

Chapter 10: Part One - Ten: The Banefire

The chapter opens with Covenant and his companions reeling from the shock of their surroundings as they face the desolate landscape near Revelstone. Covenant, weakened by exhaustion and the venom within him, struggles to maintain his balance and clarity. Linden recognizes the danger he's in, realizing the venom is burning inside him, threatening to consume him. Despite his frailty, Covenant refuses diamondraught, fearing it might destabilize his control, and opts for metheglin to steady himself. The group remains tense, aware of the looming threat posed by the Banefire and the Clave's atrocities.

As Covenant regains his footing, the company discusses whether the Sandgorgon Nom will answer his summons. Linden recalls Kasreyn's warning that distance is no barrier to such power, but Covenant's hope rests on Nom's past deference to him. The east remains empty, heightening their uncertainty. Meanwhile, Cail draws their attention to Revelstone, where Riders prepare to execute a captive Haruchai. The First and Giants intervene, hurling rocks to disrupt the Riders and free the prisoner, who kills his captors before rejoining his people. This act of defiance stirs Covenant's resolve.

The scene shifts as Covenant spots a plume of dust in the east, signaling Nom's approach. Linden stands close but hesitates to touch Covenant, sensing the danger radiating from him. The Giants react with a mix of awe and trepidation, while Honninscrave seems consumed by his desire for vengeance. Findail, weary but resigned, addresses Covenant, criticizing his purpose yet acknowledging the inevitability of his actions. The tension builds as the Sandgorgon's arrival promises both salvation and further peril.

The chapter culminates in a moment of grim determination. Covenant's internal struggle with the venom and his external battle against the Clave's cruelty converge. His refusal to succumb to despair or reckless power underscores his precarious balance between strength and destruction. The arrival of Nom hints at a turning point, but the cost remains uncertain. The Banefire's malevolence and Gibbon's manipulations loom large, setting the stage for a confrontation that will test Covenant's resolve and the limits of his companions' loyalty.

