

Chapter 30: Part Two - 12. Find Me

The chapter opens with Linden Avery facing the oppressive judgment of the Masters in the Close, their collective animosity weighing heavily upon her. Supported by her companions, Liand and Mahrtiir, she approaches Stave, expressing profound gratitude for his unwavering loyalty. Stave, however, responds with a sense of finality, as if his actions have irrevocably severed him from his people. Linden's emotional thanks are met with his stoic acknowledgment, emphasizing his commitment to her cause despite the personal cost.

The tension escalates as Linden confronts Handir, the Voice of the Masters, demanding clarity on whether they will ally with her or oppose her. Handir's cold demeanor and evasive response heighten her dread, while Mahrtiir's sharp interjection underscores the tension between the Masters and Linden's allies. Handir dismisses the Manethrall's challenge, prioritizing an unresolved matter among the Masters, which leads to a dramatic confrontation between Stave and the Humbled.

The Humbled, Galt, Clyme, and Branl, take turns attacking Stave, each delivering brutal blows while he refuses to defend himself. Linden, though horrified, restrains her companions from intervening, recognizing that Stave must endure this trial to preserve his honor. The violence symbolizes the Masters' rejection of Stave's defiance, as he bears their punishment with grim acceptance. Linden's anguish mirrors the physical and emotional stakes of the conflict, highlighting the Haruchai's rigid code of judgment.

The chapter culminates in Handir's formal pronouncement of Stave's exile, severing him from the Haruchai and their communal mind. Stave's allegiance to Linden is deemed a betrayal, and he is condemned to isolation. Handir's final, sudden attack underscores the ruthlessness of the Masters' verdict, leaving Linden and her allies to grapple with the consequences of Stave's sacrifice and the uncertain path ahead. The

chapter closes with a sense of unresolved tension and impending confrontation.

