

# Outrunning the Sunset

By Lanathae

Submitted: May 23, 2005

Updated: June 13, 2005

*A story set between the battle of the last alliance and the fellowship in Middle Earth*

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Lanathae/14976/Outrunning-Sunset>

<b>Chapter 1 - Part 1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - Part 2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 3 - Part 3</b>	<b>18</b>

# 1 - Part 1

## Lantathae's story: Out Running The Sunset

### Part 1

The last light filtered through the emerald and gold leaves. It was later than I had imagined and so I started to walk home. I crept onto the path, looked up and then down and started to run.

Every evening I tried to out run the setting sun but every night I arrived home in darkness. The path was rocky and I slipped once or twice, when that happened I would get up laughing joyfully and run on. I felt sorry sometimes for adults who walked always having to look so elegant when running is so much more enjoyable.

Galadhrim or also known as Caras Gladhon was a place of light even in this darkness. In the city of trees it was as the twilight was a blanket of leaves that glowed to protect us or that was as my father had always said.

The many elves walked through the trees, past the thick trunks where stairs circled around like long thin snakes. I had to push passed them as I ran to my small talan.

I ran through the door and shut it after me. I slung my quiver over the end of my bed and carefully put my sword in exactly the place it had been. I pulled my cloths off and shoved myself into a delicate dress with such force that it almost ripped. I took a book off the shelf and sat in front of my desk just in time.

My mother came into the room with such elegance that she looked as if she glided, hovering over the ground instead of actually stepping. I tried to steady myself so that she would not see that I was out of breath.

`What are you reading?' She inquired gently with no accusation in her voice but I could see it in her narrowed eyes. I shut the book and she looked over my shoulder. `Can you read that? It is not in any elven language nor is it a tongue of the free peoples.'

I leant back and put the book back onto the shelf and lowered my eyes ashamed.

`You will be one of the best guardians the woods have ever had but there is much more than swordplay that you must know to become one.' She picked up one of the books and looked at it. `You are behind in your studies.' She put the book down. `We have so much knowledge for you...'

`And I will learn.' I promised her. `I know most of the languages of the free peoples and the Haradrim and Eastelings-'

`Why should you need to know that?' She demanded, suddenly a slight rage showed in her face.

`They are simple, almost the same as the common tongue.' I pleaded her.

She walked to the door. `Let us hope then that you will never need that skill.'

My mother was the lady Galadriel. She had always wished for me to know the history of every place and people, forgotten languages, all the kings and lords of ages passed. My father, Celeborn, encouraged my sword play and target practice. I was already then though young a keen shot and could beat almost anyone my age.

But that was a long time ago.

It was then that I had not felt the true harshness and bitterness the world had. And even now, I do not hate the men that had been corrupted by evil, even though they have been the foundation of almost all sadness in my life.

\*\*\*

I hovered over the path, my concentration on nothing but that. I did not loosen my grip on the branch I was holding onto. The wind was still.

A leaf fell from the tree and distracted me as it passed my face. As it did so I felt a sharp jab in my side and fell off the branch. I landed on my back in the middle looking up.

A boy stood in the tree, just where I had been standing, laughing.

I stood up and brushed myself off. From the ground by the tree where I hid them I found my bow and aimed an arrow at the still laughing boy, mocking me. I pulled the string and shot the arrow so it passed by his ear, cutting it slightly. Blood trickled down his neck.

He put his hand to his neck and then looked at the blood with shock that I had fired. He wiped it on the dark bark of the tree and smiled again.

Then he jumped to the next tree but slipped and fell to the ground.

I ran after him but found that he was already running through the trees.

`Come back here.' I demanded, and kept running.

By the time I hit another path I had lost him. Surprised by how well he knew the woods I looked up and down the path. I realised too late my mistake was that I did not look up.

He jumped off the branch he was balancing on and landed on me. I fell forwards, my face hit the ground hard. I started struggling but he had me pinned, he had most of his weight on the end of my back and my arms were not in the most comfortable position.

I went limp so he relaxed his grip on me. `Well' he started to say. `Now that your listening'

I leapt up drawing my sword. I pushed him to the ground now and pressed my knee into his chest. I sank my sword into the soft earth next to his neck, threateningly.

He closed his eyes and smiled lightly. `You win' he said.

I removed my sword and got off him. Then he got up and started to run again. But this time I did not follow him. I knew that if I did my mother would have my head.

