



Wave

By Sonali Deraniyagala



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One of *The New York Times Book Review's* 10 Best Books of the Year

On the morning of December 26, 2004, on the southern coast of Sri Lanka, Sonali Deraniyagala lost her parents, her husband, and her two young sons in the tsunami she miraculously survived. In this brave and searingly frank memoir, she describes those first horrifying moments and her long journey since. She has written an engrossing, unsentimental, beautifully poised account: as she struggles through the first months following the tragedy, furiously clenched against a reality that she cannot face and cannot deny; and then, over the ensuing years, as she emerges reluctantly, slowly allowing her memory to take her back through the rich and joyous life she's mourning, from her family's home in London, to the birth of her children, to the year she met her English husband at Cambridge, to her childhood in Colombo; all the while learning the difficult balance between the almost unbearable reminders of her loss and the need to keep her family, somehow, still alive within her.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Wave By Sonali Deraniyagala Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #162719 in eBooks
- Published on: 2013-03-05
- Released on: 2013-03-05
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of the Month, March 2013: In an unblinking act of storytelling, Sonali Deraniyagala ruthlessly chronicles the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami that horrifically snatched from her all that mattered. Throughout this fierce and furious book, I kept wondering how someone who lost so much could write about it with such power, economy and grace. At first, she shrieks and grieves openly, angrily; for years she remains stunned and staggered, shamed by “the outlandish truth of me.” Then, slowly, she allows herself to remember, sharing vivid glimpses of her past. We see, hear, and smell two rowdy little boys, their brotherly scuffling, their muddy shoes and grass stains. By confronting and recreating moments that make us laugh and weep, we accept their absence and root for the author not to quit. Difficult to describe, tricky to recommend, this is a bold and wondrous book. In a wounded voice that manages to convey the snide, sarcastic, funny, and fatalistic personality that survives beneath the pain, Deraniyagala slowly pieces together the elements that represent the life--the lives--she lost. And she brings them back. For us, for her, for them. So brave, so beautiful, in these pages Deraniyagala’s family is brilliantly alive. And so is she. --*Neal Thompson*

From [Booklist](#)

It was a festive time. Economist Deraniyagala, her economist husband (they met at Cambridge), and their two young sons flew from London to Sri Lanka to spend the winter holidays with her parents. They were all staying in a hotel near their favorite national park on December 26, 2004, the day of the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami. Deraniyagala describes their bewilderment as they flee the hotel and her terror as they are swept up by the 30-foot-high, racing wave that brutally changed everything. Only Deraniyagal survived. In rinsed-clear language, she describes her ordeal, surreal rescue, and deep shock, attaining a Didionesque clarity and power. We hold tight to every exquisite sentence as, with astounding candor and precision, she tracks subsequent waves of grief, from suicidal despair to persistent fear, attempts to drown her pain in drink, “helpless rage,” guilt and shame, and paralyzing depression. But here, too, are sustaining tides of memories that enable her to vividly, even joyfully, portray her loved ones. An indelible and unique story of loss and resolution written with breathtaking refinement and courage. --*Donna Seaman*

Review

"This is the most powerful and haunting book I've read in years.... In A Whaler's Dictionary there's the line, 'Ishmael's impossible task is to write about a world that falls outside the realm of experience.' And what Sonali Deraniyagala has done, in this beautifully written book, is to similarly give us a portrait of an event and its after-effects that we have never experienced or witnessed. At the same time she has brought back to life in this stunning memoir all those she lost, so much so that we will never forget them or their lives."

--*Michael Ondaatje*

"An amazing, beautiful book."

--*Joan Didion*

""Wave," is a memoir for the ages - one of the saddest stories a human being could ever tell, told brilliantly, with devastating insight into the heart of love and death.... An eloquent monument to the deep human necessity of storytelling."

--*John Barber, "Globe and Mail*

"

"This is possibly the most moving book I have ever read about grief, but it is also a very, very fine book

about love. . . . While in "Wave" love reveals itself by the bleak intensity of the pain of absolute, irreplaceable loss, it is in the end a love story, and a book about the importance of love."

--"The Guardian" (U.K.)

""Wave "contains solemn and essential truths. . . . We are in some way fortified for our own inevitable, if lesser, struggles. . . . In accurately describing her family's life . . . she rescues [them] from uncaring, careless fate. Losing them plunged her into darkness. Writing about what happens brings them into the light. . . ."

--Teju Cole, newyorker.com

"Stories of grief, like stories of love, are of permanent literary interest when done well . . . A form of greatness reverberates from Deraniyagala's simple and supple prose."

-- "New York Times

"

"Like Joan Didion's "Year of Magical Thinking," "Wave" captures the elusive shape-shifting nature of grief."

-- "Newsday"

"A bracing and ruthlessly self-conf

- "An unforgettable book. . .unsparing as they come, but also defiantly flooded with light." -- Cheryl Strayed, "New York Times Book Review"

- "This is the most powerful and haunting book I've read in years." -- Michael Ondaatje

- "An amazing, beautiful book." -- Joan Didion

- ""Wave" is a memoir for the ages. . . . An eloquent monument to the deep human necessity of storytelling."

-- John Barber, "Globe and Mail"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Yvonne Terrell:

The event that you get from Wave will be the more deep you rooting the information that hide in the words the more you get serious about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to understand but Wave giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood simply by anyone who read that because the author of this book is well-known enough. This book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go along with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having that Wave instantly.

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