Against All Things Ending

Against All Things Ending is the penultimate volume in Stephen R. Donaldson's decades-spanning *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*, where metaphysical despair and fragile hope collide in the Land's darkest hour. As the Worm of the World' End awakens to devour all existence, three broken heroes face impossible choices:

- **Thomas Covenant**, resurrected as pure wild magic but paralyzed by the paradox of his own existence
- **Linden Avery**, wielding both the Staff of Law and White Gold while drowning in unintended consequences
- **Jeremiah**, her adopted son whose recovered mind hides a terrifying connection to *Despite*

Donaldson's signature themes reach their zenith in this 600-page odyssey featuring:
✓ The collapse of Time's fundamental laws
✓ The tragic cost of *ahl* (ultimate choices)
✓ The most controversial rape allegory in fantasy history

With prose denser than *Vellum* and philosophical stakes rivaling *Paradise Lost*, this novel divides fans but remains unmatched in its ambition to wrestle with salvation through suffering.

Chapter 1: Part One - 1. The Burden of Too Much Time

Thomas Covenant, once an immortal being who had witnessed and shaped the cosmos across eons, finds himself forcibly returned to mortality by Linden Avery. Overwhelmed by the burden of his lost power and infinite knowledge, he struggles to contain the vastness of his former existence within his now-fragile human form. The weight of time fractures his mind, leaving him vulnerable and disoriented. Around him, the spectral figures of the Dead High Lords and other beings gather, observing his plight and the consequences of Linden's choices, while Covenant grapples with the fading remnants of his divine understanding.

The chapter highlights Covenant's profound isolation as he realizes he is no longer aligned with the timeless beings who once shared his purpose. The Dead Lords, including Berek, Damelon, Loric, and Kevin, stand as silent judges, their thoughts now alien to him. Caer-Caveral and Elena, the Law-Breakers, linger nearby, their sacrifices having enabled Covenant's return to mortality. Meanwhile, the Elohim, represented by Infelice, face impending doom due to Linden's actions, though Covenant can barely process their fate amidst his own unraveling consciousness.

Covenant's fragmented awareness briefly touches upon other figures: the Haruchai, the Ranyhyn, and the Ramen, whose presence offers him fleeting solace. He recognizes their roles and struggles but lacks the clarity to fully comprehend their significance. The Stonedownor, marked by his destiny, stands as a symbol of inevitable fate. Yet, amidst the chaos, Covenant's focus remains fixed on Linden, whose anguish anchors him to his humanity. Her despair, marked by her torn clothing and discarded Staff, mirrors his own inner turmoil and guilt over his failures.

The chapter culminates in a sense of impending catastrophe as the Worm of the World's End approaches, threatening annihilation. Covenant's love for Linden and his awe at her power to shape destinies clash with his awareness of the devastation she has unwittingly unleashed. His earlier words to her—urging her to trust herself—now haunt him as he confronts the consequences of his own choices. The chapter underscores themes of sacrifice, mortality, and the unbearable weight of time, setting the stage for the looming crisis.

Chapter 2: Part One - 2. Unfinished Needs

Linden Avery is overwhelmed by horror and dismay as she confronts the catastrophic consequences of her actions. Having resurrected Thomas Covenant, she inadvertently awakened the Worm of the World's End, dooming the Land and everyone she loves. Her past traumas—her father's suicide, Covenant's deaths, and her battle against her son—pale in comparison to this moral convulsion. She realizes she has violated fundamental Laws, using evil means to pursue good, and now faces the irreversible ruin of the world. Covenant lies unconscious, his mind fractured, while Linden grapples with the weight of her choices.

Covenant's physical state mirrors the Land's peril: his leprosy has returned, worsened by Kevin's Dirt, and his mind teeters on the brink of shattering. Linden, though capable of perceiving his condition, feels powerless to heal him without risking further harm. Her despair is compounded by the realization that she ignored warnings from Sunder, Hollian, and even the Despiser, driven by rage over her son's suffering. Now, she stands as an icon of failure, her love for the Land twisted into its destruction.

The Dead, including Berek Halfhand and Loric Vilesilencer, gather to discuss the Ritual of Desecration, their attention fixed on Kevin Landwaster rather than Linden. Kevin's presence underscores the theme of good intentions leading to ruin, as he too once sought to save the Land through destructive means. Linden, though consumed by her own guilt, is momentarily drawn to his shared anguish, recognizing a kindred spirit in failure. The spectral figures debate responsibility and legacy, hinting at unresolved familial and moral tensions.

As the chapter closes, Linden remains isolated in her dismay, unable to respond to her companions' concern. The Dead's dialogue suggests a reckoning with past mistakes, but Linden's focus is inward, haunted by Covenant's broken state and her role in the world's impending end. The chapter underscores the tragic cost of unchecked emotion

and the impossibility of undoing irreversible actions, leaving Linden—and the reader—to grapple with the weight of consequences.



Chapter 3: Part One - 3. Bargaining with Fate

Linden, consumed by guilt and desperation, examines Covenant after his revival, hoping the Wraiths have healed his fractured mind and leprosy. However, she confirms they only repaired his physical wounds, leaving him trapped in a state beyond ordinary health. Despite his apparent alertness, Covenant remains disconnected, eating slowly while others tend to him. Linden’s anguish deepens as she realizes her reckless actions have irreversibly altered him, leaving her emotionally barren and unable to articulate her despair. The Wraiths, having done all they could, depart with a mournful lament, while the Ranyhyn also withdraw, signaling a shift in the unfolding crisis.

Liand, sensing Linden’s distress, attempts to console her, arguing that no one could have foreseen the consequences of her actions. He draws parallels to his own past folly, which was redeemed by unforeseen aid, suggesting her situation might yet improve. However, Linden rejects his optimism, burdened by the knowledge that she ignored clear warnings in her single-minded pursuit of saving Jeremiah and Covenant. Her refusal to absolve herself wounds Liand and others, highlighting the moral weight of her choices. Covenant’s sudden, cryptic interjection about the Creator and Despiser being paradoxical forces distracts the group, further underscoring his fractured psyche.

