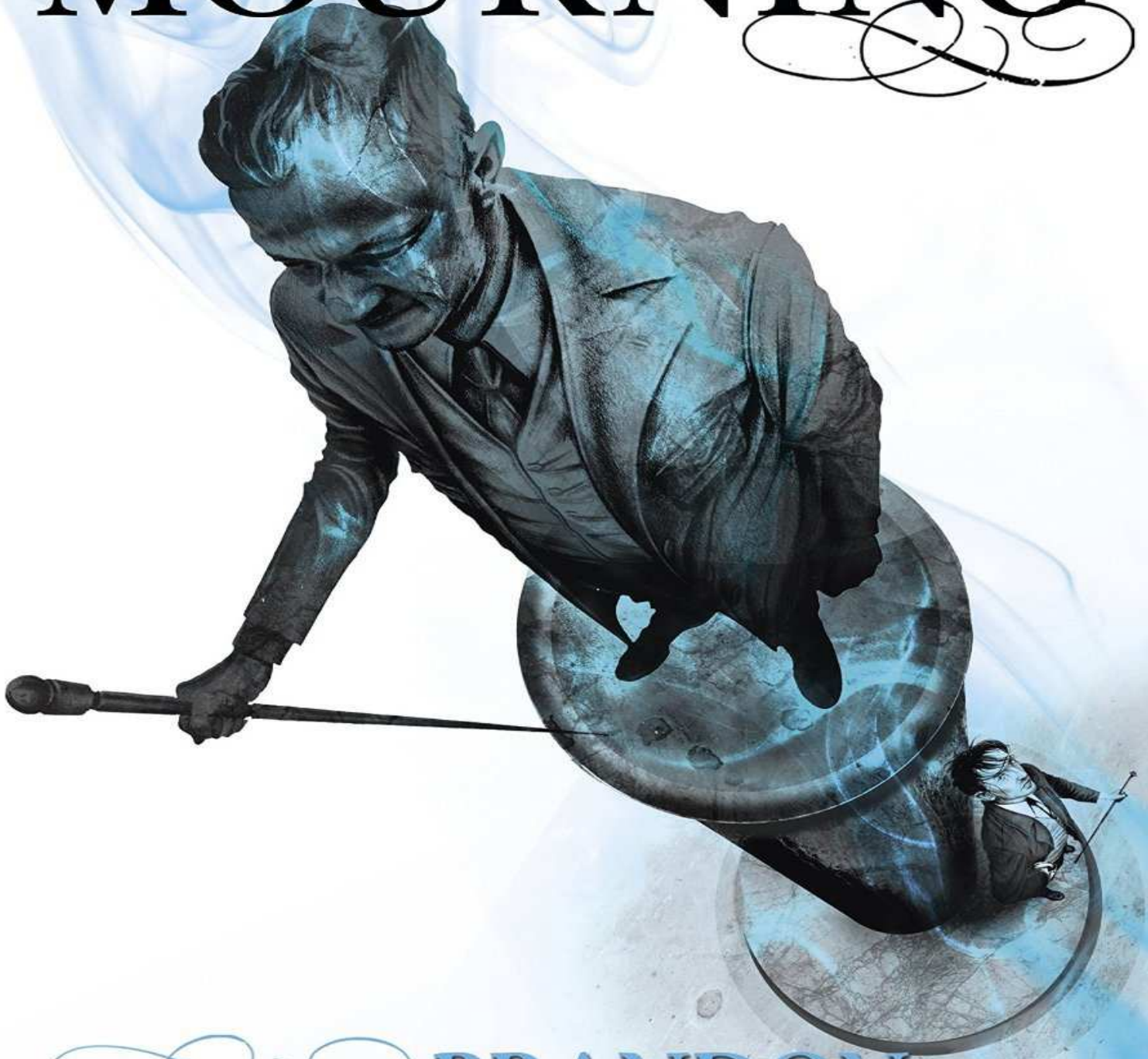


A Mistborn novel

THE BANDS OF MOURNING



BRANDON SANDERSON

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR



BRANDON SANDERSON



A TOM DOHERTY ASSOCIATES BOOK
NEW YORK

[Begin Reading](#)

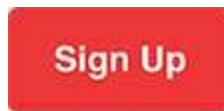
[Table of Contents](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Copyright Page](#)

**Thank you for buying this
Tom Doherty Associates ebook.**

To receive special offers, bonus content,
and info on new releases and other great reads,
sign up for our newsletters.