\*\*\*

The next day I met him again.

I knew he was waiting for me as he looked up. He walked up to me. `This is yours.' He said giving me the arrow that I had shot him with, it still had some blood on one side.

`Sorry.' I said, truthfully. `Who are you?'

`I' He announced proudly. `Am Lómdraug. My father says it is because of my hair.'

I had noticed his untamed hair that stuck out in almost every direction, black brown as shadow.

I had never met anyone with a name like that before. His name, Lómdraug, meant wolf echo or echo wolf. Suddenly my head pained, it hurt more than any aound I had ever had. My vision faded and strange images flashed across my eyes.

He ran to help me. `What is wrong?' he demanded.

The pain started to go but a small part of it stayed in the back of my mind. I got up from where I had collapsed on the ground.

`I...' I said, with even more pride than he. `Am Lantathae.'

\*\*\*

I found my mother by the mirror. I was never aloud to see what was inside it, but then I was not tall enough. I tried to soften my footsteps as I walked down the stone steps but she heard me.

`What is it, my daughter?' She asked when she saw the worry on my face.

`I had a strange experience. I was in the woods, I was talking to a boy and when he told me his name my mind suddenly pained me and I saw things that were not there.' I tried to keep my speech steady but as I talked about it the pain started again, but not as bad as it had been.

My mother put her hand on my head and I felt a little better. She then walked to the fountain that she got her water from to put into the mirror. I did not go near it.

`When I was still with you in me,' she said. `I looked into the mirror. And as I looked a leaf from a tree above us fell into the water. I could do nothing but watch as the leaf that looked young, not old enough to fall by itself, twisted in the water. Its momentum made it fall onto the grass where it was no longer a leaf...' She put her hand into the cool water of the fountain and took out a round object; I was surprised to see that her hand was not wet. `I was this.'

She gave the object to me. It felt cold and heavy in my hand. It looked like glass or some clear stone, green but inside was trapped something else. They were light and dark, still, in a suspended animation as the circled and swirled around each other. And in the middle of that there was some light like a far away star...

As I looked at that I saw what the vision was clearly. I man in strange cloths was in the middle of a hallway in some stone place where the light was so faint I hardly saw him turn and walk into the darkness.

I looked up at my mother. `What did you see?' She asked slowly.

I could not speak for a time. `A... man, in darkness.'

\*\*\*

As children we played hide-and-seek in the treetops. We were as brother and sister, hardly separable for years. My own sister was much older than me, and she spent time with higher elves, but sometimes she would sneak away and run in the woods like a child again.

I gave him the name Dîngaur, which meant silent werewolf, he liked it. Years and years later, we drifted apart and I did not call him it anymore.

\*\*\*

My sister was going to be married to Elrond Halfelven, in Imladris. It was the first time that I had properly left Lorien and my excitement could not be controlled. But Lómdraug could not come.

I was much older now but people still called me very young. I had gone from wearing boys cloths in the woods to wearing a dress. The dress I usually wore was brown and stained with green, it had slits up the sides so that my running was not hindered, and green leggings under that, with soft boots and a warm cloak. On the way to Rivendel I wore a white dress rimmed with gold and silver leaves, and a cape of dark blue velvet. I had made the stone into a clasp that I put on my cloak.

This was my first glimpse of the world as it was. We passed over Caladhras, treacherous snow slowed our passage. Then we went west to Rivendel and arrived with much joy.

I met Elrond, from our first meeting I held much respect for him, he had a ring of power like my mother. Also I met Gil-galad, who I had met many times before and was very fond of.

Imladris was so different from Loth Lorien, it was a joyful place to be in but I then and always have loved Lorien and I missed it.

\*\*\*

The day after we arrived I was allowed to go by myself to the woods that surrounded Rivendel. They were not as high or light as Lorien and beautiful in that way.

As I walked I saw a small stream through the trees and stepped quietly there. The water was dark blue and sparkled like a blanket of night. It was then that I was not the only person there.

He was an elf, but not a high elf like me and it took me some time of staring at him to realise that he was a wood elf. I had not noticed him because he was wearing dark cloths that made him hard to see.

He looked at the water but his gaze did not focus. His hair was dark and straight. I could not stop looking at him, silently in the wood.

After a while he looked up. I had realised that he would and wrapped my cloak around me with the hood up. He did not stop looking.

