

The Jewel of Arwen



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Although Professor Tolkien himself is no longer with us, other writers are already at work continuing his epic fantasy, or elaborating those matters he left undetailed. This story – little more than an episode – fills in a minor gap in our knowledge of Middle-earth by extrapolating from hints and clues in the great trilogy, producing a new narrative which throws light on the previously shadowy history of that gem which Arwen gave to Frodo in THE LORD OF THE RINGS, III, 252-253. Marion Bradley will be known to many readers for her vivid and adventuresome Darkover novels, which are deservedly popular; here she displays her expertise in Tolkienian lore. As the tale which follows has been previously published only in brochure form, with a limited printing, I imagine it will be unknown to most of you.

Lin Carter

"But the Queen Arwen said: 'A gift I will give you. For I am the daughter of Elrond. I shall not go with him now when he departs to the Havens; for mine is the choice of Luthien, and as she so I have chosen, both the sweet and the bitter. But in my stead you shall go, Ring-bearer, when the time comes, and if you then desire it. If your hurts grieve you still and the memory or your burden is heavy, then you may pass into the West, until all your wounds and weariness are healed. But wear this now in memory of Elfstone and Evenstar with whom your life has been woven!'"

And she took a white gem like a star that lay upon her breast hanging upon a silver chain, and she set the chain around Frodo's neck. 'When the memory of the fear and the darkness troubles you,' she said, 'this will bring you aid.'"

THE LORD OF THE RINGS, III 252-253

THE JEWEL OF ARWEN

Being a new translation of separate extracts from a little known and untitled book of lore, purporting to cast some additional light upon what little is known of the true history and virtue of that gem, bestowed by Queen Arwen, called Evenstar, upon Frodo of the Shire, as set forth within the Red Book of Westmarch; together with various other matters of interest to students of the lore of the Third Age of Middle-earth, translator's notes and commentary.

The whole compiled by Marion Z. Bradley.

PREFACE

OF ELVES

Explaining, perchance, for those who have not taken thought in these matters, why it is that few true tales survive of the Elven-kind.

Not readily do the Elven-folk speak of their own affairs to mortals. Nor, indeed, are any other folks well able to understand, when they break that silence. So it is that many of the tales and songs of the Elves, surviving among mortal men, are confused, garbled, and strangely altered in the repeating.

And so it is that misunderstandings were many between the Elves, and those of other folk. The distrust of the Dwarves for the Elves (and also the Elves for the Dwarves) needs no commentary here. By the end of the Third Age, many men actually feared and distrusted these folk, calling them “net-weavers and sorcerers” (II-35, 118) and even where the Elves were held in veneration, their reluctance to involve themselves in the affairs of mortals, even when earnestly besought to do so, had become proverbial: “Go not to the Elves for counsel, for they will say both no and yes” spoke of their unwillingness to become involved in the affairs of men, and their way of giving equivocal or riddling answers when they could not evade point-blank questions. And Gildor was at pains to uphold and justify this viewpoint (v. 1).

Even to those they held most deeply in their love and trust, they were guarded of speech (III-149) and rarely spoke of what they foresaw, or what they knew.

So it came to be said, among the great majority of men, halflings, and dwarf-people that the Fair Folk were a careless and merry kind, immune to suffering and pain, knowing none of the hurts of mortals, and equally indifferent to those who were not of their own high kind.

This was utterly untrue, as all those fortunate enough to be taken even a little into their confidence and trust swiftly realised. Many were the gifts of Elves to man. They brought to other kinds the gift of speech (II-71); many an elvish sword served men valiantly

against the fell hordes of the Enemy, and the crafts of these forgings, with spells to bind them, were taught by the elven smiths to the men of Westernessee.

Nor were these gifts lightly or recklessly bestowed. It is hard for the short-lived, short-sighted race of men (and even the dwarves, living each for the time of many men, lived only a brief span in the sigh of Elves) to see the many reasons behind the aloofness of the Elves. Living in a world flowing at a different time from that of mortals, and their standards unbelievably long-lived and near to immortal, they found it difficult and even painful at times to slow their consciousness to that of men, or to accept the limitations of mortal companions (II-28). Almost without exception, the entanglement of Elves into the affairs of men proved sad for themselves and often perilous to mortals, at least for those mortals who carried the seeds of their own peril; for it was, in the words of Faramir, "perilous for mortals to walk out of the sun of this world ... and few came thence unchanged." (II-275) Yet those who were admitted even briefly to the company and confidence of the Elves came to love them, and willingly suffered for the joy of beholding them, as with Gimli in the presence of the Lady of Lórien.

But the bitterest of all – indeed, bitter beyond all knowing of men – was the pain of those who chose to cast in their lot with men. Many were the reasons for this.

