

40. In for All

The chapter opens with a reflection on the nature of Odium's power, suggesting it corrupts its Vessel and drives destructive impulses. Navani Kholin arrives at the map room in Urithiru to find it bustling with activity as officers and soldiers prepare for an imminent attack.  The tower is under siege by enemy forces, including Stormform Regals and Heavenly Ones, who have infiltrated multiple floors. With the Radiants incapacitated and fabrials malfunctioning, the defenders are at a severe disadvantage, and Navani quickly assesses the dire situation.

Navani takes charge, proposing strategic barricades to hold key floors despite the overwhelming odds. She interacts with Battalionlord Teofil, a darkeyed officer promoted for merit, who provides a grim assessment of their tactical weaknesses. The enemy controls critical areas like the Oathgates and the basement, where the crystal pillar—potentially linked to the Radiants' collapse—is located. Tension rises as officers debate the feasibility of holding their ground, with some expressing despair at facing the Fused without Radiant support.

Teofil advises Navani to consider surrender, given the hopelessness of their position, but she refuses to yield. Instead, she hypothesizes that reclaiming the crystal pillar room could reverse the Radiants' condition. This sparks a shift in strategy: a risky counterattack to retake the basement. Teofil and the officers weigh the near-suicidal odds, but Navani's determination and potential solution rally them. The chapter highlights her leadership under pressure and the stark reality of their dwindling options.

The scene closes with Navani and Teofil planning a desperate assault, underscoring the themes of sacrifice and resilience. The tower's oppressive silence contrasts with the earlier chaos, amplifying the gravity of their decision. Navani's internal resolve—to avoid micromanaging while still providing direction—reflects her growth as a leader.

The chapter sets the stage for a pivotal confrontation, blending tactical urgency with deeper questions about power, control, and hope in the face of annihilation.

