

# BRANDON SANDERSON

"Highly recommended to anyone hungry for a good read."

—ROBIN HOBB ON *MISTBORN*

# WARBREAKER

 Sci Fi  
A SCI FI ESSENTIAL BOOK



# Warbreaker

Brandon Sanderson



A TOM DOHERTY ASSOCIATES BOOK  
NEW YORK

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](http://us.macmillanusa.com/piracy).

The Annotated Warbreaker:  
an Enhanced Electronic Book

**Brandon Sanderson**

A Tom Doherty Associates Book  
New York

# BOOKS BY BRANDON SANDERSON

*Warbreaker*

The Mistborn Trilogy

*Mistborn*

*The Well of Ascension*

*The Hero of Ages*

*Elantris*

*Alcatraz Versus the Evil Librarians*  
*Alcatraz Versus the Scrivener's Bones*

This is a work of fiction. All of the characters, organizations, and events portrayed in this novel are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

WARBREAKER

Copyright © 2009 by Dragonsteel Entertainment, LLC.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Moshe Feder

Electronic composition by Violet Lucca for Tor.com

Map by Shawn Boyles

A Tor Book

Published by Tom Doherty Associates, LLC

175 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY 10010

[www.tor-forge.com](http://www.tor-forge.com)

Tor® is a registered trademark of Tom Doherty Associates, LLC.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sanderson, Brandon.

Warbreaker / Brandon Sanderson.—1st ed.

p. cm.

“A Tom Doherty Associates book.”

ISBN-13: 978-0-7653-2030-8

ISBN-10: 0-7653-2030-4

1. Sisters—Fiction. 2. Princesses—Fiction. 3. Gods—Fiction. I. Title.

PS3619.A533W37 2009

813'.6—dc22

2009001665

First Electronic Edition: September 2009

0987654321

*For Emily,  
who said yes*

**Annotations for the Dedication**



# Contents

[Map](#)

[Annotations for the Map](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Annotations for the Acknowledgements](#)

[Prologue](#)

[Annotations for the Prologue](#)

Warbreaker

[Chapter One](#)

[Annotations for Chapter One](#)

[Chapter Two](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Two](#)

[Chapter Three](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Three](#)

[Chapter Four](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Four](#)

[Chapter Five](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Five](#)

[Chapter Six](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Six](#)

[Chapter Seven](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Seven](#)

[Chapter Eight](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Eight](#)

[Chapter Nine](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Nine](#)

[Chapter Ten](#)

[Annotations for Chapter Ten](#)

[Chapter Eleven](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Eleven](#)  
[Chapter Twelve](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twelve](#)  
[Chapter Thirteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirteen](#)  
[Chapter Fourteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fourteen](#)  
[Chapter Fifteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifteen](#)  
[Chapter Sixteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Sixteen](#)  
[Chapter Seventeen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Seventeen](#)  
[Chapter Eighteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Eighteen](#)  
[Chapter Nineteen](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Nineteen](#)  
[Chapter Twenty](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-One](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-One](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Two](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Two](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Three](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Three](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Four](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Four](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Five](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Five](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Six](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Six](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Seven](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Seven](#)  
[Chapter Twenty-Eight](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Eight](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Nine](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Twenty-Nine](#)  
[Chapter Thirty](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-One](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-One](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Two](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Two](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Three](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Three](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Four](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Four](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Five](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Five](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Six](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Six](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Seven](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Seven](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Eight](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Eight](#)  
[Chapter Thirty-Nine](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Thirty-Nine](#)  
[Chapter Forty](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty](#)  
[Chapter Forty-One](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-One](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Two](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Two](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Three](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Three](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Four](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Four](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Five](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Five](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Six](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Six](#)

[Chapter Forty-Seven](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Seven](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Eight](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Eight](#)  
[Chapter Forty-Nine](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Forty-Nine](#)  
[Chapter Fifty](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-One](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-One](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Two](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Two](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Three](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Three](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Four](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Four](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Five](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Five](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Six](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Six](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Seven](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Seven](#)  
[Chapter Fifty-Eight](#)  
[Annotations for Chapter Fifty-Eight](#)