For the Fair Folk, far from being immune to suffering, were unusually vulnerable to pain and grief. It is true that many things which troubled men caused them but little distress. To the vagaries of nature they were all but oblivious; the cruellest weather and storms, which would have driven even the hardy dwarves to shelter, and had been the death of man or halfling, gave them but little inconvenience. By mortal standards they were tireless, nor did they fear even the ghosts of the dead (II-28ff, III-59).

Yet many things to which man or dwarf were immune caused them almost unendurable suffering. To none of the company – even the timid halflings, or Gimli, come of Durin's folk and so dreading Durin's bane – was the Balrog such a mortal terror as to Legolas. He, too, sensed and trembled before the Nazgul when they were beyond the perception of the others. The darkness of Moria must have been terrible beyond guessing to him.

And because their kind was long-lived beyond most mortal conceptions, thought not

immortal entirely, it was sorrowful when Elf or Elf-maiden was slain untimely by violence or perished aforetime from sickness. Such unforeseen and unprepared partings were painful out of the knowledge of men, who have grown to accept death and partings as a necessary part of their common doom. And it may be that this – that they can meet bravely what is the most dreaded of terrors to the Elven-kind, the swift sundering from those they love – accounts for the respect, and wonder, which Elves often show to men.

Because of this vulnerability, the Fair Folk did not willingly permit themselves to feel involvement with those who must so soon be torn from them by the brevity of their days. Yet to those they loved they were faithful beyond telling, however great the pain which it might give them (III-342).



ON THE SOURCE OF THIS TALE

The extracts which follow are taken from an untitled and unsigned book or lore, written mostly in the Common Tongue and dating roughly from about two hundred years later than the Red Book of Westmarch. Of the few excerpts which have been translated and rendered, only these deal with the events of that time, or those persons named in the Red Book, although there are many references to events of the reign of King Elessar.

These excerpts were chosen because they seem to cast light on the history of the jewel worn by Frodo of the Shire. Who first brought these tales to the Shire, or whether they are true accounts or merely romancing, is not known. But until those who have the true accounts in their keeping see fit to bring them to the light, these old tales are presented for what they may be worth.

It is said – and I do not know whether it be true or no – that Elanor, called the Fair, daughter of Samwise, first told a part of the narrative to her kinfolk. From her father, Samwise son of Hamfast, who went with Frodo upon his great Quest, and is said to have departed at last from the Havens, she had many tales of the Elves; it is known that all the family of Samwise were close in sympathy to the Elven-kind, and that Elanor herself was said to be more like to an Elf-maiden than a hobbit. She was, moreover, for many years a Maid of Honour to Queen Arwen, dwelling in the household of King Elessar, and it is thought that the Queen, who had ever much kindness for the halfling folk, may have spoken with her maid of honour of these things, when all of her kin had departed to the West.

This would also account for any inaccuracies in the text. The women of the hobbits take almost as little part as the dwarf-women in the great affairs of their time, nor do they attempt to master those arts belonging to men. It is inconceivable that Elanor, even if this tale were hers, would have ever written it down. The most likely thing is that some child or grandchild of her kindred, many years later, committed it to writing from the memory of a tale heard long ago.

If this be true, a natural explanation suggests itself at once for the other part of the tale, that dealing with the Eleventh Steward of Gondor and the uncovering of the virtue of the jewel. The third daughter of Master Samwise, Goldilocks by name, married a son of

Thain Peregrin, who was a Knight of Gondor, and had been in the service of Denethor, last of the ruling Stewards. This son was named Faramir, which tends to suggest that Thain Peregrin and his household remained much in accord with the household of the Stewards during the days of Faramir, Prince of Ithilien; and so it is likely that many tales of the Stewards would be known to him.

Should this indeed be the case, then even this blurred copy of a tale heard long ago might come, if not in the gold, at least within the margins of the truth – or as nearly as could any save only the words of the Elves themselves. And of these no memory remains in Middle-earth.



ON BOROMIR, STEWARD OF GONDOR, AND THE UNCOVERING OF THE JEWEL

In the year of the fall of Osgiliath, great black Orcs appeared out of Mordor, and fearful indeed was the battle before that city. At that time Boromir, son of Denethor¹, was the eleventh Steward of Gondor; and a very great captain was he, wise and valiant in battle, fair and noble beloved and feared. It is said that Boromir was the first to stand before the dread Witch-king, lord of the Nazgul, and seek to wound him with his sword.

