



WANDERSAIL

WORDS BY
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For Emily,
Who is too patient
Too kindly
And too wonderful
For words.
But I try anyway.

—B. S.

To my family, who believes in me regardless
of how ridiculous my schemes get.
You're the best. Especially Kat.

—S. A.

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This story is about Derethil and the *Wandersail*.
Derethil was a king during the shadowdays, the time before memory. A powerful man. Commander of thousands, leader of tens of thousands. Tall, regal. He was a man to envy.



Derethil fought the Voidbringers during the days of the Heralds and Radiants. When there was finally peace, he found he was not content. His eyes always turned westward, toward the great open sea. He commissioned the finest ship men had ever known, a majestic vessel intended to do what none had dared before: sail the seas during a highstorm.

Derethil's goal was to seek the origin of the Voidbringers, the place where they had been spawned. Many called him fool, yet he could not hold himself back. He named the vessel the *Wandersail* and gathered a crew of the bravest of sailors. Then, on a day when a highstorm brewed, this ship cast off. Riding out into the ocean, the sail hung wide, like arms open to the storm winds . . .









The *Wandersail* was nearly destroyed in the crash,
but Derethil and most of his sailors survived.



They found themselves on a ring of small islands surrounding an enormous whirlpool, where, it is said, the ocean drains.

Derethil and his men were greeted by a strange people with long, limber bodies who wore robes of single colors and shells in their hair unlike any that grow back on Roshar.







These people took the survivors in, fed them, and nursed them back to health. During his weeks of recovery, Derethil studied the strange people, who called themselves the Uvara, the People of the Great Abyss. They lived curious lives.



Unlike the people in Roshar—who constantly argue—the Uvara always seemed to agree. From childhood, there were no questions. Each and every person went about his duty.



One day, while Derethil and his men were sparring to regain strength, a young serving girl brought them refreshment.



A woman with dark hair and green eyes, wearing a yellow and red dress, is kneeling on a dark, uneven floor. She has a distressed expression, looking up towards the viewer. In front of her are several broken goblets and scattered purple and red fruit. Behind her, a group of seven people, including men and women with various facial markings and traditional clothing, stand with serious or angry expressions. Two large, thick wooden pillars frame the scene on either side. The background is a dramatic, cloudy sky with a warm, orange glow.

She tripped on an uneven stone, dropping
the goblets to the floor and shattering them.



In a flash, the other Uvara descended on the hapless child.





Derethil and his men were so stunned that by the time
they regained their wits, the child was no more.

Angry, Derethil demanded to know the cause of the unjustified punishment. One of the other natives explained: “Our emperor will not suffer failure.”



A gloved hand, pale and smooth, reaches out from the right side of the frame. The hand is set against a dark, textured background of brown and grey rocks. Several dark red bloodstains are visible on the rocks, particularly near the hand and along a horizontal structure at the top. This structure appears to be a wooden or metal railing or walkway, also marked with blood. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the hand and the bloodstains against the dark background.

As Derethil began to pay more attention, he saw other terrible punishments. These Uvara, these People of the Great Abyss, were prone to astonishing cruelty.

If one of their members did something wrong—something the slightest bit untoward or unfavorable—the others would punish him or her. Each time he asked, Derethil's caretaker gave him the same answer: "Our emperor will not suffer failure."



The emperor, Derethil discovered, resided in the tower on the eastern coast of the largest island among the Uvara. Derethil determined that he needed to confront this cruel emperor. What kind of monster would demand that such an obviously peaceful people kill so often and so terribly?





Derethil gathered his sailors, a heroic group, and they armed themselves. The Uvara did not try to stop them, though they watched with fright as the strangers stormed the emperor's tower.









Derethil and his men came out of the tower a short time later, carrying a desiccated corpse in fine robes and jewelry.

“This is your emperor?” Derethil demanded. “We found him in the top room, alone.” It appeared that the man had been dead for years, but nobody had dared enter his tower. They were too frightened of him.

A dramatic painting depicting a large crowd of people in various states of grief and mourning. The scene is set in a dark, cavernous space, possibly a tomb or a place of execution. The people are dressed in ancient-style clothing, with men in tunics and women in long, flowing dresses. Many individuals are shown in expressive poses of sorrow: some are weeping with their hands covering their faces, others are shouting or crying out with their mouths open, and some are prostrate on the ground. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the emotional intensity of the scene. The overall composition is dense, with figures filling the frame from the foreground to the background, creating a sense of a large, overwhelming gathering.

When the Uvara saw the dead body, they began to wail and weep.

The entire island was cast into chaos, as the Uvara began to burn homes, riot, or fall to their knees in torment.





Amazed and confused, Derethil and his men stormed the Uvara shipyards, where the *Wandersail* was being repaired. Their guide and caretaker joined them, and she begged to accompany them in their escape. So it was that Nafti joined the crew.

Derethil and his men set sail, and though the winds were still, they rode the *Wandersail* around the whirlpool, using the momentum to spin them out and away from the islands.

Long after they left, they could see the smoke rising from the ostensibly peaceful lands.





They gathered on the deck, watching, and Derethil asked Nafti the reason for the terrible riots.

Holding a blanket around herself, staring with haunted eyes at her lands, she replied, “Do you not see, Traveling One? If the emperor is dead, and has been all these years, then the murders we committed are not his responsibility. They are our own.”



“What does the story mean?”



It means what you want it to mean. For the
purpose of a storyteller is not to tell you how
to think.

But to give you questions to think upon.

The End



