Lord Robart, who reassured her of the plans in motion to address the needs of the city devastated by the wurm's onslaught. Yet, as they discussed the dire situation, Glorian's concerns about defense and the fate of their people grew. Refusing to allow despair to dictate their fate, she sought Lord Robart's strategies, only to find his calm, analytical demeanor at odds with her passionate spirit. Their conversation

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revealed their contrasting approaches—her impetuosity as a Hróthi heir and his temperance as a man driven by logic.

Their discussion was abruptly interrupted when Mara Glenn, the daughter of Lord Edrick, arrived with a message from Lady Marian Berethnet, Glorian's grandmother, and a respected figure in Inys. Mara's plea for Lady Marian to leave the shifting and deteriorating conditions at Cuthyll in favor of joining Glorian fell on Lord Robart's deaf ears; he would not risk the unrest of the queendom for what he deemed a mere sentimentality. However, Glorian defended her grandmother, illustrating her compassionate nature and desire to connect with her lineage.

Just then, a breathless squire announced the arrival of a survivor from the Conviction, a ship lost to the calamity. The entrance of Wulfert Glenn, Mara's brother, brought a mix of hope and dread, as he bore tales of the Ashen Sea's dangers and the brewing plague in the Fens. With gallantry, he pledged his loyalty to Glorian, tying his status to the efforts to restore Inys amidst looming threats.

Alone later, Glorian reflected on Wulf's harrowing account of her parents' courage in their final stand, igniting a new resolve within her. As the city mourned, she awaited vital news, which soon came in the form of a summons from the Virtues Council.

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The council's grim tidings informed her of Prince Therico's tragic death at the hands of the wyrms in Tagrida. Faced with this devastation, the council deliberated on her immediate future and the need for her to secure an heir. They presented her with a contingency clause from her betrothal contract: she might marry another member of Queen Rozaria's family, specifically Prince Guma Vetalda, who was the same age as her grandmother, igniting disbelief and outrage among her supporters.

Yet the political realities pressed in—the need for Guma's wealth and forces during dark times outweighed her personal revulsion at the thought. Glorian's choice became clear: for her people, she would accept this marriage arrangement.

In recognizing this duty, she prepared herself to navigate the treacherous waters of leadership, plotting a course for the survival of her realm amid grief and uncertainty. Florell's protests echoed in her mind, but the urgency of the matter pushed her toward a decision. With resolutions in place, the winds of change began to swirl around the Queendom of Inys.

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Chapter 59 Summary: 57 East

Chapter 57 Summary: "57 East"

After a long period of dormancy, the Imperial Dragon has awakened, alongside her dragon riders, Nayimathun and Furtia, to repel the Lacustrine's golden wyrm, dubbed Taugran—the splendid death. In the aftermath, the city is still embroiled in chaos, with soldiers battling remnants of these deadly creatures and smoke clouds staining the capital's skyline. The palace has not escaped destruction, with flames consuming parts of its structure.

Princess Dumai, wounded and limping, is escorted by Kanifa, her sworn guard, to meet Consort Jekhen on a balcony. The scene unfolds amid a somber breakfast of porridge and fruit, where Princess Irebül joins them, looking unruffled despite the destruction. Consort Jekhen presents a demonstration by Master Kiprun, an alchemist whose work involves a powerful black powder derived from deep earth. This powder is a significant find that could aid in their battle against the creatures threatening their existence. As the demonstration erupts in a catastrophic explosion, it emphasizes the dire situation they face.

Consort Jekhen inquires about warfare in Seiiki's history, revealing that the last significant conflict was centuries ago, reinforcing the stakes they now

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confront. Dumai introduces her companions, Kanifa and Lady Nikeya, daughter of a loyal River Lord. The royal conversation shifts towards the Imperial Dragon's potential to awaken other dragons, vital for their survival, while referencing the cryptic warnings of a prophetic figure who hinted at the decline of the gods.

Keen to act, Consort Jekhen proposes a daring mission: Dumai is to ride her dragon to the legendary peak of Brhazat to consult an astronomer who holds answers critical for their plight. Teamed with Princess Irebül to provide diplomatic ties with the East Hüran, Dumai's initial reluctance is challenged by Consort Jekhen, who offers a powerful weapon—the bed crossbow—as an incentive. It serves as a reminder of the urgency of their quest, with the stakes laid out clearly: knowledge is what the court needs to regain control over the chaos.

In a quieter moment back at their quarters, Dumai grapples with the gravity of her decision amidst conversations with her companions, Kanifa and Nikeya. The practical necessity of revolutionary siege weapons surfaces, leading her to ponder the implications of her absence on her family back in Seiiki. Nikeya assures her of their loyalty and the House of Kuposa's commitment to support her.

Feeling the weight of her destiny, Dumai determines to inform her parents of her extended absence, while wrestling with the idea of being the first

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empress not only to have been born a godsinger but also to ride a dragon in centuries. This chapter sets the stage for her heroic journey, blending the themes of duty, fear, and the heavy burden of legacy as she prepares to navigate the dangerous unknown.

Chapter 58 Summary: To Be Continued...

(Note: As Chapter 58 is not provided, a summary cannot be constructed.

Subsequent events would continue exploring themes of legacy, conflict, and the formidable choices Dumai must face as she embarks on her quest.)

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Chapter 60: 58 West

In Chapter 58, Wulf recuperates from his harrowing experiences, relying on his sister Mara's care as he emerges from a deep, dreamless sleep, a much-needed reprieve after his trials. Wulf remembers his traumatic childhood dreams about bees, which symbolized a lingering fear rooted in a mysterious past he cannot recall. Now, those fears have evolved into nightmares of wyrms and dark waters, a testament to the horrors he's encountered.

As Wulf regains consciousness, he learns that his friend Thrit is recovering as well, and their father is likely engaged in rallying the people against the burgeoning threat of the wyrms, creatures from the sea that have attacked their home, Ascalun. Mara, who has been informed by Lord Robart about recent developments, seems anxious yet supportive. She shares the troubling news that Lady Marian has been sent to a dangerous area plagued by disease.

The narrative shifts when Lady Helisent Beck enters the room, prompting an exchange about the recent upheaval in their kingdom involving the young Queen Glorian, who is reluctantly marrying Duke Guma of Kóvuga—an aging man meant to stabilize the political landscape after the death of Prince Therico at the hands of wyrms. Helisent expresses her concern that Lord Robart, who has been returning to old practices and may be involved in dark rituals, poses a threat to Queen Glorian and the realm's stability. She

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highlights a secret shared by her father about illicit nighttime gatherings in the haithwood that could connect to Lord Robart's ambitions.

Although it seems improbable, Helisent implores the siblings to investigate further, suggesting that capturing evidence against Robart could allow them to appoint Lady Marian as a safer alternative for queenhood. Wulf, still grieving the loss of control over his own fate, agrees to undertake this perilous mission alongside Mara.

The chapter shifts again as Glorian secretly visits Wulf that night. Their conversation reveals her reluctance about the marriage, which she views as her only means to gain autonomy and ensure the survival of her lineage. In a poignant moment, Wulf offers the possibility of an intimate relationship that could help Glorian fulfill her duty without the constraints imposed upon her by the marriage to Guma. This proposal underscores their genuine friendship and Wulf's desire to protect her.

Ultimately, as Glorian grapples with Wulf's offer, the tension builds around the interwoven fates of these characters against the backdrop of impending peril from the wyrms and the dark secrets lurking within their court. Glorian, trapped in her role as a queen, weighs the sacrifice of her autonomy against the desperate need for an heir and the safety of her realm. Their connection reignites old promises of loyalty while foreshadowing the potential consequences of their choices.

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As Wulf prepares for his journey with Mara, he recognizes that they must confront both the external threats of the wyrms and the internal threats within their own leadership, highlighting a blend of personal stakes and political intrigue. This chapter encapsulates the deep bonds of friendship and loyalty that shape their destinies amidst impending chaos.

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Chapter 61 Summary: 59 South

Summary of Chapter 59: "South"

Tunuva, known as the Rose of the South, arrives in the besieged city of Jrhanyam, a once-thriving center of music and trade now ravaged by war. The ensuing chaos is marked by the presence of grotesque creatures born from wyrms, which have devastated the city and its inhabitants. Gritted teeth and heavy breathing, Tunuva rides her ichneumon, Ninuru, through streets littered with the dead and the desperate. The devastation chills her heart, particularly thoughts of a child she mourned but now wonders if he might still be alive.

As Tunuva makes her way toward the fort, ash falls like snow on the flames consuming the city. She encounters the remains of Ersyrians attempting to defend their homes, yet the death toll rises. When she finally reaches the throne room, she meets Queen Daraniya and Apaya who share grim details of the ongoing siege. Apaya informs Tunuva of the dire situation, revealing that the Ersyri soldiers are overwhelmed, and Esbar, a fellow warrior of the Priory, is holding the line against wave after wave of beastly attacks.

In a blitz of combat, Tunuva joins Esbar, wielding her spear against the

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grotesque creatures, the fight revealing the brutality of war juxtaposed against her formerly graceful training. As the assault intensifies, they face not just lesser wyrms, but the fearsome Dedalugun, a great wyrm whose very presence shakes the ground beneath them. Together with Esbar, Tunuva strategizes to use catapults against the wyrm, leading to a climactic battle that culminates in the use of a legendary spear, Mulsub.

As dawn approaches, victory is earned at a grave cost; the siege is temporarily driven back, but the consequences are devastating. Survivors emerge from water tunnels, and the Priory warriors tend to their wounds in makeshift shelters. Tunuva collapses in exhaustion, haunted by dreams of her lost child, only to awaken to the bitter reality of loss, aided by her companion Canthe, who proposes a dangerous scouting mission to the Western territories where wyrms have also been reported.

Summary of Chapter 60 (inferred from the context provided)

In the aftermath of the battle, Tunuva is confronted with her unresolved grief and the harsh realities of survival. Canthe suggests returning to the West to gather intelligence on the wyrm threats, knowing that the task is treacherous and potentially isolating.

During discussions with Esbar, who has tight expectations for Tunuva's loyalty to the Priory, the conversation turns to personal loss when Tunuva

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voices a painful possibility: her birthson, separated from her many years ago, could still be alive. Esbar is stunned, emphasizing the importance of holding onto their shared mission and the community that needs Tunuva now more than ever.

Caught between her obligations and her grief, Tunuva insists on pursuing this lead. Esbar, distressed by Tunuva's potential departure, implores her not to leave the fight and abandon their shared journey. Their deep bond is tested as Tunuva must weigh her heart's desire against the call of duty to her sisters.

Ultimately, the conversation reveals Tunuva's struggle with loss and longing, and set against the backdrop of survival, it showcases how personal and collective struggles intertwine. The tension builds as she reads the unspoken fears in Esbar's eyes, and the chapter concludes with an emotional standoff—both women wrestling with the sacrifices they must make in the face of impending doom and personal truths.

Through these events, themes of maternal love, loyalty, and the weight of grief unfold, intertwining Tunuva's personal quest with the fight for survival in a world steeped in darkness and danger.

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Chapter 62 Summary: 60 West

Chapter Summary: 60 - 61

As spring loosens winter's grip on Inys, Wulf finds himself amidst memories of a more peaceful time spent in the Lakes with his family. This year, however, fear of an encroaching plague looms, restraining joy from blossoming in the landscape. Accompanied by his companions Mara and Thrit, Wulf arrives at Langarth, his family's manor, to gather information about the new regent, Lord Robart, and confirm the king's proper alignment with their beliefs. The atmosphere is thick with tension, further heightened by uncertainty about his father and brother, who are away preparing their people for potential conflict.

Upon arrival, they find the manor eerily quiet. Mara eventually reveals that her father is with the Countess of Deorn, while Rollo and Lord Mansell are mobilizing the local populace. Wulf contemplates his responsibilities to Queen Glorian, worrying about her safety and the potential influence of the regent. As they settle in, the connection between Wulf and Thrit deepens, with Thrit expressing concern over Wulf's past trauma and Wulf sharing his complicated feelings regarding his relationship with Glorian.

Meanwhile, Glorian is hard at work in the Royal Chancery, grappling with

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historical discrepancies in treasury records that reveal the dire financial state of her kingdom. The regency is strained, and she realizes the urgency of securing a suitable heir. During a visit from the bonesetter Mastress Bourn, Glorian learns about the severity of the spreading sickness and the need for more stringent hygiene practices, while grappling with her own authority during Lord Robart's absence.

As the city begins to witness strange occurrences—apparently invisible creatures amassing outside—Glorian feels compelled to act decisively. Defying the inherent fears her court holds for her safety and the importance of maintaining her status without an heir, she resolves to don armor and lead by example in the face of impending chaos. Her determination to protect her people amidst such calamity crystallizes into a plan of action that involves relocating their subjects to a stronghold away from danger.

With her advisors reluctantly gearing up for this monumental task, Glorian proves her leadership skills by outlining strategies to shelter her populace and retain morale. The tension between duty and personal sacrifice becomes palpable, echoing the historical legacies of her family as she prepares for what may be a desperate confrontation with the chaos outside the city walls. As her companions rally to her side, Glorian manifests her resolve to be a steadfast protector and leader, embodying the true spirit of what it means to be queen during turbulent times.

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Chapter 63 Summary: 61 West

Chapter 61 Summary

The chapter opens with Wulf and his companion Thrit holed up in a dilapidated ruin overlooking Parr Castle, a formidable stronghold belonging to the Duke of Generosity. Wulf feels an uncanny connection to the castle, attributing it to the chilly winter atmosphere and his bleak surroundings. They have been hiding for days, strategizing against Lord Robart, who has been ordered to remain at the castle under suspicious pretenses, claiming he is assessing the timber reserves of the local woods.

Their peace is briefly interrupted when Mara returns from a scouting mission, bringing Lord Mansell with her. After a touching reunion, they discuss the ongoing political concerns, including the plague in the province and Lord Robart's intentions. Wulf learns that he and his allies may need a member of the Virtues Council to witness Lord Robart's actions among the woods during the Feast of Early Spring.

Mara proposes a daring plan to investigate Parr Castle herself, inciting a humorous but serious exchange with Wulf about crime versus sport.

The chapter progresses to the eve of the Feast, where Wulf's brother Roland

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arrives, providing comic relief through their banter and camaraderie. However, the dark mood shifts when Lord Edrick reveals alarming news about a gathering of creatures exhibiting plague-like symptoms near Ascalun, suggesting the potential threat Lord Robart poses. Impatient and eager, Wulf expresses a desire to confront Robart directly in the haithwood, the ominous and ancient forest that has haunted him since childhood.

Despite his father's initial hesitations, Lord Edrick ultimately acquiesces, emphasizing the need for Wulf to remain close and cautious in these woods. A heartfelt exchange reveals Lord Edrick's deep concern over Wulf's mysterious past and the fears regarding what his origins mean. Wulf, filled with a mix of anticipation and dread, resolves to enter the haithwood, a place of his past he cannot ignore any longer.

As the night deepens, they set out stealthily toward the castle, where Wulf's instincts go on high alert. He remains watchful, recalling memories connected to the woods as they ride—his unease amplifies when they approach the dark confines of the haithwood, ultimately leading to a foreboding encounter.

Chapter 62 Summary

In this chapter, Wulf and his companions plunge into the depths of the haithwood, each step laden with tension. As they navigate the eerie silence

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of the forest, they recount their motivations for being there and the threat posed by Lord Robart, who has been shrouded in suspicion.

The atmosphere shifts dramatically when they encounter wolves, a familiar yet terrifying presence for Wulf, who struggles with faded memories of a night spent in fear within the woods. As they fend off the advancing pack, chaos erupts—Wulf is injured but manages to escape, driven by an urgent need to confront Robart.

Amidst his panic, Wulf stumbles across memories and visions of the woods and faces from his past, leading him to an illuminated clearing where Lord Robart conducts a ritual with a group of masked dancers. The sight of ancient hawthorn trees, associated with long-forbidden practices, heightens Wulf's inner conflict. He recognizes the gravity of what Robart is attempting: a communion with the earth that contradicts everything he has been raised to believe about the Saint.

