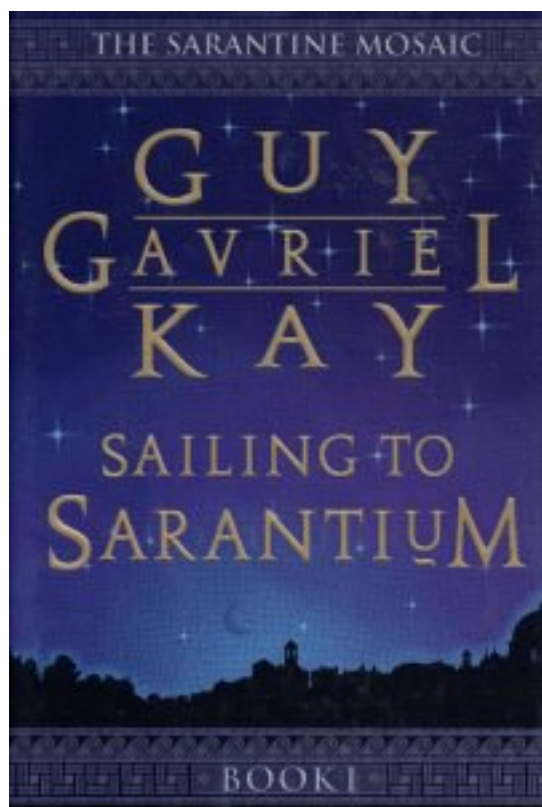


Sailing to Sarantium



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Valerius the Trakesian has great ambition. Rumored to be responsible for the ascension of the previous Emperor, his uncle, amid fire and blood, Valerius himself has now risen to the Golden Throne of the vast empire ruled by the fabled city, Sarantium. Valerius has a vision to match his ambition: a glittering dome that will proclaim his magnificence down through the ages. And so, in a ruined western city on the far distant edge of civilization, a not-so-humble artisan receives a call that will change his life forever. Crispin is a mosaicist, a layer of bright tiles. Still grieving for the

family he lost to the plague, he lives only for his arcane craft, and cares little for ambition, less for money, and for intrigue not at all. But an imperial summons to the most magnificent city in the world is a difficult call to resist. In this world still half-wild and tangled with magic, no journey is simple; and a journey to Sarantium means a walk into destiny. Bearing with him a deadly secret, and a Queen's seductive promise; guarded only by his own wits and a bird soul talisman from an alchemist's treasury, Crispin sets out for the fabled city from which none return unaltered. In the Aldwood he encounters a great beast from the mythic past, and in robbing the zubir of its prize he wins a woman's devotion and a man's loyalty--and loses a gift he didn't know he had until it was gone. In Sarantium itself, where rival factions vie in the streets and palaces, and chariot racing is as sacred as prayer, Crispin will begin his life anew. In an empire ruled by intrigue and violence, he must find his own source of power. And he does: high on the scaffolding of the greatest art work ever imagined, while struggling to deal with the dangers--and the seductive lures--of the men and women around him. Guy Gavriel Kay's magnificent historical fantasies draw from the twin springs of history and legend to create seamless worlds as vibrant as any in literature. Sailing to Sarantium begins The Sarantine Mosaic, a new and signal triumph by today's most esteemed master of high fantasy. "To say of a man that he was Sailing to Sarantium was to say that his life was on the cusp of change, poised for emergent greatness, brilliance, fortune--or else at the very precipice of a final and absolute fall into chaos and ruin."

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目录:

[Sailing to Sarantium 下载链接1](#)

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