Or visit us online at
us.macmillan.com/newslettersignup

For email updates on the author, click [here](#).

The author and publisher have provided this e-book to you without Digital Rights Management software (DRM) applied so that you can enjoy reading it on your personal devices. This e-book is for your personal use only. You may not print or post this e-book, or make this e-book publicly available in any way. You may not copy, reproduce, or upload this e-book, other than to read it on one of your personal devices.

Copyright infringement is against the law. If you believe the copy of this e-book you are reading infringes on the author's copyright, please notify the publisher at: us.macmillanusa.com/piracy.

FOR BEN OLSEN

*Who keeps putting up with a bunch of crazy writers as friends,
And finds time to make our books better all the while.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book comes out in the year that will mark the tenth anniversary of the Mistborn series. Considering all the other things I've been doing, it seems like six books in ten years is a grand accomplishment! I can still remember the early months, writing the trilogy furiously, trying to craft something that would really show off what I can do as a writer. Mistborn has become one of my hallmark series, and I hope that you find this volume a worthy entry in the canon.

As always, this book involved the efforts of a great number of people. There's the excellent art by Ben McSweeney and Isaac Stewart—maps and icons by Isaac, with all the broadsheet art done by Ben. Both also helped a great deal on the text of the broadsheet, and Isaac himself wrote the Nicki Savage piece for it—since the idea was to have Jak hiring out his work now, we wanted to give that a different voice. I think it turned out great!

The cover art was done by Chris McGrath in the US, and by Sam Green for the UK edition. Both are longtime artists on this series, and their art keeps getting better. Editorial was done by Moshe Feder at Tor, with Simon Spanton shepherding the project over at Gollancz in the UK. Agents on the project included Eddie Schneider, Sam Morgan, Krystyna Lopez, Christa Atkinson, and Tae Keller at Jabberwocky in the US, all overseen by the amazing Joshua Bilmes. In the UK you can thank John Berlyne of the Zeno Agency, an all-around awesome guy who worked hard for many years to finally break my books into the UK.

At Tor Books, I'd also like to thank Tom Doherty, Linda Quinton, Marco Palmieri, Karl Gold, Diana Pho, Nathan Weaver, and Rafal Gibek. Copyediting was done by Terry McGarry. The audiobook narrator is Michael