As the confrontation escalates, Lord Robart invites Wulf to embrace his destiny as a supposed successor to the Lady of the Woods, hinting at Wulf's inherent connection to the ancient forest. Despite the allure of understanding his origins and role, Wulf steadfastly refuses to abandon his allegiance to the Saint.

The tension reaches its climax as Lady Gladwin and Lord Edrick arrive,

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leading to Robart's capture. In a moment of revelatory tension, Robart asserts that it is the practices of the Saint that have caused the earth's turmoil, challenging their notions of faith and duty. Lady Gladwin, with a sense of disappointment, directs the assembly to seize him, ending Robart's bold but dangerous defiance and asserting the influence of the established faith against the chaos of the emerging old ways.

As dawn approaches, the clearing remains awake with the remnants of the ritual, leaving Wulf to grapple with his identity and the calls of an ancient lineage that threatens to reshape his understanding of loyalty, authority, and the natural world itself.

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Chapter 64: 62 East

Chapter 62 Summary

In a dreamlike state, Dumai engages in a profound conversation with a shadowy figure who is likely her sister, reflecting on existence and freedom. Dumai realizes they are connected yet separated by a dark sea, and that while her sister is trapped in her physical form, Dumai is free to explore. The conversation reveals Dumai's inner turmoil about her journey and the burdens of her destiny, particularly her fear of inadequacy in wearing a crown meant for leadership.

Awakening in the sunlight of her tent, Dumai finds her companions Kanifa and Nikeya missing. Feeling cold and fragmented, she writes down her dream, recalling her sister's advice to embrace her journey and not let the crown imprison her. Concerned about their missing ally, Furtia, Dumai resolves to head towards Brhazat, her destination, despite the challenges ahead.

As the Lacustrine court moves forward after a devastating dragon attack, Dumai and Kanifa navigate the treacherous path of the Snow Road toward the Whinshan Ridge. They witness the aftermath of the conflict—refugees, destruction, and the lingering threat of wyrms. Dumai grapples with her

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feelings for Nikeya, who has found a semblance of joy in the midst of chaos, while Kanifa expresses his concern about the young woman's influence on Dumai.

Their dragons, Nayimathun and Furtia, provide assurance as they prepare for the next leg of their journey, fortifying Dumai's resolve to uncover the truth that might save her people. She seeks out Nikeya to impart important truths about their expedition to Brhazat, including the dangers of altitude and the consequences of pushing beyond one's limits. Their relationship intensifies through playful banter and pointed questions, with Dumai acknowledging her feelings for Nikeya while also recognizing the necessity of pragmatic caution.

Chapter 63 Summary

In this chapter, the tension between Dumai and Nikeya escalates as they prepare to confront the challenges of their journey to the imposing mountain of Brhazat. Dumai's worries about the perilous ascent are overshadowed by a budding camaraderie tinged with underlying romantic tension as they agree to support each other with a newfound understanding. Nikeya's playful teasing masks the vulnerability she feels regarding her father's expectations and her desire to prove herself.

Ultimately, Dumai asserts the necessity of careful planning while also laying

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the groundwork for honesty in their relationship. Nikeya's promise to heed Dumai's warnings signifies a bond forming, one that straddles the line between companionship and the potential for heartbreak. This chapter cleverly interlaces themes of duty, ambition, and the complexities of desire as they prepare for an uncertain future on the treacherous mountain path. As they leave the safety of the court behind, both characters are faced with their own fears and ambitions, suggesting that the journey ahead will test not just their physical limits but also their emotional fortitude.

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Chapter 65 Summary: 63 West

In this chapter entitled "63 West," Glorian awakens to a world draped in an otherworldly honey-like atmosphere, suggesting both beauty and unease. It marks her seventeenth birthday, a significant milestone as she is now of age to bear heirs for Inys. Her thoughts linger on fragmented memories of a mysterious woman and cryptic messages, hinting at a larger destiny that remains unclear.

As they journey towards Arondine, an ancient trade city and her planned site for coronation, Glorian grapples with the stark challenges facing her queendom. A procession of thousands follows her, laden with resources from the capital, but underlying tensions threaten to erupt, exemplified by a man who accuses her of fraud, reminiscent of an earlier incident at Glowan Castle.

Arondine, perched strategically on a hill, presents a stronghold against the will of a formidable foe — a black wurm named Fýredel, who has brought devastation to the land. Recognizing that her people cannot confront such fire head-on, Glorian reflects on the wisdom of retreating to the safety of caves for the time being. With dwindling supplies and uncertainty ahead, she feels the weight of leadership pressing upon young shoulders.

Upon her arrival at Arondine, she is greeted with a mix of awe and

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skepticism from her people, keen to see how a queen so young will navigate the brewing conflict. Understanding the gravity of her situation, she commands preparations for defense and further fortification, urging her court to mobilize resources as they await the return of her regent, Lord Robart.

In the coming days, Glorian watches as the city fortifies itself against impending doom. Amidst the chaos, she receives unsettling news about Lord Robart, who is rumored to be practicing heathen rites. This revelation strikes at the heart of her authority and necessitates tough decisions; she contemplates the implications of his actions and the loyalty, or lack thereof, of those around her.

A pivotal moment occurs when Glorian receives news from Lady Gladwin, urging her to meet at Glowan Castle due to pressing dangers that may require her attention. Despite the risks, she leaves Arondine to uncover the truth.

In Glowan, she is met by Wulf, amidst troubling discoveries about Lord Robart's secretive practices, suggesting a potential conspiracy involving Guma, her intended consort. The idea of having a heathen consort raises concerns about legitimacy and the future of her reign.

Discussions among her council lead to the conclusion that Glorian must appoint a new regent, positioning her grandmother for the role, even as her

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court struggles to maintain unity amid her unexpected revelations about both Robart and Guma. In a bold move, she decides not to renounce her marriage to Guma, understanding that Inys needs him for resources even as she plans to steer her own course.

Back at the castle, Glorian finds comfort in Wulf's presence, leading to a moment of intimacy where they share a bond that transcends mere politics. Their connection grows deeper as they navigate the complexities of the world around them while preparing for the challenges they must face together.

Throughout the chapter, themes of leadership, legacy, and the tensions between personal desire and public duty play out against a backdrop of impending danger, leaving Glorian at a crossroads as she strides into an uncertain future. In the weave of alliances, betrayals, and burgeoning relationships, she must hold firm as the weight of her ancestry looms large.

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Chapter 66 Summary: 64 East

Chapter 64: East

The tranquility of the Snow Road was shattered by chaos: wyrms and unnatural creatures surged forth, threatening everything in their path. In response, the dragons Furtia and Nayimathun chose to fly under the cover of night, aware that the dragons prowled at dawn. Their allies, Dumai, Kanifa, and Master Kiprun, found solace in their close quarters as they traveled northward, through desolate landscapes scarred by fire.

During one harrowing stop, they discovered a fallen god at a Lacustrine outpost—a tragic reminder of the ongoing destruction wrought by the wyrms. The entity, a dragon named Taugran, had presumably tried to protect the soldiers from an unknown attack. As Dumai mourned this loss alongside her companions, she sensed that their mission's significance was growing heavier with each passing sight of devastation. The chaotic spread of fires and smoke left her with a sense of dread about what awaited them.

They continued their journey along the Daprang River, which, usually frozen, revealed the chaos left in the wake of spring, a symbol of renewal but also of peril. Upon reaching the northern city of Golümtan, they were greeted by the tangible tension of the aftermath of four years under Hüran

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rule. They aimed to find Princess Irebül, who had reportedly taken to the wilderness, symbolizing the resilience of her people amidst encroaching darkness.

Once Dumai met Irebül, her thoughts turned to the ancient warnings of long, harsh winters. The dialogue shared hinted at a prophecy of a comet that could potentially reshape their future—a cosmic balance to cool the raging furor that the wyrms had unleashed. With this new hope came the weight of their quest, as Dumai realized they would soon venture toward the peak of Brhazat, seeking answers from the elusive figure of Tonra, a supposed guardian shrouded in myth.

Accompanied by Kanifa and their dragons, Dumai faced the daunting climb of Brhazat. The mountain towered above them, filled with secrets and dangers. As they ascended, their resolve remained strong despite the thin air threatening their very survival. However, as they reached a precarious point, a moment of carelessness led to a catastrophic fall that would change everything.

In a fundamental moment of bravery and sacrifice, Kanifa made an agonizing choice to sever their connection, prioritizing Dumai's survival over his own. The emotional turmoil and pain drowned Dumai in despair as she confronted the severity of their situation and her fears of loss. Overcome by the dread and the rising cold, she felt the spectral presence of voices,

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urging her toward survival.

With desperation in her heart, she reached for a flicker of hope—a light that resonated within her being. This moment of connection hinted at her latent power and loomed as the harbinger of her ultimate test. The awakening within her surged beneath the icy grasp of the mountain, calling forth ancient forces to help her reclaim her life, her purpose, and ultimately, the destiny she would fulfill in the face of looming darkness.

This chapter serves as a transition in Dumai's journey, reflecting the struggle against external chaos, internal despair, and the faint glimmer of hope that unites her with those she's lost and those she will protect. As she looks toward a terrifying future, the need to balance her emotions and newfound powers becomes crucial, setting the stage for the battles ahead.

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Chapter 67 Summary: 65 West

Chapter 65 Summary

In the heart of Yscalin, the imposing Saurga Mountains form the Middle Pass, the quickest route to Inys. The castle of Hart Grove looms above, its battlements defended by springalds firing at wyverns—two-legged dragons, known to many in the West as wyrmlings. Amidst chaos as miners flee or fight against these menacing creatures, Tunuva, a warrior with no ties to Yscalin, stubbornly engages in battle against the tainted forces of the Dreadmount alongside her non-combatant friend, Canthe.

After a fierce skirmish, the wyverns retreat, leaving destruction in their wake. Tunuva's resolve to detest the rule of Yscalin's High Prince shifts when Canthe reveals that the prince has proposed aid to reach Inys, as the ports are closed due to a spreading blood sickness. The prince, Guma, serves as a far more pragmatic option than the perils they face alone, and though Tunuva initially resists joining him, she realizes that they need his protection to traverse the dangerous territory efficiently.

As they begin their journey to Garazna with the prince's escort, they encounter harsh landscapes scorched by flames and ravaged by conflict, marking the creeping threat of wyverns. During their travels, Tunuva learns

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that Prince Guma carries a precious cargo intended for a dowry, indicative of the pressing political tensions even amidst calamity. They face further attacks from wyverns, but Tunuva's magic compels them to flee, showcasing her unique connection with the mystical forces.

Days turn into weeks, and while the exertions wear on them, Tunuva grows fond of Canthe's company. Haunted by thoughts of her home and sisters, particularly Siyu, she pushes forward, determined to discover the truth she believes is linked to her pain.

As they reach the port of Garazna, they witness the desperation of Yscalin's people, pleading for passage to safety. Despite the turmoil, Prince Guma remains steadfast, focused on his goals. Tunuva's reluctance to accept Guma's payment is temporarily overshadowed by the promise of reaching Inys. After coming aboard the ship, Tunuva shares her heart's turmoil with Canthe, expressing her longing to confront her past and find her sister. As the ship sets sail into uncertain waters, Tunuva wrestles with her inner conflict, determined to pursue her quest for truth.

Chapter 66 Summary

Life in Inys is plagued by fear and preparation in anticipation of wyrms

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returning to their skies. As the city pivots from harvests to trench-digging, Glorian grapples with her complicated feelings for her lover, Wulf, as well as her responsibilities as ruler. The focus of the Regency Council shifts dramatically upon the arrival of Lady Marian, who, despite her weakened health, assumes the role of Lady Protector in a time of crisis.

Glorian is both pleased and anxious to see her grandmother, whose presence forces her to confront the realities of leadership and legacy. They share a tender moment, reflecting on shared family traits and the burdens placed upon Glorian by past queens. As Marian strengthens her resolve to aid Glorian, the atmosphere shifts when it's revealed that Prince Guma is en route to Arondine. This news looms large, revealing the intricate web of political maneuvering and the threat the prince's presence poses to Glorian's plans.

Thrit, training to regain his archery skills, provides a juxtaposition of the impending dangers outside the castle walls with the personal struggles uniquely shaping the individuals within. Wulf's concern for Glorian's wellbeing intertwines with her political reality; their passion is challenged by necessity and the looming presence of Guma.

As they discuss the delicate timing of Glorian's potential pregnancy, the tension grows. Wulf's devotion to Glorian is highlighted as they prepare for a tumultuous battle of love against the backdrop of war and destiny. The

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chapter closes with a poignant exchange between them, filled with love and an awareness of the sacrifices they may have to make in their relentless pursuit of survival.

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Chapter 68: 66 East

Chapter 66: East

The chapter begins on the longest day of summer, known as the godsbane in Seiiki, a day traditionally associated with intense heat that scorches the land. However, for the first time in centuries, there is hope for rain, signaling possible divine favor. Dumai, recovering from her past traumas and the mystical experiences in Brhazat, is summoned by her father, Emperor Jorodu, to discuss her emerging role as heir to the throne.

Dumai, dressed in grey silks, carries the weight of her past losses, particularly the death of her protector, Kanifa, and her beloved mentor, Osipa. Despite her grief, she meets her parents in the palace's Water Pavilion. Her mother, Unora, reenters court life to help Dumai heal, while the Emperor expresses his desire for her to take on her royal duties, beginning with a ceremony to honor the gods for the summer's rain.

During their meeting, Emperor Jorodu reveals that Dumai has discovered a potentially powerful stone from Brhazat—referred to in ancient texts as capable of commanding the oceans and winds. The stone, oily blue and moon-like in appearance, is believed to respond only to a chosen few. As Dumai touches it, she senses a latent power within but struggles to



understand how to access it. Her father expresses concerns about keeping the stone secure, hinting at potential dangers from enemies like the Kuposa, a rival clan.

Amid their collaborative urges to safeguard the stone, the Emperor mentions

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Chapter 69 Summary: 67 West

Chapter 67 Summary

In the city of Arondine, also known as the High City, Tunuva and Canthe navigate a throng of people at the city gates. Adorning masks and washing their hands in vinegar, they enter the bustling streets, learning that Queen Glorian is unexpectedly present. Arondine is marked by its castle, which rises above the humble structures of black oak and straw, symbolizing both power and danger—the potential for fire to consume it all.

Tunuva reflects on her recent tumultuous journey through the Marshes, absorbing the devastation wrought by a flock of wyverns led by the great wurm named Fýredel. As they wrestle with their disquieting surroundings, they marvel at the immense power of belief that keeps the Inysh people centered on their monarch's supposed divinity—a legacy built on the stories of Galian, a past king.

Their path leads them to a sanctuary where Canthe points out the significance of the young Queen Glorian and her lineage, the "Saint's Marvel," a phenomenon where each queen resembles the last. Tunuva is struck by Glorian's youth and the urgency of her position, needing to secure an heir to prevent a cataclysmic belief surrounding the Nameless One.

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They find shelter in a modest building, and after speaking about their intentions to locate Wulfert Glenn, Tunuva succumbs to sleep. When Canthe returns, Tunuva voices her concerns about Wulfert, learning he survived a harrowing experience that resulted in the death of royals Sabran and Bardholt, revealing his connection to her and igniting a sense of urgency to find him.

The atmosphere shifts as they share a moment of vulnerability, but Tunuva pulls away from an intimate embrace, recognizing the emotional turmoil that lingers. Their friendship is strained yet strengthened by understanding the weight of hope, loss, and the pain of unfulfilled love—a poignant reminder of the trials they both face.

Chapter 68 Summary

Queen Glorian awakens from a deep sleep, startled to find a figure at her window, which reveals itself to be her mother's ghost, a comforting presence from the realm of the dead. The apparition brings both solace and a prophecy regarding the end of the current chaos, indicating a coming spring when peace will return. Glorian is advised to keep her dreams and truths close, particularly about a mysterious voice that has spoken to her since childhood.

