

WayFarer

Janalyn Voigt

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales, is entirely coincidental.

WayFarer

COPYRIGHT 2013 by Janalyn Voigt

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission of the author or Pelican Ventures, LLC except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

The author is represented by and this book is published in association with the literary agency of WordServe Literary Group, Ltd., www.wordserveliterary.com.

eBook editions are licensed for your personal enjoyment only. eBooks may not be re-sold, copied or given away to other people. If you would like to share an eBook edition, please purchase an additional copy for each person you share it with.

Contact Information: titleadmin@pelicanbookgroup.com

Cover Art by Nicola Martinez

Harbourlight Books, a division of Pelican Ventures, LLC
www.pelicanbookgroup.com PO Box 1738 *Aztec, NM * 87410

Harbourlight Books sail and mast logo is a trademark of Pelican Ventures, LLC

Publishing History

First Harbourlight Edition, 2013

Paperback Edition ISBN 978-1-61116-292-9

Electronic Edition ISBN 978-1-61116-291-2

Published in the United States of America

Dedication

To the memory of my father, Carl Thomas Weise.

Praise for DawnSinger

Janalyn Voigt is a fresh voice in the realm of fantasy. Her writing is crisp, her verbs muscular, and it's all wrapped up in a lyrical style. Blending action and romance, DawnSinger is a journey through fear, failure, and faith, and I look forward to its sequel. Eric Wilson, NY Times bestselling author of Valley of Bones and One Step Away

In DawnSinger, Janalyn Voigt has penned a novel full of surprises. With adventure, mystery, and an unlikely romance, this beautiful, epic fantasy debut will leave you scrambling for the next book in the trilogy. Jill Williamson, Christy Award-winning author of By Darkness Hid

DawnSinger is a delightful fantasy spun with bardic prose and threaded with danger and intrigue. Linda Windsor, author of Healer, Thief and Rebel, Brides of Alba Historical Trilogy

Janalyn Voigt builds an exciting world, tranquil on the surface but filled with danger, ancient enemies, and a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. DawnSinger leads you into a land only imagined in dreams. I can't wait to read the second book in the Tales of Faeraven trilogy. Lisa Grace, bestselling author of the Angel in the Shadows series.

Acknowledgements

Nicola Martinez, Harbourlight Editor-in-Chief, has given me the rare gift of caring about me as a person first and an author second. Nicola also perfectly captured the mood of my writing in her stunning cover designs. I am grateful for the patience and wisdom of Lisa McCaskill, Fay Lamb, and the other Pelican Book Group editors who assisted with this book. My critique partners at Northwest Christian Writers Association also deserve a mention. *WayFarer* is a better story because of you.

Lisa Dawn, and now Pamela S. Thibodeaux, continue to back up my marketing efforts.

Barbara Scott and Greg Johnson of Wordserve Literary stepped in to help negotiate my contract just when I most needed help. Thanks for making life easier for a new novelist.

My husband, John Voigt, and my children have selflessly supported me as a writer in more ways than I can name. I so appreciate and return their respect.

I rely upon the High One's guidance and inspiration when writing and must here express my thanks to Him.

A glossary is located in the back of book.

Author's Website

<http://fantasy-worlds.janalyuvoigt.com>

DAWNSINGER: BOOK ONE
SYNOPSIS

Kai, personal guardian of the dying lof raelein (high queen) of Faeraven, delivers a summons to Shae of Whellein, a princess he is sworn to protect. Shae believes herself his sister, but Kai knows that she is only bound to him by secrets. At Torindan, high hold of Faeraven, Shae discovers her true identity as Lof Raelein Maeven's daughter and her calling as DawnSinger of prophecy. Her mother kept her hidden to protect her from an unknown contender who took her father's life. Maeven asks Shae to sing the ceremonial death song at her funeral. After Shae agrees to do so, she learns such an honor belongs by tradition to Frearer, first musician of Torindan. Frearer both fascinates and frightens Shae because of the intense emotions he arouses in her.

Shae experiences the almost-physical touch of a dark soul. A second, gentler soul touches hers as well. She keeps these encounters and the unexpected visions that visit her quiet, unable to explain to others what she herself doesn't understand.

Maeven's health improves, and she seems ready to recover when she is poisoned by Shae's servant, Chaeldra. Shae also drank the same poison that took Maeven's life, but she survives because of the knowledge of a tracker, Dorann. Chaeldra has disappeared.