Dreadful was their meeting, so that strong men fled like children or were cast down senseless in terror; but Boromir neither fled nor quailed, but struck boldly, slaying the Black Rider's fell steed, and ripping away with his sword the black mantle with which the Nazgul covered his hideous nothingness. And at last the Witch-king fled from before him; yet in that battle Boromir had suffered a wound from a Morgul-blade, and though it seemed, at first, a slight hurt indeed, from that day thence his arms withered and shrank in pain, and he fell into a wasting sickness. None of the wisdom of the healers Gondor could aid him, though they were many; but while he lay sick in Minas Tirith, there came to the city Mithrandir the Grey Pilgrim.

Boromir the Steward had ever welcomed the rare visits of this wisest of counsellors, and when Mithrandir heard that Boromir was like to die, he went up to see him, and asked to look at the blade which had wounded him; but when it was taken from the place where it had been laid away, lo—only the hilt remained. The Mithrandir looked grave and said, "There is no power in Gondor to heal this wound."

At this all men despaired, for Cirion, son of Boromir, was not yet of an age to sit in the seat of his father. But Mithrandir said that far up the great river Anduin, in the forest known as Lothlórien, there were those who might lend their aid; so Boromir was laid in a boat and, with a few of his household, borne up the stream to the crossing of Nimrodel; for in those days the journey was less perilous than later, though still set about with dangers.

¹ This was, of course, *not* the Boromir of the Fellowship, but his ancestor by some fourteen generations! (III-333)

And at the crossing of the Silverlode (for they were never fated to enter into the valley of Lórien), Boromir lay like a pale shadow, with no powers even to lift his head. And there they were met by the White Elf-Lord.

((Translator's note: Nowhere in all of this volume is the one known as the White Elf-Lord named by any proper name. Though the body of the text is in the Common Tongue, this person is always named by a Sindarin word meaning, literally, the White Elf-Lord. This is obviously a title of courtesy, rather than a name. Yet from various brief passages dealing with him, a conjecture may be made as to his identity. The following passage appears when speaking of the Dúnedain: *"When the Witch-king of Angmar, Lord of the Black Riders, appeared in the wars that overthrew the North-kingdom, the greatest of his foes was that White Elf-Lord, who more than once turned the tide of battle against him. Greatly did the Witch-king fear the White Lord, and never once did he stand against him; indeed it is believed that this Elf-Lord was the first of those being named in high tales as the White Riders, who could stand against the dread and terror of the Witch-king and his deadly wraiths. Moreover the White Lord was wise in lore, skilled in healing, and so fair and kindly of face that to look on him brought joy to all folk of good will."*

So it is at least matter for conjecture that the White Lord may have been he who was named, in the Red Book, as Glorfindel, for Glorfindel, too, had the power to stand before the Ringwraiths, and showed rather loathing than fear for their deadly captain. Like the Ringwraiths, and like Gandalf later, he showed the power to dwell in both worlds at once. Even more significantly, even as Gandalf Mithrandir after becoming the White Rider, he too had limitations on his powers. In the Battle of Nenuial (III-331), although he put the Witch-king to rout simply by "riding upon his white horse" when otherwise all was lost, he could not slay, follow, or even pursue him. He, too, was skilled in healing, although not as Elrond; he knew much of Morgul-wounds and his mere touch was of aid when Frodo was wounded. In many ways the one mentioned briefly under the name Glorfindel is more like a Wizard than an Elf-Lord; and they had many and curious limitations on their otherwise great powers, not to meet force with force or to dominate by fear. So beyond all doubt Glorfindel was not merely an Elf-Lord, but a White Rider. And it may be that the White Lord, who is named as a member of the household of Elrond, is in truth that same Glorfindel. Or, of course, it may be that he is not.))



The White Elf-Lord greeted the company fairly and said that he had been sent from Lothlórien for their aid; at which they were astonished and afraid. Yet so kindly and wise he seemed that they quickly lost all fear and led him to Boromir, who lay like death and seemed not to know what befell him. Yet when the White Lord called him by name, he roused and spoke to him, at which they were all surprised; but they marked that his face was grave and angry. "This is the work of him I hate above all else in Middle-earth, save only the Enemy," he said, "and so deadly is this wound that it passes my skill, though indeed some ease from pain can I give this brave man." And he tended him with healing

herbs and sang strange spells, and Boromir grew easier and seemed revived. Then the White Elf-Lord said, "Cruel is the journey to Imladris in the West, and long; hardly can this wounded man withstand that journey, yet I counsel him to undertake it, else he will swiftly pass away; not even into death which all men must endure, but to an evil and bitter bondage in the fell shadows whence this thing came to him. And he is too valiant and worthy a man to pass into that darkness; sooner would I see him slain."