The next morning, Glorian shares her dream with her grandmother, Marian,

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who expresses concern about their dwindling food supplies and stresses the need for effective leadership. Just as they discuss the implications of their current situation, news arrives of Prince Guma's imminent arrival—a signal of political maneuvering with grave stakes.

When Guma Vetalda arrives at Arondine, he is presented as a robust leader of Yscalin, bringing food supplies as his dowry. Their interaction reveals tension under the facade of politeness as both leaders navigate the complexities of their alliance, Guma's intentions shrouded in diplomacy amid an air of survival.

Glorian positions herself as a tactician, echoing advice from her mother as she decides to let Guma believe in his scheming, preparing for potential betrayal while ensuring the immediate needs of her people are met. As the chapter concludes, her resolve strengthens in the face of looming threats, enhancing her character as a queen prepared to defend her realm and her legacy.

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Chapter 70 Summary: 68 East

Chapter 68 Summary:

In the quiet of the palace, Dumai, the Crown Princess, awakens with a mild headache to find her handmaiden Juri at her door, delivering a message from her younger sister, Suzumai, who wishes to see her. Dumai struggles with the burden of impending doom, as the wyrms threaten their peace, but she cannot refuse her sister's innocence and desire for connection. After struggling into her heavy robes, Dumai reflects on her separation from Nikeya, a woman who's become central to her life, and she is haunted by dreams of a snowy valley and the responsibilities that weigh heavily upon her.

Upon visiting Suzumai, who is happily playing with her dollhouse, Dumai's heart softens. The young girl expresses her desire to accompany her sister on adventures and reveals a miniature representation of Dumai among her dolls, showcasing her longing for familial bonds amid political turmoil. As they stargaze on the porch, Dumai is visited by the ancient dragon Pajati, whose presence brings a mix of awe and apprehension. When Dumai's mother, Empress Sipwo, joins them, she expresses gratitude for Dumai's role in Suzumai's life and acknowledges the challenges that lie ahead.

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Later, Dumai finds herself overwhelmed by feelings of confinement within the palace, likening it to a silken cage. Exhausted by the weight of expectation, she longs for freedom and a sense of purpose beyond her royal obligations. In a dreamlike state, she reconnects with her mirror sister, who encourages her to embrace the potential for power they both possess. Together, they realize they must find a way to unite their strengths to confront the threat posed by the wyrms.

Awakening from the dream, Dumai seeks an audience with her father, Emperor Jorodu, urgently asking for permission to embark on a journey to confront the looming darkness. She shares her visions and insights, which resonate with the Emperor, leading him to support her quest. He gifts her a powerful sword, Nightborn, symbolic of her legacy, though Dumai hesitates, feeling unworthy. The Emperor insists she prepare adequately as she ventures into a war-torn reality.

Equipped with armor and her icy weapons, Dumai prepares for departure but encounters Nikeya, who has come to express concern over Dumai's plans and their implications for her loyalty to Seiiki. Despite initial reluctance, Dumai recognizes the value of Nikeya's assistance and allows her to join the journey, marking their reunion as allies in the face of impending danger.

The chapter closes with a glimpse of a grieving fisherman on the bleak northern coast of Seiiki, illustrating the widespread impact of their troubles

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as he seeks aid along the shores. As day breaks, the narrative hints at the interconnected destinies of the characters and the looming conflict they must face.

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Chapter 71 Summary: 69 West

Chapter Summary: 69 & 70

Chapter 69: West

Inys is in turmoil as young Queen Glorian Berethnet rides through her kingdom, trying to connect with her subjects amid a siege. Tunuva, a warrior and protector of the queen, observes Glorian's attempts to provide comfort and aid, reflecting on her lineage and the mysterious figures in Inys's history. Her thoughts drift to a past queen, Cleolind, whose identity seems veiled in secrets. Tunuva grapples with feelings of regret and yearning as she contemplates her place in the ongoing chaos caused by war and plague.

Amidst the uncertainty, Tunuva awaits the return of her companion, Canthe, who has been on a vital mission. When Canthe finally returns, she brings news from Langarth: Wulfert Glenn, a significant figure previously affiliated with the Hammer, has returned to Hróth and pledged his loyalty to the new king. This revelation stirs Tunuva; she is determined to journey to the North to seek Wulfert, feeling a sense of urgency to reunite with him. Resolve replaces hesitation as she acknowledges that they have already come so far.

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Chapter 70

Meanwhile, Glorian faces a different kind of struggle as she navigates her duty as a newlywed queen. She enters her royal bedchamber with Prince Guma, who has requested her company. The atmosphere is tense with the weight of expectations and the political implications of their union. Guma, revealing his northern accent, assures Glorian that their marriage will remain unconsummated and serve as an alliance between Yscalin and Inys. He recognizes the pressure on her to produce an heir and offers a pragmatic approach to their situation.

As they discuss their roles, Guma makes it clear that while he will support her in raising a child, he has no desire to impose as a biological father, rather claiming the title of a loving protector. Glorian remains astute, analyzing his words and intentions, aware of the games of power they must navigate. She wishes to assert her own lineage and her future child's legitimacy, subtly contesting Guma's authority over their potential family.

The chapter closes with a poignant moment as Glorian, despite her dignity, finds herself once more sleeping on the floor of her own chamber, a symbolic gesture of her precarious position in her royal palace. The secret of her pregnancy, newfound and hidden, pulses within her—a promise of life amidst the burden of her responsibilities and the stark realities of her reign.



Together, these chapters create a rich tapestry of political intrigue, personal struggle, and the fight for identity within the chaos of a fractured kingdom, echoing themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and the complexities of leadership in turbulent times.

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Chapter 72: 70 North

Chapter Summary: 70 North & 71 North

In the blazing midst of battle at the burning capital of Bithandun, Wulf is entrenched in a desperate fight against the invading wyrms from the Iron Mountains. The air is thick with the smoke of destruction and the stench of death as the Hróthi warriors defend their territory. Wulf, bearing the signs of fatigue and injury, fights valiantly alongside his fellow soldiers against terrifying foes, including lindworms—serpentine creatures with deadly scales and fiery breath.

The narrative oscillates between chaotic combat scenes where Wulf shows remarkable bravery and flashes of painful memories, particularly the sight of his melted friend, Vell. The Hróthi code emphasizes valor in the face of death, and Wulf is committed to fighting for honor rather than retreating underground as suggested by the Inysh. The warriors rally under the command of Einlek, their king, who emphasizes the importance of standing and fighting, rejecting any notion of hiding from the enemy.

As dawn breaks on the battlefield, the tide turns in favor of the Hróthi. The fall of a wyvern incites panic among its kin, leading to a retreat after significant losses on both sides. In the aftermath, the survivors gather under

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the remaining roof of the Silver Hall, which is partially intact, to celebrate their hard-won victory despite feeling the weight of mourning for their fallen comrades. The gathering is bittersweet—Einlek praises those who have shown great courage, including the whaler Góthur Wyrmkiller, who struck the fatal blow to the wyvern.

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Chapter 73 Summary: 71 North

In this chapter, Tunuva's journey into the desolate land of Hróth illustrates her determination and resilience in the face of loss and uncertainty. Upon her arrival, she is met with the aftermath of devastation—the remnants of a once-thriving city now reduced to ashes, with a slain dragon lying atop its ruins. This dragon, referred to as a wurm, symbolizes both destruction and the power that once governed the land.

Tunuva is accompanied by Canthe, a skilled communicator who speaks the local language, Hróthi, and possesses an uncanny ability to extract hidden truths from others. Through her charm, Canthe learns that a man named Wulfert Glenn has left for the wilderness with another warrior, igniting Tunuva's need to pursue him. She spends her remaining funds acquiring essential supplies, like pelts and sturdy steeds, preparing for the challenging journey ahead.

They follow an ancient trade route characterized by its stunning yet treacherous landscape—a mixture of formidable rivers and towering waterfalls. Tunuva reflects on her deceased companion, Siyu, wondering if she would have found happiness in such a bleak, icy realm. This internal struggle highlights Tunuva's grief and longing to reconnect with the past.

As they travel through the Barrowmark, gruesome signs of a plague unfold

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before them—bodies strewn across the landscape, victims of a sinister affliction that has claimed countless lives. The stark imagery of death serves as a chilling reminder of the fragility of life in Hróth, where despair reigns. Canthe's lament that “only death lies here” signals the urgency of their quest, and they press onward despite the haunting sights.

Their journey takes them to a frozen lake, where Tunuva encounters yet another ghastly scene—a man preserved in the ice, a stark visualization of desperation and decay. This moment further underscores the pervasive atmosphere of dread and decay that permeates Hróth.

As they approach the Vathuld Pass, marking the boundary between the civilized remnants of Hróth and the untamed wilderness beyond, Canthe offers a final chance to retreat. However, embodying the warrior spirit within her, Tunuva decisively chooses to venture eastward, embracing the unknown that lies ahead. This resolute commitment sets the stage for the challenges and confrontations that await them in the wild and unforgiving landscapes of Hróth.

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Chapter 74 Summary: 72 West

Summary of Chapter 72: "West"

As the ominous darkening of the eastern sky signals trouble, Glorian stands in her chamber, feeling the weight of her pregnancy and the legacy of her lineage. She is supported by Helisent, her devoted maid who helps her navigate the sickness from her condition. Glorian's thoughts reflect both her personal turmoil and the uncertainty of the realm as she grapples with the realization that she is carrying the burden of her family's future, a new Berethnet child. Despite the tumult, her mind drifts to the memories of her father's efforts to preserve her childhood joy, now overshadowed by the political tides.

In the midst of her struggle, Glorian receives grave news about Robart Eller, who has escaped from Glowan Castle only to be found dead under tragic circumstances. Though a part of her feels a twinge of sorrow for him, she quickly resolves to spin the narrative to shield her realm, suggesting they claim his death resulted from the plague, reinforcing the whispers of madness surrounding him.

The narrative shifts to the city of Inys, which grows ever more restless under the stifling heat and rising tensions that result in public riots over food

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scarcity. Glorian's emotional and physical state deteriorates, haunted by the memory of Eller and the sinister implications surrounding his death. The pressure builds as she realizes the moment of truth about her pregnancy is looming, fearing the restrictions that will come from revealing it.

In a drastic and impulsive act of defiance against her situation, Glorian cuts her long hair—a symbol of control over her identity still left in a time of uncertainty. This gesture marks a significant turning point, as she prepares to confront the Regency Council about her pregnancy.

As the dragon threat from Dreadmount looms, Glorian and her entourage gather, readying themselves for an impending crisis. The people show a mixture of fear and resolve, seeking refuge in the tunnels of Hyll Sanctuary while beset by ominous foreboding. Amidst the chaos, Glorian comforts and inspires the gathered people, instilling hope through her words.

In the safety of the underground, Glorian's thoughts drift back to her precarious condition, the weight of her responsibilities, and the impending threat the wyrms pose to her homeland. The chapter closes with Glorian experiencing the intense horror and devastation of Arondine's burning, symbolizing the destruction that lurks just beyond her reach.

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Summary of Chapter 73: "Fýredel"

[Note: Since Chapter 73 has not been provided or described in your request, the summary above concludes the content from Chapter 72. If you wish to provide Chapter 73 or require further summaries, please share!]

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Chapter 75 Summary: 73 North

Chapter 73: North

Once a barren ridge connected the northern regions of East and North, but it was devoured by what is known as the Abyss, creating the treacherous area called the Broken Corridor. Dumai finds herself hovering over this desolate stretch of land aboard the dragon Furtia, observing the icy shallows where ancient guardians, the dragons, float silently above. Furtia's distant cousins are indifferent to her presence, evoking a sense of stillness despite the chaos that has engulfed their world.

Dumai feels a compelling bond with Furtia, a connection manifested through a chilling stone she carries. This connection is filled with uncertainty, urging her to continue despite the inherent chaos of the Abyss. The dragon warns her against crossing the deep waters, suggesting that trouble brews within. However, Dumai resolves to press on, driven by a force beyond her understanding, seeking answers to her dreams and a reunion with her lost sister.

On the eve of a peculiar unsetting sun—a hallmark of northern summers—Dumai and her companion Nikeya navigate the unforgiving landscape. Furtia lands by a dark river, giving Dumai a brief moment to

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wash in the cold, which she believes sharpens her senses. Their conversation reveals the sadness of Dumai's recent loss of Kanifa, to which Nikeya confesses her own envy and misunderstandings.

As night falls, an attack suddenly strikes—the dragons have awakened chaos from their slumber. Furtia is injured by a spear, sending the pair into a harrowing plunge toward the snow below. In the frigid aftermath, Dumai struggles to revive Nikeya, who, against the odds, regains consciousness with her trademark humor.

The attack reveals deeper tensions, as Dumai grapples with the implications of their situation—local Northerners mistaking Furtia for a deadly wyrm. Pressured by Nikeya's insight, they decide to seek shelter in the mountains where they believe Furtia may be hiding.

Exhausted and marked by the harshness of their trek, the two women find refuge in a cave just as they evade further danger. Inside, they tend to each other, both physically and emotionally. While resting, Nikeya becomes frustrated by Dumai's lack of trust, reminding her of their shared history and the loyalty she has shown. Dumai, weary and conflicted, reflects on Nikeya's family's complex loyalties and the burdens that accompany them.

The chapter culminates in the intimate sharing of warmth and protection between the two, symbolizing their fragile alliance amidst the brewing storm

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outside. Dumai finds herself both protective and guarded, caught between her past experiences and her desire for connection. In this moment of vulnerability, they acknowledge their lives' intertwining paths, despite the barriers and complexities that persist.

Chapter 74: (As the continuation is not provided, a summary for this chapter cannot be created.)

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Chapter 76: 74 North

Chapter 74: North

The chapter opens in the stark beauty of the North, illuminated by the midnight sun. Wulf and Thrit, two seasoned housecarls, ride through the wild landscape, navigating steep bluffs and deep snow as they make their way towards Járthfall. Their journey is one of survival, as they find food in hidden bear grapes and hunt for game amid the frigid terrain. The air is crisp, a welcome change from their previous travels, and Thrit's singing provides a fleeting sense of comfort in the isolation.

As they venture deeper into the North, they encounter loathsome creatures, including a majestic wyvern and the great wurm Valeysa, a creature previously mentioned by a character named Einlek. This unsettling evidence of life in the desolation amplifies their caution.

Their trek leads them to an expansive forest of towering blood pines, eventually culminating in a picturesque lake bordered by the formidable Oxhorns – twin peaks cloaked in snow and ice. Here, they discover a campsite, although Wulf suspects it is too small to serve as the main camp. Thrit expresses apprehension about crossing a shelf of hanging ice that serves as a natural deterrent to unwelcome visitors, but they both understand



they must traverse it to reach their destination. Despite Thrit's exhaustion, he refuses to rest, insisting on accompanying Wulf as they press on to their goal.

Chapter 75: A Dream of Ashes

Transitioning to Dumai, another character, the narrative shifts to a cave illuminated by a flickering light that reveals ancient paintings on its walls, filled with symbols and enigmatic figures. Among them, a striking depiction of a circle with lines radiating outward suggests a cosmic connection that resonates with her childhood memories of stargazing with her sister Kanifa. Pondering the meaning of these images, Dumai senses a connection to prophecies and long-forgotten events, igniting her determination to find her sister, Furtia.

Sleeping beside her is Nikeya, who suffers from frostnip. Their contrasting fates link the two women as Nikeya draws strength from Dumai's story of survival, recounting a childhood incident where Dumai almost perished in a snowstorm. Their bond deepens as they expose their vulnerabilities: Dumai's fears and past hardships juxtaposed against Nikeya's treacherous political ties as a Kuposa, a term suggesting she is of noble descent closely tied to power struggles.

