

Chapter 6: Part One - Six: Winter in Combat

The chapter opens with Covenant and his companions finding temporary respite on a coastal shingle, where the milder climate offers a brief reprieve from the harsh winter. Covenant awakens to the unsettling sight of a growing ice spit extending from the glacier they had left, signaling the relentless pursuit of the arghuleh. The First confirms the threat, estimating they have until the next day before the creatures reach them. Despite their exhaustion, the company quickly prepares to depart, with the Giants showing resilience and determination, while Linden remains visibly strained by the journey's toll.

As the group moves southwest, Covenant and Linden walk alongside the sleds, taking advantage of the bare ground. Covenant attempts to gauge Linden's condition, but their progress is soon interrupted by heavy snowfall, forcing them to ride the sleds. The First navigates the treacherous terrain with ease, leading the company through the storm. When the snow clears, Covenant reflects on their mission to stop the Clave and extinguish the Banefire, a goal that fuels his anger and resolve. The thought of the Ranyhyn, now lost to the Sunbane, deepens his determination to confront the Land's corruption.

Days pass as the company traverses a desolate, snow-covered plain, haunted by an unshakable sense of being hunted. Linden's health-sense detects an unnatural unease in the winter landscape, though she cannot pinpoint its source. Eventually, they ascend into a mountain range, where the terrain becomes less severe, offering hope for faster progress. Covenant identifies the area as the Northron Climbs, a familiar landmark that suggests they are nearing Landsdrop, the boundary between the Lower and Upper Land—and the edge of the Sunbane's influence.

The chapter concludes with the company gaining elevation and optimism, despite the lingering threat of the arghuleh and the unknown dangers ahead. Covenant's recognition of the Northron Climbs renews his sense of purpose, as the group presses onward toward Landsdrop and their ultimate confrontation with the forces of the Sunbane. The mixture of hope and foreboding underscores the chapter's tension, as the companions brace for the challenges that lie beyond the mountains.

