

I-3. Into the Fire

Taravangian reflects on his impending fate, acknowledging that his path was never meant to end peacefully. He has accepted that his death will come as a consequence of his deal with Odium, ensuring the survival of Kharbranth at the cost of his own life. The Diagram, once his guiding tool, has served its purpose, and he prepares to disband the organization built around it. His focus remains solely on protecting his city, even as he faces betrayal and execution by the Alethi.

In a poignant farewell, Taravangian gathers his closest friends—Adrotagia and Mrall—for a final meeting. He instructs them to dismantle the Diagram's operations and disperse its members, emphasizing that their mission is complete. Adrotagia, understanding the necessity, agrees to leave, while Mrall struggles to accept Taravangian's sacrifice. The king reassures them that his death will divert attention from Kharbranth, allowing it to remain safe.

Taravangian reveals his role as a diversion in Odium's larger plan. By accompanying Dalinar and Jasnah to Azir, he will draw the Alethi's focus when Jah Keved's armies betray them. This strategic move ensures Odium's true objectives remain hidden. Despite Mrall's protests, Taravangian insists his sacrifice is necessary, as Odium no longer has use for him. His fate is sealed, and he accepts it with a mix of resignation and sorrow.

The chapter closes with Taravangian staring out at the mountains, contemplating the weight of his choices. He acknowledges the pain of his impending death but finds solace in knowing Kharbranth will survive. His legacy, marked by both cunning and sacrifice, underscores the tragic cost of his deal with Odium. The scene is a somber reflection on mortality, loyalty, and the price of power.