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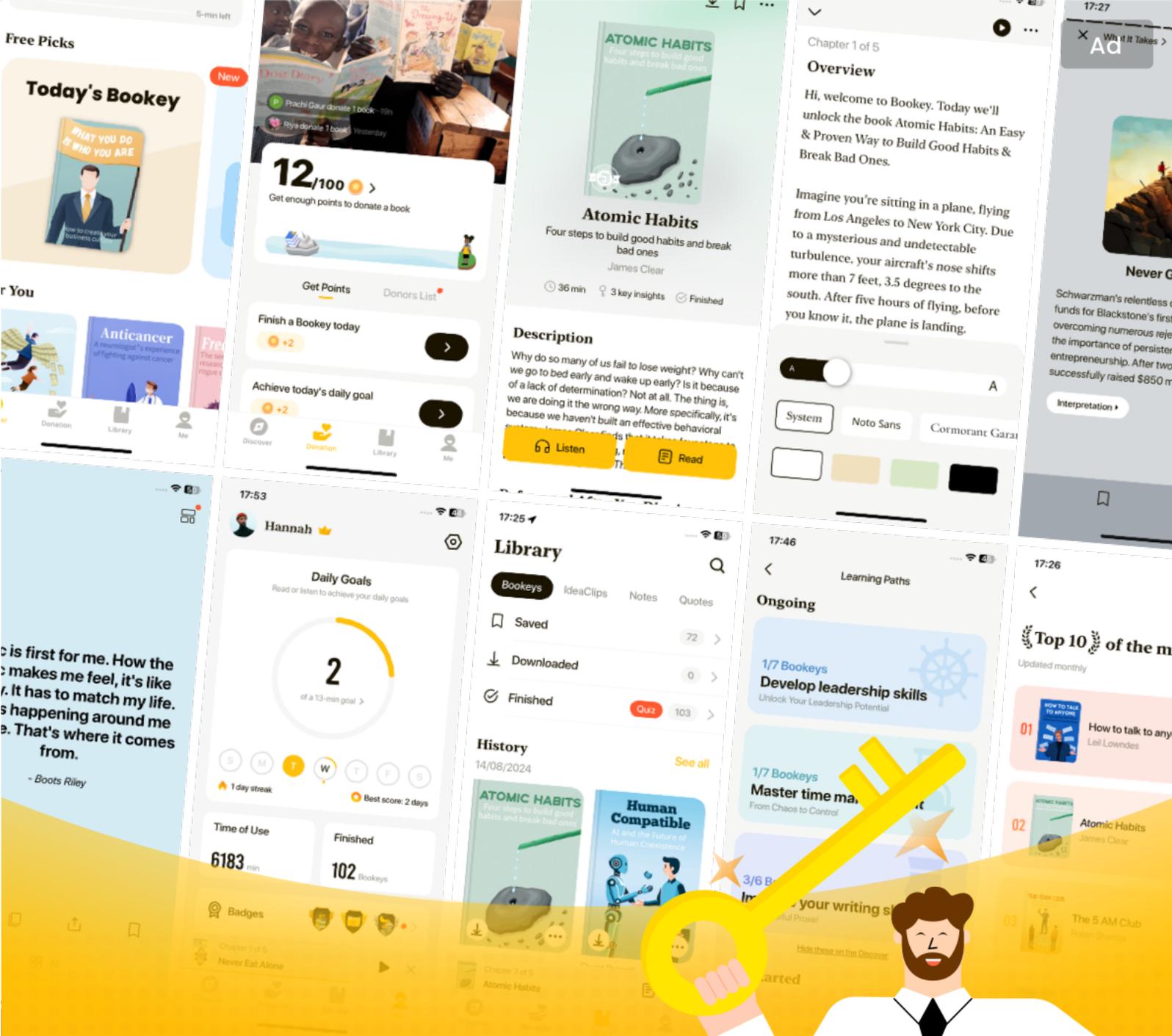
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The tension in their interaction swells as Nikeya reveals her feelings for Dumai, contrasting her persona as a political instrument bound to serve her father. The warmth of their connection culminates in a tender kiss, a moment that breaks the barriers that Dumai has built around herself in her journey for

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Chapter 77 Summary: 75 North

In Chapter 75, titled "75 North," Wulf and his companion Thrit navigate a perilous mountain pass adorned with banners of the Hraustr. As they approach a wide ice helm nestled between the Oxhorns, Wulf is filled with trepidation, wary of hidden fissures beneath the snow. Midway through their trek, they discover a violent confrontation on the ice: a gaunt man named Karlsten is attacking a small woman in armor with a greatsword, while another woman without armor watches from a distance.

Wulf shouts to Karlsten, attempting to redirect his aggression. Karlsten, consumed by despair and loss—having just killed his fellow tribesmen—believes the two women are threats from the East, igniting his paranoia. As tensions escalate, a massive dark creature—revealed to be a dragon—appears, wrenching attention away from the confrontation. Karlsten charges toward the creature, eager for a fight.

Simultaneously, Dumai, one of the women in the ice battle, struggles with a grievous leg injury. She witnesses Karlsten's relentless assault on Furtia, a dragon whom she views with reverence and desperation. She employs her sickle in a desperate, albeit futile attempt to protect Furtia, a being she sees as divine. Despite her efforts, the fight intensifies as another Hróthi warrior joins Karlsten.



Recognizing the peril of the situation, Dumai feels a strong bond with Furtia yet experiences a foreboding sense when a mysterious, hooded woman from her past emerges, revealing a connection to Dumai's own quest. Meanwhile, chaos ensues as the ice gives way beneath the fighters' feet, leading to a massive glacier fracture that threatens everyone involved.

Amidst this climax, Wulf and Thrit maintain focus on the immediate threats around them, struggling to manage their alliances and the dire circumstances developing on the ice. Karlsten's rage and desperation pose an imminent threat not only to the Eastern women but to Wulf and Thrit as well. The chapter culminates in heightened action as characters are forced to confront their inner demons and external dangers, with the dragon's feral presence amplifying the chaos.

Chapter 76 shifts perspective to Tunuva and Canthe. Tunuva harnesses her wyrmfire abilities to confront the dragon, finding herself connected to the creature in unexpected ways. As Tunuva and Canthe work together in the aftermath of the glacier's rupture, they witness the fallout of the earlier conflicts. Tunuva's focus quickly shifts to a young Northern warrior dangling perilously over the abyss, revealing a personal connection through his striking resemblance to her own past.

The chapter encapsulates themes of identity, loss, and the unpredictable nature of both allies and enemies, as characters are propelled toward a

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confrontation that intertwines their fates in profound ways. Tunuva's act of saving the young man demonstrates her resilience and connection to her own past, setting the stage for dramatic revelations and further conflicts as the story unfolds.

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Chapter 78 Summary: 76 West

In the aftermath of the devastating fires that consumed Arondine, Glorian Berethnet rides through the smoldering remains of Hyll Sanctuary, her figure wrapped in a red cloak that symbolizes the royal bloodline of Inys. The castle, a testament to her people's history, now lies in ruins, but the sanctuary has partially survived, offering a glimmer of hope amid the ashes. As she approaches the throne within the sanctuary, she is accompanied by the Arch Sanctarian, who solemnly crowns her as Queen of Inys, proclaiming her as Glorian Shieldheart, the latest heir in a long line of rulers.

This moment marks not only her ascension but also a pivotal moment for the people of Inys, who are still reeling from tragedy and loss. Glorian addresses her subjects, acknowledging her mixed heritage — a royal mother and a father of common origins who fought for freedom and justice. She emphasizes the current crisis is not merely a battle against tangible foes but against an insidious sickness threatening their lands.

Her speech underscores the need for patience and wisdom over reckless bravery. Glorian evokes the memory of her father and calls for a collective wait for guidance from the Saint, under whose protection they must endure the challenges ahead. She conveys that while they must be temperate and strategic, they will have the chance to rise as warriors if the time comes. In a passionate declaration, she reveals her pregnancy, promising that her child,

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named Sabran, will symbolize their enduring legacy against the encroaching darkness. This announcement fuels the people's hope, igniting a powerful rallying cry of "Shieldheart" that reverberates through the ruins.

Thus, in her declaration, Glorian unites her people with both a sense of purpose and a vow of resilience, indicating that despite the looming threats, they will rise again under her leadership. As the triumphant chant fills the air, Glorian's resolve solidifies, setting the stage for the challenges and battles that lie ahead in her quest to protect her kingdom.

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Chapter 79 Summary: 77 North

Chapter 77: The Reunion in Halgalant

Wulfert Glenn awakens in the embrace of a lumpy bed in Halgalant, accompanied by pain and confusion. He recalls nightmarish memories of battles and a wyrm, sparking questions about his survival and the fate of his companions. As he becomes aware of his surroundings, he realizes he is being tended to by two women: Tunuva Melim, whom he later learns is his mother, and Canthe, an Inysh woman. Initially surprised and disoriented, Wulf grapples with the emotions of discovering his lineage while dealing with recent traumas, including the loss of comrades in battle.

Canthe reveals that they are in the outpost of Járthfall and explains why Tunuva has searched for him for so long, suggesting that Wulf might have been abducted as a child. Her words evoke a mix of hope and bitterness within Wulf, who longs for answers about his past and the mysteries surrounding his adoption into the Glenn family. Following his mother's emotional nudge and the offer of further understanding about his heritage, Wulf begins to reflect on his own identity and the impact of his lineage.

Despite feeling a pull to his duty to the King and his companions, something in Tunuva's plea to learn about his past resonates deeply. Confronted with

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the possibility of discovering the truth about who he truly is, Wulf ultimately decides to accompany Tunuva and Canthe to Lasia to uncover the secrets that have eluded him for decades.

Chapter 78: A Journey Into Shadows

Meanwhile, in a different part of the world, Dumai and her dragon, Furtia Stormcaller, face their own crises. Exhausted and weakened, Furtia collapses, revealing the toll that recent conflicts have taken on her. Dumai, determined to help her, seeks to remove a spear that has pierced Furtia's crest—a task fraught with danger. With the assistance of her companion Nikeya, they manage to extract the spear, but not without physical and emotional strain.

As the trio discusses their dire situation, the tension escalates. Dumai grapples with her bond to a mysterious stone she has carried, which she believes holds immense power. However, a bitter exchange with Nikeya reveals underlying distrust and unspoken grievances, leading to a deeper exploration of their respective identities and roles. Dumai's earlier sense of certainty falters, and she reflects on her responsibilities, not only to her companions but also to the legacy that she bears.

Furtia's cryptic insights offer glimpses of the potency of the stone, hinting at

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ancient connections and responsibilities that Dumai must navigate. The chapter closes with a sense of urgency as Dumai realizes the path ahead is fraught with challenges that will test their bonds and resolve.

These chapters intertwine personal revelations and quests for identity, demonstrating how the characters are shaped by their pasts while also grappling with the present as they forge their destinies against the backdrop of a world rife with conflict and secrets.

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Chapter 80: 78 North

Chapter Summary: 78 North

On a cobbled beach near Eldyng, Thrit and Wulf are having a tense conversation, unsure about the decisions that lay before them. Thrit voices his discontent about Wulf's choice to embark on a dangerous journey involving mysterious women and their dragon, an encounter that Thrit links to past tragedies. Their discussion reveals a deeper understanding of the prejudices in their world, particularly regarding the antagonist Karlsten, who succumbed to fear and hatred against those he deemed different. Thrit argues for a more compassionate approach, advocating for understanding rather than scorn, suggesting that the world might need a transformational moment – perhaps even an apocalyptic one – to change longstanding beliefs.

As they contemplate an uncertain future marked by the possibility of dragons – creatures thought extinct for centuries – Wulf prepares to leave for a journey of his own. He intends to meet Thrit later at Inys, where Thrit wants to ensure that Queen Glorian is protected from the influence of the Yscali, a character representing foreign menace. In a moment of emotional vulnerability, Thrit unexpectedly kisses Wulf, acknowledging the risk of losing Wulf to the dangers that await him. Their bond, previously unvoiced, is now laid bare, yet both are left grappling with the unexpressed feelings

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that swell between them.

Their exchange hangs heavily in the air, filled with the pain of parting and the weight of unspoken truths as Wulf commits to returning, despite the looming threats ahead. As he walks away from Thrit, he reflects on the

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Chapter 81 Summary: 79 West

Chapter Summary: 79 West

In the aftermath of the unguarded Harmur Pass, a group of travelers crossed the Gulf of Edin, guiding their horses through the shallow waters. Among them was Tunuva, who, upon reaching the sandy shores of the Ersyri side, knelt to absorb the familiar scent of the desert. This moment marked her return to the South, each day bringing her closer to the home she longed for.

As she surveyed the landscape, her attention turned to Wulf, her son, who was experiencing the vastness of this environment for the first time. His expressions intrigued her; she often compared him to his father, Meren. At first glance, Wulf resembled Meren with his thick brows and sharp nose, yet he also bore features reminiscent of Tunuva and her late mother, Liru. The emotional weight of their familial resemblance weighed heavily on her heart. Wulf had grown quiet and introspective, carrying the scars of hardship that Tunuva could only imagine. The contrast to her memories of him as a laughter-filled child was stark.

His upbringing had lacked the nurturing presence of a mother figure; Tunuva felt a complex mix of relief and sorrow at the thought. Wulf had been taught the fierce languages of the Hróthi and the melodious Inys, while Tunuva

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struggled to communicate with him, learning bits of the Inysh language from their companion Canthe during their journey. Each lesson was a reminder of the distance that had grown between them.

As they walked, Wulf's curiosity piqued. He spotted an unusual creature in the distance and instinctively reached for the axe at his side. Tunuva followed his gaze to see Ninuru, an ichneumon and Tunuva's loyal friend. The exuberant creature approached, knocking Tunuva off her feet and showering her with affection. Their joyful reunion was filled with laughter, showcasing the bond that had remained intact despite Tunuva's absence. Ninuru, sensing the connection between her and Wulf, confirmed her bond with Tunuva by commenting on Wulf's familiar scent, leaving Tunuva feeling grateful and hopeful for the journey that lay ahead as they all prepared to return home together.

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Chapter 82 Summary: 80 East

Chapter 80: The Flames of Seiiki

As Dumai and her dragon Furtia journey through the aftermath of the gods waking, a heavy haze of melancholy pervades their travels. With the guidance of Dumai's dream—a betrayal too raw to forget—she grapples with her relationship with her sister Nikeya, choosing silence over confrontation. Dumai is burdened by the mistakes of their quest, but Furtia's recovery leads them homeward, away from North Hüran.

On the seventh day, they return to Seiiki, only to be met with a devastating sight: their homeland is engulfed in flames, and a dark smog chokes the sunset. The destruction reveals a massive threat—intruders from the provinces, driven by fear of a mysterious illness, have raged against the palace, leading to the death of Dumai's father, Emperor Jorodu.

Upon landing, Dumai rushes to the Inner Palace against a backdrop of whispers and masked guards. Inside the Throne Hall, she confronts her sister Suzumai, now Empress at just nine years old, and the River Lord, who stands beside the throne—a cunning figure whose words are dipped in trouble. The hall erupts in shock at Dumai's return and the tragic news of their father's demise. She learns that the illness spreading through the

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province is laid at her doorstep, as she had returned with the help of foreign forces.

In the wake of her father's death, the River Lord exploits the moment, suggesting Dumai's exile to protect her from both court and the mounting fear. Tension escalates as Dumai realizes she is being betrayed, and her claims to the throne are diminished by her absence. Yet, through the chaos and mourning, she asserts her loyalty to her sister while recognizing their shared bloodlines and the burdens of rule.

Despite the River Lord's manipulations to entrench power, Dumai refuses to be sidelined; she declares her intention to form her own court in the provinces to defend their people—a bold act of defiance against the River Lord's insidious ploys. As she leaves the court, a reluctant Nikeya's pleas and warnings echo behind her, revealing the emotional rift between the two.

With Furtia awaiting her, Dumai ascends into the sky—her heart set on a path beyond the tumult of court. Despite her sister's sorrowful figure left behind, she is resolved to shape her destiny far from the grasp of the River Lord.

Chapter 81: **Unyielding Winds**

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Dumai sits on her dragon, Furtia, soaring high above Seiiki. The pain and uncertainty of her familial crisis weigh heavily on her, but her resolve only grows stronger. As they fly towards Mount Ipyeda, her thoughts focus on the real threats overshadowing her homeland—the wyrms and the fear that clouds the hearts of her people.