I heard him stand up and when I looked around from behind the tree I could not see him. He, like me, was blended into the forest. I went to another tree to look and I heard him do the same but I still could not see him. I looked up but the trees did not have any branches that were low enough or strong enough for me to could climb.

I stepped with my back to the trunk of the tree to look. He was there, his back to the same tree looking right at me. He leant forwards and his lips touched mine. I felt the same pain in my head. I stepped back and fell into the water. Through the pain I placed my hand on the crystal on my cloak and thought of the light at its centre.

I was no longer in the river but in a stone room with him fighting men, I could not move and soon the vision was over. I woke up cold and wet with him looking over me. I rolled onto my side away from him and coughed up water. He had started a small fire and sat by it.

'Are you all right?' he asked, his face full of worry.

I nodded and ringed water from my dress, not looking at him. He had hung my cloak on a tree near the fire and giver me his to keep warm.

'Why did you do that?' I asked after a while.

'It felt like the right thing to do at the time, I apologise.' He said, but he only said the apology, I could tell that he did not mean it.

Back in Imladris I was given a new dress as the one I had been wearing was now spoilt. It was light blue on the outside and dark underneath with a strip of cloth wrapped around my waist as if they were bandages. I liked the dress, people had always said that I was not as beautiful as my mother, she had long hair so fair that it was like soft glows, my was fair but slightly browner, shorter and not so neat. My face was more like my father's but my mother and I shared eyes, pale grey with blue around the pupil.

\*\*\*

Celebrian looked so beautiful at the wedding, so happy, I was glad for her. Everything seemed so much more beautiful. I saw the wood-elf again and smiled at him; he was wearing dark colours again and looked almost out of place, he did not see me.

My sister saw me watching him and looked at me accusingly. I raised my eyebrows innocently, she grinned.

When the rejoicing was over and we had eaten everyone was in the hall. Music rang out and I spoke with Gil-galad. He promised to teach me how to use a spear the next day as it was the weapon that he preferred and I would show him my progress.

`Gil-galad?' I asked.

`Yes.'

`Who is that over there?' I asked pointing at the wood-elf who was sitting silently in a dark corner.

`He has been in Riverndel for a few years now; I do not know where he comes from.' He replied slowly.

`What is his name?'

`Here he has been given the name Daedhel, you can tell why.'

This name suited him as it meant shadow elf.

Gil-galad had to go with Elrond so I walked onto a balcony. It overlooked the falls that were just outside the houses, they splashed down smoothly as if it were a blue piece of silk.

In my heavy gaze I did not hear Daedhel walk onto the balcony. `There is something you wish to ask me?'

I, surprised, swung around to come face to face with him. His skin was pale and his hair light, only his cloths showed him to be at all dark.

I could not speak for a minute but stared at him. `Was just wondering' I was able to say. `Where you come from.'

`Did Gil-galad not say that when you were speaking?'

`No, he said that he did not know'

The elf looked at me for minutes and I tried to keep his stare but broke it at times. `Are you afraid of me?' He asked.

I nodded slightly.

`Why?'

`I do not know.'

He turned to leave. `If you want to know, I am not from any place, I live nowhere.'

`Stop,' I did not know why I said that but some part of me did not wish for him to leave. He turned round slowly. `I was just wondering what your real name is.'

Turned around again and started to walk off. `My given name is fine.'

\*\*\*

I did not see Daedhel again and we left Riverndel weeks later. I said goodbye to Celebrian, though she was much older than me we had always been close and we would miss each other as she was staying in Imladris.

I was sorry to leave Imladris but happy to be back in Lothlorien when we arrived. It had not changed, but I had.

I kept the dress that the elves from Riverndel had given me as a memory. But I put it to the side and got out my forest cloths back on and started to train with the guard. Learning with them was much harder than what I did with Lómdraug and he had decided that he did not want to be in the guard. I sometimes saw him through the trees watching us, I was the only one that could see him as he only wanted me to. We still did meet and he noticed that I had changed but said nothing.

I was quickly excepted into the guard with Haldir as captain. We became close, I could not outrun him in the forest during our training but I knew that he would be no match for Lómdraug.

\*\*\*

There was talk of was against Sauron and his ring. My mother and father were unsettled and a general sense of fear was all around. Any army that would be the last alliance was gathered; I decided that I would join when they came from Imladris to Lothlorien. Gil-galad came early. I was glad that he was here.

