

Cordimancy: Notes about Sensitive Content

Chapters 1-7

probably safe

Chapter 8 (“sacks of barley ~ Malena”)

Noemi is attacked, looted, and destroyed. Malena is raped and stabbed, though this is only implied, not shown. Plot detail: Malena sees an attacker riding a horse that belonged to her sister, Tupa; she suspects that her sister was captured in the attack. This later motivates her to chase kidnappers.

Chapter 9

probably safe

Chapter 10 (“victim ~ Malena”)

Malena regains consciousness and feels shattered and hopeless.

Chapter 11

probably safe

Chapter 12 (“White Hair ~ Kinora”)

Kinora’s experience as a kidnap victim is described. She is treated cruelly by the bandits who are spiriting her and other children away from Noemi. She witnesses Gorumim (who she thinks of as “White Hair” because she doesn’t know his name at first) cooperating with Osipi warriors. Gorumim kills a bandit with magic. She sees massive wolves who appear to be controlled by a magic spell.

Chapters 13-14

probably safe

Chapter 15 (“shadows ~ Malena”)

Malena is attacked by a shapeless evil that’s been conjured by black magic. She has an out-of-body experience. Toril calls her back from the dead using good magic from a religious ordeal he has completed.

Chapter 16

probably safe

Chapter 17 (“enchantments ~ Kinora”)

More of Kinora’s suffering as a kidnap victim (less graphic than ch 12). She overhears Gorumim explain his plans and motivations, including his reasons for ordering the attack on Noemi and wanting Malena dead. Gorumim sends evil wolf creatures to kill Malena.

Chapters 18-19
probably safe

Chapter 20 (“wolves ~ Malena”)

A violent chapter. Battle with wolves. Malena is briefly possessed by an evil spirit of some kind. She is saved by her companions’ courageous defense and Oji’s timely intervention.

Chapter 21 (“oreni ~ Malena”)

Gorumim’s plan to sacrifice children in ritual black magic is discussed. Malena learns more about the nature of the wolf creatures who attacked them, which includes a story about how possession works. They encounter some gory cadavers that were the men who controlled the wolf creatures.

Chapters 22-26
probably safe

Chapter 27 (“a quattroglyph ~ Kinora”)

Kinora is treated brutally by a soldier. She is leaving piles of stones behind in hopes that someone might follow and rescue the children. She learns that Gorumim has been letting her do that, and is using her messages to lure her would-be rescuers into a trap.

Chapters 28-30
probably safe

Chapter 31 (“Cricket ~ Kinora”)

Kinora is concerned for a little toddler that is also a prisoner. He is becoming weak and catatonic. She names him “Cricket” because of the sound he makes when he snores.

Chapters 32-37
probably safe

Chapter 38 (“cattails ~ Kinora”)

Kinora is desperate to protect Cricket, who seems near death. The children are being loaded on boats to float downriver; she decides to hide Cricket in the rushes in hopes that rescuers (who she believes to be close behind) will find him.

Chapters 39-50
probably safe. Chapters told from Kinora’s point of view continue to hint at ominous events in the children’s future, but they are just hints.

Chapter 50 (“despair ~ Toril”)

They discover four children that Gorumim has killed in an act of black magic. Paka dies as well, from wounds in a battle with the pishacha. This is the emotional low point of the novel. They build a pyre and hold a funeral. They vow to continue.

Chapters 51-53

probably safe

Chapter 54 (“more secrets ~ Malena”)

This is a key chapter, and would be hard to skip; only do so if torture is too painful for you to read about. Malena witnesses Gorumim torturing Toril (he uses the staff to break Toril’s fingers, to beat him, etc). He wants Toril to tell him where Malena is, both to make his magic symbol (ch 17) complete, and to understand how Toril was able to pull her back from death. Toril reveals that he is becoming a sata because he unwound magic from his own bones to get the power to heal Malena. Malena learns that Toril has been carrying shards of the ceramic antechild gift that she had intended to give him, hoping to repair them for her. She overhears several things that influence her attitude, and she realizes that she does love Toril and is able to forgive his mistakes just as Shivi has forgiven hers. The scene ends with Gorumim jamming the heated brass endcap of the staff into Toril’s open mouth, burning his lips.

Chapter 55 (“confrontation ~ Toril”)

This is the climax of the novel and should probably not be skipped. However, there is a one-sentence description of Gorumim killing a victim to gain some magical power.

Chapter 56

probably safe