Guided by the memories of her father and past lessons, Dumai summons her strength and commitment to fight back against the chaos. She reaffirms her role not just as a princess, but a protector of Seiiki. With Furtia by her side, she embraces her identity as a dragon rider and godsinger, rejecting the limitations the court seeks to impose upon her.

This chapter delves deeply into Dumai's transformation from a princess relegated to court politics to a powerful figure determined to reclaim her rightful place as a leader. Here, the themes of identity, loyalty, and the spirit of defiance resonate, carving a path for Dumai that transcends her initial doubts and the manipulations of those around her.

Thus, with newfound purpose, Dumai embarks on a quest not just to reclaim her home from forces that threaten it, but to forge a legacy that honors her family's history while making space for her own voice amid the roiling tides of power.

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Chapter 83 Summary: 81 South

Chapter 81 Summary: Homecoming and Reunion in Lasia

Tunuva rides swiftly to Lasia, accompanied by Wulf, her birthson, and Ninuru, their ichneumon guide. As they traverse the landscape ravaged by the wyrms, Wulf mercifully ends the suffering of the wounded left behind. The intense journey culminates in the lush Lasian Basin, where Tunuva instinctively feels a mix of joy and trepidation as she prepares to face her old life and the potential absence of her sisters.

Upon reaching the old fig tree, Tunuva retrieves a precious water source and seeks to reconnect with her memories, her presence conjuring reflections of her past life with her lost child. As they move deeper into the fig's roots, Wulf displays curiosity akin to that of his father, Meren, leading Tunuva to briefly reminisce about her family.

The narrative shifts when Tunuva reunites with Siyu, her birthdaughter, who has undergone significant changes due to the ongoing conflict. The emotional reunion is tempered by a complex exchange about Tunuva's absence during a turbulent time, prompting Siyu to voice her pain. Nonetheless, Tunuva attempts to mend their bond by introducing Wulf to Siyu, revealing their familial connection. Though Siyu expresses disbelief,



Tunuva reassures her of the deep-rooted love she has for both her daughters: Siyu and Lukiri.

Siyu informs Tunuva that Esbar is present but engaged in replenishing magic and supplies after a demanding battle. Wulf, still absorbing the gravity of his new surroundings, is led away by Siyu to rest while Tunuva finds solace in the familiarity of her chamber, now lit and welcoming despite her prolonged absence.

The chapter takes a poignant turn when Tunuva encounters Esbar, who appears more battle-worn yet resolute. Their long-standing connection hangs in the balance as they navigate the delicate territory of love, loss, and loyalty. Esbar's direct inquiry about the well-being of Wulf stirs complex feelings in Tunuva, who confidently acknowledges Wulf as her son despite the uncertainty surrounding his origins.

Through their conversation, the tension of missed opportunities and unspoken emotions surfaces. Tunuva acknowledges Esbar's struggles as a leader during an escalating conflict against the wyrms, emphasizing the dire situation threatening their people. As they exchange thoughts on familial bonds and the realities of war, the two women share a moment of vulnerability, admitting the weight of their choices.

The chapter culminates in a fragile yet tender reconciliation between Tunuva

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and Esbar. As they grasp each other's hands, the warmth of their connection rekindles, allowing both women to bridge the gaps formed over years marked by grief and uncertainty. The commitment to face the challenges ahead together signifies a hopeful turn, as they pledge to support one another in the tumultuous times to come.

Chapter 82 Summary: [To Be Provided]

(Note: The summary for Chapter 82 would follow the same format as above, focusing on key events and character developments to maintain continuity and logical flow in the narrative.)

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Chapter 84: 82 East

Summary of Chapter 82 - East

As the cold dawn broke over Mount Ipyeda, the ominous clouds of smoke thickened in the sky, hinting at turmoil. In the privacy of her quarters, the Grand Empress addressed her granddaughter, Dumai, alongside Unora, who was Dumai's mother. The Grand Empress acknowledged the precarious situation that had developed with the Kuposa and predicted potential retaliation from the River Lord, their regent.

Dumai, however, argued that the River Lord had no reason to threaten her. She believed he was more focused on maintaining control over the throne, which currently housed a naive child, rather than on escalating conflict with her, especially given the pressing dangers of wyrms and a spreading sickness that threatened their realm.

Unora, wary of the challenges ahead, was reminded by her mother of her crucial role. The Grand Empress encouraged her to assist Dumai, emphasizing that survival in these dire times would require her knowledge of the provinces. This marked a shift in their roles: Dumai was expected to take a stand and lead, while Unora was to guide her in navigating their kingdom's fragile landscape.



The Grand Empress reflected on her own past with Osipa, her former handmaiden, lamenting her absence and the void it left behind. Dumai, grappling with her memories of loss, shared her haunting dreams—a recurring vision of another woman by a stream. This figure, who had offered

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Chapter 85 Summary: 83 South

Chapter 83: South

As a magical fire flickered in the hearth, Wulf found himself caught in reflection, contemplating the profound challenges ahead of him. Today was the day he intended to confront Tunuva, his mother—a moment he had grappled with for weeks as he oscillated between his old life and the new one he had forged at the Priory. Inys, where he was born, called to him, especially after the upheaval known as the Conviction, which had left his family reeling from his absence.

Wulf had become an anomaly among the noble women of the Priory, a place where war was traditionally a woman's burden, contrary to the roles held by men in his past. He felt like a puzzle piece that fit awkwardly into this community, where Siyu welcomed him warmly and Esbar gradually warmed up to him as well. Through his time at the Priory, he had learned of his history and the legacy of the Saint, which intertwined deeply with the essence of the place itself.

In a moment of solitude, Wulf immersed himself in a hot spring, a ritual that deeply connected him to magic—a lineage he had feared but learned to embrace rather than resent. Equipped with this knowledge, he was ready to

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speak to Tunuva, who was honing her blades in the armory, a testament to the strength and honor that defined her.

In their conversation, Wulf revealed his intentions to leave. His heartfelt apologies rolled out for the lost time and misunderstandings that had shadowed their relationship. Tunuva acknowledged his decision with an understanding smile, aware that he had commitments in Inys. Encouraged by her, Wulf set out to find Canthe and Esbar, seeking their support for his departure.

In the company of Canthe, who held an enigmatic power, and Esbar, the Prioress, Wulf made his leave known. To Esbar, he spoke of his child with the Queen of Inys, sharing both joy and trepidation about the legacy they would pass on—an unborn child possibly endowed with magic. The women accepted his choices, with Esbar acknowledging the complexity of Wulf's position yet confirming his freedom to choose his path.

As he prepped to leave, Wulf took a quick moment to reflect on his birthplace, feeling the weight of all that had been unearthed about his identity. Along the way, he encountered Siyu, who expressed her fear of being forgotten by her child, Lukiri. They shared a tender moment as Wulf prepared for battle once more, recognizing the familial ties forged at the Priory, but still feeling the tug of duty that called him back to Inys.

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In a bittersweet farewell, Wulf carved his name on the wall dedicated to the brother lines, marking his legacy. He felt pride yet sorrow—as he was preparing to leave behind a place that had begun to form an integral part of his identity and home.

Chapter 84: Reflections and Farewell

As the days rolled on, Tunuva watched lovingly from afar as Wulf shared a beautiful moment with his child. Yet the impending separation weighed heavily on her. The reality of Wulf's departure and the sprouting ties binding him to the Queen troubled her, considering the implications for the unborn child—the future of a lineage steeped in shadows.

Tunuva and Esbar found a moment of solace together, grappling with the complexities of Wulf's legacy. They shared their fears and aspirations, acknowledging that the child would face unique challenges due to the bloodline they were a part of. As a future queen, she would be burdened by expectations and the burdens carried by those who came before her.

Though Tunuva wished to protect her grandchild's truth, the intrinsic nature of their world demanded harsh realities. They mutually decided to keep the news of the royal pregnancy between themselves to guard against potential resentments among the sisters at the Priory, who might fear the repercussions of a mage-born child. The two women reaffirmed their



commitment to their duty, recognizing that their fight for the survival of their heritage would continue even as Wulf secured his role in Inys.

Tunuva stood vigil as dusk settled over the valley, cherishing these moments with her family—a poignant juxtaposition of hope and heartache. She accepted the bittersweet truth: life moves inexorably forward, separating them even as it binds them in new ties—moving towards a future wrought with uncertainty, but also the possibility of hope for both her son and for their community at large.

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Chapter 86 Summary: 84 East

Chapter 84: East

After a prolonged absence from the mortal realm, the gods unleash a torrential rain over the harbor city of Ginura, bringing both relief and chaos. The city, once peaceful, is now under siege as the monstrous Taugran the Golden and its twisted wurm creations wreak havoc, terrorizing the inhabitants who desperately fight back.

Amidst the turmoil, Dumai, daughter of the late Emperor Jorodu, rides atop Furtia the Stormcaller, a formidable dragon. They are accompanied by a cadre of other dragons who hear whispers of a star and its chaos-inducing power. Dumai, who has recently returned from exile, is determined to rally the Ginurans and lead them to safety. She directs Furtia to protect the fleeing citizens as they form a refuge at the beach, intent on heading to Mayupora Forest, a safer destination.

As the city burns, cultivated fields lie in ash, the result of relentless attacks by wyrms and a devastating red sickness plaguing the land. Dumai's thoughts are burdened with the grim state of Seiiki, where chaos reigns and many have fallen, yet she focuses on the immediate task of saving lives. Clan Mithara and other noble families have pledged their loyalty to her,

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bolstering her resolve to protect the people.

Descending from the skies, Furtia seizes an enemy creature, showcasing their power and drawing cheers from the survivors. Dumai, wearing no armor and armed only with the magical blue stone of the gods, addresses her people, asserting her claim as queen and urging them to flee to the forest for safety.

The flight to Mayupora Forest is fraught with worry. Dumai reflects on the significant losses sustained during this devastating season of conflict. Yet, their flight into the forest represents hope, as it remains untouched by the wyrms' destruction. Dumai reunites with her mother, Unora, who has cared for the displaced and is worried for Dumai's health after her exhausting flights.

At their makeshift camp, the survivors find solace in each other, sharing meals and stories. Among them, Dumai meets a young girl named Iyo, who mourns the loss of her sister. Dumai comforts her, drawing strength from the collective resilience of her people. An elderly storyteller's tale of the Mulberry Queen, a figure of hope, resonates deeply with Dumai, reminding her of her purpose.

Meanwhile, discussions unfold regarding the River Lord's betrayal, revealing that the regent is hoarding a powerful siege engine that could

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bolster their defenses. Dumai devises a plan to reconstruct the weapon, seeking help from her allies in the other camps.

Despite the relentless burden of her responsibilities weighing on her, Dumai concedes to her mother's wisdom, realizing she must rest and regain her strength. As she sleeps, it becomes clear that the night holds more surprises — the arrival of a weary, ashy survivor named Nikeya, who has braved the perils to find Dumai. The encounter promises to ignite new possibilities and challenges for their struggle against the chaos engulfing their land.

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Chapter 87 Summary: 85 West

Chapter 85 Summary: The Plight of Stilharrow Deep

Once a serene valley kissed by mist at dawn, Stilharrow Deep had transformed into a grim battleground scarred by smoke and death. As Glorian, a royal with a heavy burden, watched from a concealed vantage point, her knights confronted monstrous adversaries, creatures woven from nightmares. A battle raged on a treacherous sheet of ice, where a horse met a brutal fate at the jaws of a scaled wolf, punctuating the horror of the day. The stark reality of loss was palpable, especially with the ominous shadow of Fýredel looming over them.

Glorian, heavily pregnant and aching from the strain, observed the carnage, realizing that winter had only granted a fleeting reprieve from the relentless assault of Fýredel's monstrous legions. Lord Damud, a key advisor, informed her that enemies had momentarily retreated but predicted the return of Fýredel, a fearsome dragon known to command legions of terror. Despite her dwindling options, Glorian remained resolute.

After the battle, Glorian returned to the safety of her castle where she sought respite from both the physical and psychological toll of war. Her ladies attended to her, offering comfort as she contended with her fears about

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childbirth, a process steeped in danger, especially for women of her lineage. Generations of women before her had faced death in bringing forth heirs, and as she sat in her chamber, she felt the weight of expectation pressing upon her.

When the Regency Council convened, Glorian faced scrutiny from her advisors, concerned about her readiness for leadership amid the chaos. Lady Marian, her grandmother, spoke of relocating to a safer stronghold, recognizing the growing threats from the dragons. Various suggestions were put forth, balancing safety against proximity to her scattered people. Amidst disagreements, Glorian's determination shone through; she insisted on visiting Hollow Crag, where thousands of survivors had gathered, offering them solace and leadership, even as her own time grew precarious.

Ultimately, after tense discussions, the council agreed that they would ride for Hollow Crag, a decision underscoring both Glorian's unwavering commitment to her people and the ever-looming threats of the world around them. This chapter encapsulates the precarious balance between duty and vulnerability, the struggles of leadership, and the sacrifices made in the name of kingship and family.

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Chapter 88: 86 East

In Chapter 86 of **The Eternal Tide**, we find Dumai tending to the wounded Nikeya, who has recently arrived at Dumai's camp after a harrowing journey. Uncertain about the motives behind Nikeya's visit, Dumai grapples with the complexities of their past relationship, as Nikeya was once a part of the court life that Dumai left behind. The chapter begins with Dumai in a contemplative mood, contrasting the beauty of a red sunset with the tragedy surrounding them.

Lady Mithara, Dumai's grandaunt and head of the Mithara clan, arrives and questions Dumai about Nikeya, suspecting she may be a spy for the regent due to her past as an instrument of power since her mother's death. Dumai defends Nikeya, noting her respect for Dumai's life. The two women discuss important issues, including the need for protection against their enemies and the importance of Dumai's formal recognition as queen.

As tensions rise among the clans dealing with the aftermath of a civil conflict, Dumai shares her concerns about the future with Mithara, expressing a desire to avoid a civil war. Once alone with Nikeya, who awakens from sleep, Dumai learns more about Nikeya's struggle for survival and her experience evading her father's plots. The dangerous revelations about the regent's ambition and the potential threat to Dumai's family deepen the bond between the two women.

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Amidst their heartfelt conversation, Nikeya reveals that she has acquired plans for a powerful weapon—a crossbow—while risking her life to steal them from her father’s study. This vital piece of information could aid Dumai in defending her people. As they share meals and stories, there is an underlying tension that reflects both their histories and their growing connection.

Dumai expresses worry for her sister, Suzumai, revealing threads of familial loyalty and the stakes of their political environment. The chapter culminates in a significant moment of intimacy, portraying the emotional pivot in their relationship. They waded into a hot spring, where the intimacy progresses into a deep exploration of shared secrets and family legacies, including the legend tying their ancestors together through ages of intrigue and power struggles.

As they relax and confide in each other, Nikeya proposes a strategy to help defend Seiiki—a notion of ruling together. She envisions Dumai as empress alongside her, creating a stronger alliance against the backdrop of their political turmoil. The chapter closes on a note of renewed trust and deepening affection, as the two women embrace their desires, merging personal and political ambitions amidst the chaos of their world.

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This summary weaves through the essential plot points and thematic elements, capturing the nuances of the characters' relationships and settings while creating a cohesive narrative flow. If you would like more depth in certain areas or a focus on additional characters, please let me know!

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Chapter 89 Summary: 87 South

In Chapter 87, titled "South," the scene unfolds at the Priory as Wulf prepares to embark on a journey that leads him into the tumultuous remnants of civilization. Accompanied by Tunuva and Siyu, he approaches the tunnel that signifies his departure. Tunuva advises him against taking an unclaimed ichneumon, warning of their obstinate nature, while Lukiri, Tunuva's young charge, clings to her fingers, expressing concern for Wulf's safety. Through the exchange, Tunuva reassures Wulf of Ninuru's protection, her beloved ichneumon awaiting him on the other side.

The poignant farewells begin with Siyu giving Wulf a heartfelt embrace. Their brother-sister bond is evident as she urges him to cherish his family and to remember the truth, warning him against falling prey to deceit. The departure grows more emotional as Wulf crouches to say goodbye to Lukiri, who, albeit hesitant and emotional, understands the necessity of his journey.