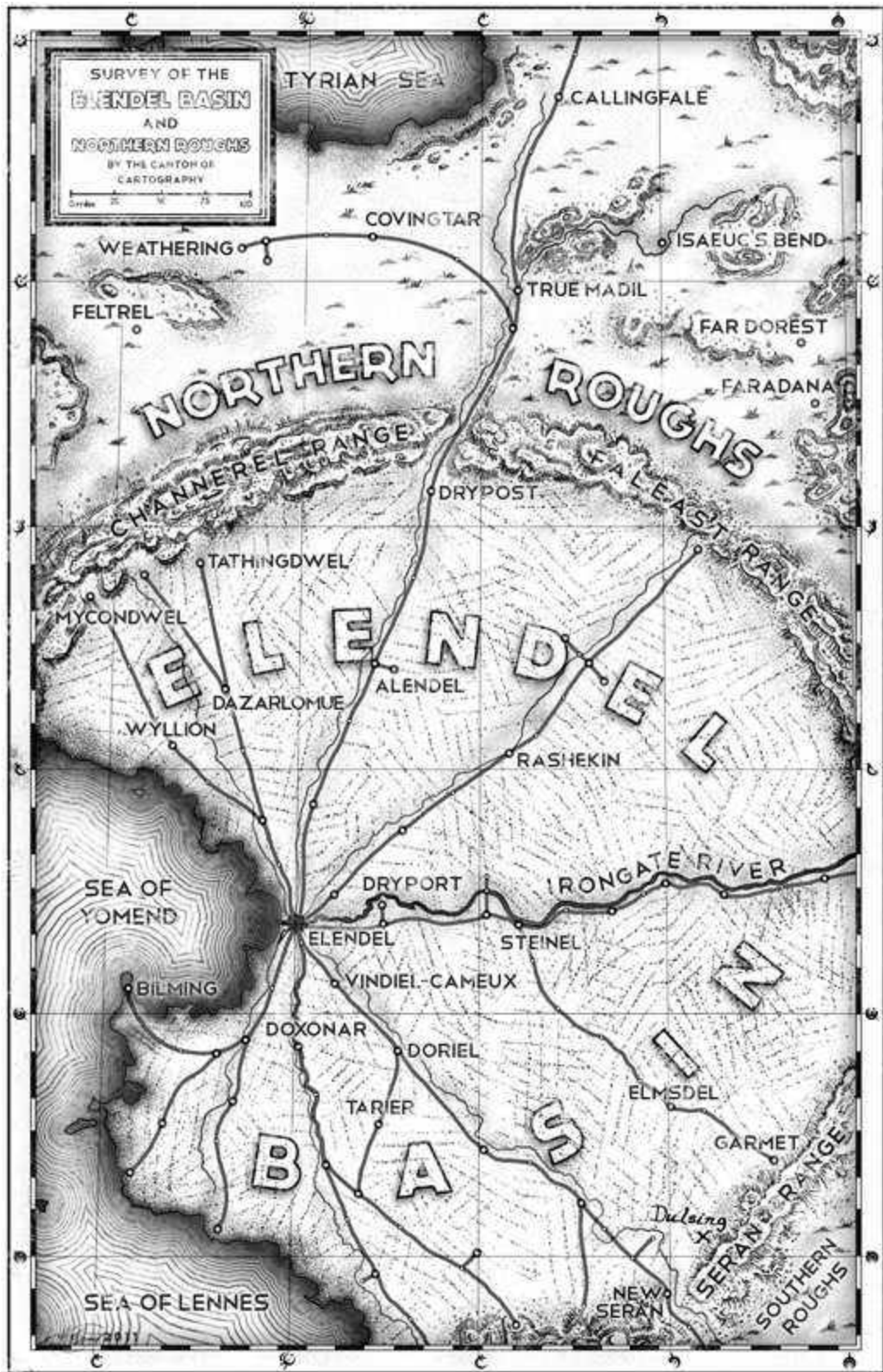
Kramer, my personal favorite narrator—and one I know I’m probably making blush right now, as he has to read this line to you all who are listening. At Macmillan Audio, I’d like to thank Robert Allen, Samantha Edelson, and Mitali Dave.

