

# Chapter 25: TWENTY-FONE: The Seventh Ward

The chapter opens with a tense exchange between High Lord Elena and Thomas Covenant as they journey toward the Seventh Ward. Covenant questions Lord Foul's motives, arguing that the enemy orchestrated events to manipulate their actions. He believes Foul released the tortured creature Dukkha to provoke Elena into summoning him at this precise time, ensuring they would pursue the Seventh Ward under pressure. Covenant warns that Foul thrives by corrupting hope, suggesting the Ward might be a trap. Elena, however, remains steadfast, trusting in High Lord Kevin's ancient wisdom and dismissing the idea that the Ward is tainted by evil.

Covenant's frustration and fear are palpable as he grapples with his role in the unfolding events. He reflects on how his presence has altered the course of their mission, from awakening Amok to diverting attention from his own untapped power, the wild magic of his white gold ring. He suspects Foul wants to prevent him from mastering this power, which could threaten the enemy's plans. Despite his warnings, Covenant's words are overshadowed by the cavern's eerie echoes, leaving him feeling unheard and powerless. The tension between his desperation and Elena's resolve underscores their ideological clash.

As their boat reaches a breathtaking, silent waterfall, the group prepares to enter the Seventh Ward. Amok, now solemn and aged, leads the way, stepping into the cascade with uncharacteristic gravity. Elena, reinvigorated by the Ward's proximity, follows without hesitation, while Covenant, burdened by dread, crawls reluctantly through the pounding water. The falls seem to scour him physically and spiritually, yet he remains unchanged at his core, symbolizing his unresolved inner conflict and the looming uncertainty of their quest.

The chapter closes with the party assembled at the threshold of the Seventh Ward, poised for a pivotal moment. Amok's transformation hints at the gravity of what lies ahead, while Covenant's unshaken unease contrasts with Elena's determination. The silent, gem-like waterfall serves as a metaphor for the beauty and peril of their journey, leaving readers anticipating the consequences of unlocking the Power of Command. The stage is set for a revelation that could either save or doom the Land.