Tunuva presents Wulf with a meticulously crafted Kumengan spear, a symbol of her unwavering connection as his mother and a testament to his warrior lineage. Their shared emotional weight becomes palpable as Wulf recounts his longing for her presence throughout his childhood, expressing admiration for her strength as a warrior and a mother who traversed the world for him. Tunuva's response, filled with tears, reflects the depth of their bond. She assures him he is always welcome back, leaving them both



clinging to hope for a reunion.

As Wulf finally steps into the darkness, Tunuva is overwhelmed by sorrow mixed with pride. She mourns their years apart, the clandestine truths that have shaped him, and the grief of his absence, feeling both joy for his strength and pain for their inevitable separation. Beneath the comforting orange tree, her tears merge into a bittersweet acknowledgment of their connection, her love for Wulf alive within her heart despite the distance. In this moment, she holds both the agony of separation and the relief that he has embraced his legacy, assuring her that he remains proud to be her son.

This chapter poignantly captures the emotional intricacies of family, identity, and the bittersweet nature of goodbyes, as Wulf faces a world filled with uncertainty while Tunuva processes her enduring love and loss.

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Chapter 90 Summary: 88 East

Chapter Summary: 88 88 East

In a quiet tent nestled in the woods, Dumai cradles her companion Nikeya, both enveloped in intimate silence illuminated by the flickering candlelight. Their day had been filled with tasks: chopping wood for crossbows with their companions, and later, Nikeya taught Dumai the art of archery, culminating in a successful hunt for dinner. To protect her identity from enemies, Dumai has taken the name Tonra, after a resilient figure from the mythical land of Brhazat.

As they share a tender moment, the conversation shifts to a mysterious dark stone that Nikeya is inspecting. Dumai reveals that Furtia, another member of their group, spoke of it as a remnant of fallen stars imbued with powerful energies. Nikeya expresses her discomfort with the stone's presence, and Dumai reassures her with a reflection on their love.

After some playful banter, Dumai admits her deep feelings for Nikeya and conveys that their bond is as sacred as a marriage. She reveals her past in a temple, steeped in traditional rituals, and states that their love has already been cemented under the night sky's witness. This moment culminates in a romantic and beautiful exchange, where they affirm their commitment to one

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another, flavorful with hints of light-hearted teasing about secret marriages.

However, they agree to keep their relationship private for a while, cherishing their time together without outside pressures. The chapter highlights their deepening connection amidst the backdrop of urgency and uncertainty, as Furtia's prolonged absence looms over them, leaving Nikeya worried about Dumai's commitments to the larger world. Dumai reassures her of her intention to return whenever called, but as she drifts off to sleep curled around Nikeya, an ominous inner voice stirs within her, hinting at the turbulence lurking below the surface of their seemingly peaceful existence. Dumai feels a haunting presence that suggests both love and inevitable sorrow.

This summary captures the essence of Dumai's bonds with Nikeya and the complexities of their situation, while introducing key elements like Furtia and the mystical stone that foreshadow future conflicts.

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Chapter 91 Summary: 89 South

Chapter 89: South

As time continues its relentless march, Tunuva finds herself deep within the reality of a burning world, battling fierce creatures in the treacherous Crimson Desert. Accompanied by her loyal companion Denag, the two embark on a vital mission to deliver a rare plague remedy to Queen Daraniya, acknowledging the guidance from their all

Upon their return to the Priory, they are summoned by Esbar to confront a dire situation; Jotenya's powerful stronghold has been breached by Dedalugun's factions, prompting Gashan and the other survivors to seek refuge in Nzene. Esbar has resolved to join them in this crucial defense.

That night, while the Priory rests in silence, Tunuva stands alone at a window, gazing at the stars that manage to pierce through the city's smog. She contemplates the journey back of Wulf, hoping for his safety and thinking of the bond that may blossom between them again, even after all they have lost.

In this moment of introspection, Tunuva is unexpectedly joined by Canthe, dressed in blue, who expresses her understanding and compassion for

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Tunuva's feelings toward Wulf. Following their conversation, Canthe expresses a deep desire to visit the Mother's tomb—a sacred place which no one is allowed to enter without initiation. Tunuva, grappling with her own secrets and past, hesitates but ultimately decides to grant Canthe this request in a moment of camaraderie.

However, as Tunuva and Canthe stealthily navigate the corridors of the Priory, a surreal dreamlike state engulfs Tunuva. Finally, they reach the tomb, where a haunting revelation awaits them. Canthe's presence shifts from comrade to something far darker as they uncover the body of Cleolind Onjenyu, the Mother, preserved as if untouched by time.

Enraptured by the sight, Tunuva feels a tension rise as Canthe's true intentions surface. Awash in longing and crushing realization, Tunuva learns that Canthe, who has become a figure of both comfort and betrayal, harbors ancient and malevolent ambitions linked to the jewel tucked within the Mother's resting place. Despite her instinct to recoil in horror and disbelief, Tunuva is drawn into a web of magic, deceit, and emotional turmoil.

As conflict erupts in the tomb with Esbar's arrival, Tunuva's loyalties are tested. Canthe's true identity reveals itself, taking on names from their shared folklore that solidify her unsettling power. The true extent of Canthe's manipulation becomes painfully clear to Tunuva, who realizes the depths of the betrayal she has endured.

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In a desperate struggle for both the waning jewel and Esbar's safety, the confrontation escalates. With emotions at a fever pitch, arrows fly, and magical forces collide. The once silent chamber erupts into chaos, showcasing the complexities of love, betrayal, and the mysterious bonds they have formed. Esbar and Tunuva fight against Canthe's dark influence and the legacy of lies she has woven, as the very fabric of their identities unravels.

The chapter culminates in a climactic moment of action, revealing the tragic truth behind Canthe's actions. As Tunuva learns of her significant role as the tomb keeper, she becomes determined to protect both Esbar and the legacy of the Mother, foreshadowing an intense reckoning as they navigate the aftermath of all that has been revealed.

This chapter intricately weaves together themes of loss, deception, and the quest for identity, setting a poignant stage for the conflict that will unfold as Tunuva faces the consequences of both her choices and those of her companions. The reader is left pondering the intricate web of relationships and the heavy price of loyalty in a world on the brink of chaos.

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Chapter 92: 90 West

Chapter Summary: 90 90 West

As the northern winter clings to the landscape, Glorian, the pregnant queen, journeys with her royal party away from the charred remnants of Stilharrow towards the perilous heart of Inys. The land they traverse, once vibrant with wheat and orchards, lies in devastation, marked by the relentless assault of wyverns. The air is thick with ash, heavy with the scent of death, stark reminders of the horror they now navigate.

Despite the Regency Council's insistence that she retreat to safety, Glorian remains steadfast, refusing to abandon the remnants of her royal lineage, especially as her pregnancy becomes more precarious. Her loyal companions, including Helisent and Florell, ensure her safety throughout their slow and cautious trek, providing water and solace as they contend with their grim surroundings.

During a brief stop at an ancient barrow, the party unexpectedly encounters two homeless families, which they take under their wing. The sense of shelter amongst strangers provides Glorian with a fleeting sense of security—a feeling increasingly rare in this harsh reality. Yet, the overarching dread of the wyverns looms ever closer as they continue

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southward, seeking refuge at Hollow Crag.

When they reach the silhouette of Hollow Crag, a harrowing scene unfolds: desperate villagers flood towards the shelter in panic from pursuing wyverns. In a moment of chaos, the royal party narrowly escapes the onslaught and takes refuge within the cavern's depths. In a dimly lit cave filled with the wounded and grieving, Glorian confronts the reality of their precarious situation—Hollow Crag is not the sanctuary it was meant to be.

Lord Ordan, the Dowager Earl, outlines their grim circumstances and the urgent need for defense but suggests that their hope may lie in their numbers, irrespective of their many injuries. Glorian ardently motivates the gathered lords and ladies, emphasizing the necessity to fight for the sake of her unborn child and the future of her kingdom. Drawn in by her conviction, plans are set in motion to prepare a defense against the wyverns from the entrance of the cave.

Despite her exhaustion, Glorian's determination to nourish her compatriots and herself sets the tone of compassion amidst despair. She attempts to share a feast with fellow expectant mothers, yet their disbelief in accepting aid reflects their fractured spirits. The weight of her role as a leader becomes acutely real as she grapples with isolation and the burden of impending motherhood.

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As tension builds within the cave, the long-awaited moment arrives—glimmers of impending labor signal the encroaching reality of her delivery amid chaos. Helisent and Julain rally to support her as her body begins to betray her, foreshadowing both vulnerability and resilience that defines a mother in dark times.

Chapter Summary: 91 91 West

As Glorian awakens to the throes of labor, fear and determination intermingle, revealing the stakes of her situation more clearly than ever. The urgency of the moment prompts her to call for the Regency Council while battling the physical anguish of her impending childbirth. Amid the tumult of emotions and fearful whispers of her companions, the stakes of her duty—to her child and her kingdom—become frighteningly apparent.

The echoes of their beleaguered surroundings highlight the reality that she is trapped not only by circumstance but by the weight of expectation placed upon royal heirs. Each contraction serves as a visceral reminder that her life and her child's life hang in the precarious balance against the advancing wyverns and their relentless threat.

Through grit and resolve, Glorian steels herself for the challenges ahead,

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knowing the battle for Hollow Crag will also become a struggle for her child's existence in a world consumed by flame and devastation. She recognizes that this may not only be a fight against the creatures in the wind but against the very foundations of her lineage, and she seeks to ensure that her daughter experiences life beyond this moment of death.

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Chapter 93 Summary: 92 South

Chapter 92: South

Ninuru sprinted across the arid landscape, her powerful paws stirring up dust as Tunuva clung to her fur, with Siyu secure at her waist. They raced alongside Jeda, with other ichneumons carrying warriors, as they hurried towards the city of Nzene. A dark cloud loomed in the distance, marking the devastation of Jotenya, while tension hung in the air regarding the imminent arrival of the feared wurm, Dedalugun.

In Nzene, Tunuva's father, Kediko, had only recently begun fortifying the city after the alarming visit from a Lasian ambassador. High walls, ditches filled with stakes, and archer towers now protected the narrow mountain passes. Despite the city's bustle in preparation for war, the air was heavy with anxiety. Thousands of survivors awaited entry through the main gate near Mount Dinduru, the largest and most sacred of the Godsblades.

As Esbar introduced herself to the city guards—whose recognition of her name granted them swift passage—they entered a scene brimming with tension. Warriors readied themselves, mounting their horses and gripping their weapons, while civilians scrambled for cover. As they made their way to the palace, Esbar and Tunuva encountered Gashan Janudin, the Royal



Treasurer, who stood ready at the palace gates.

Tunuva noticed that Gashan wore the white cloak of an initiate, a sign of her transcendence within the ranks despite their fraught history. Gashan's plea for unity echoed the sentiments of the Divine Mother as they prepared to confront Dedalugun. Esbar echoed Gashan's resolve, promising to set aside past feuds for the greater good. The sense of urgency deepened as Gashan revealed the seriousness of their plight: with dedalugun's approach, the city faced potential destruction.

They gathered in the palace, where Gashan shared her urgent findings from the ancient royal archives. She had discovered a weathered tablet that spoke of a comet, one that had historically passed close to their world. Tunuva noted the chilling cold emanating from the tablet, reminiscent of another encounter with celestial events linked to magical phenomena. This comet, according to Canthe—a powerful figure in Tunuva's past—was believed to have influences over otherworldly forces.

Esbar raised concerns over the High Ruler's awareness, pressing Gashan about Kediko's reluctance to embrace the potentially beneficial implications of the comet. The situation was dire; with the vast bulk of Nzene's forces occupied elsewhere, only a small number remained to defend the city.

When they finally met Kediko, the High Ruler, he presented a facade of

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warmth and welcome, acknowledging Esbar's new role as Prioress while revealing signs of the toll the chaos had taken on him. He belittled their capabilities, opining that merely warding off threats wasn't enough to affirm the prowess of the Priory. Esbar bristled at his condescension but maintained her composure, ready for the impending battle against Dedalugun.

She and Gashan stepped out onto the terrace, surveying the city before them, the sun casting an ominous glow over the land. Together, they expressed their silent pledge: to confront Dedalugun—be it in victory or in death—side by side under the Lasian sun.

Chapter 93:

[The content for Chapter 93 is missing, please provide the text for summarization.]

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Chapter 94 Summary: 93 West

Summary of Chapter 93: West

On Cening Moor, a fierce battle rages as soldiers are engulfed in the chaos of wyrmfire, with the sounds of war echoing through the caverns of Hollow Crag. Inside, Queen Glorian of Inys endures the agonizing process of childbirth, a sacred event observed only by select individuals. Surrounding her are her grandmother, the midwife Bourn, and a few ladies-in-waiting, as half of the nobles fight outside to protect their realm.

As Glorian struggles with the pains of labor, her emotions fluctuate between fear and determination. She asks how many soldiers have arrived to aid in the fight, revealing her awareness of the stakes involved. Despite her distress, the midwives encourage her to focus solely on childbirth, dismissing her concern for the battle outside. The discussion about her birthing position hints at the weight of her royal status, but the traditional norms clash with the urgent necessity of labor.

Throughout Glorian's labor, breaching the depths of her physical and mental limits, she reflects on the burdens of her lineage and her role as the future of Inys. As flashes of her past invade her thoughts—her parents, the serene landscapes of her childhood—she fights against despair and fear of failure.

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A figure from her past, Prince Guma, intrudes upon this sacred moment, eliciting anger from those around her, emphasizing the emotional turmoil she faces.

Outside, Wulfert Glenn rides valiantly toward Hollow Crag, determined to find his father amidst the chaos. His journey is fraught with danger as he witnesses the devastation wrought by the marauding wyverns and their beasts, alongside his brother Rollo, who valiantly combats the attackers.

Despite the overwhelming carnage and fear, Wulf's concern for Queen Glorian heightens; he contemplates rushing into the caverns to defend her. However, he is reminded by his brother Thrit of the necessity to focus on the fight outside, clarifying that their own battle requires attention. This tension between personal desires and duty to one's homeland underscores the overarching themes of sacrifice and resilience within the narrative, as both battles—inside and outside Hollow Crag—carry heavy implications for the future of Inys.

Summary of Chapter 94

(Tentative continuation, if needed, to maintain the logical flow.)

In Chapter 94, the repercussions of the battle in the heart of Inys deepen. As warriors face the relentless onslaught of flame and beast, the connections among characters tighten, revealing hidden loyalties and alliances. Wulf and

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Thrit must navigate their sibling bond and the wider implications of their choices on the future of the realm. Meanwhile, Queen Glorian's struggle to birth a child embodies the dual themes of continuity and sacrifice, as her role within the fate of Inys becomes ever more critical.

The emotional weight of these chapters is juxtaposed against the brutality of war, illustrating the resilience required to uphold both life and legacy amid chaos. As the stakes rise, the past and present intertwine within the narrative, shaping the destiny of Inys under the looming threat of destruction.

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Chapter 95 Summary: 94 East

Chapter Summary: 94 - East

Dumai's encounter with Epabo, her father's enigmatic ally, unfolds in dire circumstances as he lies gravely injured in a tent. His condition has deteriorated since their last meeting on the snow-covered Mount Ipyeda, where he had first impressed upon her the importance of their alliance. Now, his left arm has been amputated and festering, revealing the grim realities of his journey to warn her of impending doom.

As Dumai speaks to the dying Epabo, he urges her to keep her distance, fearing he may be afflicted with a pervasive sickness. He reveals that a fearsome creature, identified only as a "winged beast," attacked him and that the River Lord of Seiiki has abandoned the provinces to chaos as they burn. Epabo's loyalty is evident as he shares urgent news about the River Lord's disturbing plan to appease this mythical beast named Taugran in hopes of saving their people.

Dumai's concern grows as Epabo describes how the River Lord intends to sacrifice the young Empress Suzumai—a chilling parallel to an ancient tale involving a similar ruler who sacrificed his daughter to placate a creature in another land. This revelation suggests a deep-seated betrayal, as the River

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Lord prioritizes power and political maneuvering over the lives of his own, manipulating his daughter for his gain.