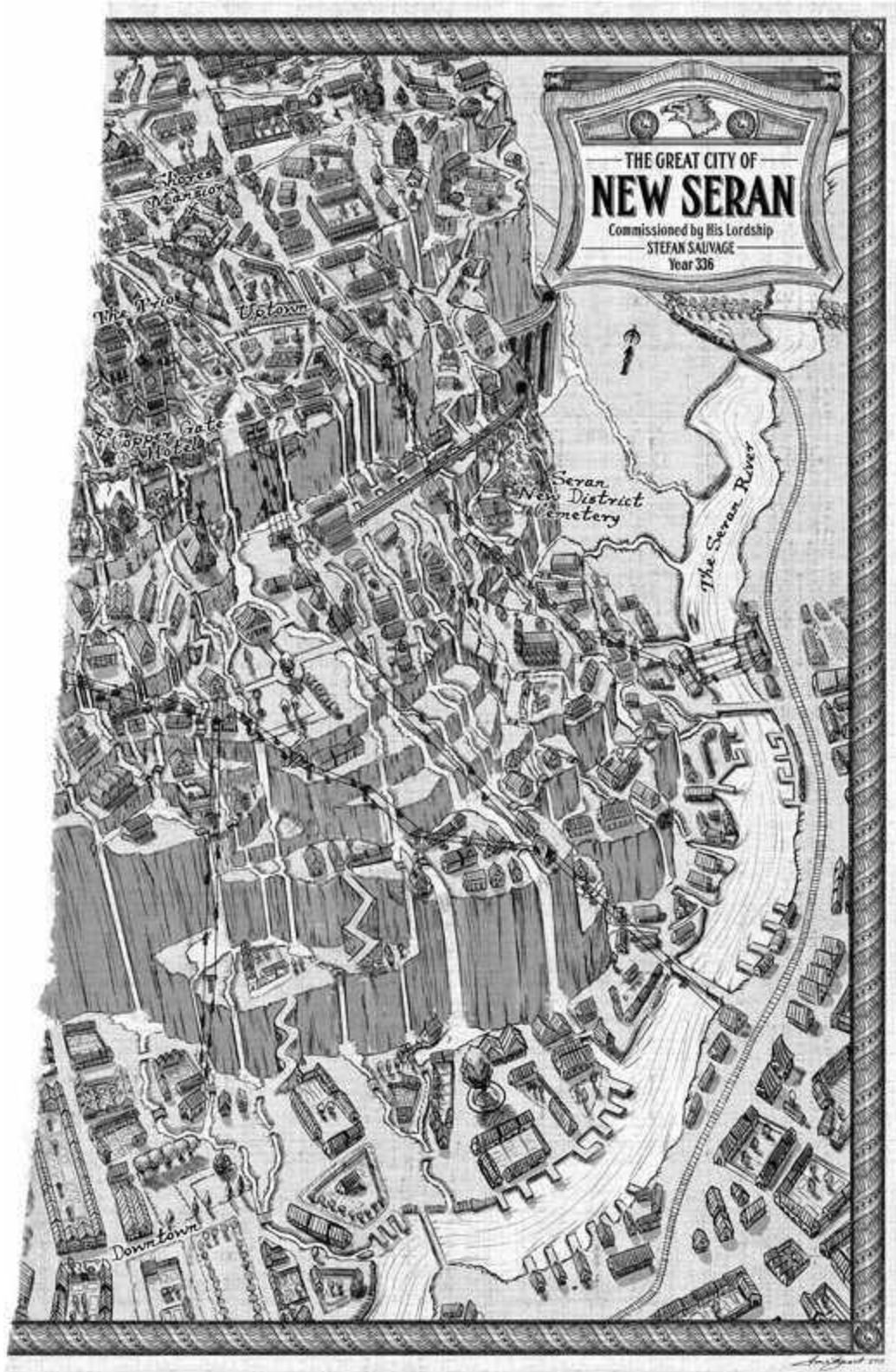
Continuity, all-around editing feedback, and countless other jobs were done by the Immaculate Peter Ahlstrom. Also working here on my team are Kara Stewart, Karen Ahlstrom, and Adam Horne. And, of course, my lovely wife, Emily.

We leaned extra hard on my beta readers for this one, as the book didn’t have the chance to go through writing group. That team is: Peter Ahlstrom, Alice Arneson, Gary Singer, Eric James Stone, Brian T. Hill, Kristina Kugler, Kim Garrett, Bob Kluttz, Jakob Remick, Karen Ahlstrom, Kalyani Poluri, Ben “wooo this book is dedicated to me, look how important I am” Olsen, Lyndsey Luther, Samuel Lund, Bao Pham, Aubree Pham, Megan Kanne, Jory Phillips, Trae Cooper, Christi Jacobsen, Eric Lake, and Isaac Stewart†. (For those wondering, Ben was a founding member of my original writing group with Dan Wells and Peter Ahlstrom. A computer person by trade, and the only one of us in that original group who had no aspirations toward working in publishing, he’s been a valued reader and friend for many years. He also introduced me to the Fallout series, so there’s that as well.) Community proofreaders included most of the above plus: Kerry Wilcox, David Behrens, Ian McNatt, Sarah Fletcher, Matt Wiens, and Joe Dowswell.

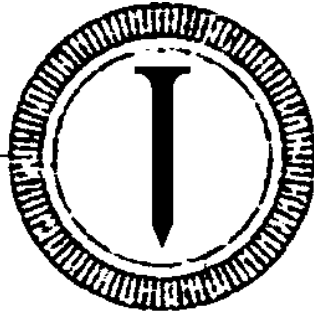
Well, that was a mouthful! These folks are wonderful, and if you compare my early books to my later ones, I think you’ll find that the assistance of these people has been invaluable in not only slaying typos but also helping me tighten narratives. Finally, though, I’d like to thank you readers for sticking with me these ten years, and being willing to accept the strange ideas I throw at you. Mistborn is not quite halfway through the evolution I have planned for it. I can’t wait for you to see what is coming your way, and this book is where some of that finally starts to be revealed.

Enjoy!





PROLOGUE



“Telsin!” Waxillium hissed as he crept out of the training hut.

