

[Sounds of running water]

CYTHAELIA

Phrosy, you don't have to scrub so hard. Your face is turning red.

SOPHROSYNE

That's not from scrubbing, it's because I'm mad. I can't believe Grobien had the audacity to touch me like that, and in front of my father.

CYTHAELIA

If I were there, he would have lost a hand.

SOPHROSYNE

His fingers were like ice. I can still feel where he touched.

[Scrubbing sounds intensify]

CYTHAELIA

Their idea of immortality is interesting, I have to admit. Stop that, you're splashing water on your dress.

SOPHROSYNE

I don't care.

[Water shuts off]

SOPHROSYNE

There's a difference between living and being alive. I'm not sure which they are. Will you hand me a towel?

CYTHAELIA

They do smell like death. Stringent chemical preservatives with a tinge of rot.

SOPHROSYNE

(distant)

No, it doesn't smell like that at all. Death smells like herbal tea and olibanum.

CYTHAELIA

I'm sorry...I didn't mean you make you think of your mother.

SOPHROSYNE

It's fine. She's been on my mind a lot anyway. Sometimes I get the sense that she's not really gone.

CYTHAELIA

Of course she's not gone, at least not from memory.

SOPHROSYNE

There's more to it than that. There was something very complicated about her. Something I'm still trying to wrap my head around.

(beat)

I wonder what she thought of being a queen?

CYTHAELIA

It was probably really different for her. She had your father.

SOPHROSYNE

What if I'm not good enough?

CYTHAELIA

Have you seen how much people love you?

SOPHROSYNE

What, the banquet? It feels so superficial. I *have* to do more. To *be* more.

CYTHAELIA

I think you're trying too hard.

SOPHROSYNE

There's just this feeling of urgency...Like if I let an opportunity pass by, something terrible might happen.

CYTHAELIA

That's ridiculous.

SOPHROSYNE

Do you think we did the right thing by choosing Chartrulean over the Order?

CYTHAELIA

(snickering)

It doesn't matter what I think.

SOPHROSYNE

You're a good friend. Your opinion matters to me.

CYTHAELIA

I think it was the right choice. Don't you?

SOPHROSYNE

I want to. But if these dreams mean anything at all, the war may not be over. And so far, they've gotten one thing right. *Him*.

CYTHAELIA

(under breath)  
Here we go...

CYTHAELIA

Phrosy, I know you're afraid, but people have recurring dreams all the time. Plus, you've been under a lot of stress.

SOPHROSYNE

Maybe. But these dreams are so different. Jhardehos believe in prescience and all that, so I know I'm not completely crazy. Especially after what father told me about my mother.

CYTHAELIA

How many family heirlooms are you willing to give away before you're satisfied?

SOPHROSYNE

There won't be any more need now. I think I'm close to an answer.