Covenant’s disjointed musings reveal his altered state, as he speaks abstractly about cosmic contradictions, seemingly unaware of the emotional tension around him. His words, though philosophically dense, hint at a deeper truth about hope existing within paradox. Linden and Mahrtiir try to engage him, but he remains detached, shifting focus to Liand’s earlier analogy about orcrest. This interaction emphasizes Covenant’s unstable condition, leaving Linden and her companions grappling with the consequences of her actions and the uncertain path ahead.

The chapter culminates in a poignant moment of unresolved tension, as Linden’s guilt and Covenant’s enigmatic behavior leave the group in limbo. The departure of the Wraiths and Ranyhyn signals a turning point, while Covenant’s fragmented thoughts suggest a mind grappling with forces beyond comprehension. Linden’s inability to forgive herself and Covenant’s cryptic utterances create a sense of impending doom, setting the stage for the next phase of their journey. The chapter masterfully blends emotional turmoil with metaphysical themes, leaving readers questioning the boundaries of fate and free will.



Chapter 4: Part One - 4. After Unwisdom

Linden Avery grapples with overwhelming shame after her deliberate choices, including aiding the Harrow and extracting Thomas Covenant from the Arch of Time. Despite her remorse, she recognizes she cannot evade responsibility. Seeking help, she acknowledges her companions' unwavering loyalty, though she has largely ignored their counsel, particularly Liand’s. Physically and emotionally drained, she moves toward Covenant, finding his presence less agonizing than the Harrow’s. The safety of Andelain offers little solace, as she feels vulnerable without Covenant’s ring, her tattered state mirroring her fractured spirit. Only her son Jeremiah’s racecar in her pocket provides a fragile sense of purpose.

Covenant, meanwhile, paces around Loric’s krill, engrossed in a monologue that seems aimless yet may reflect his struggle to retain fragmented memories. His companions, including the Humbled, Giants, and Cords, watch with varying degrees of patience, hoping for his return to clarity. Linden realizes the Humbled no longer pose a direct threat, as their focus shifts to the Harrow, who is beyond their control. The Ardent’s potential intervention adds uncertainty, as his motives and powers remain enigmatic. Linden yearns for Covenant’s support but fears her credibility is irreparably damaged by her recent actions.

Covenant’s physical and mental deterioration worsens, his leprosy exacerbated by Kevin’s Dirt, though its effects are muted in Andelain. His numbness and disjointed speech highlight his instability, yet he clings to cryptic phrases, like a quote about courage transcending doom. When Liand suggests seeking hurtloam to heal him, Covenant vehemently refuses, insisting his numbness defines his identity and potential. His sudden focus on Linden signals a pivotal moment, as he steps between her and the krill, his expression obscured by shadows, leaving her uncertain of his intentions.

The chapter culminates in a tense standoff, with Linden and Covenant separated by unspoken burdens. She hesitates to speak, overwhelmed by her needs and guilt, while Covenant’s cryptic behavior leaves his stance unclear. The krill’s light casts him in ambiguity, symbolizing the unresolved tension between them. Their interaction hangs in the balance, with Linden’s fate and the safety of her companions dependent on Covenant’s next words—words that remain unfinished, echoing the chapter’s themes of fractured trust and desperate hope.



Chapter 5: Part One - 5. Preparations

Linden Avery is overwhelmed by conflicting emotions after resurrecting Thomas Covenant at a great personal cost. While grateful for his unwavering support, she struggles with feelings of inadequacy, as his belief in her undermines her self-perception of guilt and blame. She finds herself caught between hope and despair, questioning whether friendship and love diminish her sense of purpose. The chapter highlights her internal turmoil as she grapples with the paradox of being both empowered and weakened by the trust of her companions, including Covenant, the Humbled, and Stave, who stands apart as a solitary figure.

The reactions of Linden's companions reflect the shifting dynamics among the group. The Humbled, Giants, Ramen, and Liand each respond differently to Covenant's influence, with some expressing awe, skepticism, or cautious optimism. The Giants prepare for an uncertain journey, assigning roles to protect their allies, while Liand's pride in Covenant's accomplishments underscores his unwavering loyalty. Meanwhile, Covenant slips into fragmented memories, hinting at deeper fears, and the Harrow and Ardent grow impatient. These interactions emphasize the tension between unity and individual agendas within the group.

Liand, ever compassionate, approaches Linden to offer solace, urging her to draw strength from the trust of her friends. He reminds her of their shared trials and sacrifices, emphasizing their voluntary commitment to stand by her despite the dangers. Linden, however, remains paralyzed by guilt, confessing her failure to save Covenant's daughter, Elena, and her sense of brokenness. Liand's stern yet dignified response shifts from comfort to command, insisting she must act despite her despair, as delay only worsens the peril facing her son, Jeremiah.

The chapter culminates in Linden's realization that she must move forward, even in her fractured state. Liand's unexpected authority jolts her out of her paralysis,

signaling a turning point in her resolve. The group’s preparations and Covenant’s cryptic musings about Sandgorgons hint at looming challenges, while Linden’s internal struggle mirrors the broader themes of sacrifice, trust, and the weight of leadership. The stage is set for the next phase of their journey, with Linden poised to confront her fears and embrace the uncertain path ahead.



Chapter 6: Part One - 6. Seek Deep Stone

Thomas Covenant finds himself abruptly pulled from his memories by the magic of the Insequent and his fears for Linden, standing on a narrow stone bridge spanning a chasm in Mount Thunder. The darkness is absolute, and the air is stale and lifeless, thick with the oppressive influence of Kevin’s Dirt, which dulls the senses of Linden and her companions. Covenant, numb from leprosy, lacks the health-sense to perceive his surroundings but knows the peril they face. The bridge leads to the Lost Deep, a place even the Harrow, who claims knowledge of Linden’s son, has never ventured beyond, relying instead on indirect knowledge.

The company is paralyzed by the suffocating darkness and cold, their senses nearly useless. Covenant, struggling to breathe, warns everyone not to move, fearing a fatal misstep on the precarious span. Linden urges Liand to use his orcrest, a Sunstone, to summon light, but the group’s disorientation delays its activation. The Harrow, indifferent to their plight, offers no aid, while the Ardent, fearful of the depths, remains silent. The Giants, though resilient, cautiously adjust their positions, unaware of the sheer drop beneath them. Stave’s calm directive to heed Covenant and Linden finally spurs Liand into action.