Glancing back, Telsin winced and crouched lower. At sixteen, Waxillium’s sister was one year older than he was. Her long dark hair framed a button nose and prim lips, and colorful V shapes ran up the front of her traditional Terris robes. Those always seemed to fit her in a way his never did. On Telsin, they were elegant. Waxillium felt like he was wearing a sack.

“Go away, Asinthew,” she said, inching around the side of the hut.

“You’re going to miss evening recitation.”

“They won’t notice I’m gone. They never check.”

Inside the hut, Master Tellingdwar droned on about proper Terris attitudes. Submission, meekness, and what they called “respectful dignity.” He was speaking to the younger students; the older ones, like Waxillium and his sister, were supposed to be meditating.

Telsin scrambled away, moving through the forested area of Elendel referred to simply as the Village. Waxillium fretted, then hurried after his sister.

“You’re going to get into trouble,” he said once he caught up. He followed her around the trunk of an enormous oak tree. “You’re going to get *me* into trouble.”

“So?” she said. “What is it with you and rules anyway?”

“Nothing,” he said. “I just—”

She stalked off into the forest. He sighed and trailed after her, and eventually they met up with three other Terris youths: two girls and a tall boy. Kwashim, one of the girls, looked Waxillium up and down. She was dark-skinned and slender. “You brought *him*?”

“He followed me,” Telsin said.

Waxillium smiled at Kwashim hopefully, then at Idashwy, the other girl. She had wide-set eyes and was his own age. And Harmony ... she was gorgeous. She noticed his attention on her and blinked a few times, then glanced away, a demure smile on her lips.

“He’ll tell on us,” Kwashim said, drawing his attention away from the other girl. “You know he will.”

“I won’t,” Waxillium snapped.

Kwashim gave Waxillium a glare. “You might miss evening class. Who’ll answer all the questions? It will be rusting quiet in the classroom with nobody to fawn over the teacher.”

Forch, the tall boy, stood just inside the shadows. Waxillium didn’t look at Forch, didn’t meet his eyes. *He doesn’t know, right? He can’t know.* Forch was the oldest of them, but rarely said much.

He was Twinborn, like Waxillium. Not that either of them used their Allomancy much these days. In the Village, it was their Terris side—their Feruchemy—that was lauded. The fact that both he and Forch were Coinshots didn’t matter to the Terris.

“Let’s go,” Telsin said. “No more arguing. We probably don’t have much time. If my brother wants to tag along, then fine.”

They followed her beneath the canopy, feet crackling on leaves. With this much foliage, you could easily forget you were in the middle of an enormous city. The sounds of shouting men and iron-shod hooves on cobbles were distant, and you couldn’t see or smell the smoke in here. The Terris worked hard to keep their section of the city tranquil, quiet, peaceful.

Waxillium should have loved it here.

The group of five youths soon approached the Synod's Lodge, where the ranking Terris elders had their offices. Telsin waved for the group of them to wait while she hurried up to a particular window to listen. Waxillium found himself looking about, anxious. Evening was approaching, the forest growing dim, but *anyone* could walk along and find them.

Don't worry so much, he told himself. He needed to join in their antics like his sister did. Then they'd see him as one of them. Right?

Sweat trickled down the sides of his face. Nearby, Kwashim leaned against a tree, completely unconcerned, a smirk growing on her lips as she noticed how nervous he was. Forch stood in the shadows, not crouching, but *rusts*—he could have been one of the trees, for all the emotion he showed. Waxillium glanced at Idashwy, with her large eyes, and she blushed, looking away.

Telsin snuck back to them. "She's in there."

"That's our grandmother's office," Waxillium said.

"Of course it is," Telsin said. "And she got called into her office for an emergency. Right, Idashwy?"

The quiet girl nodded. "I saw Elder Vwafendal running past my meditation room."

Kwashim grinned. "So she won't be watching."

"Watching what?" Waxillium asked.

"The Tin Gate," Kwashim said. "We can get out into the city. This is going to be even easier than usual!"

"Usual?" Waxillium said, looking in horror from Kwashim to his sister. "You've done this *before*?"

"Sure," Telsin said. "Hard to get a good drink in the Village. Great pubs two streets over though."

"You're an *outsider*," Forch said to him as he stepped up. He spoke slowly, deliberately, as if each word required separate consideration. "Why should you care if we leave? Look, you're shaking. What are you afraid of? You lived most of your life out there."