Kai, second son of the royal house of Whellein and voluntary servant to Maeven, must choose whom he will serve after her death. He can pledge his service to Maeven's son, Elcon, or in the absence of his missing older brother, rule and reign in Whellein. Despite

pressure from his parents to come home, Kai makes the difficult choice to pledge fealty to Elcon.

Frearer and three shraens (kings) who break alliance with Faeraven challenge Elcon for the throne at his coronation. Frearer states that Maeven gave him claim to Shae in exchange for the right to sing her death song. When Elcon rejects his words, Frearer and his followers attack and attempt to kidnap Shae. Kai defends Elcon and falls to the sword. Shae cries out to the High One and is able to tap an inner source of light that flares out to lash Frearer. Shae's kidnappers drop her and flee. Frearer and the three shraens escape.

The DayStar appears in the sky, a sign that the time of prophecy has come. Before it completes its arc of the sky, Shae must travel to the Well of Light and sing a song that will release the DawnKing into Elderland to save it. When Shae asks what song to sing, no one can tell her. Elcon directs Kai to protect Shae on her quest. Wingabeasts (winged horses) carry Shae, Kai, and a small band of protectors through twisting canyon lands where they dodge giant raptors. Large, spidery waevens almost defeat them at a ruined stronghold. In the ruins of Pilaer, an ancient place of defeat for their people, they face their own dark regrets. Goblin-like garns attack them in a dark forest. In a lost wasteland, privation and hardship test them. Through these trials, the company of protectors dwindles.

Kai's love for Shae changes in nature, and her growing attachment to him creates conflict for them both. Shae rejects her feelings for Kai until they become separated in the Lost Plains and she believes him dead. Grieving and alone, Shae enters the Cavern of Death in a desperate bid to fulfill prophecy, if it is not too late.

When her lamp burns out, what seems at first the specter of Kai approaches. After a sweet reunion in which they declare their love, Kai's spirit sword, Whyst, lights the way to the ancient stairway that winds upward through the rotting heart of the Cavern of Death.

When Kai loses his footing and drops Whyst, Shae has to go on without him, for there is no time to spare and she is able to see by an inner light. At the top of the crumbling stairway, a natural bridge spans the chasm known as the Well of Light. But the bridge terminates at a blank wall of stone rather than at the Gate of Life she expects.

Freaser rides a giant raptor to enter through a breach in the mountain. He tempts Shae to escape with him but can't approach her while she stands on the bridge because he fears the flames of virtue burning in the chasm. The Gate of Life appears in the rock wall at the end of the bridge. A youth waits within. He identifies himself as the DawnKing and calls for her to come through the gate so that he can enter Elderland in her place. Freaser warns Shae that if she does so, she will never return. Shae wavers, but then cries of the perishing within Elderland carry to her from the Well, and she knows, at last, the song she must sing.