Then the men of Boromir's escort took counsel, and it was resolved to bear him to Rivendell; and the White Elf-Lord went with them a part of the way, until Dimrill Stair was past, then rode ahead to bring word of their coming. Long and hard was that journey with the wounded man, yet Boromir was so staunch of heart, and so reluctant to pass into the darkness whereof the White Lord had warned him (for he had spoken in secret to him of this), that he endured it without complaint. And at last then he came to Rivendell, and there Elrond, who had more skill at such matters than any other master of wisdom, whether man

or Elf, restored him beyond what any man would believe who had seen him lying like a shadow.

So Boromir dwelt for months in the house of Elrond, and returned slowly to strength of body and mind; and in that time he grew to a great friendship with the White Elf-Lord, who admired his bravery against their common enemy and grew to know him well in the days of his slow recovering.

But at last there came a day when the lord Boromir said, "Master Elrond, beyond all words is my gratitude to you; that man must be hard to please who could not abide content in this fairest of all houses forever, but beyond hope I have found healing for my death-wound; now must I take thought for my own land, and return to Gondor."

Elrond looked on him gravely and said, "In this valley you have found health, indeed, but that is not all due to my skill; there is virtue in Rivendell, that evil things have no power here. [See Note II.] While you remain here the evil is stayed, though not banished—" and here he looked on Boromir's arm, which was still withered and shrunken to the size of a child's limb, though in all else he was recovered, "but if you depart hence it will not be so. A while you may continue, but your days will be shortened, and evil." [See Note IV.]

Boromir said without faltering, "If that indeed be my destiny, Master Elrond, then must I abide it as best I may. In such times as these, I may not leave my people fatherless. While a Steward of the House of Mardil keeps Gondor against the return of the king, peace there is in our land; and in my absence, so it be brief and at need while I seek healing, the High Warden rules in my stead. But should it be known that I propose to lay down my staff in good earnest and end my days elsewhere, then cruel would be the strife that would follow, and an end to such a peace as we have known. For those who have sworn fealty and service to the land follow me while I rule; but if no man justly claims power, again there will be a great struggle between those who will hold it. Strength shall be given me, I now judge, to set all in order; and then what shall follow, must follow."

Elrond smiled upon him. "Be it so, then," he said. "You men of Gondor, I can see, are strong in heart, worthy sons of the Faithful of Westergates. And if fears for yourself do not keep you from your duty, I would not be willing that any words of mine should do so."

And he took kind leave of Boromir and blessed him, and sent him with an escort of his household. But the White Elf-Lord travelled with the company a day's journey in friendship; and when he made ready to say farewell he delayed for a moment and spoke apart with the Steward.

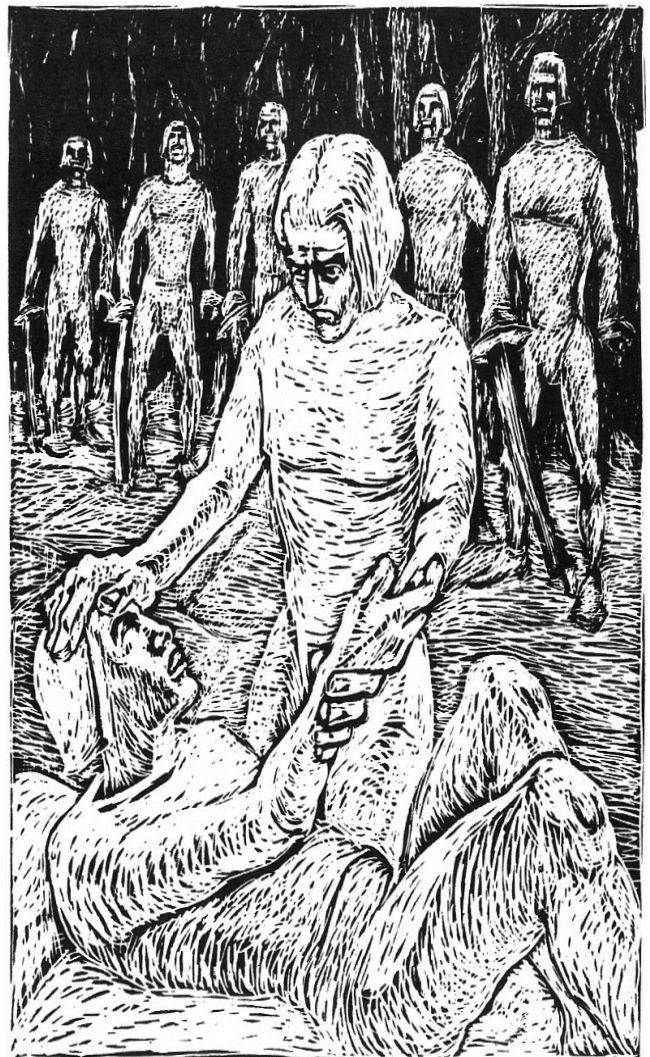
"Master Boromir," he said, "it grieves me to part with you, for it is not like that you will come northward again in such times, and now my folk do not travel in Ithilien or toward the South. I have thought long on what counsel I might give you that would ease the burden of what, I fear, must lie heavy on you in the days to come," and he looked up into the evening sky, where the early stars hung low, like diamonds. "This only will I say; when you walk in the court of the White Tree, take thought to the heirlooms of the Faithful."