We were in the armoury fitting on my new armour. It was uncomfortable and slightly heavy but my movement was not too restricted. It was in the same style as the high king's and the rest of the armies but adapted to my fighting style which allowed me to move my legs and arms more. I laughed as I fought air which fitted it more.

Then I was another armoured figure beside Gil-galad watching me.

`Dîngaur!' I exclaimed in surprise. `You are coming with me.'



A wide smile spread across his face. 'There is nothing anyone can do to stop me.' he looked at Gil-galad and then back at me. 'I guess someone has to protect you.'

'You know perfectly well I can fight as well as you!'

He shrugged and turned to pick up a sword. "Wanna make a bet?'

Gil-galad sighed and took the sword out of Lómdraug's hands and put it in its sheath. 'Not here and not now, children.' He gave the sheath back to Lómdraug.

Galadriel entered the chamber and when she saw me she was filled with a wave of sadness that she could not hide. I walked out onto the talan with her and she looked to me, controlling tears that were collecting in her eye.

'I wish for you, daughter of the forest, to stay.' She announced. 'While all our fighters are away who will protect Lorien and Caras Gladhon when we are at our most vulnerable.'

I saw the truth of her words. 'I would rather go into battle but I know that as a guardian it is my duty to stay.'

I embraced my mother as she started to show weakness. The tears rolled off her face and onto the metal of my armour. I did love my mother and she did love me, but it was only rare moments like this that we showed it to each other.

\*\*\*

I stood in front of Lómdraug not knowing what to say. I would not allow myself to cry at our parting but I could tell that he too was saddened.

'Dîngaur, I won't forgive you if you die.' I only half joked.

'Then I won't, Lant... but only for you.' He leant forwards and brought his face closer to mine, he kissed me gently on the lips and then walked off not looking back to join the end of the line of soldiers. I stood there and tears ran down my cheeks. I did not feel the headache which could tell me if we would meet again. I prayed we would.

\*\*\*

There were orcs and goblins that came during dark hours through the forest but from high talans I could shoot them all before that got even a mile into the woods. There was no happiness here, but I knew there would be even less in the depressing lands to the southeast but that hardly lightened my spirits it only angered them.

Once I was in a clearing, I had not gone back to Caras Gladhon since I had left but I did not miss it, as all Lorien was my home. As I lay on the soft ground, fallen leaves for my bed, inside my head pain burst out. I bit back screams and rolled around in agony. I grabbed the stone off my neck and squeezed it.

The vision that came to me was of the dead plains of Mordor where both armys fought with all their might. On the ground the dead were not separated as orc and goblin bodies were mingled with fallen elves and men. I saw myself fighting beside Gil-galad both of us were covered in mud and our armour did not shine as they had done here in that grim light. Behind me there was an unchallenged goblin who had strung his bow and aimed it at the High King. But as he fired, the arrow missed him and hit me on the shoulder of my right arm making me drop my weapon. I, through the pain, tried to reach down and pick my sword up with my left hand.

Gil-galad only noticed when it was too late that I was wounded and as I was set upon by so many orcs that I could not fight, even if my right arm was working, he slaughtered them all, as they had killed me.

I saw my broken body, bloody, on the floor, mingled with the bodies of orc and man.

I knew that that was what would have happened if I had gone to Mordor and there was no changing it.

But then I saw another vision, not another one of a pathway but I knew that that was what was happening that very second.

Gil-galad fought alone, the goblin missed him with one shot which flew through the air to where I had been standing but with another arrow, hit him in the back. The swarms attacked him and he fell...

I lay on the fallen leaves not able to do anything about the death that I knew had just happened, and I thought... I had not seen Lóm draug in the vision.

I knew that my mother had seen what I had just witnessed and she knew that if I had fought with the Last Alliance then I would have died but because I didn't the High King Gil-galad did instead.

Above me a soft rain started as the sky wept for me, and even the forest looked dull as the sun went away.

\*\*\*

I was in my sorrow sitting on a talan feeling so alone that I could hardly bare it. But then through the forest I saw a horse. I jumped off the talan and to it thinking it some evil thing, a threat to Lorien. But as I came closer I saw it was not, but a wounded grey horse, without a rider but still saddled.

It tried to go away from me when I went near him but his tiredness made him too slow and he collapsed on the ground.