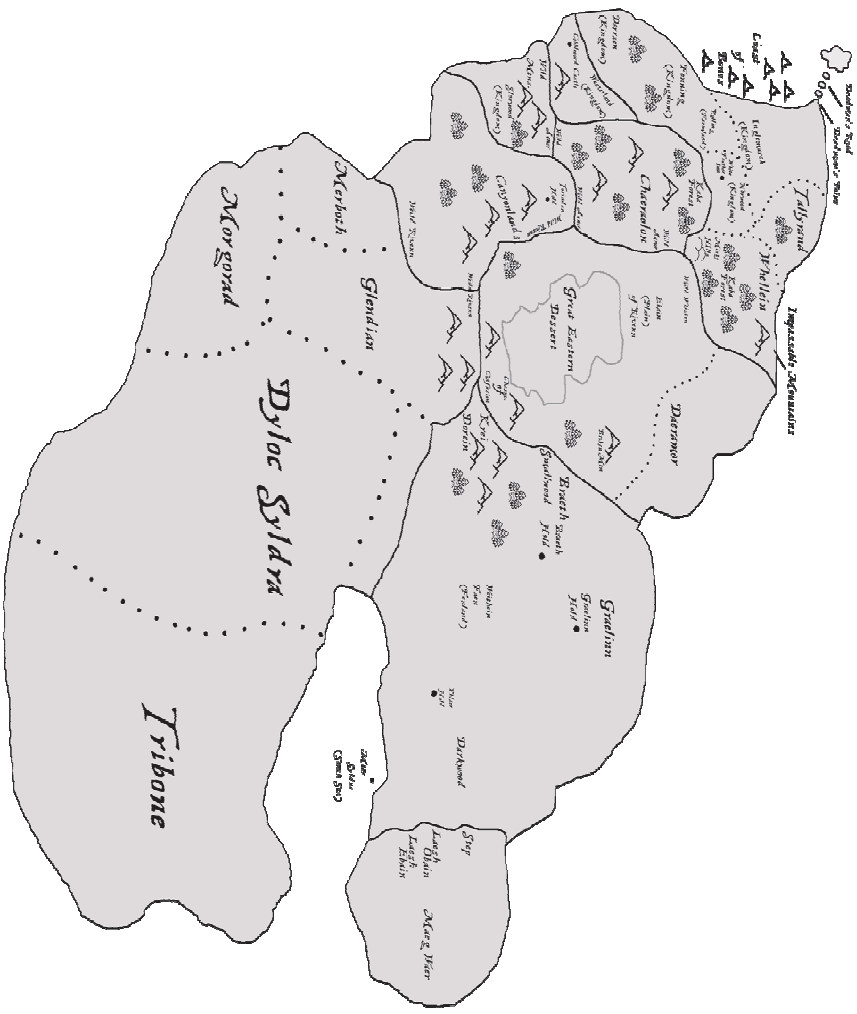
Shae sings her own death song as she steps through the Gate of Life, changing places with the DawnKing. The gateway closes, shutting Shae behind it. As it carries on the wind throughout Elderland, the DawnSinger's song brings healings.

Emmerich, the youth who calls himself the DawnKing, accompanies Kai and the band of protectors back to Torindan.

RAVENS WITH NAMES OF SHRAENS AND
RAELEINS

Whellein—Shraen Eberhardt and Raelein Aeleanor
Chaeradon—Shraen Ferran and Raelein Annora
Tallyrand—Shraen Garreth and (raelein not named)
Glindenn—Shraen Veraedel and (raelein not named)
Morgorad—Shraen Lenhardt and (raelein not named)
Braeth—Shraen Raemwold and Raelein Reyanna (last shraen and
raelein of Braeth)
Daeramor—Shraen Lammert (raelein not named)
Merboth—Shraen Aelfred and Raelein Ilse
Graelinn—Shraen Enric and Raelein Katera
Selfred—Shraen Taelerat and (raelein not named)
Rivenn—High Hold, Lof Shraen Elcon

200 Miles



200 Miles

Stardinn's Tomb
Stardinn's Tomb

Falsorind

Imperialis Agnandis

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Cherch
Cherch
Cherch

Part One: The Bridegroom

1

Return to Torindan

An indrawn breath alerted Kai. Unsheathing his sword, he peered into the shadows beneath a weilo tree's curling tresses.

Nothing stirred.

"Show yourself!" His challenge rang through the vale.

No response.

He stepped closer.

Kai. His name sighed in a sudden wind that ruffled the waters of the weild. Morning mists eddied above the river, but the leafy canopy over his head remained still and silent.

Impossible! And yet he knew that voice. "Shae?" With his heart beating in his throat, he pressed forward.

Beneath the weilo a many-hued light shimmered, swirled, and took shape. Shae stood before him, her eyes closed as if in prayer. Her unbound hair cascaded

in burnished curls to her waist. Beneath her scarlet cloak, she clutched something at the end of the fine chain encircling her neck. The glint of silverstone between her fingers told him she wore his locket. She opened her eyes and smiled at him. "Kai."

But he backed away. "Are you some dryad come to enchant me?"

"Please." She held out her hands imploringly. "Stay."

"Why should I trust you?"

"You have nothing to fear. It's me—Shae."

He shook his head. "I saw you vanish from this world. Do you return by another gateway than *Gilead Riann*?"

"Gilead Riann is the only Gate of Life, but there are soft places like this one where I can look into Elderland, if only for a time. When I saw you near, I called to you over and over."

Even as a spark of hope flared, he hesitated. "I heard your voice once only, borne on the wind."

She clasped her arms about herself and smiled, although tears glistened in her eyes. "And yet you answered my call."

"I love you, Shae."

"No. Release yourself." Her voice broke on the whispered words.