[Epilogue](#)  
[Annotations for the Epilogue](#)

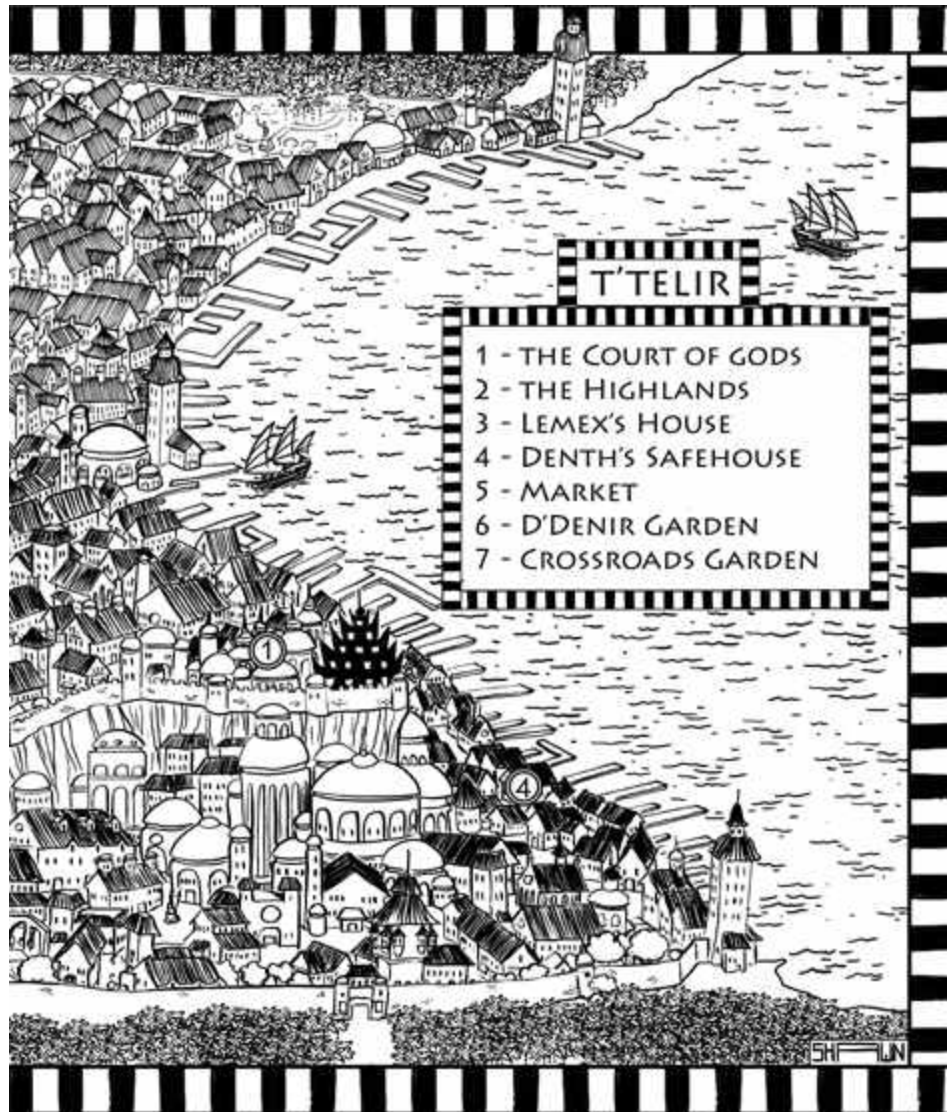
*Ars Arcanum*

- [1. Table of the Heightenings](#)
- [2. Heightening Powers](#)

[Annotations Wrap-Up](#)



*Map of Jolir copied from a tapestry hanging in the palace of the Returned god Lightsong the Bold, circa*



*circa 329. This artistic representation of the city is not to scale, but is a useful referrence of relative locations*

[Annotations for the Map](#)

# Acknowledgements

## [Annotations](#)

Working on *Warbreaker* was an unusual process in some ways; you can read more about it on my website. Suffice it to say that I had a more varied pool of alpha readers than normally, many of whom I know primarily through their handles on my forums. I've tried to get everyone's names in here, but I'm sure I'm going to miss some. If you are one of those individuals, feel free to email me, and we'll try to get you in future printings.

