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

***Chapter 36***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary in brief:***

In Chapter 36, “In Which a Map Is Rather Useless,” Luna is alone and still running in the woods, scared of Sister Ignatia. Luna’s memories flood back to her suddenly and she becomes aware that both Xan and she are witches. Luna recalls her grandmother making a scrying device, and Luna creates a makeshift one to search for Xan. She asks to see her grandmother, but she sees Antain feeding a bird in the woods instead. Luna eventually realizes that her grandmother has turned into a swallow.

***Analysis (33-36):***

All of the main characters in the novel are converging in the forest and this gives reason to believe that all of the misunderstandings about the evil Witch and the volcano and the destruction of happy villages will all be explained. A large theme in this novel is the idea of neighbors believing different things because they do not talk to one another. This lack of communication and questions leads to misunderstandings and hatred. The people of the Protectorate, for example, believe that Xan is an evil Witch while Xan believes the Protectorate abandons babies for cruel reasons unknown to her. However, Barnhill is moving the action of the story to the forest. This area is already considered to be dangerous and now there are extra dangers. Each character is in the woods for a different reason. Each character is unaware of the others present. Each person is searching for someone else, and their movements through the forest lead everyone to search without results. However, these characters would not be placed in the woods at the same time unless Barnhill has a plan to bring them all together. The question is whether the characters will get together in a fierce battle of magic or whether they will calmly unite and communicate their way to peace and understanding. It is doubtful that Sister Ignatia will be calm in this situation. It is much more likely that everyone else will join forces to fight stubborn Ignatia, who is used to living a comfortable life where she is in charge of everything that happens.

The hope that Luna and the madwoman feel is starting to form into a metaphor for how hope destroys sorrow and sadness. Hope is starting to outweigh any other emotion in this story, with both the madwoman and Luna clinging to hope and finding themselves successful in their endeavors. Luna is deeply hopeful she can trust her map of the unknown part of the forest. She remains positive in the face of danger, she believes in her work, and she believes in the map she drew. Much like her birth mother, she remains hopeful that she will succeed. She does not feel sad or defeated. This hope allows Luna to move forward. This hope helps Luna achieve her goals. Also, a lucky side effect to Luna’s and the madwoman’s hope is that Sister Ignatia is starving and growing weak in the forest (267). She has no one to feed off of, so she has nothing to consume for strength. Hope wins and sorrow fades away.

Sister Ignatia’s weakness is good news for the people she is coming after because she is a quite strong Witch who has had hundreds of years to improve her skills through establishing the Protectorate, but the Sister is also likely to be stopped by her own pride and vanity related to the Protectorate. Sister Ignatia cannot stop thinking about how clever she is for making the Protectorate, and she thinks that she never really gave “herself the proper admiration that was her due” (267) for making such a complex place all for herself. She refers to it as an “Ever-filling goblet. All for her” (267). This proves that Sister Ignatia is filled with pride, which is distracting herself from her true mission. However, she also notes that she is out of practice. She has grown lazy in the Protectorate because life is so easy for her there. Now she is in the forest and may need to use skills she has not used before. She is desperately searching for her boots for two reasons. First, she wants her boots because she knows she will need help on her mission since she is out of practice. Secondly, she is a vain and selfish person who thinks she should have everything she wants and anything she thinks she deserves.

Unlike Xan and Glerk, Sister Ignatia’s memories of the destructive day when the volcano erupted is still strong, but someone spoiled Ignatia’s plan that day by stealing shoes from the innocent witches and sorcerers. She mentions that the original plan was for them to have the boots but that someone stole them and, “ran away from danger, leaving them all behind” (291). This is a part of the story readers have not learned about yet. This new information leads readers to wonder who could have stolen the boots and why a person would have done such a thing. The most likely suspects for this are Zosimos and Xan, but it is unclear what their motivations for stealing the shoes may have been. On the other hand, Fyrian found an extra pair of Seven League Boots in the village where people have birthmarks like Luna’s. Perhaps someone from the village stole those boots, which could explain why an extra pair ended up there.

Ethyne has been written as a sweet and weak character, but her visits with the Grand Elder Gherland show that she is a clever and tough character that will use the magic she learned in the Tower to help her family. Ethyne does not seem afraid of Gherland. This may be from her time in the Tower where the Sisters know they are the supreme leaders in the Protectorate. She understands what Gherland is doing because she knows what the Elders want to protect. She has the advantage of her education in the Tower and will use it to help protect her husband. We see how manipulative Ethyne is when she easily convinces the Sisters of the Star guards to give her information and to help her. She is the only character in the story that is part of both worlds: the commoners in the Protectorate and the Sisters in the Tower. Ethyne will use her knowledge and connections to assist the people she supports in this upcoming forest battle. In this way, Ethyne actually has more advantage than Gherland, whose only superpower is being a rich ally to Ignatia. With her out of the Protectorate, anything is possible.

***Summary Part 1:***

[Luna](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/luna) runs in panic. The [crow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/the-crow) caws that he was wrong about the [paper birds](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/symbols/paper-birds). Finally, Luna stops and says that she doesn’t want that woman anywhere near [Xan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/xan). Suddenly, Luna’s brain unlocks. She remembers being little and standing blankly. Xan told [Fyrian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/fyrian) to fetch a flower for a game and Fyrian flew away. [Glerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/glerk) appeared and scolded Xan for lying, but Xan insisted she must lie to protect. Glerk inspected Luna, and Xan explained that Luna caught sight of her scrying device when she made one to check for the [Sorrow Eater](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/sister-ignatia-the-sorrow-eater). Glerk pulled Luna close and said they need to tell Fyrian, but Xan cried that Fyrian would reveal that Xan is a witch. After that, Luna will go into a trance every time she sees Xan, and Xan won’t be able to teach her before she dies when Luna turns 13.

***Analysis Part 1:***

In this instance, Luna realizes why exactly Xan took her censorship and forgetting as far as she did: she knew that if Fyrian spilled that she was a witch, she wouldn’t be able to teach Luna anything or care for her at all. As just a grandmother but not a witch, Xan had the opportunity to lay the groundwork for Luna’s future education. Though Xan wasn’t sure if Luna was internalizing these memories, the fact that she had these conversations with Glerk in front of Luna provides Luna helpful tools to remember and learn who she is.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Luna](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/luna)’s heart races. She’s never heard the word “witch,” but if she searches her memories, she finds it often. She says out loud that [Xan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/xan) is a witch, and she is too. The [crow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/the-crow) is unimpressed and says that this is obvious. Luna suddenly remembers all the times that Xan made scrying devices out of all sorts of objects. She grabs some objects and instinctively starts to wind a knot. She tells the knot to show her Xan, and peers through it. It shows her a frightened man. Luna asks again for Xan, and the device zooms in on a small swallow in the man’s jerkin. Luna shouts for Xan and watches the swallow squawk desperately. The device gets even closer to the bird and the bird stares into Luna’s eye. The device goes dark and Luna realizes that someone has blocked it.

***Analysis Part 2:***

In this instance, when Luna refusal to accept that her scrying device is telling the truth shows that Luna doesn’t yet understand how magic works. Because she has no grasp of magical theory or what’s possible using magic, Luna has no reason to suspect that this swallow is actually Xan. In this way, the novel again draws out the negative consequences of censorship and of forcing someone to forget.