The longing to take her into his arms left him weak. "You ask more than I can give."

"I can't bear to see you suffer."

"Then you must not look."

Shae's image shimmered like a reflection in wind-stirred waters. "I release you."

"Wait!" As he rushed toward her, she dissolved into glimmering light that melted into shadow...

Jerking heavy lids open, Kai blinked against the weak light tilting through swishing weilo leaves. His dream had seemed so real. A moan sprang to his lips but died behind gritted teeth. Short, swift breaths relieved the tightness in his chest. His mind, however, knew no ease.

He turned his head and met a pair of dark, rounded Elder eyes. He let his lids close to shield himself from their penetrating gaze.

“Kai.”

Emmerich’s murmur called him back from the edge of thought. He rolled onto his side and pushed to a sitting position. His companions, their shapes little more than shadows in the gathering mists of morning, bent over their bedrolls. Behind them the canyon walls of Doreinn Ravein rose into obscurity.

At the expression of pity on Emmerich’s face, Kai balled his hands into fists and rode out a surge of heat. Shae might stand beside him now, but for Emmerich.

As soon as the unworthy thought came, he pushed it away and forced his hands to unclench. Shae had willingly traded places with Emmerich at Gilead Riann. She’d sung her own death song by choice. And he, to his joy and sorrow, had urged her on.

He glanced sideways at Emmerich. “Sometimes, when the wind blows, I think I hear her calling.”

Emmerich’s eyes gleamed. “Perhaps she does.”

Kai waited until he could trust himself to speak again. “She comes to me in the land of dreams.”

Emmerich tilted his head, and a lock of dark hair fell across his brow. “Does she speak to you?”

Without answering, Kai bent and rolled up his bedding.

Emmerich waited.

Kai sighed and looked away. "She tells me to wait for her no more."

"I see. And will you heed her?"

He dusted off his hands, lingering over the task, and then glanced sideways at Emmerich. "At odd moments I expect to see her, to hear her voice. I can't stop hoping for a sight of her—looking for her return." The words wrenched from him in a rush. "I can't release myself from loving her. I don't know how."

"Patience does not spring from sorrow with ease."

All at once, Kai laughed. "You have both wisdom *and* youth—a fearsome combination."

"Those with ready ears often hear wisdom, even from a youth."



"Steady, Fletch." Kai touched the neck of the winged horse beneath him and looked out over the frothing weild, which fell to rapids here. Sudden memory caught at him. He could almost see Shae combing her hair on the flat-topped rock at water's edge.

At a restive movement from the other wingabeasts, Fletch shuddered in sympathy. Kai turned away from the wraith of memory and gathered his wits before facing his companions. "Thank you for your faithful service. Each of you went beyond duty. Although we—" He heaved a breath. "Although we return without Shae, our quest succeeded. In that we can give thanks to Lof Yuel, the High One, who has kept us in His care."

He signaled Fletch, and wings rose to enfold him like a feathered curtain. As the great wings lowered

and they lifted on invisible currents to the top of the canyon walls, draughts rippled across him. At this height the mists thinned but would still hide their movements from any stragglers from Frearer's forces retreating from the siege of Torindan.

How would Lof Shraen Elcon, Faeraven's new high king, react when Kai returned without Shae? He put the thought from him and focused, instead, on navigating the twists and turns of the canyons. They emerged into a flat land as the horizon blushed and the shadows lengthened to stain the eastern desert purple.

The ground folded and rose beneath them, and then crested a rise. In the distance, past the broken peak of Maeg Strehcan, swelled the hills that Kai's people, the Kindren, called Maegren Syld. The Elder nation knew them as the Hills of Mist. To the west, the kaba forest stretched to meet sandy shores where the tides of Maer Ibris ebbed and flowed.

Torindan, fortress of Rivenn, perched on an arm of rock thrusting into Weild Aenor, the wild river of legend. Kai caught his breath at the sight. How long ago it seemed since they had left.



Raena Arillia stepped toward Elcon in the dance, jewels and eyes aglitter. Her figure had softened since he'd seen her last, and the luster of her golden hair echoed the glow of her skin. He captured her by the hand and waist and turned her toward him. When she smiled at him, he forgot everything but her beauty.

He clapped his hands in tempo, and Arillia swayed in a circle that brought her back to him. Dainty, light on her feet, and quick to smile, she