

The Eye of the World: Summary

(Aine 8–Saven 8 N.E. 998)

In the prologue, we meet Lews Therin Telamon, the Dragon. He has gone mad from using saidin, a tainted magic that only men can wield. After realizing he has murdered his own wife and children, Lews Therin kills himself with saidin, creating a volcanic peak in the backlash.

As the village of Emond's Field prepares for its end of winter festival, it is plagued by a sudden influx of strangers. The sheepherder Rand al'Thor encounters the first of these—a shadowy figure whose black cloak isn't touched by the wind—on his way to the village. He learns that his friends Mat Cauthon (the village prankster) and Perrin Aybara (the blacksmith's apprentice) have also seen this man, and agree there is something sinister about him.

The other strangers are less frightening: Moiraine, a lady who claims to be collecting stories; her armsman Lan with his color-shifting cloak; and the gleeman Thom Merrilin, who entices Rand's girlfriend Egwene with stories of faraway lands. The last, a peddler named Padan Fain, brings news of a war in nearby Ghealdan—caused by a man proclaiming himself the Dragon Reborn.

Rand returns home with his father Tam, but night has barely fallen when monsters out of legend burst through the door—Trollocs, like huge men with animal feet and faces. Rand and Tam escape to the woods, but Tam is wounded. In his delirium, Tam mumbles about finding Rand on a mountainside as a baby.

Rand dodges the black-cloaked figure—a Myrddraal, whose eyeless gaze causes supernatural fear in everyone it looks at—and arrives in Emond's Field to find half of it in ashes. The village Wisdom, Nynaeve, knows she cannot save Tam, but Moiraine uses the One Power to heal the deadly wound.

Moiraine believes the Myrddraal was looking for either Rand, Mat, or Perrin, and takes the boys with her. She is an Aes Sedai, and may be able to protect them. Egwene and Thom leave with them. They are hounded by a flying creature called a Draghkar until Moiraine summons fog and loses it.

The group travels to Baerlon. Rand meets Min, a woman who sees auras. Nynaeve catches up with the group just before the Myrddraal does, and flees the city with them.

With Trollocs hot on their heels, the group seeks the dubious safety of a ruined city called Shadar Logoth. The boys meet the ghost of Mordeth, who shows them a room filled with treasure; Mat takes a ruby-hilted dagger from the pile. A deadly mist which roams Shadar Logoth at night does not stop the Trollocs from entering the city as Moiraine hoped, and the party is separated.

Perrin and Egwene cross the river and meet Elyas, a man who can talk to wolves and claims Perrin can as well. Elyas agrees to guide them to Caemlyn, traveling for a while with the wagons of pacifist nomads called the Tuatha'an. After leaving the wagons behind, Perrin and Egwene are hunted by flocks of ravens, then captured by Whitecloaks—a fanatical military group which believes Perrin's connection with the wolves makes him a Darkfriend.

Rand, Mat, and Thom catch a boat headed downriver, the boys pretending to be Thom's apprentices. They rejoin the road at Whitebridge, where they once again encounter a Myrddraal; Thom faces it, allowing the boys to run. Rand and Mat, believing Thom to be dead, make their way to Caemlyn, dodging Darkfriends every step of the way.

Nynaeve tracks down Moiraine (earning Lan's respect) and is told that she, like Moiraine and Egwene, can channel saidar, the female half of the One Power. Moiraine guesses at Nynaeve's earliest use of the Power, describing something very like what Rand has been experiencing since they left Emond's Field. The trio tracks down Perrin and Egwene, rescuing them from the Whitecloaks with a little help from the wolves.

Rand, waiting with an increasingly paranoid Mat in Caemlyn, meets a book-loving Ogier named Loial, then takes a stroll to see the false Dragon Logain, who was captured by Aes Sedai and is being taken to their city, Tar Valon. Rand climbs a garden wall for a better view and lands in the lap of Elayne, Daughter-Heir of Andor. Rand then meets the queen, as well as the Aes Sedai Elaida, who Foretells that Rand will shake the world.

At last Moiraine and the others join Rand, but the dagger from Shadar Logoth has twisted Mat's perceptions. Moiraine uses a saidar-amplifying object called an angreal to isolate Mat from the dagger's influence, but cannot break the connection completely.

As the group recounts their adventures, it becomes apparent that the Shadow is fixated on something besides Rand, Mat, and Perrin—something called the Eye of the World. Moiraine knows of the Eye, and believes the world will be in danger if the Shadow's agents reach it first. Abandoning her plan to take the Emond's Fielders to Tar Valon, Moiraine asks Loial to take them through a dangerous shortcut called the Ways.

The Ways, once filled with light and gardens, is now dark and rotting. Created using tainted saidin, it could take a traveler from one end of the world to the other in a matter of days. Now, Trollocs have begun using them to reach places they once could not, and there is also Machin Shin, a black wind that eats souls. Moiraine's party barely escapes.

After a brief rest in the Borderland city Fal Dara, Moiraine leads the way north through the Great Blight—a twisted wilderness full of monsters and Shadowspawn. Just when all seems lost, the Eye comes to them, changing the landscape around it into a beautiful garden. Its guardian, the Green Man, welcomes them.

The Eye of the World is actually a pool of untainted saidin, created over three thousand years ago. Two of the Forsaken—ancient wielders of the One Power, sworn to the Shadow and imprisoned since the Breaking of the World—appear and try to claim the Eye. The Forsaken Balthamel is killed by the Green Man; Aginor and Rand wrestle for the power stored in the Eye, but Aginor is destroyed by it. Rand faces Ba'alzamon and deals him a blow with a sword made of light.

Rand rejoins his friends, realizing what he has done, and what he is. He determines to leave them before he can go mad from the taint on saidin, but Moiraine believes that prophecy is fulfilled and the true Dragon has been reborn.