You're an outsider, they said. Why was his sister always able to worm her

way into any group? Why did he always have to stand on the outside?

“I’m not shaking,” Waxillium said to Forch. “I just don’t want to get into trouble.”

“He’s *going* to turn us in,” Kwashim said.

“I’m not.” *Not for this anyway*, Waxillium thought.

“Let’s go,” Telsin said, leading the pack through the forest to the Tin Gate, which was a fancy name for something that was really just another street—though granted, it had a stone archway etched with ancient Terris symbols for the sixteen metals.

Beyond it lay a different world. Glowing gas lamps marching along streets, newsboys trudging home for the night with unsold broadsheets tucked under their arms. Workers heading to the rowdy pubs for a drink. He’d never really known that world; he’d grown up in a lavish mansion stuffed with fine clothes, caviar, and wine.

Something about that simple life called to him. Perhaps he’d find *it* there. The thing he’d never found. The thing everyone else seemed to have, but he couldn’t even put a name to.

The other four youths scuttled out, passing the building with shadowed windows where Waxillium and Telsin’s grandmother would usually be sitting and reading this time of night. The Terris didn’t employ guards at the entrances to their domain, but they *did* watch.

Waxillium didn’t leave, not yet. He looked down, pulling back the sleeves of his robe to expose the metalmind bracers he wore there.

“You coming?” Telsin called to him.

He didn’t respond.

“Of course you’re not. You never want to risk trouble.”

She led Forch and Kwashim away. Surprisingly though, Idashwy lingered. The quiet girl looked back at him questioningly.

I can do this, Waxillium thought. *It’s nothing big*. His sister’s taunt ringing in his ears, he forced himself forward and joined Idashwy. He felt sick, but he fell in beside her, enjoying her shy smile.

“So, what was the emergency?” he asked Idashwy.

“Huh?”

“The emergency that called Grandmother away?”

Idashwy shrugged, pulling off her Terris robe, briefly shocking him until he saw that she wore a conventional skirt and blouse underneath. She tossed the robe into the bushes. “I don’t know much. I saw your grandmother running to the Synod Lodge, and overheard Tathed asking about it. Some kind of crisis. We were planning to slip out tonight, so I figured, you know, this would be a good time.”

“But the emergency...” Waxillium said, looking over his shoulder.

“Something about a constable captain coming to question her,” Idashwy said.

A constable?

“Let’s go, Asinthew,” she said, taking his hand. “Your grandmother is likely to make short work of the outsider. She could be on her way here already!”

He’d frozen in place.

Idashwy looked at him. Those lively brown eyes made it hard for him to think. “Come on,” she urged. “Sneaking out is hardly even an infraction. Didn’t you *live* out here for fourteen years?”

Rusts.

“I need to go,” he said, turning back to run toward the forest.

Idashwy stood in place as he left her. Waxillium entered the woods, sprinting for the Synod Lodge. *You know she’s going to think you’re a coward now, part of him observed. They all will.*

Waxillium skidded to the ground outside his grandmother’s office window, heart thumping. He pressed against the wall, and yes, he *could* hear something through the open window.

“We police ourselves, constable,” Grandmother Vwafendal said from inside. “You know this.”

Waxillium dared to push himself up, peeking in the window to see Grandmother seated at her desk, a picture of Terris rectitude, with her hair in a braid and her robes immaculate.

The man standing across the desk from her held his constable's hat under his arm as a sign of respect. He was an older man with drooping mustaches, and the insignia on his breast marked him as a captain and a detective. High rank. Important.

Yes! Waxillium thought, fiddling in his pocket for his notes.

"The Terris police themselves," the constable said, "because they rarely need policing."

"They don't need it now."

"My informant—"

"So now you have an informant?" Grandmother asked. "I thought it was an anonymous tip."

"Anonymous, yes," the constable said, laying a sheet of paper on the desk. "But I consider this more than just a 'tip.'"

Waxillium's grandmother picked up the sheet. Waxillium knew what it said. He'd sent it, along with a letter, to the constables in the first place.

A shirt that smells of smoke, hanging behind his door.

Muddied boots that match the size of the prints left outside the burned building.

Flasks of oil in the chest beneath his bed.

The list contained a dozen clues pointing to Forch as the one who'd burned the dining lodge to the ground earlier in the month. It thrilled Waxillium to see that the constables had taken his findings seriously.

