***The Girl Who Drank the Moon***

***Chapter 33***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary in brief:***

In Chapter 33, “In Which the Witch Encounters an Old Acquaintance,” Antain is deep in the woods. He comes across Xan in the form of a swallow and, thinking she is a paper bird coming to attack him, he throws a rock and breaks her wing. He then rescues the struggling bird by placing it in his possession. Meanwhile, Sister Ignatia is on her journey in the forest. She uses something called a scrying machine to locate Glerk, noting that she thought she killed him long ago. Sister Ignatia is hungry from the lack of sorrow. All the while, Sister Ignatia is focused on where she hid the Seven League Boots (269).

***Summary Part 1:***

[Xan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/xan) remembers living with her parents in a forest village when she was small. She remembers how they seemed to love her, and then they disappeared. A woman with a tiger’s heart supposedly found Xan alone. In her swallow form, Xan rests in a tree and laments that she didn’t turn herself into an albatross. She vows to complete her journey and then teach [Luna](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/luna) about magic. She eats some ants, falls asleep, and wakes up when the moon rises. The moonlight sinks into her bones, easing her pain. She hears a terrified voice warning someone that it’s armed. Xan desperately wants to help now that the moonlight has made her strong. She flies out and toward the man, who throws a rock at her. Xan falls.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Now that Luna is beginning to remember who she is, Xan also has to reckon with what she remembers of her past. The fond memories that Xan has of her parents indicates that they likely didn’t leave her of their own volition, whether the Sorrow Eater had a hand in their deaths or not. Connecting to the moon and to her magic allows Xan to remember that she’s a kind and selfless person at heart, but because Xan is so ill, she doesn’t take into account that fear makes people behave in strange and sometimes violent ways.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Antain](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/antain) realizes that he hit a sparrow, not the [Witch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/symbols/the-witch), and feels awful. He isn’t sure he even has the guts to kill the Witch. The bird is still alive, but its wing is broken. Antain apologizes to the bird, picks it up, and remembers that [Ethyne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/ethyne) loves swallows. He promises the bird that he’ll take it home to Ethyne and tucks the bird into a pouch. He can tell that the bird isn’t happy, but it grudgingly accepts a moth.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The irony here, of course, is that Antain did hit a witch—just not the one he really should have hit. However, caring for Xan in her bird form means that when Antain does eventually discover who Xan is, he’ll be much more likely to reevaluate what he knows about the Witch, and whether Xan is the Witch in the stories or something else entirely.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Sister Ignatia](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/sister-ignatia-the-sorrow-eater) feels increasingly weaker. She ate all the sorrow she could from the Protectorate and congratulated herself on her handiwork before she left but now, two days into the forest, she’s hungry. She scans the forest for life and discovers a nest of hatchling birds. She knows that she could crush the babies and eat the mother bird’s sorrow, but it won’t be very potent. She creates a scrying glass and looks around, but magic obscures her view—though she knows that all magicians perished 500 years ago, when they made the mistake of tasking Sister Ignatia with using her Seven League Boots to save everyone. She catches sight of [Glerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/glerk), vows to kill him this time, and then crushes the baby birds. She sets out to find her Seven League Boots.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The revelation that Sister Ignatia allowed everyone to die when the volcano erupted continues to paint her as a callous and unfeeling individual. It’s worth noting that while Sister Ignatia feeds on sorrow, she doesn’t seem to feel any herself—which could suggest either that she’s closed herself off to it, or that she is somehow not in touch with the full range of human emotions. Targeting the mother bird’s babies shows just how little Sister Ignatia thinks of others. Killing the babies allows her to control the mother bird’s future and ensure that it will be a sad one—one that solely benefits Sister Ignatia.