"You speak to me in riddles," said Boromir, and the White Lord, laughing sadly, said, "Know you not yet that it is the way of my folk?" More he would not say, and they exchanged courteous words of farewell and parted, each hiding his sorrow.

So Boromir returned to his people and took thought to set all things in order. True had been the words of Elrond, for after he left the valley the pain and darkness came upon him often, though so mighty a man he had been that it was slow in returning. He could no longer grasp a sword in his shrunken hand; but he gave the command of the armies into the hands of his Warden and set his son Cirion, though he was still a stripling, in posts that should teach him to use power wisely. Farsighted was he, noble and high of heart, but even at the first he knew much suffering. Being most strong of will, he took little thought to himself; but one evening in great weariness he walked in the court of the White Tree, where the waters fell from the branches, and the words of the Elf-Lord came into his mind: *take thought to the heirlooms of the Faithful*. And as he looked up into the sky, there the seven stars of the Net swung low, and an old rhyme of lore of Westernesse came into his head in the ancient tongue:

*"Seven stars and seven stones,
And one White Tree."*

“Heirlooms,” he thought. “What can that mean? The Horn of Mardil is our house’s chief heirloom; yet it can be little help. Nor my staff. Seven stars and seven stones—” and he thought of the Stone of Minas Arnor, lying hidden in a secret place, which not even the Kings of Gondor dared to touch. Great was the peril of the Stones of Seeing: “And the White Lord would not counsel me to so dread a course,” he thought. Then as his eyes fell again upon the stars he recalled how the White Lord had also looked into the sky, and remembered the Seven Stars, the jewels of light, whose brightness was a terror to all things of darkness. Chiefest of these was the Star of Elendil; worn by him in the Last Alliance when Sauron was thrown down, and since then vanished in the North, so men said. And now he recalled that indeed the House of Mardil was one of those houses which held in their keeping one of the Seven Stars, precious guarded as too high and great even to be looked on, and not drawn forth for many lives of men now, not indeed since the days of the Kings. And suddenly a longing came upon him to look upon the star. So he had it brought to him, a fair jewel upon a fine chain of silver, and when he held it for a moment in his hand, suddenly it seemed that his pain was gone, and the shadowy darkness cleared, as if a veil were drawn away and he looked from a high place on clear cloudless skies. He drew the first free breath in many days; and when at last he turned again to the many duties that lay upon him, his heart was clear of worry and fear.



From that hour, never again did he lay aside the jewel, but wore it about his neck upon its chain. And those who knew him well marked that when the look of drawn suffering came into his eyes he would lay his hand to it, and be somewhat at rest.

Many and fearful indeed were his long sufferings, and as the years drew on he grew withered and shrunken as a man of thrice his years; yet where he had hoped at most for two or three years to set his realm in order, he lingered for eleven years after his return from Rivendell; and not in the highest hopes had he thought so much time would be given to him. Weary indeed he was of life, and long ere the end he longed to leave it, yet he clung to frail strength remaining, until the year came when his son reached full age and he knew he had achieved beyond his best hopes and there was no longer fear of strife within to mar their union against the strife from without. And then he quickly declined. No longer did the jewel bring any surcease from the pain within his ravaged limbs, but even now when he looked on it, some peace would come to his heart.

At last he lay near death, and he called his son Cirion to him and yielded up his Steward's staff and the horn that was the heirloom of their house. Then, after giving him counsel about the ordering of their country, he laid his hand to the jewel and said, "A precious thing has this been to our house, though less regarded than its worth 'til now, save as a thing of loveliness and a reminder of our lost glories. But I charge you now that you shall not keep it for yourself, for the time has come when it shall pass from the hands of our kindred. I desire you to send it North, by the trustiest messenger known to you, to come at last into the hands of the Master Elrond of Imladris."

"It shall be done," said Cirion. "But why?"

"Great was his gift to me, and to you, and to Gondor, my son, For else you would never have reigned, nor another Steward sat here to await the return of the King. And it comes to me that you will bear this staff for many years.² Yet no gift would Master Elrond accept from me, and few gifts of men would be worthy. Now I deem—" and here the foresight of his fathers came upon him, "— that the time has come when such a gift shall not be ill-given; for the shadow shall fall even on the beauty of Imladris and the glory of fair Lothlórien, and the arts of Elrond shall strive in vain. Alas that he who has healed so many hearts of their grief shall know the cruellest of sorrows when all his skill shall fail." And so saying he died.