Just then, Lady Nikeya, once an ally turned complication, enters the tent, confirming that her father, the River Lord, has indeed changed and is blinded by an insatiable thirst for control amid the chaos. Sensing a trap, Dumai's mother, Unora, protests her daughter's intention to rescue Suzumai from what they believe to be a dark fate. Yet, Dumai, emboldened by a sense of duty, resolves to confront the River Lord directly.

In a poignant moment, Unora confesses her past wish to save her own father, linking her own experiences to Dumai's determination. The mention of Muysima, an island notorious for its tragic history and the loss of Unora's father, adds weight to the emotional stakes. Dumai hands her mother a keepsake, symbolizing their bond and her hope for a safe return.

As the night deepens, Dumai prepares for her mission. Despite her inclination to keep Nikeya safe, she recognizes the necessity of their partnership. Nikeya's insistence to fight alongside Dumai, citing their responsibilities as a married couple, solidifies their united front against the River Lord.

Renowned for her connection with the elemental forces, Furtia Stormcaller, their ally, communicates her arrival. With renewed resolve, Dumai and

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Nikeya prepare to embark on a perilous journey to save Suzumai, embodying the partnership necessary for their intertwined fates.

Chapter Summary: 95

The next chapter continues the story of Dumai and Nikeya as they navigate the complexities of power, sacrifice, and familial bonds in their fight against the dark forces threatening their future.

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Chapter 96: 95 West

Chapter 95 Summary: The Birth of a Queen and a Princess

Glorian, now the Queen of Inys, lies exhausted on her pallet, gripped by the pain of labor while distant echoes of battle fill the air. Her faithful companion, Helisent, comforts her. As she struggles to bring her child into the world, anxiety for both her newborn and the ongoing war looms heavily, causing her labor to stall. Glorian reflects on the oppressive danger surrounding her and her helplessness in the face of a raging conflict.

As dawn breaks, Helisent informs Glorian that it is her birthday, a poignant reminder of her transition into adulthood and her responsibilities as a queen. Memories flood back of simpler, happier times, intensifying Glorian's yearning for peace. Amidst her fear, the persistent call of duty awakens a fierce maternal instinct. The cries for her attention during the battle ignite a realization: to bring forth life is the ultimate battle, one she must face.

With renewed determination, she pushes through pain and fear, assisted by her friends. In a moment reminiscent of her mother's legacy, she claims her strength as a warrior. Glorian brings forth her daughter, Sabran, amidst blood and sweat, marking the birth as a sacred act intertwined with the struggles of her queendom.

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As Glorian holds Sabran for the first time, she feels both elation and sorrow: this new life is bound to the relentless cycle of royal duty and sacrifice. Sabran embodies hope, yet also the burdens of legacy and fate. Despite the chaos around her, Glorian's fierce love for her child offers a fleeting moment of solace. However, the battle rages outside, with her friends preparing to defend them against encroaching danger.

Driven by instinct and a quest to protect her newborn, Glorian decides to join the fight. She commands her loyal followers to bring her a horse, declaring her sovereignty and readiness to take on the responsibilities of her title. Clad in remnants of childbirth, she emerges as a warrior, determined to defend her family and her kingdom.

Chapter 96 Summary: The Battle of Cening Moor

As sunlight breaks over Cening Moor, the battlefield is littered with death and chaos. Wulf, once a protector, is now battling through fatigue, desperately trying to hold the line with his comrades as wyvern forces threaten their survival. Despite reinforcements, exhaustion gnaws at the Inysh soldiers, who struggle against an unrelenting swarm of creatures.

Lady Gladwin directs her archers in a desperate attempt to combat the

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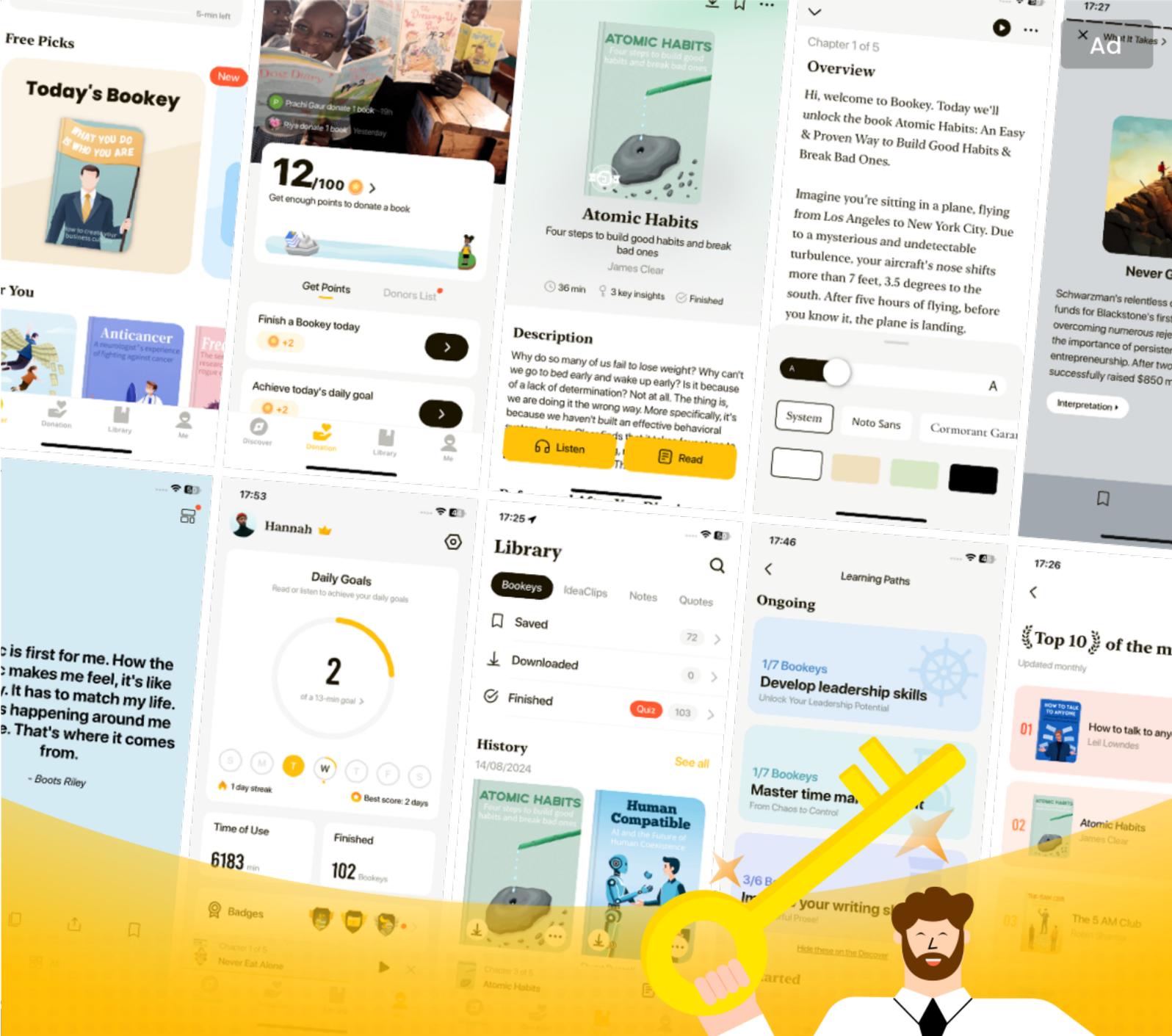
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enemy's overwhelming numbers while Wulf grapples with the reality of his limits as he fights to keep his brother, Thrit, alive. Their bond deepens amidst the turmoil, and Wulf confesses feelings for Thrit just before the world around them explodes.

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Chapter 97 Summary: 96 East

Chapter 96: East

In the shadowy twilight of Uramyesi, the island reserved for exiles, Dumai finds herself haunted by memories as Furtia, a dragon adorned in glittering scales, flies overhead with her companions. The city, obscured by night, shimmers with the light of funeral pyres, where the sick and the departed have met their fate. With her heart heavy, Dumai reflects on her grandfather's demise and the suffocating despair that envelops Uramyesi, where the Abyss threatens to swallow those who dare to wish for home.

As dusk gives way to night, Furtia directs Dumai towards a collection of ominous fires burning atop the cliffs. The atmosphere is thick with an impending sense of doom, as Dumai clutches a powerful blue stone, a symbol of her lineage and connection to ancient powers. She expresses her determination to protect her sister, Nikeya, who shares this fate, and the dragon reluctantly agrees to accompany her.

Upon arriving at the Western Gate, a colossal structure that serves as a threshold to dragons returning home, they are met by an anxious crowd recognizing Dumai's significance. Pajati the White, a revered figure, beckons Dumai forward, indicating the tumultuous shifts in the cosmos,

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suggesting the urgency of her destiny entwined with that of her people.

Amidst swirling ash that resembles falling snow, Dumai grapples with a sense of detachment as she realizes the gravity of her situation.

Understanding that the blue stone may become a point of conflict, she entrusts it to Nikeya, recognizing that the real battle lies ahead with Taugran the Golden—a formidable wyrm threatening their world.

In a moment of tension, the River Lord Kuposa pa Fotaja, now a tyrant under the influence of dark forces, confronts Dumai. He reveals his true intentions to sacrifice the Empress and her kin to the very chaos that he has embraced, claiming their fates are now bound to the monstrous Taugran. As dread surges through Dumai, a familiar presence captures her attention: her sister, Suzumai, is held captive, casting all into peril.

Despite the growing darkness surrounding them, memories of familial bonds and courage rise within Dumai. The River Lord, consumed by a tainted ambition, threatens to annihilate those left in her family, inciting Dumai's fierce determination to resist him. Her sister's plea for help amplifies her resolve. As tension reaches its zenith and fear reverberates through the crowd, Dumai prepares for battle, channeling the powerful light inherited from her ancestors.

The struggle culminates in chaos as Taugran rises from the Abyss, his

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terrifying presence fracturing the night. The River Lord seizes the moment to unleash devastation, and in a heartbeat, Suzumai disappears into the darkness. The unimaginable weight of loss pushes Dumai toward her breaking point; an unquenchable anger ignites as she watches her sister being taken. She lunges at the beast, propelled by love and vengeance.

In the heart of the fray, Dumai's spirit transcends the confines of her body. Surging with energy and purpose, she races toward the edge of the cliff where the abyss beckons, embodying the power of a star determined to burn through darkness. With Furtia beneath her, she leaps into the void, ready to confront her fate and challenge the terror that looms over her world.

Chapter 97: The Twilight Year

CE 509: In a world illuminated by brief glimmers of hope, every moment exists as delicate and fleeting as dew glistening on flowers. The story unfolds in a landscape intertwined with magic and peril, where destinies collide amid the ethereal beauty of nature. Each character's journey evokes themes of sacrifice, love, and the eternal struggle against despair, echoing the sentiments of Izumi Shikibu's poignant wisdom. As secrets ripple through the air, characters must navigate their destinies while remaining tethered to the delicate threads of their interconnected history.

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Chapter 98 Summary: 97 West

In Chapter 97, the narrative immerses us in the turmoil faced by Glorian, the newly crowned Queen of Inys. Despite being physically weakened and bloodied, she battles ferociously against monstrous creatures on the Cening Moor, driven by a primal fury that seems to surpass her own. This intense conflict represents her struggle for survival and identity—a manifestation of her fate as a warrior queen, forged in the crucible of her responsibilities. As she fights, the presence of an ominous figure, Fýredel, looms over her. He embodies the destructive force of the Dreadmount and menaces the very existence of her kingdom.

In a moment of desperation, she is forcibly removed from the battlefield and taken back to Hollow Crag, where she reflects on her lost child and the deep cost of her role as queen. Even as she senses the weight of failure, the surreal notion of flying emerges in her dreams, hinting at her yearning for freedom and her sister's spirit, which inspires her amid despair.

Across town, Wulf faces his own peril as he flees from pursuing wyverns while cradling his daughter, Sabran. His knowledge of Inys archaeology guides him towards a barrow that conceals hope for their survival. As he fights against hopelessness, he inadvertently taps into a newfound power that manifests as a bolt of energy, striking a wyvern and providing a glimmer of hope against the impending doom.

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The chapter peaks as Glorian steels herself for confrontation, donning her armor with the determination to protect her people at any cost. Fýredel, the embodiment of chaos and destruction, offers a twisted bargain: surrender herself to him to spare her subjects. Throughout the tense exchange, Glorian's commitment to her realm shines, as she refuses to allow her lineage and purpose to be used for bargaining.

Their encounter culminates in cosmic significance when both characters witness a comet—a portentous omen—slicing through the sky. Framed by prophecies of destruction and rebirth, Glorian finds herself blessed with a wild courage, signaling her defiance against fate. Fýredel's foreboding promises of future ruin encapsulate the stakes of their struggle, pushing the narrative toward an anticipation of destiny's unavoidable confrontation.

In contrast, Chapter 98 continues the tone set in 97, calling back to the themes of sacrifice and inevitability. According to the prophetic visions and the vicious cycles of power in Inys, the specter of Fýredel looms over Glorian's impending fate—a confrontation between light and darkness that echoes through the ages. The chapter hints at a broader conflict that stretches beyond personal sacrifices, intertwining with the fate of the entire kingdom.

Ultimately, both characters face their crossroads: Glorian, as she confronts her adversary, grapples with the meaning of sacrifice in leadership, while

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Wulf embodies a father's desperate hope amid encroaching darkness.

Together, their narratives coalesce around the themes of identity, survival, and the burdens of legacy, setting the stage for a resolution steeped in both conflict and hope.

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Chapter 99 Summary: 98 South

Chapter 98 - South

In the midst of a fiery assault led by the great wyrm Dedalugun, the city of Nzene is engulfed in chaos and destruction. The stone structure of the city is failing against the fierce, chaotic fury of the wyrms, whose immense forms darken the sky with shadows cast over burning homes, gardens, and sacred groves. Tunuva, a fierce warrior, fights valiantly in the temple quarter, determined to protect her home and its inhabitants in memory of the fallen Mother, Gashan.

As Tunuva battles against the encroaching hordes, she becomes acutely aware of her sister, Esbar, who had previously fought by her side but is now unaccounted for amidst the devastation. The city walls breach as smaller wyrms attack, flooding Nzene with terror and destruction. Amidst the chaos, Tunuva witnesses scenes of carnage and her heart aches at the thought of lost lives, including that of their fallen sister, Canthe.

With war horns blaring, the Royal Guard arrives, a cavalry of warriors equipped to fight the encroaching beasts. However, the true threat looms above as Dedalugun lands heavily on Mount Dinduru, its ominous voice echoing a call for Kediko Onjenyu, a figure linked to the vanquished gods.

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Tunuva witnesses Gashan trying to coordinate an assault against Dedalugun and realizes they must find a way to use the spear lodged in the wyrm—this is a crucial moment, recalling a tactic the Mother had once employed to defeat another fiendish foe.

Esbar insists they need to use the spear as a leverage against Dedalugun, and Tunuva, recognizing a potential link between her magic and the mythical stone she possesses, suggests they lure the wyrm to Lake Jodigo, where she might harness its power. Fueled by desperation and determination, they navigate through the monstrous onslaught, each side battling with a fervor born of desperation.

The trio of warriors—a mix of sisters and allies—push through horrors as they strive to reach the unscathed lake. As they arrive, Esbar unleashes an awe-inspiring display of her magical fire, which draws Dedalugun's attention. Tunuva, feeling the magic of the lake respond to the mighty stone she carries, directs her will towards the water.

Using all her strength, Tunuva successfully calls forth the lake's waters to aid them in their battle against the monstrous wyrm. As Dedalugun descends in fury, she finally wrestles the lake into movement and employs it as a weapon against their foe, enveloping the creature in a torrent of icy water. In a climactic finish, Esbar plunges the enchanted spear into the heart of Dedalugun, claiming a victory for their cause.