"Disturbing," Grandmother said, "but I don't see anything on this list that gives you the right to intrude upon our domain, Captain."

The constable leaned down to rest his hands on the edge of her desk, confronting her. "You weren't so quick to reject our help when we sent a fire brigade to extinguish that blaze."

"I will always accept help saving lives," Grandmother said. "But I need no help in locking them away. Thank you."

"Is it because this Forch is Twinborn? Are you frightened of his powers?"

She gave him a scornful look.

"Elder," he said, taking a deep breath. "You have a criminal among you

—”

“If we do,” she said, “we will deal with the individual ourselves. I have visited the houses of sorrow and destruction you outsiders call prisons, Captain. I will not see one of my own immured there based on hearsay and anonymous fancies sent via post.”

The constable breathed out and stood up straight again. He set something new down on the desk with a snap. Waxillium squinted to see, but the constable was covering the object with his hand.

“Do you know much about arson, Elder?” the constable asked softly. “It’s often what we call a companion crime. You find it used to cover a burglary, to perpetrate fraud, or as an act of initial aggression. In a case like this, the fire is commonly just a harbinger. At best you have a firebug who is waiting to burn again. At worst ... well, something bigger is coming, Elder. Something you’ll all regret.”

Grandmother drew her lips to a line. The constable removed his hand, revealing what he’d put on the desk. A bullet.

“What is this?” Grandmother said.

“A reminder.”

Grandmother slapped it off the table, sending it snapping against the wall near where Waxillium hid. He jumped back and crouched lower, heart pounding.

“Do not bring your instruments of death into this place,” Grandmother hissed.

Waxillium got back to the window in time to see the constable settling his hat on his head. “When that boy burns something again,” he said softly, “send for me. Hopefully it won’t be too late. Good evening.”

He left without a further word. Waxillium huddled against the side of the building, worried the constable would look back and see him. It didn’t happen. The man marched out along the path, disappearing into the evening shadows.

But Grandmother ... she hadn’t believed. Couldn’t she see? Forch had committed a crime. They were just going to leave him alone? Why—

“Asinthew,” Grandmother said, using Waxillium’s Terris name as she always did. “Would you please join me?”

He felt an immediate spike of alarm, followed by shame. He stood up. “How did you know?” he said through the window.

“Reflection on my mirror, child,” she said, holding a cup of tea in both hands, not looking toward him. “Obey. If you please.”

Sullenly, he trudged around the building and through the front doors of the wooden lodge. The whole place smelled of the wood stain he’d recently helped apply. He still had the stuff under his fingernails.

He stepped into the room and shut the door. “Why did you—”

“Please sit down, Asinthew,” she said softly.

He walked to the desk, but didn’t take the guest seat. He remained standing, right where the constable had.

“Your handwriting,” Grandmother said, brushing at the paper the constable had left. “Did I not tell you that the matter of Forch was under control?”

“You say a lot of things, Grandmother. I believe when I see proof.”

Vwafendal leaned forward, steam rising from the cup in her hands. “Oh, Asinthew,” she said. “I thought you were determined to fit in here.”

“I am.”

“Then why are you listening at my window instead of doing evening meditations?”

He looked away, blushing.

“The Terris way is about *order*, child,” Grandmother said. “We have rules for a reason.”

“And burning down buildings isn’t against the rules?”

“Of *course* it is,” Grandmother said. “But Forch is not your responsibility. We’ve spoken to him. He’s penitent. His crime was that of a misguided youth who spends too much time alone. I’ve asked some of the others to befriend him. He *will* do penance for his crime, in our way. Would you rather see him rot in prison?”

Waxillium hesitated, then sighed, dropping into the chair before his

grandmother's desk. "I want to find out what is right," he whispered, "and do it. Why is that so hard?"

Grandmother frowned. "It's easy to discover what is right and wrong, child. I will admit that always *choosing* to follow what you know you should do is—"

"No," Waxillium said. Then he winced. It wasn't wise to interrupt Grandmother V. She never yelled, but her disapproval could be sensed as surely as an imminent thunderstorm. He continued more softly. "No, Grandmother. Finding out what's right *isn't* easy."

"It is written in our ways. It is taught every day in your lessons."

"That's one voice," Waxillium said, "one philosophy. There are so many. ..."

