

Of the Sky, Of the Sea, and of the Stones
Chapter 2 - Of the Sky
Part 14 - Settling In

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“Do you mean to say that the Gods of the Sky are apathetic towards your people?” I asked the lilac-robed librarian.

“Not just my people, but everything that isn’t their own kind or the Sky.” He responded bluntly. Before he could continue, his three assistants returned. They gave their reports in a series of meows, which Cais seemed to understand as well as Koivan. I briefly marveled at his mastery of language. “Alright,” he turned to me, expression content, “the ground floor is as secure as we can make it.”

“Good news,” I acknowledged, “But...what now?” I spared thoughts then for the crew of the Bitterwind, who were all likely aboard the docked ship in the harbour. My worry must have been expressed on my face, as the scholar before me attempted to ease my mind.

“Fear not, the library’s doors and walls are quite sturdy. Although, Temptes Equit has not faced a threat like this in a long time...or possibly ever. I have never read anything of these pink, tongue-like monsters, or the titanic crimson eel that attacked recently. It feels like there is...more going on than we know,” Cais then leaned on his desk, relaxing. His feline assistants adjusted similarly. “Protocol dictates that in an emergency and escape from the building is impossible, or unwise, everyone within the library should gather to the most central reading area.” He then pulled out the copy of Theories of the Sky that I had been reading and handed it to me, “let us proceed there now.”

Accepting both the book, and his suggestion, the five of us made our way to this reading area. When we arrived, there was a crowd of about twenty or so cyan-skinned scholars. When they saw the library’s staff, they all began aggressively asking questions.

“What’s going on?”

“Why are we locked in?”

“Why was there screaming coming from outside?”

The scared and confused scholars began approaching in the form of a pseudo-mob, but halted when Olhos stepped forward, blocking their path to the head librarian and myself. Orange Olhos hissed before opening the eyes on his flanks. As each eye opened, another Olhos appeared. Soon, there were as many cats as scholars, all hissing ferociously.

Intimidated, the cyan readers backed off. The break in their stream of questions allowed everyone to calm down enough for Cais to begin relaying what was happening in the city. When he was done, the scholars looked even more scared and confused than before.

After discussing library protocol, everyone was advised to settle in with their preferred book and wait until the threat passes. The Gods of the Aether’s herald had promised that the city would be cleansed, and that it would likely happen soon. Something about that made me uneasy, despite the situation being somewhat controlled within the Central Library.

The many Olhos clones merged with the original so that there were only three cats once more. They then cuddled together upon an unoccupied section of the floor near their leader, who had seated himself at a table and was preparing to get some writing done.



Figure 21. The three Central Library assistants napping together

I heeded Cais' advice and took a seat in a comfortable armchair and opened Theories of the Sky to where I had left off. The section about the physical properties of various Aether particles had ended and ahead was part two: A Discussion of The Sun.