I saw in the great stallions eyes the fear he had, his master must have died in the war and he had come all this way. I found a small sword and some food in the saddlebag which proved that his owner had been a man.

I nursed it back to health and gave it the name Thinarien, grey sunlight. He would follow me everywhere.

\*\*\*

The army returned in low spirits and I met them near the start of the woods.

'Lord Sauron has been destroyed and we are victorious, but in our hearts we have lost.' Said Haldir, as we lead the army to Caras Galadon. 'We lost Gil-galad, and many others.'

In sadness we walked of miles. 'What of Lómdraug? Is he here?' I finally asked.

Haldir looked at me, then back to the road. 'On the way to Mordor, the back of the company were set upon by Easterlings and I think that Lómdraug was one of the ones killed by them, but I do not know for sure.' We kept walking and when we saw the great city I could go no further. I stood to the side as wounded and sorrowful elves walked with no hope into the place that had once been my home, a place of refuge to me, but no longer was it so. I would miss it and I would miss my mother and father but I could not go in.

## 2 - Part 2

### Part 2

I stood on the talan that I was assigned to. I looked down with my bow readily strung and my quiver on my back. I looked down from the platform and saw Haldir climbing up.

He silently pointed to a figure that was just coming into view. It wore a dark cloak and rode a black horse. It reminded me of the Nazgûl that I had heard of in legends.

We jumped from branch to branch until we were on the ground. And then waited for him to come to us. When he was close we surrounded him with arrows in our bows.

‘What is your purpose here?’ Haldir demanded.

The cloaked man did not reply.

Haldir jumped from the talan and stood by me. ‘Show yourself.’

The figure leant forwards towards me so I could see his face behind the hood that cast dark shadows. ‘Lantathae knows who I am.’

Haldir looked at me with raised eyebrows and some questioning surprise on his face. ‘Well?’ he asked impatiently.

‘It is all right.’ I said and indicated for the elves to lower their loaded bows. ‘I met him in Rivendel, his name is Daedhel.’

Haldir looked at him with a look that said ‘What sort of a name is that?’

‘May I pass or not?’ Asked Daedhel.

Haldir looked at me. ‘Make it so that he goes straight.’ Haldir nodded at me and ordered the rest of the guard back onto the talans.

The horse went at walking pace so that I could stay at its side with ease. ‘Why are you here?’ I asked once I knew that there was no one that could over hear us. ‘Do you wish to speak to the Lady?’ I asked referring to my mother.

‘Yes.’ He replied simply.

We arrived at the entrance of Calas Galadhon and I left him pointing out where the stables were.

`Will you not come?' He asked, dismounting from his horse.

`I can't go any closer.' I answered him and left.

\*\*\*

I saw Daedhel the next day. He sat on a fallen log hardly visible but I could see him.

`What do you think of Lorien?' I asked when he saw me.

`I can not say. It has so much beauty to it.' He said looking up at me and then at the rest of the forest.

`You seem as much a part of it was the trees themselves.' He stood and stretched.

I stepped back. `You are a woodelf. How dose this compare to other places you have been?'

`All woods are different.' He answered; he looked around to descried Lorien. `This one is full of light, old, tall, gold and silver. There are other places I have been where all the trees cast shadows and have dark leaves, and some are still young and I know that they will be beautiful in years to come, I just hope that I can go back and see it progress.'

`How long do you think you will stay here for?'

`I don't know... some number of years of your mother and father will allow me.'

`If they don't you can be like me.' I joked. `It is a good thing to be able to hide here. Scouting parties come regularly from Moria.'

He grimaced at the name of the mines. `I do not know how they can live in there.'

I had never been to the mines, all I knew was that the dwarves had make then and some still lived there, fighting off hordes of goblin scum and that there was a small part on the edge where Haradrim and Easterlings dwelled.

Daedhel sat back down on the fallen tree. `I also came here to apologise to you... for my rudeness the last time we met.'

`You are forgiven but I do not know what for.' I was confused.

`You wanted to know my name before I was called Daedhel.'

`Yes, but only out of curiosity. I did not think that the name suited you.'

`Everyone else thinks shadow elf suits me.'

`But you were so nice to me, underneath, I know you are good.'

He stood back up and walked over to me. `I think you should know...' He began. `My real name is...

Tirndur.'