As Liand’s orcrest brightens, the company’s surroundings become horrifyingly clear. The bridge is alarmingly narrow, barely wide enough for the Giants, and the cavern’s ceiling looms with massive stalactites. The group’s shock is palpable as they grasp the extremity of their situation—the bridge’s fragility and the abyss below. The Harrow continues his muttered incantations ahead, while the Ardent, wrapped in his ribbands, stifles his terror. The light reveals the arched entrance to the Lost Deep, a void even the Sunstone’s radiance cannot penetrate, hinting at the unknown dangers awaiting them.

The chapter culminates in a moment of dread and realization. The bridge, built by the Viles for their slender forms, is ill-suited for the weight and size of Covenant’s group. The cavern’s vastness, with its glistening stalactites and reflective crystals, underscores their vulnerability. As Liand’s light grows stronger, the company regains their breath but remains acutely aware of their precarious position. The scene sets the stage for the challenges ahead, emphasizing the physical and psychological toll of their journey into the depths of Mount Thunder, where ancient evils and unseen threats lurk.



Chapter 7: Part One - 7. Crossing the Hazard

Linden Avery is overwhelmed by the dire circumstances she and her companions face. Trapped on the wrong side of a bottomless chasm, she grapples with Covenant's deteriorating mental state and the looming threat of the Worm of the World's End. The Harrow's oaths offer little reassurance, as Linden doubts his ability to open the sealed portal to the Lost Deep. Her primary focus remains rescuing her son, Jeremiah, but without her Staff or Covenant's ring, she feels powerless. The oppressive cold and stagnant air of the cavern amplify her despair, leaving her paralyzed by fear and uncertainty.

The Giants, led by Rime Coldspray, attempt to rally the group, emphasizing the urgency of their mission. Coldspray's words momentarily shake Linden from her trance, but the weight of their predicament remains. Anele, exhausted from revealing ancient secrets, lies unconscious, adding to the tension. Linden's thoughts spiral as she struggles to balance her need to help Covenant, understand Anele's revelations, and save Jeremiah. She acknowledges her own weakness, both physically and emotionally, as the shivering cold mirrors her inner turmoil.

The group debates the Harrow's intentions and the feasibility of stopping the Worm. Mahrtiir and Stave question whether the Harrow's plans can truly avert disaster, while the Ardent defends the Insequent's uncertain prophecies. Covenant, lost in his fragmented mind, interjects with cryptic remarks about an unnamed female entity, further confusing the situation. His disjointed speech underscores the group's lack of clear direction. Linden, jolted by his voice, rises to her feet, but her actions feel futile amidst the chaos.

As the Harrow remains inactive, Liand and Clyme voice their skepticism about his capabilities. The Ardent's attempts to justify the Insequent's role fall flat, leaving the group in a tense standstill. Linden, standing beside Covenant, mirrors his helplessness,

symbolizing their shared struggle. The chapter ends with a sense of impending doom, as the characters confront their limited options and the overwhelming power of their enemies. The stakes are higher than ever, but solutions remain elusive, leaving Linden and her companions on the brink of despair.



Chapter 8: Part One - 8. Caverns Ornate and Majestic

Linden Avery and her companions, including the Swordmainnir Giants, Liand, and Stave, enter the abandoned loreworks of the Viles, guided by the confident but impatient Harrow. The group is arranged protectively around Linden, with the Humbled escorting Covenant at the rear. The Harrow, bound by his oaths, waits for Linden to release him from his frustration, tapping his Staff silently on the polished floor. As they proceed, Linden initially focuses on the Harrow, unaware of the breathtaking surroundings until her companions react with awe and wonder.

The chamber they enter is vast and radiant, its walls and ceiling burnished to a luminous sheen, emitting shifting pastel hues. At its center stands an intricate, translucent castle, composed of delicate outlines resembling bone or crystal. The structure, with its flying buttresses, turrets, and balconies, is eerily familiar to Linden—it mirrors a model her son Jeremiah once built in their home. This revelation shocks her, confirming that Jeremiah had seen this place before, validating her quest and hinting at his earlier connection to the Land.

Overwhelmed by memories and foreboding, Linden hesitates, struck by the castle’s beauty and its ominous significance. Liand urges her to move forward, warning of unseen dangers, while the Harrow impatiently demands haste. The Giants, however, are captivated by the stonework’s perfection, their reverence momentarily delaying progress. Rime Coldspray, the Ironhand, expresses their collective awe, calling the castle "immaculate to the point of melody," though Liand’s unease grows.

Despite her emotional turmoil, Linden steels herself, recalling the croyel’s grip on Jeremiah and the urgency of their mission. With Liand and Stave supporting her, she follows the Harrow into the heart of the castle, the Ardent reassuring the group of the

Harrow’s guidance. Covenant, though silent, observes everything intently, while the Humbled remain vigilant. The chapter ends with Linden stepping into the unknown, driven by love for her son and the looming threat of the abyss.



Chapter 9: Part One - 9. Hastening Doom

The chapter "Hastening Doom" depicts Linden Avery's torment as she witnesses her son, Jeremiah, under the control of the malevolent croyel. Lord Foul's taunts echo in her mind, mocking her helplessness and threatening Jeremiah's doom. The croyel, confident in its dominance, uses Jeremiah's body as a vessel while facing off against the Harrow, who seeks to overpower it. Linden is paralyzed by despair, realizing that Lord Foul manipulated her into resurrecting Covenant to awaken the Worm of the World’s End, all to break her spirit. Yet, she remains defiant, believing Foul underestimates her resilience and love for her son.

Liand, horrified by Jeremiah's suffering, attempts to attack the croyel using his orcrest stone’s Earthpower. However, the creature effortlessly repels him with a wave of magic, leaving him severely injured. The attack severs Linden’s health-sense, leaving her blind to the true extent of the danger. Anele flees in terror, and Linden is left alone, torn between aiding Liand and seizing the orcrest to regain her perception. She forces herself to wait for the right moment to act, knowing the croyel could easily crush her if she moves prematurely. Her strategy hinges on distracting both the Harrow and the creature.