2 He bore it, in fact, for eight-and-ninety years of men; and in his time the Rohirrim came to the Mark.



In those days, now and again, one would still go secretly from Gondor northward to the forests of Lórien (II-268); and into the hands of one such, Cirion entrusted the White jewel. So it was brought to Lórien, to be sent by the Lady Galadriel to Rivendell when occasion should offer. But the jewel abode in Lórien for many years of men (which were but as a brief time to the Elven-folk) and then, by chance as men say, the sons of Elrond abode for a time in Lórien; and when they set out Westward, the

White Lord journeyed in their company and into his hands the star jewel was given.

((Here ends the first part of the narrative which has been translated. It has been told elsewhere that less than twenty years after the death of Boromir (III-333, 368), the shadow indeed fell on the house of Imladris. A portion of the narrative which follows is written in what appears to be an attempt to transpose into the Common Tongue a song of the form and metre of some of the very few remaining Elvish songs. No attempt has been made to give more than the briefest summary of the lay, and no claims are made for the authenticity of any part of the tale; it is simply presented until those entrusted with the true story shall come forth. It has elsewhere been told how the Lady Celebrían, journeying to Lórien, was delayed in the Redhorn Pass by a storm through which their beasts could not pass; and while they waited there for the passing of the snow, they were attacked with dreadful suddenness by Orcs out of Moria, who scattered and slew her escort and carried the Lady into darkness.))

It has been said of the Sons of Elrond that they were like to their father: fair and grave, courteous and wise. Often had they ridden to battle with the captains of the North, and they were great captains of men and terrible in war, yet wise in counsel and gentle of speech, and much loved by those who knew them. Many were their friends among the men of the North-Kingdom, and there was even a jesting byword (so like was one to the other) that a most long-lived chieftain was one who had "lived long enough to learn to tell

Elrohir from Elladan.”

And indeed they were alike; save that if one spoke in company, whether in counsel or jest, it was likeliest to be Elrohir, for Elladan was the more silent, though as wise and brave.

Word had come to Lothlórien that Celebrían had set out on her way, and her sons set out to meet her, in company of the White Lord, being fearful of the delay. They came at last to one of her escort lying near death in the pass and heard the tale; and in great grief and fear, they made swift plans. The White Lord was to ride in search of the scattered escort, hoping to bring rescue swiftly. Elrohir meanwhile drew off the main Orc body by a daring feigned attack; a desperate plan and one from which he escaped only hardly and by chance with his life; while Elladan went down alone into the darkness of Moria in search for his mother. And save for the overthrowing of Sauron whereby Gil-galad perished, this has been called one of the bravest deeds of any of the Elven-kind; but in after years, so great a pain was this memory that never would the house of Elrond allow any song of it to be sung in Imladris or in Lórien.

But before the three parted on their fearful errand, the White Lord gave in haste to Elladan a jewel like a star. “No time there is to prepare a better light for that fell darkness, and your sword alone will not serve,” he said; “Yet this may serve you better than any other light.” And so it was; for the light of that jewel, though not great, held a terror for the Orc-folk even greater than the burning pain of the Elven blades. And when it blazed upon them out of their familiar darkness they fled before it in dread, blinded; so that ever after, in the minds of all that folk, the image of terror was that of a tall elf-warrior bearing the sword of painful light and another, more dreadful, light at his breast. So at last Elladan, after a time he could never reckon (for even Elven-folk lose all sense of time in such caverns) came to Celebrían, slew her tormentors, and bore her, still living though wounded with a poisoned dart and evilly tormented by the Orcs, to safety above ground.

Terrible was that journey to Imladris and the homecoming, and indeed the shadow that fell upon the Valley then. Elrond healed her wounds indeed; but for the Lady of Rivendell, who had dwelt all her life within the refuges of Imladris and golden Lórien, there was in them no extraordinary virtue of healing. So that the other hurts of that deadly wound and deadly torment came on her with a greater swiftness than on any mortal folk, and

swiftly she darkened and fell into great weariness. And they knew she must soon depart over Sea into the West, or else depart forever into a greater parting.

Yet she herself was reluctant to go, for such partings of kin are sadder to Elves than ever to men; and for near a year she lingered among them, and much she endured. And for all this time she wore the white jewel which had brought them safely out of the darkness, and so it came to pass as Boromir of Gondor had foreseen that this was a precious gift to the house of Elrond. For this was one of the Seven Stars given into the hands of those who passed from Númenor ere it was cast down, and held by the highest of the Edain in exile; and in it was preserved a gleam of the true light

But at last, when the leaves of that year were falling, Elrond would permit her to delay no longer, and they bore her to the Havens. Heavy was it now upon Elrond and Galadriel that they were pledged to abide the long strife in Middle-earth, for it seemed in that hour that they were weary past telling of their abiding here. And Elrohir and Elladan vowed that every Orc east of the mountains should know the terror of the sons of Elrond.

