

Chapter 32

Alis down here without even knowing the full extent of your own ineptitude?”

“Because I must,” I said simply. “Because I love him.”

Alis’s expression softened for a moment before she sighed, “I will help you, but know this: Amarantha is cruel beyond measure. The journey will test you in ways you cannot imagine.”

In Chapter 32, the protagonist returns to the estate, finding it in ruins and signs of a brutal fight but no bodies, hinting that Tamlin and Lucien might be alive. Investigating the damage, she encounters Alis, who initially is startled but then confirms that Tamlin and Lucien are indeed alive but have been taken by Amarantha to her court Under the Mountain due to a curse. Alis narrates the history of Amarantha's rise to power, revealing she was once a general for the King of Hybern and became known for her brutality during the war with humans. After the war, she charmed her way into the courts of Prythian, slowly infiltrating and eventually seizing power by tricking the High Lords and stealing their strengths. The curse on Tamlin was a result of his refusal to become her lover, a challenge set by Amarantha that he had to find a human who despised faeries to fall in love with him as a means to break the spell. The protagonist realizes the depth of her failure to see through the curse and her role in the fate of the faerie lands. Determined to save Tamlin and the others, she insists on going Under the Mountain to face Amarantha, despite Alis's warnings about the perilous journey and the impossibility of her success due to her human frailty. This chapter is dense with backstory revealing the antagonist's motivations and the complexities of the curse, setting the stage for a climactic confrontation.