The Harrow, undeterred by the croyel’s mockery, boasts of his impending mastery over the Staff of Law and white gold. He claims the creature’s defenses have isolated it, even from allies like Roger Covenant, who relies on Jeremiah’s powers. The Harrow’s display of power briefly restores Linden’s health-sense, revealing Roger’s absence and Kastenessen’s influence. Linden realizes Roger and the croyel have grander ambitions, while Kastenessen’s sole goal is the Elohim’s destruction. The Harrow’s confidence grows, but the croyel remains defiant, baring its fangs in a sinister grin.

As the confrontation escalates, Linden braces for the croyel’s next move, expecting a lethal strike. Instead, the creature redirects its power, leaving her unharmed—for now.

The chapter underscores Linden’s precarious position, caught between the Harrow’s arrogance and the croyel’s malice. Her resolve to save Jeremiah remains unshaken, but the cost of failure looms larger than ever. The tension builds toward a pivotal moment, where Linden must act decisively or risk losing everything.



Chapter 10: Part One - 10. By Evil Means

Linden Avery stands broken yet resolute, burdened by the consequences of her choices. Though she regains the Staff of Law and Covenant’s ring, the weight of her actions crushes her: Liand lies near death, Stave is injured, and the Harrow’s corpse serves as a grim reminder of her failures. Esmer’s return unsettles her further, despite the arrival of ur-viles and Waynhim. Physically and emotionally drained, Linden struggles to focus as Pahni pleads for Liand’s healing, while her heart aches for Jeremiah, trapped by the croyel. Covenant’s defiance against Joan’s torment offers her fleeting hope, but his suffering is immense.

Covenant’s resilience becomes the chapter’s focal point as he endures Joan’s relentless assault, his leprosy both a shield and a curse. His hands, seared by pain, cling to Loric’s krill, the only leverage against the croyel holding Jeremiah captive. Linden, torn between healing Liand and aiding Covenant, ultimately channels Earthpower to ease Covenant’s agony as Galt takes over the krill. The transfer is excruciating, but Covenant’s release momentarily disrupts Joan’s fury, offering respite. The Humbled’s coordinated efforts underscore their loyalty, though Linden remains haunted by Jeremiah’s plight and Covenant’s sacrifice.

The dynamics among Linden’s companions reveal their shared desperation. Bhapa and Pahni support her physically and emotionally, while the Giants and Ramen rally despite their own wounds. The Ardent, though fearful, joins the group, clutching Liand’s orcrest. Esmer’s distress and the ur-viles’ presence add tension, but the immediate threat remains the croyel and Joan’s unchecked rage. Covenant’s whispered admission—that Joan grows stronger—hints at impending doom, leaving Linden grappling with her powerlessness to shield him or her son.

The chapter culminates in a fragile moment of reprieve. Galt’s assumption of the krill’s burden allows Covenant to collapse into Linden’s embrace, her Earthpower a

temporary salve. Yet the underlying horrors persist: Jeremiah’s captivity, Joan’s undiminished hatred, and the toll of Linden’s choices. Covenant’s cryptic arrival and unwavering courage hint at deeper mysteries, but for now, the group clings to fleeting victories. The narrative lingers on their exhaustion and unresolved anguish, setting the stage for further trials ahead.



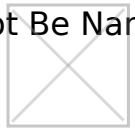
Chapter 11: Part One - 11. Private Carrion

The chapter opens with Linden and her companions in a state of shock and dismay as they confront the rising threat of She Who Must Not Be Named. Covenant, though aware of potential treachery, had not warned them, leaving the group unprepared. Esmer warns them that their only chance of survival lies in fleeing through the Hazard, guided by the ur-viles and Waynhim. The Ardent, rendered powerless by Esmer’s presence, resigns himself to impending doom, while the Humbled silently vindicate their earlier opposition to Linden’s decisions. The croyel, despite being threatened by the krill, remains defiant, its grin hinting at impending chaos.

Linden, torn between despair and determination, struggles to focus as the group debates their next move. Stave and Coldspray urge action, emphasizing the need to resist Corruption’s influence. Drawing strength from Mahrtiir’s unwavering spirit and Covenant’s past lessons, Linden resolves to trust the ur-viles and Waynhim, ordering the company to run. The Giants, carrying their companions, sprint through the moonstone passage, with Linden using the Staff’s Earthpower to shield them from the palace’s disorienting magic. The urgency is palpable as the bane’s presence grows stronger, its pulse resonating in their very bones.

The race through the palace is fraught with peril as the group navigates its enchanted wonders. Linden’s concentration wavers under the strain of resisting the Viles’ lingering magicks, but she regains control, ensuring the Giants can descend the crystal stairs safely. However, the rear of the company, including Galt, Coldspray, and Jeremiah, falls behind, raising concerns about the croyel’s potential escape. Linden, realizing the danger, urges Grueburn to slow down, fearing the croyel could exploit the gap to attack. The ur-viles, sensing the crisis, split their ranks to assist, their barks echoing through the chaotic scene.

As the chapter concludes, the tension escalates with the bane’s approach and the group’s fragmented progress. Linden’s leadership is tested as she balances the need for speed with the safety of her companions. The palace’s illusions and the croyel’s malevolence threaten to unravel their efforts, but the ur-viles’ loyalty and the Giants’ strength offer a glimmer of hope. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, leaving the outcome uncertain as the company races against time to escape the Lost Deep before She Who Must Not Be Named consumes them all.



Chapter 12: Part One - 12. She Who Must Not

Thomas Covenant exists in a fractured state, simultaneously aware of the present yet trapped in fragmented memories, unable to act as he witnesses Linden and their companions face imminent doom. He observes Linden’s collapse before She Who Must Not Be Named, a being of immense malice and grief, while his consciousness drifts through disjointed recollections. Esmer’s influence has left him paralyzed, forcing him to relive the past without the power to intervene, even as he feels the full weight of his companions’ suffering and the looming threat of the bane’s emergence.

The chapter delves into the history of the ur-viles, who once served Lord Foul but later questioned their purpose after witnessing the Waynhim’s defiance. Through centuries of introspection, they uncovered their origins in the Viles, a race untainted by self-loathing, and forged a new path by creating Vain and the manacles. This backstory highlights their transformation from servants of destruction to beings seeking redemption, though their efforts remain overshadowed by the present crisis. Covenant’s memories of their struggle contrast sharply with the dire situation unfolding around him.