Bitterest of all was her parting from Arwen; for although as yet no shadow of the doom of Luthien had fallen upon Arwen Evenstar, yet Celebrían foresaw it in that hour; though she parted from her kindred for long years of Middle-earth, going before them into the long home of her people, from Arwen the parting should endure past the ending of the world. Greater still was the lamenting of Arwen; for though she had dwelt for many years on the green earth, still she was but a young maiden in the reckoning of her people and had known no griefs; nor had she any great tasks set before her, to give strength in that hour.

And so even among her manyfold sufferings Celebrían strove to appear light of heart, and at last she held in her hand the star-jewel, shining forth as if indeed her fingers could not hide it, and “I shall need this no more,” she said, “for where I go that light is undiminished. Its virtue is less for our kind than for men who must ever dwell beyond that light and so are greatly strengthened even by its palest gleam; yet even for us, Arwen, though it gives little healing, great is the ease of the heart which lies in its brilliance, when sadness and fear and dark thoughts and memories are upon the heart. And of these I foresee you will have full measure, and wait long for your happiness; maybe as long as I must wait till I be all glad again.” Then she looked on the White Elf-Lord as if asking leave,

and he smiled in consent, hiding that he too was wrung with grief; and she said, "Be comforted, Evenstar; wear this, which was first worn by a brave mortal, recalling that even the short-lived find courage to endure their griefs without hope. And when you look on it, remember that I dwell in the light of which this is the palest memory, and that this gleam was light to my heart in this saddest of leaf-fallings." Then she clasped the jewel about Arwen's throat where a moment it lay like a burning star, and then as if its light was slowly fading into cloud, grew paler and soft.³ And softly she said, but as in jest, "This is not the Elfstone which one day will come to you, Evenstar, so wear this well until the other is yours to look upon for your heart's peace. And in that hour, when you have won through the shadows to splendour, and after long doubt and sadness come at last to joy, then yield up this jewel to one whose need is greater in that hour, as I to you." But Elrond looked grave and said, "Peace; speak not of that," so she said no more, and they parted.

So Celebrían departed over Sea, and for many years the songs of Rivendell were silent and even the Hall of Fire was dark...

It is told elsewhere of Arwen that even as her brothers did she grow in grace and wisdom, bright and blessed among the great ladies of Elf-kind, and only the Lady Galadriel was fairer or more beloved. And it is known that in the hour when at last she achieved her heart's desire, and sat in joy beside the King Elessar, did she indeed yield up to the Ring-bearer, in his need, the White Jewel of the Star.



3 The star-glass of Galadriel, too, waxed and waned at the wish of the one who bore it.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

I. OF MORGUL WOUNDS

It is obvious that the Morgul-knives were fashioned of some matter of high radioactivity, with a short half-life and low stability; disintegrating quickly after being exposed to heat and light. At ordinary body temperature they would quickly disintegrate and however quickly the knife was drawn forth, bits of radioactive matter would remain in the wound, difficult to remove or neutralise. The rest of the blade, too, would quickly disintegrate, giving off meanwhile deadly radioactivity.

Some were of a worse and subtler kind, akin to the matter of which the Rings were made; they, like the *palantiri* only in a more evil manner, conducted thought and the impulses of those who would use it in such a manner. These fragments, then, acted directly on the mind of the victim, placing him, with all his thoughts and actions, at the mercy of whoever could bend his thoughts upon them; so that the man with such a wound quickly became slave, and mindless, to the Ringwraiths.

For the Ringwraiths themselves had long ago been given, as if they were precious gifts, rings made of this substance, or impregnated with it; so that they became both physically and mentally altered; not dead but possessed of a monstrous form of other life. They were under the domination of Sauron, who had made the Rings of this monstrous kind; but they could dominate any victims pierced with such blades. (Gandalf warned Frodo that he would have become like the Ringwraiths, only lesser, and subject to them.)

These Ringwraiths, because of this curious transformation worked within the very cells of their protoplasm, were themselves – like some bacteria and low forms of life which absorb and give off radioactivity – immune to radiation poisoning, as is shown by their dwelling in the blasted tower of Minas Ithil.

They themselves gave off a very dangerous form of radioactive contamination to all whom they approached; the sickness and poisoning from their touch was known as the Black Breath.



The herb *athelas*, or *asëa aranion*, “Kingsfoil” in the Common Tongue, contained two powerful healing agents and was therefore at the end of the Second Age well known and much sought after; but by the end of the Third Age, knowledge of it had passed away, being handed down only by a very few lore-masters and in the family of the Kings.