The first acknowledgment goes to my lovely wife, Emily Sanderson, whom I married while writing this book. This is the first novel of mine that she had a large hand in by giving me feedback and suggestions, and her help is greatly appreciated. Also, as always, my agent, Joshua Bilmes, and my editor, Moshe Feder, did an extremely large amount of work on this manuscript, taking it from the Second or Third Heightening to at least the Eighth.

At Tor, several people have gone well beyond their call of duty. The first is Dot Lin, my publicist, who has been particularly awesome to work with. Thanks, Dot! And, as always, the tireless efforts of Larry Yoder deserve a note, as well as the excellent work of Tor's art director genius, Irene Gallo. Dan Dos Santos did the cover art of this book, and I strongly suggest you check out his website and his other work, because I think he's one of the best in the business right now. Also, Paul Stevens deserves a word of thanks for being the in-house liaison for my books.

In the special thanks department, we have Jovans3, and Dreamking47, Louise Simard, Jeff Creer, Megan Kauffman, thelsdj, Megan Hutchins, Izzy Whiting, Janci Olds, Drew Olds, Karla Bennion, Eric James Stone, Dan Wells, Isaac Stewart, Ben Olsen, Greyhound, Demented Yam, D.Demille, Loryn, Kuntry Bumpken, Vadia, U-boat, Tjaeden, Dragon Fly, pterath, BarbaraJ, Shir Hasirim, Digitalbias, Spink Longfellow, amyface, Richard "Captain Goradel" Gordon, Swiggly, Dawn Cawley, Drerio, David B, Mi'chelle Trammel, Matthew R Carlin, Ollie Tabooger, John Palmer, Henrik Nyh, and the insoluble Peter Ahlstrom.



# Prologue

## [Annotations to the Prologue](#)

*It's funny, Vasher thought, how many things begin with my getting thrown into prison.*

The guards laughed to one another, slamming the cell door shut with a clang. Vasher stood and dusted himself off, rolling his shoulder and wincing. While the bottom half of his cell door was solid wood, the top half was barred, and he could see the three guards open his large duffel and rifle through his possessions.

One of them noticed him watching. The guard was an oversized beast of a man with a shaved head and a dirty uniform that barely retained the bright yellow and blue coloring of the T'Telir city guard.

*Bright colors, Vasher thought. I'll have to get used to those again.* In any other nation, the vibrant blues and yellows would have been ridiculous on soldiers. This, however, was Hallandren: land of Returned gods, Lifeless servants, BioChromatic research, and—of course—color.

The large guard sauntered up to the cell door, leaving his friends to amuse themselves with Vasher's belongings. "They say you're pretty tough," the man said, sizing up Vasher.

Vasher did not respond.

"The bartender says you beat down some twenty men in the brawl." The guard rubbed his chin. "You don't look that tough to me. Either way, you should have known better than to strike a priest. The others, they'll spend a night locked up. You, though...you'll hang. Colorless fool."

Vasher turned away. His cell was functional, if unoriginal. A thin slit at the top of one wall let in light, the stone walls dripped with water and moss, and a pile of dirty straw decomposed in the corner.

"You ignoring me?" the guard asked, stepping closer to the door. The colors of his uniform brightened, as if he'd stepped into a stronger light. The change was slight. Vasher didn't have much Breath remaining, and so his aura didn't do much to the colors around him. The guard didn't notice the



change in color—just as he hadn't noticed back in the bar, when he and his buddies had picked Vasher up off the floor and thrown him in their cart. Of course, the change was so slight to the unaided eye that it would have been nearly impossible to pick out.