She Who Must Not Be Named embodies a tragic archetype—a figure of love betrayed and imprisoned, her malice born from endless grief. Covenant perceives her as the culmination of countless wronged women, from Mininderain to Lena and Joan, her rage a reflection of absolute treachery. Her emergence from the lake of fire signals impending doom for the company, as her hunger leaves little hope for survival. Covenant, though detached, recognizes the stakes: every companion, from Linden to the Giants, has a vital role to play in the Land’s fate, yet their time is running out.

Despite his helplessness, Covenant grasps the necessity of his own survival, not for his sake but to bear the burdens of Joan and Roger, whose choices continue to threaten existence. The chapter closes with a sense of inevitability, as She Who Must Not Be

Named prepares to consume her victims, leaving only fleeting chances for escape. Covenant’s introspection underscores the themes of memory, responsibility, and the relentless march toward an uncertain future, where even the smallest hope hinges on fractured legacies and desperate acts.



Chapter 13: Part Two - 1. Those Who Endure—

Thomas Covenant sits in a desolate gully, cradling an unconscious Linden Avery while grappling with grief over his daughter Elena’s tragic fate. The landscape is barren, mirroring his inner turmoil as he reflects on the recent cataclysmic events, including Linden’s restoration of his life and the awakening of the apocalyptic Worm of the World’s End. Despite his numbness, he clings to Linden, placing his symbolic ring around her neck, a gesture of relinquished power and unresolved guilt. The company, exhausted and battered, rests nearby, their immediate survival overshadowed by the looming threat of the Worm’s relentless advance.

The Ardent, an Insequent, has transported the group to the Lower Land, a strategic location free from Kevin’s Dirt, allowing Linden and her allies to retain their perceptual abilities. Covenant recognizes the terrain, noting its proximity to Landsdrop and the distant threat of the Worm’s eventual path to Melenkurion Skyweir. The Ardent’s choice offers temporary respite from immediate dangers like the skurj and Sandgorgons, but Covenant remains acutely aware of the larger, insurmountable threat. His focus, however, stays fixed on Linden, whose suffering echoes his ex-wife Joan’s torment, adding another layer of personal anguish to his burden.

Covenant’s internal conflict deepens as he contemplates the need for Loric’s krill, a weapon essential for confronting Joan yet vital for restraining the croyel that controls Linden’s son, Jeremiah. The dilemma underscores his refusal to sacrifice Linden or her son, even as the world teeters on the brink of destruction. Meanwhile, the company’s remnants—Giants, Ramen, and Stave—stand guard or rest, their resilience tested by exhaustion. Mahrtiir, blind yet perceptive, faces the sunrise as if seeking guidance, while Galt maintains a vigilant hold over the croyel, preventing its escape.

The chapter paints a portrait of weary defiance amid hopeless odds. Covenant’s quiet vigil over Linden symbolizes his unresolved guilt and determination, even as the

Earth’s doom approaches. The group’s fragile respite is a fleeting pause before the storm, with each character grappling with their own limits and loyalties. The narrative lingers on Covenant’s introspection, highlighting his torn priorities—between personal redemption, Linden’s salvation, and the impossible task of saving a world already condemned by the Worm’s awakening.



Chapter 14: Part Two - 2. Trying to Start Again

Linden Avery finds herself consumed by She Who Must Not Be Named, a malevolent entity embodying the torment of countless betrayed women, including Elena and others. Overwhelmed by guilt and despair, she believes her actions have doomed her companions, Jeremiah and Covenant, to a watery grave. The bane's eternal anguish merges with Linden's own, forcing her to relive the pain of her failures, particularly her lack of compassion for Elena. She accepts her fate as deserved, screaming in unison with the lost souls within the bane, until her body instinctively fights for survival, struggling against suffocation.

Just as Linden succumbs to despair, she is violently pulled back to consciousness by strong hands—Stave and Pahni—who rescue her from drowning. Disoriented, she gasps for air, barely comprehending that she has escaped the bane's grasp. Pahni's voice anchors her to reality, and sunlight confirms she is no longer trapped in darkness. The Staff of Law, offered to her, symbolizes hope and power, though Linden remains weakened by her ordeal. Meanwhile, Covenant lies unconscious, his arms bleeding from her frantic scratches, a grim echo of Joan's past violence.

As her senses return, Linden realizes her friends are alive, and the bane's influence is fading. Stave and Pahni work together to keep both her and Covenant afloat in the current, urging her to take the Staff to regain control. The rune-covered Staff, now blackened by her previous use of immense power, remains a mystery to her, yet its presence is a lifeline. Covenant's limp form worries her, but she lacks the strength to reach him, relying instead on her companions to guide them to safety.

The chapter ends with Linden grappling with the aftermath of her torment, physically and emotionally drained. Though free from the bane's immediate grasp, its echoes linger in her mind. The Staff represents both her past mistakes and her potential for redemption, while Covenant's unconscious state underscores the fragility of their

survival. As Stave and Pahni steer them through the water, Linden begins to reclaim her agency, though the weight of her guilt and the challenges ahead remain daunting.



Chapter 15: Part Two - 3. —Whatever the Cost

The chapter opens with the Giants, led by Rime Coldspray, withdrawing to hold their own private discussion, or "Giantclave," away from Linden and Covenant. Linden observes their frustration but trusts their judgment implicitly. Meanwhile, other companions display varying states of tension: Mahrtiir paces restlessly, Bhapa masks his anxiety, and Anele sleeps deeply, exhausted by their ordeal. Linden herself is weighed down by unresolved concerns, waiting for Covenant or Mahrtiir to offer clarity, but the only illumination comes from the fading dusk and the krill’s light.

Linden retreats to the stream with Stave, seeking solace and reflection. She muses on the cost of their escape from the Lost Deep, feeling the lingering toll of their ordeal. Stave reveals how Covenant persuaded Esmer to leave, explaining that Anele, in a moment of clarity, summoned the Dead—specifically Sunder, Hollian, and later Elena—to distract the bane. This allowed Covenant to negotiate with Esmer, though the details remain unclear. Linden is shaken by the revelation, realizing Covenant indirectly sacrificed Elena, and she shares the blame for Elena’s torment.