Grandmother reached across the desk and put her hand on his. Her skin was warm from holding the teacup. "Ah, Asinthew," she said. "I understand how hard it must be for you. A child of two worlds."

Two worlds, he thought immediately, *but no home*.

"But you must heed what you are taught," Grandmother continued. "You promised me you would obey our rules while you were here."

"I've been trying."

"I know. I hear good reports from Tellingdwar and your other instructors. They say you learn the material better than anyone—that it's as if you've lived here all your life! I'm proud of your effort."

"The other kids don't accept me. I've tried to do as you say—to be *more* Terris than anyone, to *prove* my blood to them. But the kids ... I'll never be one of them, Grandmother."

"'Never' is a word youths often use," Grandmother said, sipping her tea, "but rarely understand. Let the rules become your guide. In them, you will find peace. If some are resentful because of your zeal, let them be. Eventually, through meditation, they will make peace with such emotions."

"Could you ... maybe order a few of the others to befriend me?" he found himself asking, ashamed of how weak it sounded to say the words. "Like you did with Forch?"

“I will see,” Grandmother said. “Now, off with you. I will not report this indiscretion, Asinthew, but please promise me you will set aside this obsession with Forch and leave the punishment of others to the Synod.”

Waxillium moved to stand up, and his foot slipped on something. He reached down. *The bullet.*

“Asinthew?” Grandmother asked.

He trapped the bullet in his fist as he straightened, then hurried out the door.

* * *

“Metal is your life,” Tellingdwar said from the front of the hut, moving into the final parts of the evening recitation.

Waxillium knelt in meditation, listening to the words. Around him, rows of peaceful Terris were similarly bowed in reverence, offering praise to Preservation, the ancient god of their faith.

“Metal is your soul,” Tellingdwar said.

So much was perfect in this quiet world. Why did Waxillium sometimes feel like he was dragging dirt in solely by being here? That they were all part of one big white canvas, and he a smudge at the bottom?

“You preserve us,” Tellingdwar said, “and so we will be yours.”

A bullet, Waxillium thought, the bit of metal still clenched in his palm. *Why did he leave a bullet as a reminder? What does it mean?* It seemed an odd symbol.

Recitation complete, the youths, children, and adults alike rose and stretched. There was some jovial interaction, but curfew had nearly arrived, which meant that the younger set had to be on their way to their homes—or in Waxillium’s case, the dormitories. He remained kneeling anyway.

Tellingdwar started gathering up the mats people had used for kneeling. He kept his head shaved; his robes were bright yellows and oranges. Arms laden with mats, he paused as he noticed Waxillium hadn’t left with the others. “Asinthew? Are you well?”

Waxillium nodded tiredly, climbing to his feet, legs numb from kneeling so long. He plodded toward the exit, where he paused. “Tellingdwar?”

“Yes, Asinthew?”

“Has there ever been a violent crime in the Village?”

The short steward froze, his grip tightening on the load of mats. “What makes you ask?”

“Curiosity.”

“You needn’t worry. That was long ago.”

“*What* was long ago?”

Tellingdwar retrieved the remaining mats, moving more quickly than before. Perhaps someone else would have avoided the question, but Tellingdwar was as candid as they came. A classic Terris virtue—in his eyes, avoiding a question would be as bad as lying.

“I’m not surprised they’re still whispering about it,” Tellingdwar said. “Fifteen years can’t wash away that blood, I suppose. The rumors are wrong, however. Only one person was killed. A woman, by her husband’s hand. Both Terris.” He hesitated. “I knew them.”

“How did he kill her?”

“Must you know this?”

“Well, the rumors...”

Tellingdwar sighed. “A gun. An outsider weapon. We don’t know where he got it.” Tellingdwar shook his head, dropping the mats into a stack at the side of the room. “I guess we shouldn’t be surprised. Men are the same everywhere, Asinthew. You must remember this. Do not think yourself better than another because you wear the robe.”

Trust Tellingdwar to turn any conversation into a lesson. Waxillium nodded to him and slipped out into the night. The sky rumbled above, foretelling rain, but there was no mist yet.

Men are the same everywhere, Asinthew.... What was the purpose, then, of everything they taught in here? If it couldn’t prevent men from acting like monsters?

He reached the boys’ dorm, which was quiet. It was just after curfew, and