“Here, now,” said one of the men looking through Vasher's duffel. “What's *this*?” Vasher had always found it interesting that the men who watched dungeons tended to be as bad as, or worse than, the men they guarded. Perhaps that was deliberate. Society didn't seem to care if such men were outside the cells or in them, so long as they were kept away from more honest men.

Assuming that such a thing existed.

From Vasher's bag, a guard pulled free a long object wrapped in white linen. The man whistled as he unwrapped the cloth, revealing a long, thin-bladed sword in a silver sheath. The hilt was pure black. “Who do you suppose he stole *this* from?”

The lead guard eyed Vasher, likely wondering if Vasher was some kind of nobleman. Though Hallandren had no aristocracy, many neighboring kingdoms had their lords and ladies. Yet what lord would wear a drab brown cloak, ripped in several places? What lord would sport bruises from a bar fight, a half-grown beard, and boots worn from years of walking? The guard turned away, apparently convinced that Vasher was no lord.

He was right. And he was wrong.

“Let me see that,” the lead guard said, taking the sword. He grunted, obviously surprised by its weight. He turned it about, noting the clasp that tied sheath to hilt, keeping the blade from being drawn. He undid the clasp.

The colors in the room deepened. They didn't grow brighter—not the way the guard's vest had when he approached Vasher. Instead, they grew *stronger*. Darker. Reds became maroon. Yellows hardened to gold. Blues approached navy.

“Be careful, friend,” Vasher said softly, “that sword can be dangerous.”

The guard looked up. All was still. Then the guard snorted and walked away from Vasher's cell, still carrying the sword. The other two followed, bearing Vasher's duffel, entering the guard room at the end of the hallway.

The door thumped shut. Vasher immediately knelt beside the patch of straw, selecting a handful of sturdy lengths. He pulled threads from his cloak—it was beginning to fray at the bottom—and tied the straw into the shape of

a small person, perhaps three inches high, with bushy arms and legs. He plucked a hair from one of his eyebrows, set it against the straw figure's head, then reached into his boot and pulled out a brilliant red scarf.

Then Vasher Breathed.

It flowed out of him, puffing into the air, translucent yet radiant, like the color of oil on water in the sun. Vasher felt it leave: BioChromatic Breath, scholars called it. Most people just called it Breath. Each person had one. Or, at least, that was how it usually went. One person, one Breath.

Vasher had around fifty Breaths, just enough to reach the first Heightening. Having so few made him feel poor compared with what he'd once held, but many would consider fifty Breaths to be a great treasure. Unfortunately, even Awakening a small figure made from organic material—using a piece of his own body as a focus—drained away some half of his Breaths.

The little straw figure jerked, sucking in the Breath. In Vasher's hand, half of the brilliant red scarf faded to grey. Vasher leaned down—imagining what he wanted the figure to do—and completed the final step of the process as he gave the Command.

“Fetch keys,” he said.

The straw figure stood and raised its single eyebrow toward Vasher.

Vasher pointed toward the guard room. From it, he heard sudden shouts of surprise.

*Not much time*, he thought.

The straw person ran along the floor, then jumped up, vaulting between the bars. Vasher pulled off his cloak and set it on the floor. It was the perfect shape of a person—marked with rips that matched the scars on Vasher's body, its hood cut with holes to match Vasher's eyes. The closer an object was to human shape and form, the fewer Breaths it took to Awaken.

Vasher leaned down, trying not to think of the days when he'd had enough Breaths to Awaken without regard for shape or focus. That had been a different time. Wincing, he pulled a tuft of hair from his head, then sprinkled it across the hood of the cloak.

Once again, he Breathed.