The first, when infused in boiling water from the rough coating of the leaves, formed one of the most powerful decontaminants known; it served to neutralise, to some degree, the powerful radiations and the toxins released by the cells attacked by this radiation.

The volatile oil of this herb, when inhaled, had a similar action upon the central nervous system, serving to neutralise the poison.

It has been written that the line of the Kings had power against the Black Breath. It is quite obvious that this was done by achieving telepathic rapport with the victim, and reviving in him the will to live, by discovering and calling upon and reviving memories of what he loved most. This was of incalculable virtue, for one of the the side-effects of the poison was that, in its attack upon the central nervous system, it caused great depression, so that the victim seemed to fall into a deepening dream. This is the effect produced by some chemotherapeutic agents such as lysergic acid; and it is believed that one of the toxins of cells attack by the peculiar radioactivity of the Ringwraiths was similar in effect to one of the lysergens.

II. OF THE REFUGE OF IMLADRIS

It is certain that Rivendell, like Lórien, was sheltered from the decay of that time,

perhaps by some natural conformation of the land, or perhaps by some beneficial radiation of an unknown kind. An automatic “decontamination process” is suggested by the flooding of the Fords of Bruinen when the Nazgûl attempted to cross the river.

III. OF THE FAILING OF ELROND'S POWERS

It is curiously significant that a hardy man could live many years, even though withered with pain, after a Morgul-wound, and that the onset of Frodo's disintegrating sickness was slow, while Celebrían, though “healed in body”, fell swiftly into weariness. On the other hand, clearly the Elves, while in many ways hardier than mankind, were more susceptible to nervous disease and that in general their nervous organisation was sensitive and not wholly adapted to the conditions of Middle-earth in the Third Age. The hypersensitivity of Legolas to the presence of the Nazgûl, when no one else could sense them, is revealing.

Also, clearly, the sensory mechanism of the Elves was not quite like that of men. Their sight and hearing were abnormally acute, at least under the sun of this world. Legolas makes at one point a revealing statement: “A! The green smell. It is better than much sleep.” The temptation is to interpret this after the fashion of men – that the smell of growing things is as refreshing as a long sleep – but an equally valid interpretation is that colour, smell, and sleep are not (to Elves) three separate sense impressions, but graduations of a single one.

IV. ON THE VIRTUE OF THE STAR-JEWEL

Beyond the immediate peril of the Morgul-wounds was the second danger which seems to have been akin to leukæmia or some other slow, wasting disintegration; possibly a growing anæmia from damage to the bone marrow.

The physical healing attributed to this Light is doubtless akin to the relationship between the treatment of malignancies and leukæmia with X-rays and radiation; yet they can also be caused by X-rays and radiation! Thus the vibrations of the jewel could alleviate, though not cure.

The effect on mental distress and darkness is not easily explained. It may have

been hypnotic, or the result of a suggestion, easily achieved by the telepathic Elven-kind.

For the Elves, the relief may have been in looking upon a light, possibly, more natural to their kind; as sunlight and sunbaths are prescribed for some vitamin deficiencies.

The star-glass of Galadriel was obviously of similar kind; Galadriel, as her very name implies, had power over these lights. Doubtless Frodo's bearing of this phial delayed the evil after-effects of his deadly wounds, and lightened the burden of the Ring, for its weight grew signally after he had given the star-glass to Samwise to carry (II, Chapter 9; III, Book 6). For the Ring's deadly weight and other harmful effects were due to the vibrations set within it by the Ring-inscription in letters of fire. These were not simply a curse; they were, as all the words in the Black Speech, mathematical formulae bearing the power to shatter with vibration, as some notes of son will shatter a glass. This is why Elrond was angry when Gandalf spoke the words aloud in Rivendell, and why they darkened the sky; not merely his distaste for the works of the Enemy. And Gandalf had done so for that reason: to show them that even Rivendell was not wholly safe. It was by this means that the Ring drew Gollum; that it sharpened Frodo's sight at one time and the cry of the Nazgûl blinded him at another; and that it gave to Sam abnormally acute hearing. And the vibration of the star-glass had some power to neutralise this deadly power; as when grasping it, Frodo was able, even under the gaze of the Witch-king, to withstand the hypnotic command to put on the Ring before the gates of Mordor (II-316). But a full discussion of this matter must wait for another time.

This ebook is an attempt at a cleanly typeset and wholly unabridged version of the story originally published in the 1961 second edition of *I Palantir* fanzine, republished independently in 1975 by T-K Graphics, and republished in abridged format in *The Year's Best Fantasy Stories* by DAW Books in 1976. The only edits are some minor corrections to spelling and grammatical errors. The images contained herein are those published in the original booklet.

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