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

***Chapter 24***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary in brief:***

In Chapter 24, “In Which Antain Presents a Solution,” Antain visits his Uncle Gherland and requests permission to thank the Council for their training so many years ago. But this is a lie. Ethyne is pregnant. Due to the timing of the baby’s birth, it is sure that their baby will be sacrificed. Antain shows the Elder the map he received from the madwoman and announces that he will use this map to enter the forest and kill the Witch.

Analysis Chapter 21 to 24:

The book's theme revolving around the pain caused by forgetting important memories is extended even further when Fyrian struggles through a confusing breakthrough of his past, which indicates to readers that either Xan or Zosimos placed controls on Fyrian’s memories. Thus far, Fyrian has been a simple, one-sided character. He has no sorrow or pain, and the only issue he seems to have is the lie everyone tells him about his small size in the so-called land of giants. Fyrian’s dream is actually a flashback. It is an awakening into a past he has forgotten or into memories someone has erased. The flashback is pretty straightforward, but the confusing nature of Fyrian’s size is something to look further into. In his reality, Fyrian is as small as a bird. Everyone is aware that this makes him a tiny dragon, but Fyrian is unaware of this fact. However, in his flashback, Fyrian is a huge dragon with a massive body much bigger than a house. Fyrian believes he has left the supposed land of giants, which is why he seems too large in comparison to the home he sees, but in reality it is Fyrian who has changed sizes. One might argue that Fyrian grew in size because he took on the stance of his mother, a large and beautiful dragon. However, this is not likely because Fyrian describes his mother’s gorgeous, scaly body before the flashback and he does not note any of those same traits in his flashback. This, then, hints at the idea that Fyrian was once a large dragon. While there is no direct evidence for this, readers now know for certain that Fyrian’s memories have been wiped. There is evidence that when a character has his or her memory wiped it changes that person dramatically. Xan shrinks Luna’s magic into a tiny grain of sand and alters her grasp on her memories. It is possible that someone locked away Fyrian’s memories with the unplanned consequence of shrinking him. Fyrian’s memories related to being a large dragon might also be part of what a person blocked. A second possibility for how Fyrian was shrunk from a large dragon to a small dragon is that someone hurt him or punished him, resulting in his small size and childlike nature. For his own protection, it is possible that a magic spell was placed on Fyrian in order to prevent him from remembering this trauma in his life.

This section also transforms Fyrian from the light-hearted dragon that relieves emotional pressure to a saddened dragon with a depressing past; leaving readers without any completely “happy” characters. Previously, readers knew that Fyrian’s presence in a scene meant upcoming adorable and happy comments. While Fyrian’s personality is not likely to change, the introduction of Fyrian as a troubled character alters readers’ perceptions of him and slightly changes the mood of the story as well. The realization of Fyrian’s past puts him in a position where he is very similar to Luna, who is also Xan’s adopted ward and struggles with her place in a family unit.

Antain becomes hypocritical in his quest for saving his own lifestyle, which makes him no better than the Council he judged so harshly many years ago. Antain left the Council because he could not stand their lies. He felt nobler and more honest than them. However, Antain has succumbed to the same greed the Elders have: a greed to keep one’s personal lifestyle intact. The Elders lie and manipulate the townspeople in order to stay happy. They love their large homes and their gourmet food. Antain, on the other hand, loves his wife and his unborn baby. Like the Elders, he is willing to kill for his personal happiness. In this respect, Antain is no more ethical than the Elders he still judges. In his mind, the Council sacrifices babies, but now Antain has no problem sacrificing a Witch in order to keep his life the way he wants it. This is a surprising change for Antain, who, up until this point has seemed rather kind and straightforward. This is a reference to how some of the Elders have allowed themselves transform as well.

***Summary Part 1:***

It takes [Antain](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/antain) an hour to work up the courage to knock on [Gherland](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/grand-elder-gherland)’s study door. He holds a handkerchief that [Ethyne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/ethyne) embroidered for him and remembers her telling him about the power of hope. He thinks about her pregnant belly as he knocks on the door. Gherland admits him, shouts, and rolls his eyes. Antain says that he’d like to address the Council to explain his departure. Antain swallows to cover up the lie, but Gherland agrees to let Antain speak. Antain feels hopeful as he stands in front of the Council. They congratulate him on his marriage to Ethyne and shower him with rich food.

***Analysis Part 1:***

For Antain, this handkerchief from Ethyne is a symbol of hope in that it reminds him of why he needs to speak to the Council, and in doing so, begin to change the way that things happen in the Protectorate. Gherland’s willingness to let Antain speak again shows that Gherland isn’t an entirely evil individual. He does care for Antain and wants Antain to be happy—just not too happy.

***Summary Part 2:***

The room grows cold as [Antain](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/antain) admits that he lied about his reasons for speaking. Antain thinks of his coming baby, and says that his baby will be the last one born before the Day of Sacrifice. The Elders clear their throats, but Antain says he knows how to stop the [Witch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/symbols/the-witch)’s tyranny. He says he saw the Witch. [Gherland](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-girl-who-drank-the-moon/characters/grand-elder-gherland) is beside himself, as he knows there’s no witch. Antain continues his story. The Witch is old, in pain, and he knows where she is. He pulls out a map. Gherland and Antain stare at each other as Antain describes his route to the Witch’s lair. He asks for the Council’s blessing to save his baby from sacrifice by following the map and killing the Witch.