It took the rest of his Breath. With it gone—the cloak trembling, the scarf losing the rest of its color—Vasher felt...dimmer. Losing one's Breath was not fatal. Indeed, the extra Breaths Vasher used had once belonged to other

people. Vasher didn't know who they were; he hadn't gathered these Breaths himself. They had been given to him. But, of course, that was the way it was always supposed to work. One could not take Breath by force.

Being void of Breath *did* change him. Colors didn't seem as bright. He couldn't *feel* the bustling people moving about in the city above, a connection he normally took for granted. It was the awareness all men had for others—that thing which whispered a warning, in the drowsiness of sleep, when someone entered the room. In Vasher, that sense had been magnified fifty times.

And now it was gone. Sucked into the cloak and the straw person, giving them power.

The cloak jerked. Vasher leaned down. "Protect me," he Commanded, and the cloak grew still. He stood, throwing it back on.

The straw figure returned to his window. It carried a large ring of keys. The figure's straw feet were stained red. The crimson blood seemed so dull to Vasher now.

He took the keys. "Thank you," he said. He always thanked them. He didn't know why, particularly considering what he did next. "Your Breath to mine," he commanded, touching the straw person's chest. The straw person immediately fell backward off the door—life draining from it—and Vasher got his Breath back. The familiar sense of awareness returned, the knowledge of connectedness, of *fitting*. He could only take the Breath back because he'd Awakened this creature himself—indeed, Awakenings of this sort were rarely permanent. He used his Breath like a reserve, doling it out, then recovering it.

Compared with what he had once held, twenty-five Breaths was a laughably small number. However, compared with nothing, it seemed infinite. He shivered in satisfaction.

The yells from the guard room died out. The dungeon fell still. He had to keep moving.

Vasher reached through the bars, using the keys to unlock his cell. He pushed the thick door open, rushing out into the hallway, leaving the straw figure discarded on the ground. He didn't walk to the guard room—and the exit beyond it—but instead turned south, penetrating deeper into the dungeon.

This was the most uncertain part of his plan. finding a tavern that was frequented by priests of the Iridescent Tones had been easy enough. Getting

into a bar fight—then striking one of those same priests—had been equally simple. Hallandren took their religious figures very seriously, and Vasher had earned himself not the usual imprisonment in a local jail, but a trip to the God King’s dungeons.

Knowing the kind of men who tended to guard such dungeons, he’d had a pretty good idea that they would try to draw Nightblood. That had given him the diversion he’d needed to get the keys.

But now came the unpredictable part.

Vasher stopped, Awakened cloak rustling. It was easy to locate the cell he wanted, for around it a large patch of stone had been drained of color, leaving both walls and doors a dull grey. It was a place to imprison an Awakener, for no color meant no Awakening. Vasher stepped up to the door, looking through the bars. A man hung by his arms from the ceiling, naked and chained. His color was vibrant to Vasher’s eyes, his skin a pure tan, his bruises brilliant splashes of blue and violet.

The man was gagged. Another precaution. In order to Awaken, the man would need three things: Breath, color, and a Command. The harmonics and the hues, some called it. The Iridescent Tones, the relationship between color and sound. A Command had to be spoken clearly and firmly in the Awakener’s native language—any stuttering, any mispronunciation, would invalidate the Awakening. The Breath would be drawn out, but the object would be unable to act.

Vasher used the prison keys to unlock the cell door, then stepped inside. This man’s aura made colors grow brighter by sharp measure when they got close to him. Anyone would be able to notice an aura that strong, though it was much easier for someone who had reached the first Heightening.

It wasn’t the strongest BioChromatic aura Vasher had ever seen—those belonged to the Returned, known as gods here in Hallandren. Still, the prisoner’s BioChroma was very impressive and much, much stronger than Vasher’s own. The prisoner held a lot of Breaths. Hundreds upon hundreds of them.

The man swung in his bonds, studying Vasher, gagged lips bleeding from lack of water. Vasher hesitated only briefly, then reached up and pulled the gag free.

“You,” the prisoner whispered, coughing slightly. “Are you here to free me?”