Stave further explains that Covenant’s arguments to Esmer involved the peril to Kastenessen if the bane obtained white gold, but Esmer’s response was cryptic. He hinted at unseen forces that should have aided Covenant but failed to do so, leaving Linden baffled. She expresses frustration at the constant ambiguity surrounding their allies and enemies, wishing for straightforward communication. Stave defends the Demondim-spawn, noting their intentions are clear even if their language is not, highlighting a rare instance of transparency in their struggles.

The chapter underscores the emotional and psychological burdens carried by Linden and her companions. Themes of sacrifice, trust, and the elusive nature of truth dominate as Linden grapples with the consequences of their actions and the mysteries yet to be unraveled. The Giants’ solidarity, Stave’s unwavering support, and the

cryptic hints of unseen forces all contribute to a sense of impending confrontation, leaving Linden exhausted but determined to press forward despite the darkness surrounding them.



Chapter 16: Part Two - 4. Attempts Must Be Made

The chapter opens with a chaotic scene as Linden and her companions are besieged by multiple caesures—temporal rifts—directed by Joan under the influence of the Raver turiya Herem. These destructive storms threaten the group, nearly claiming Branl and converging on Jeremiah or the krill. Despite Linden’s efforts to quell them, she is overwhelmed by grief and guilt, particularly over Liand’s death, which she feels responsible for. The Raver’s manipulation of Joan’s power leaves five relentless caesures raging, pushing Linden to the brink of despair as she struggles to protect her companions.

Linden’s anguish deepens as she reflects on Liand’s tragic fate, realizing she ignored Anele’s plea for the orcrest, which might have prevented his death. Handir’s earlier warning about Anele’s Earthpower serving Corruption echoes in her mind, compounding her guilt. Meanwhile, Jeremiah, controlled by the croyel, fights against Galt’s restraint, desperate to free the creature as the caesures draw nearer. The Humbled remain steadfast, but the situation grows increasingly dire, with Linden paralyzed by grief until Bhapa administers amanibhavam, reigniting her resolve.

Fueled by the stimulant and her fury, Linden unleashes a torrent of Earthpower, attacking the remaining caesures with reckless abandon. Her actions are driven by a mix of rage and desperation, but she is too consumed by emotion to gauge their effectiveness. Stave intervenes, preventing her from spiraling further into self-destruction, and reassures her that the group has survived, though Liand is lost. The Giants, though injured, endure, and Jeremiah remains physically unharmed, though still enslaved by the croyel.

In the aftermath, Linden is left emotionally shattered, her health-sense gradually returning as she surveys the survivors. Stave’s calm assessment of their situation offers little solace, as she cannot reconcile her guilt with their survival. The chapter

closes with a somber acknowledgment of their losses and the lingering threats they face, underscoring the heavy toll of their journey and the fragility of their hope in the face of relentless adversity.



Chapter 17: Part Two - 5. Inheritances

Linden, burdened by grief and the weight of her responsibilities, ascends the slopes with Stave and Mahrtiir to visit Liand's cairn. The journey feels arduous, both physically and emotionally, as she grapples with her inability to save her son and her reliance on others to make decisions for her. The Giants' monumental cairn for Liand, constructed with immense effort and reverence, overwhelms her with its grandeur, underscoring the finality of his death. Despite her reluctance, Linden acknowledges the Giants' tribute as a fitting homage, though it offers her no solace for her loss.

The company gathers to assess the dire threats facing the Land, with Mahrtiir delivering a grim tally of their enemies. From Joan's destructive madness to the Despiser's overarching malice, the list is exhaustive and daunting. The Giants and Haruchai remain vigilant, aware that danger lurks even in their current refuge. Linden, though withdrawn, adds the Elohim to the list, recalling Infelice's opposition to their efforts. The weight of these perils leaves the group uneasy, with Covenant lost in his own thoughts and others visibly shaken by the scale of their challenges.

Rime Coldspray urges the company to voice their thoughts openly, emphasizing the need for collective counsel in their desperate situation. Mahrtiir echoes her call, insisting that even painful or dismissed ideas must be shared. Pahni, seemingly numb with grief, cryptically references the Ardent's prophecy about Linden's "need for death," hinting at unresolved suffering. The atmosphere grows heavier as the group confronts the impossibility of their task, with no clear path forward against the Worm and the Despiser's machinations.

The chapter closes with a sense of overwhelming despair and unresolved tension. Linden, paralyzed by guilt and exhaustion, struggles to contribute, while the others grapple with their own fears. The Giants' monumental efforts to honor Liand contrast sharply with the futility they feel in the face of the Land's impending doom. The

company’s unity is tested as they stand on the brink of an impossible decision, with no assurance of success or survival.



Chapter 18: Part Two - 6. Parting Company

The chapter "Parting Company" depicts a brutal and desperate battle as Linden and her companions face overwhelming forces. Cavewights and Roger Covenant’s relentless attacks leave the Giants and Haruchai severely wounded, with several on the brink of death. The ur-viles and Waynhim provide crucial but faltering defense, using dark magic to shield the group. Amidst the chaos, Galt is dead, Anele is dying, and Jeremiah remains catatonic despite being infused with Earthpower. Roger, driven by madness after losing the croyel and Jeremiah, unleashes destructive fury, killing even his own allies in his rage.

Linden, pushed to her limit by despair, abandons hesitation and embraces overwhelming power. She discards the Staff of Law, dons Covenant’s white gold ring, and ignites a cataclysmic surge of wild magic by touching Loric’s krill. Transformed into a force of destruction, she annihilates the Cavewights and drives Roger into retreat. Her rampage is swift and merciless, leaving the battlefield littered with corpses. Yet, as the adrenaline fades, she collapses, overwhelmed by the horror of her actions and the toll on her allies.

