

100. An Old Friend

The chapter begins with Dalinar reflecting on the lingering influence of Nergaoul, the ancient and malevolent force on Roshar, which aligns with historical accounts of the Alethi “Thrill” of battle. This connection underscores the persistent presence of old, dark powers that continue to shape the current conflicts and memories. Hessi’s mythica references serve to deepen the sense of an ongoing struggle between ancient evil and the present, hinting at the unseen forces that influence the world’s history and the characters’ destinies.

Dalinar’s internal struggle becomes more evident as he recalls his encounter with the Nightwatcher, revealing the profound psychological scars inflicted during that meeting. His memories have been altered and fractured, leaving him feeling exposed and vulnerable. This loss of mental wholeness symbolizes the emotional toll of his past decisions and the ongoing burden of guilt, especially as he tours Vedenar, a city scarred by war and catastrophe, reflecting the physical and emotional devastation wrought by conflict.

The narrative then shifts to Dalinar’s observations of Vedenar’s battered state, emphasizing the city’s destruction and the remnants of its former splendor. As he surveys the ruins and the ocean beyond, Dalinar’s thoughts turn to his fears for his loved ones—Adolin and Elhokar—whose fate remains uncertain. The memories of Evi’s death and the persistent smoke evoke feelings of despair and helplessness, illustrating his deep internal conflict and the recurring trauma from past losses and failures.

Finally, Dalinar’s interaction with Taravangian introduces a philosophical dimension about the nature of power, sacrifice, and moral choices. Their discussion about fabrials, spren, and the remnants of ancient legends highlights the complex interplay of technology, magic, and morality in their world. Dalinar’s introspection about his own decisions and his critique of his ancestor, the Sunmaker, reveal his ongoing struggle

with his identity and legacy. Despite the outward calm, he grapples with the profound weight of his past and the uncertain future, seeking clarity amidst chaos.