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As the dust settles and the chaos recedes, Tunuva, Esbar, and their injured sister Siyu are left holding one another, united in grief for the fallen but resolute in their bond as they look upon the remnants of the battle beneath a bearded star—a sign of hope amidst desolation.

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Chapter 100: 99 East

Chapter Summary: Storm of the Abyss

The chapter plunges into a violent yet chaotic scene above Uramyesi, where a dreadful storm, fueled by the wrath of the dragon Taugran, rages on. As Dumai witnesses the devastation from the skies and the ground below, she grapples with the relentless fury of the storm and the ongoing slaughter. The storm has consumed the once-bright moon, and the chaotic powers of the gods are unleashed.

Dumai, entwined in the fierce pursuit of the mighty Taugran alongside her dragon companion Furtia, feels the weight of emotions and instincts driving her to confront the great beast, unleashing its fury upon the earth. The chase evokes both her human memories and the primal instincts of dragonkind. A painful arrow wound reminds her of the treachery she faced from the River Lord, who set a trap for her; a betrayal that leaves her with regrets about her rivalries and failures. She is torn between her past and the dire present, where the survival of Seiiki, her homeland, hangs in the balance.

As she struggles with her own fading strength, memories of her family — her mother, grandmother, and the fallen Noziken — flood her mind, fueling a desperate determination to honor her commitments and protect Seiiki at all

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costs. Amidst the chaos, Dumai experiences a moment of clarity: the arrival of the comet, Kwiriki's Lantern, which represents hope against Taugran's relentless onslaught.

Together with Furtia and other water dragons, she feels the heavy pull of destiny, realizing that the power of the star can forge a future by quenching the fire that Taugran has spread across their land. They weave a web of energy to trap and smother Taugran, whose fiery wrath finally crashes against the might of their combined forces, leading to the creature's death and ending a cycle of pain.

As Dumai succumbs to injury and drifts into the sea, she dreams of peace, surrendering herself to the depths where she anticipates her journey will end. But she awakens washed ashore, her loyal dragon companion Furtia lying still beside her. The remnants of the battle leave an echo of silence where the dragons once roamed, and she witnesses the beauty of a comet-filled sky—a sign of the gods' love.

In her weakened state, Dumai creates a farewell to her sister Nikeya through her wish, channeling her remaining strength. She realizes that her existence itself was born from a wish, symbolizing a connection to something greater. Choosing to embrace the darkness, she prepares to dissipate her presence, believing it to be the best way forward to ensure peace in Seiiki.

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This chapter emphasizes themes of sacrifice, identity, the struggle of power against overwhelming chaos, and the enduring nature of familial bonds, underscoring Dumai's journey from turmoil to acceptance and the mystical connection she has with her world and the deities residing within it.

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Chapter 101 Summary: 100 West

In the quiet of a barrow, Wulf sits with his newborn daughter, Sabran, as she sleeps soundly against him. The world outside is awash with the warmth of spring, yet within the barrow, remnants of winter linger. Wulf savors every moment with his daughter, marveling at her delicate features and whispering comforting words, assuring her of the love she will have from others despite the absence of her birthfather. He reflects on his past, recounting a life filled with loss, secrets, and the weight of his family's history—a lineage entwined with truths that will shape Sabran's identity as a future queen.

As Wulf's heartfelt musings unfold, he hears the distant sounds of victory approaching, signaling a shift in fate and possibly a brighter future for his daughter. However, across Inys, Queen Glorian remains isolated in her grief, the weight of loss pressing heavily upon her as the kingdom celebrates.

Meanwhile, Tunuva Melim journeys to a clearing in the Lasian Basin, a place filled with memories of her late partner, Meren. She grapples with the echoes of their past, revisiting the sweetness of their shared moments overshadowed by the pain of his untimely death. When confronted by Canthe, a once-trusted ally turned adversary, Tunuva learns of Canthe's motivations for the tragic events that unfolded, exposing a dark past where the balance of magic was disrupted, leading to suffering.

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The conversation reveals Canthe's desperate ambitions driven by loss—a yearning for an heir with magic to restore harmony to the earth. As Tunuva faces her former friend, she is confronted with the betrayal of losing her child, Wulf, to Canthe's machinations. Tunuva stays strong, demanding answers, yet her resolve is tested as Canthe offers a magical potion, hinting at a lingering connection despite their fractured relationship.

As the world mourns the aftermath of recent battles, there is a sense of change in the air. With the powerful comet that awoke dormant dangers fading, the inhabitants of the land slowly reclaim their lives. Tunuva and Esbar emerge from their own turmoil, reaffirming their love and commitment to each other. Tunuva reveals the emotional truth about her past encounter with Canthe—a poignant moment that illuminates the depths of their connection and the pain of deception.

Resilient in grief yet determined to protect their lineage, Tunuva devises plans to prepare future sisters of the Priory for the threats that lay ahead, acknowledging their duty to uphold the truth. They rise to confront the remnants of darkness that have plagued their world, determined to ensure the safety of their realm.

In the aftermath, Tunuva honors the fallen, igniting a flame in the burial chamber of Cleolind, the great queen who exemplified truth and strength. Through song and remembrance, she connects with the legacy of those who

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came before, promising to uphold their memories and the values of love and resilience that define them. Tunuva declares a promise to remain vigilant, forging a path for future generations to embrace the truth and protect their world from the shadows of the past.

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Chapter 102 Summary: Tunuva

Summary of "Tunuva"

In the Lasian Basin, seasons shift as Tunuva Melim revisits a clearing where her beloved Meren was buried, a place laden with memories of loss and sorrow. The once silent birds, now singing, signal a change, reflecting the turmoil surrounding Tunuva's life. Canthe, a former friend turned foe, has recently returned to confront Tunuva. She reveals that the magic balance of their world was disturbed, leading to unspeakable suffering.

Years ago, Canthe had killed Meren as part of her darker quest to create a child with mage blood—a guardian for the forest. She abducted Tunuva's child, Wulf, believing he wouldn't be missed and hoping to raise him as her own. Despite the pain of Canthe's betrayal, Tunuva yearns for the truth behind Canthe's actions and asks why she allowed Wulf to be taken by dangerous forces.

Canthe explains that her enemies pursued her, and though she hoped to return for Wulf, she had to ensure his safety, believing he found happiness away from Tunuva. The confrontation reveals layers of regret, love, and betrayal, as Tunuva realizes that Canthe's twisted desires stemmed from her own experiences of loss. Canthe struggles with her identity and expresses a

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desire to atone, but Tunuva firmly resolves to cut ties, asking Canthe to stay away for her own emotional well-being.

Canthe offers Tunuva a bottle of magical elixir to help her sustain her power—revealing the harsh burdens they share. Ultimately, she vows to walk alone in penance for her actions, embodying a monstrous version of herself, while Tunuva resolves to remember her past but forge ahead without looking back.

As Tunuva reflects on the catastrophic events that led to many deaths—including the defeat of fierce wyrms—the world outside begins to heal. Tunuva returns to the Priory, where normalcy is slowly being restored. News of Canthe’s disappearance leaves them vigilant yet hopeful.

Tunuva shares a deeply personal moment with her partner Esbar, confessing her past feelings for Canthe, which were full of anguish and confusion. Esbar's understanding and forgiveness pave a path toward healing their bond, while she pledges to protect the legacy of the Priory against future threats.

With renewed strength and resolve, Tunuva and Esbar mobilize their sisters, the Red Damsels, to hunt the remaining wyrms that threaten their world, showcasing their fierce unity. The chapter closes with Tunuva paying homage to the fallen, underscoring themes of remembrance, loss, and the

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enduring connection to the Mother, symbolizing the hope that arises even from despair.

Epilogue

The story concludes with a sense of restoration. Despite the hardships and tragedies faced, Tunuva stands resolute in her identity and purpose, ensuring that the memory of those lost remains alive. The journey of healing and empowerment continues, with Tunuva's commitment to her family and the earth serving as a beacon of hope as they face the uncertainties ahead.

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Chapter 103 Summary: Wulf

Summary of Chapters Featuring Wulf

In the enduringly resilient manor of Langarth, Wulf awakens to the serenade of birds and the gentle whispers of sunlight filtering through open shutters. He reflects on the survival of the estate, untouched by plague or fire, standing strong beside the ancient Haithwood forest. Lying beside him is Thrit, a steadfast companion whose friendship Wulf had hesitated to jeopardize despite the tumult of their past, especially following the trauma of Cening Moor. Amidst the fallout of conflicts and losses, Wulf had resolved to embrace love, taking his first steps towards expressing his feelings for Thrit.

After joining forces with the formidable Einlek Ironside in the post-war reconstruction, Wulf transitioned into a role of a carpenter, aiding efforts to repair the broken communities ravaged by death and despair. Yet, remnants of sorrow linger, as he wrestles with his duty as a housecarl while also contemplating the safety of his daughter, Sabran, now in the care of Queen Glorian.

As the seasons passed, Wulf's heart swells with the intent to nurture his budding romance with Thrit. A planned outing to the treasured cliff of

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Averóth ignites relief and laughter between them, culminating in a long-awaited kiss — the first sign of their deepening connection since the storm of war. With hope blossoming, Wulf engages in daily chores, ensuring the manor's beauty thrives despite ongoing mourning for the dead and uncertainty over the future.

Unexpectedly, Wulf reunites with Siyu uq-N ra, a friend from the past. Her quest to master the Inysh language underlines her commitment to the Prioress and the urgent mission to guard secrets tied to their shared history. An injury from battle reminds them both of the relentless trials faced at Nzene, yet Siyu shows resolve; she carries a mysterious iron box that holds an important secret, a key sought by the witch Canthe, the one who had once taken Wulf from Meren. Understanding the potential danger, they plan to hide the box in the Sanctuary of the Sacred Damsel to keep it safe.

The narrative then shifts to the remains of Ascalun, where the devastation is palpable, yet the atmosphere hums with the anticipation of knighthood ceremonies. As guests arrive for the occasion, Wulf, embodying a mix of pride and weighty obligation, prepares to be knighted by Queen Glorian, who appears regal amidst the ruins. Their shared past hangs unspoken between them, tightly interwoven with layered deceit of title and responsibility.

Finally, as he rises from the knighthood ceremony, Wulf requests a place at

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court for Siyu, whose brave spirit and unwavering dedication to Sabran take center stage. With Glorian's endorsement, Siyu is accepted into her household, ensuring her proximity to Wulf's daughter. After the ceremony, Wulf accompanies Siyu to the Sanctuary of the Sacred Damsel at night, uncovering further truths of the past while ensuring the newly secured box is hidden away. Their farewell is bittersweet as Wulf resumes his path into the world, leaving behind the weight of titles and the heartbreak of former allegiances, resolute in his desire for a future where love transcends the scars of war.

Concluding his time in Ascalun, Wulf steps back into the world, marked by resilience and filled with newfound determination for the life ahead, both hopeful and uncertain. In his heart, he carries the weight of his duties split between the knight he has become and the man he longs to be, nurturing his dreams of adventure while vowing to protect what remains precious to him.

Key Events	Details
Waking at Langarth	Wulf wakes up in his resilient manor, reflecting on survival and his mental state after the trauma of war.
Relationship with Thrit	Wulf resolves to embrace love and takes steps to express his feelings for Thrit.
Role as Carpenter	He assists in post-war reconstruction efforts alongside Einlek Ironside, while grappling with the safety of his daughter, Sabran.
Outing to Averóth	A planned outing leads to a long-awaited kiss between Wulf and Thrit, signifying their blossoming relationship.

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Key Events	Details
Reunion with Siyu uq - N r	Siyu's language mastery and her quest to guard secrets link her a past with Wulf's. They plan to hide a dangerous box together.
Ascalun's Knighthood Ceremony	Wulf prepares to be knighted by Queen Glorian amidst devastation, navigating a mix of pride and obligation from their past.
Siyu at Court	Wulf secures a place for Siyu at court to keep her close to Sabran, ensuring her continued support and connection.
Hidden Secrets	Wulf and Siyu hide the box in the Sanctuary of the Sacred Damsel, revealing more truths and ensuring safety.
Conclusion and Future	Wulf exits Ascalun with resilience, balancing his duties as a knight and his desires for a hopeful and adventurous future.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embrace love and connection in the face of adversity

Critical Interpretation: Wulf's journey teaches us that even in the aftermath of chaos and loss, it is crucial to embrace love and connection. By daring to express his feelings for Thrit despite the turmoil of their past, Wulf highlights the transformative power of relationship amidst hardship. This encourages us to seek and cultivate meaningful connections, reminding us that love can flourish even in the toughest of times, giving us hope and strength to face our own challenges.

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Chapter 104: Glorian

In this chapter, **Glorian** grapples with overwhelming feelings of loss and fear as she navigates her new life following the traumatic events known as the **Grief of Ages**. Haunted by nightmares of loss, particularly the fear of abandoning her young child, **Sabran**, Glorian finds herself in the northern realm of **Hróth** after being encouraged by her ladies to take a respite. Her mother had once experienced similar emotional turmoil, referred to as **unmód**, leading Glorian to reflect on the burdens of motherhood.

Upon arriving at her cousin **Einlek's** hunting lodge, deeper issues surface. Despite the picturesque scenery of the snowy Nithyan Mountains, Glorian feels an underlying chill that her aunt, **Ólrun Hraustr**, ominously attributes to the **Vildavintra**, or Wild Winter. As Glorian adjusts to her surroundings, she relieves her emotional heaviness by plunging into an icy waterfall, emerging invigorated as she embraces this painful yet cathartic experience.

Glorian and Einlek share a meal, revealing a bond that has flourished amid shared struggles. However, their conversation takes a darker turn when Einlek proposes a marriage alliance intended to secure the future of their realms. Tension arises when Prince **Guma**, Glorian's husband, confronts her about letters revealing a conspiracy tied to their marriage, challenging



the legitimacy of her beliefs and asserting his own faith, which diverges from the Saint's teachings that Glorian holds dear.

As they engage in a tense dialogue, Glorian defends herself against accusations of being a mere pawn in Guma's schemes while recognizing the

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Chapter 105 Summary: Nikeya

Summary of "Nikeya"

Mount Ipyeda looms over the desolate ruins of Antuma as Kuposa pa Nikeya embarks on a solitary journey to the High Temple of Kwiriki, a place filled with memories of love and loss. After years of mourning the devastation that claimed countless lives during a catastrophic event known as the Great Sorrow, Nikeya climbs the mountain amid the lingering cold of spring, driven by a deep yearning for the woman she loves, Dumai, who has gone missing.

Upon reaching the temple, she is greeted by Unora, the Maiden Officiant, who brings her to meet the Grand Empress of Seiiki. Their initial conversation reveals Nikeya's painful past and the tragic demise of her father in the isle of Muysima, where he confronted the dragon Taugran. As she recounts the harrowing events surrounding Dumai's fate—a fateful battle against the wyrm and a dazzling comet that changed everything—Nikeya grapples with profound grief and the weight of survival.

The Grand Empress questions Nikeya's motivations regarding her relationship with Dumai, leading to a discussion about the political implications of their bond. Despite her initial reluctance to embrace power,

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Nikeya ultimately agrees to take a significant role in Seiiki's future as the Dowager Queen and Warlord, realizing that her heart still beats with the desire to protect her people and honor Dumai's legacy.

The narrative shifts to Nikeya's acceptance of her new responsibilities and challenges. She is tasked with uniting the fractured state of Seiiki, stigmatized by the Great Sorrow and the lingering threat of the dragons. As she assumes her new title, symbols of hope emerge from the ashes, with plans to train orphans as dragon riders to defend against future dangers, reflecting Dumai's love for the people.

In a poignant conclusion, Nikeya prepares for an important ritual involving dragon eggs, signaling a new beginning for her and her land. The chapter ends with a sense of purpose as she tenderly touches the eggs, ready to usher in a brighter world.

As the new Warlord of Seiiki, Nikeya's journey is one of resilience, leadership, and the enduring bond of love, intertwining her personal desires with the broader destiny of her people. Ultimately, she must balance the burdens of leadership with the lingering echoes of her past, vowing to create a future where hope can flourish amidst the remnants of sorrow.

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