Upon awakening, Linden finds herself cared for by Stave, though his demeanor suggests deep conflict. The surviving Giants, Haruchai, and Demondim-spawn tend to the wounded, with vitrim sustaining some while others, like Anele and Esmer, remain beyond help. The ur-viles and Waynhim, once feared servants of the Despiser, now show unexpected compassion, even toward Esmer, who laughs weakly at their aid. Linden struggles to reconcile their actions with their dark history, adding to her emotional turmoil.

The chapter concludes with Linden grappling with the consequences of her choices. The battle is won, but at a devastating cost, and she must now face the aftermath. Her friends are grievously injured, the land is scarred, and her own soul is burdened by the

violence she unleashed. As she clings to the Staff of Law, she hesitates to rise, dreading the sight of the carnage and the weight of responsibility for what she has done.



Chapter 19: Part Two - 7. Implications of Trust

Linden Avery stands isolated and desolate amidst her companions, physically and emotionally drained. Her appearance reflects her inner turmoil—matted hair, worn features, and tattered clothing mirror her fractured spirit. The Staff of Law, once a symbol of hope, now feels tainted, mirroring her despair. Covenant's departure leaves her feeling unprotected and abandoned, as he prioritizes his ex-wife Joan over their shared mission. Linden grapples with the fear that Covenant may be riding to his death, unable to reconcile his absence with her reliance on him.

Her focus shifts to her son, Jeremiah, a hollow shell of the boy he should have been. Despite his emptiness, he remains her anchor, the last vestige of her former life. She clings to him, tormented by the mystery of why Anele's Earthpower failed to awaken him. Though she understands his self-imposed isolation as a defense mechanism, she feels powerless to help him without violating his autonomy. The ethical dilemma of possession weighs heavily on her, compounded by past mistakes and the warnings of the Ranyhyn.

The urgency of their situation is underscored by Rime Coldspray, who insists they must move forward despite their exhaustion. The Worm of the World's End looms as an abstract yet dire threat, and the group's physical toll is evident—Coldspray, Mahrtiir, and the Giants bear the marks of their struggles. Linden acknowledges their resilience but remains uncertain of their next steps. Covenant's absence forces her to reconsider their strategy, though bitterness and grief cloud her judgment.

Linden's internal conflict deepens as Mahrtiir urges her to try again to reach Jeremiah. She resists, haunted by the moral implications of possession and her failures as a healer. Her past experiences—both as a victim and perpetrator of possession—reinforce her conviction that true healing must come from within. Covenant's admonition to trust herself rings hollow as she confronts her limitations.

The chapter closes with Linden torn between her desperation to save her son and her growing awareness that some wounds cannot be forced to heal.



Chapter 20: Part Two - 8. The Amends of the Ranyhyn

The chapter opens with Linden and her companions seeking shelter from a harsh wind after a harrowing ordeal. Linden uses the Staff of Law to heal herself and others, though most of her allies, including the Haruchai Stave and the Giants, are relatively unharmed. She reflects on her vulnerability to the Feroce's magic, which had sent her mind back to Haven Farm, severing her connection to the present. Guilt-ridden for leading her friends into danger near the Sarangrave, she tends to them, grappling with unanswered questions about the Feroce, the lurker's motives, and the sudden abandonment by the Ranyhyn.

Linden's internal turmoil deepens as she recalls how her actions—cutting herself and wielding the Staff—had both endangered and saved the group. She realizes her desperation had driven her to repel her companions with Staff-fire, though the Giants and Stave endured. Her self-doubt is tempered by Covenant's earlier advice to trust herself, as her instincts had ultimately guided her to cast the Staff into the heart of the crisis, preventing the lurker from claiming her. Yet, she remains haunted by her role in the Despiser's designs and the spiritual toll on her friends.

The group reaches a sheltered hollow, where Linden uses the Staff to warm the stone and dry their mud-caked garments. As she tends to minor injuries, she ponders the significance of her self-inflicted wounds, which had both weakened her and revealed a path to salvation. Her thoughts return to the Ranyhyn's unexplained departure, a troubling anomaly given their past loyalty. The Giants, though weary, remain vigilant, while Mahrtiir's silent anger hints at his frustration over the Ranyhyn's actions.

The chapter concludes with the distant sound of approaching Ranyhyn, signaling their return. Hynyn's angry whinny pierces the wind, prompting Mahrtiir to prostrate himself

in reverence. Linden’s tension eases slightly as hooves draw nearer, suggesting the horses’ reappearance may bring answers or renewed conflict. The scene leaves the reader questioning the Ranyhyn’s motives and their role in the unfolding struggle against the Despiser’s machinations.



Chapter 21: Part Two - 9. Great Need

The chapter "Great Need" follows Linden Avery and her companions as they ride the Ranyhyn across a desolate, ancient battlefield in the Lower Land. The terrain is harsh and lifeless, scarred by centuries of war, with dust and the lingering scent of death filling the air. Despite the grueling conditions, the Ranyhyn demonstrate remarkable endurance, their strength seemingly boundless. Linden, though concerned for their limits, trusts the horses' resilience, while Stave rides effortlessly and Jeremiah remains eerily passive, sustained by Earthpower. The group heads south, guided by Stave’s knowledge of the land, though their exact destination remains uncertain.

As the Ranyhyn press onward, the landscape shifts from barren plains to treacherous stretches of shattered rock and molten stone, remnants of past cataclysms. The horses navigate these hazards with astonishing agility, their instincts surpassing Linden’s perception. The heat intensifies, weighing heavily on the riders, yet the Ranyhyn push forward, their coats slick with sweat. Linden grows increasingly aware of their urgency, sensing an impending trial that will demand their full strength. She prepares to use her Staff to aid the horses but hesitates, unsure if her intervention is welcome.

The group pauses briefly at a spring surrounded by aliantha, where Stave gathers the life-sustaining berries to feed Jeremiah. The boy consumes them mechanically, showing no other signs of awareness. The respite is short-lived, and soon the Ranyhyn resume their relentless gallop southward. Linden eats the berries more slowly, drawing strength from them, her anxiety mounting. The horses’ unwavering pace reinforces her conviction that they are racing toward a critical confrontation, though its nature remains shrouded in mystery.

By the chapter’s end, Linden’s resolve hardens. She recognizes the Ranyhyn’s sacrifice and the growing urgency of their journey. Despite her exhaustion and the oppressive environment, she steels herself for the challenges ahead, determined to support the

horses and her companions. The chapter closes with her silent plea to Hyn, seeking permission to intervene with her power, underscoring her deepening bond with the Ranyhyn and her commitment to their shared mission.



Chapter 22: Part Two - 10. The Pure One and the High God

Thomas Covenant rides southward on the Harrow’s destrier, flanked by the Ranyhyn and the Humbled, who push the horse to its limits. Despite the physical strain, Covenant is mentally detached, consumed by grief and dread rather than the landscape or his mission. His thoughts linger on his painful separation from Linden, whom he loves deeply but has deliberately distanced himself from. He fears his own transformation and the possibility of breaking promises to her, knowing his unresolved fate could render him unrecognizable or unworthy of her trust.

Covenant’s internal conflict centers on his refusal to let Linden accompany him, convinced her presence would doom her son, Jeremiah, though he cannot explain why. He trusts her devotion to Jeremiah implicitly, yet this certainty clashes with his inability to foresee the future clearly. His mortality now limits his perspective, confining him to the present—a stark contrast to his earlier omniscient awareness. This shift leaves him feeling trapped, though he acknowledges that such constraints are paradoxically liberating, enabling action where boundless knowledge might paralyze.

The chapter delves into Covenant’s emotional turmoil, contrasting his love for Linden with his fear of failing her. He regrets his harsh departure, recognizing how his rejection deepened her despair. Yet he believes his sacrifice is necessary, even as he grapples with the weight of his choices. His physical discomfort—thirst, fatigue, and the jarring ride—mirrors his inner struggle, grounding his existential dread in the immediate demands of his body.

Ultimately, Covenant’s journey reflects broader themes of sacrifice and mortality. His certainty about Linden’s role clashes with his own uncertainty, highlighting the tension between faith and doubt. The chapter underscores his humanity, as he navigates love,

loss, and the burden of leadership, all while racing toward an uncertain confrontation with Joan. His reflections on constraint and freedom suggest that meaning emerges not from omnipotence but from acting within limits—a truth he must now accept on faith.



Chapter 23: Part Two - 11. Kurash Qwellinir

The chapter opens with Thomas Covenant awakening at dawn in a cave, where Clyme brings him treasure-berries to eat. As Covenant reflects on the fleeting nature of his renewed life, he grapples with the weight of his impending fate and his deep love for the Land and its people. He acknowledges the redemption he's found in this world and his desire to make amends to Linden Avery, whom he believes blames herself unjustly. Despite his physical pain and the looming threat of the Worm, Covenant resolves to face the day with determination, clinging to the hope of proving his worth.

Covenant tests his ability to wield Loric's krill, a powerful dagger, by freeing it from the stone floor with surprising ease. He wraps the blade to conceal its light and tucks it into his waistband, preparing for the journey ahead. The Humbled guide him out of the cave and onto the grassland, where their horses, including Covenant's temperamental mount, await. Though weakened, the horse shows renewed spirit, and Covenant prays it will endure the coming trials. The group sets off southward, with Covenant's impatience tempered by the need to conserve the horses' strength.

As they ride, the sky darkens ominously, foreshadowing impending disaster. Clyme notes the unnatural disruption of the weather, but Covenant responds by defiantly scattering treasure-berry seeds, a symbolic act of resistance against the Despiser. The terrain grows more treacherous as they approach the Shattered Hills, with springs providing occasional relief. Covenant's thoughts drift to Joan, whose torment he senses through the krill, yet he remains uncertain how to confront her or the larger threat of the Worm. The urgency of their mission weighs heavily on him as time slips away.

The chapter closes with the riders navigating the increasingly rugged landscape, forced to slow their pace as the terrain becomes obstructed. Covenant suspects they are nearing the promontory of Foul's Creche, but his lack of a clear plan for confronting Joan or the Worm leaves him uneasy. The oppressive sky and the relentless advance of

the Worm underscore the dire stakes of their journey, as Covenant steels himself for the challenges ahead, driven by love for the Land and a refusal to surrender to despair.



Chapter 24: Part Two - 12. Sold Souls

The chapter "Sold Souls" plunges Thomas Covenant into a nightmarish, timeless void where he experiences multiple overlapping dimensions of suffering. On one plane, he exists on a frozen, featureless plain, his body and mind suspended in agony without the relief of time or change. On another, he endures the torment of countless hornets burrowing into his flesh, their pain eternal and inescapable. Simultaneously, he merges with Joan, experiencing her madness, rage, and fractured memories as his own, while the Raver turiya Herem manipulates their suffering like a cruel puppeteer. Covenant’s consciousness fractures under the weight of these layered torments, blurring the lines between his identity and Joan’s.

Amid the chaos, Covenant clings to fragmented awareness of his purpose: he entered this temporal maelstrom to reach Joan, believing she is the key to his survival and the Land’s salvation. Though he is lost in the caesure’s turmoil, Joan’s presence anchors him to the present, as her heartbeat tethers her to life. Yet, his resolve is eroded by her madness and the Raver’s taunts, which mock his helplessness and the futility of his sacrifice. Covenant’s grip on the krill, a weapon of potential power, is rendered meaningless as he drowns in Joan’s deranged psyche and the Raver’s malevolent games.

The chapter delves into Joan’s tragic backstory, revealing how her idyllic life with Covenant—marked by love, horses, and creative fulfillment—was shattered by his leprosy. Her revulsion and sense of betrayal festered into all-consuming rage, which the Raver exploits to deepen her and Covenant’s suffering. These memories, sharp as knives, strip away Covenant’s sanity, leaving him as broken as Joan. The Raver revels in their shared despair, emphasizing how Covenant’s love has become a source of endless torment, a commodity traded for misery.

Ultimately, the chapter portrays Covenant’s descent into existential despair, where even his fleeting hope of reuniting with Linden Avery and saving the Land seems lost. The Creator’s absence looms over the narrative, suggesting a universe abandoned to its doom. Covenant’s struggle becomes a microcosm of futility, as he is consumed by Joan’s pain, the Raver’s cruelty, and the relentless cold of a timeless void. The chapter ends on a note of unresolved anguish, with Covenant’s fate hanging in the balance, his humanity eroded by forces beyond his control.