I smiled at his old name. He came to me and raised his hand and touched my jaw. He ran his thumb across it and held the back of my neck; his hand was soft and warm. I melted into his embrace and looked up at him. He was no longer Daedhel, cold and mysterious, he was just an elf like me who loved the forests of the world and was shunned for it. He placed his lips on mine and we kissed gently. He relaxed his grasp and silently we untangled but I did not go.

We sat in silence on the fallen tree. I rested my head on his shoulder and in such peace I fell asleep.

\*\*\*

I went to Imladris the second time so that I could take my sister back with me. Haldir would not let me go alone so Tirndur. He was to me like his name, devoted watcher which could also mean grey warmth, both were like him in my eyes. We left early and went the long way to Riverndel; passing through the gap of Rohan I first saw the Rohirim. The horse lords were slightly cold but greeted us and I was in awe of their horse control and their fine beasts. I remembered the style of the saddle that I had found Thinarien in and realised that he had come from Rohan and I could tell by his excitement that he remembered being here. I had thought about leaving him there but even in his home he followed me.

I was sad to leave Rohan but anxious to see my sister and her three children. I could not imagine being their aunt.

When we reached Imladris I cried tears of happiness with Celebrian. Too many years we had been apart. I met my nephews who were twins, Elladin and Elrohir both sharp shooters and well trained warriors. My niece was Arwen who indeed had much beauty. Tirndur was not received coldly but he felt out of place in the family reunion.

We soon left for Lothlorien going the way above the Misty Mountains upon Caladhras. I stood in front so that I could look to see any ambushing parties of goblins through the snow but I could see nothing through the thick snow. I had dismounted from Thinarien so that I would be ready.

I shivered in the cold. And out of the corner of my eye I saw a dark shape above disappear behind a rock. I turned around just in time. 'It's an attack.' I yelled as loud as I can and I saw the goblins and Haradrim attacking us. I ran to my sister to protect her. She had always been so kind, never full of evil thoughts. I saw her horse throw her off and she hit the ground. I put an arrow in my bow and shot the goblins that surrounded her until they were backing off. I took my sword out. My sister got up but as she stood she was hit by a black arrow.

A rage filled me and I ran to the figure that had shot Celebrian. I saw him, one of the haradrim. He looked at me and raised his bow once again. Through the snow I ran to him. But he had disappeared and I was left with Tirndur and my family. The haradrim and the goblins were gone.

I knelt by my sister and took her to my horse and sat her in front of me. There were very limited things I could do for her and I knew that her husband would be able to heal her. 'I am going back to Imladris.' I announced and rode off.

It did not take me too long to get there. Half the time it would normally and Thinarien was weary but kept going, sensing my urgency.

The rest of the party came soon after me; they were all as worried as I was. The poison arrow had hit Celebrian close to the heart but Elrond was healing her and she would soon be well again.

\*\*\*

When she could walk again my sister came to see me first. I was on a balcony looking out at the beauty of Rivendel not letting myself go to the woods I stayed to learn of my new family. Still weak Celebrian sat by me and did not speak.

`Will you leave soon?' she finally asked.

`Not until you are well again, I have sent a messenger to our mother.' I replied.

`I will go.' She sighed.

`No,' I ordered her. `You are still weak, I told the messenger to bid mother and father to come here.'

`I do not mean to Lorien.' She spoke sadly.

`Then where?'

She sighed again. `To where... we can from. I will go across the sea.'

I wanted to say something but I could not.

`My beloved Elrond has saved my flesh from that wound but my heart will not change now. My joy for this land has become lost to me. My path to Valinor will give my soul peace. I see this land now as a grieving autumn that will soon give into the pitiful winter. I know there will come a day when Elrond will meet me there, and I give my children the choice to follow him or stay here.' Tears spilled from her and I embraced her strongly.

I was born in Middle Earth and I could think of no other home, but I had always been tempted by the legends of the Undying Lands, as I once saw the sea, mysterious and welcoming seemingly unending.

`Lantathae, I know your heart. You will not go or if you do it will be so long a time that I will not recognise you. Lant, I give you these last words of advice live in your forest, and always love it so you may not fall into the same despair as me.'

I could not stop crying. The thought of never seeing her again was unthinkable. It would be worse than death to know that she was alive and I could not see her ever again, only if I left Lorien for good. My heart ached and it seemed that all my life was sorrow after sorrow with no thought of happiness.

I said goodbye to my sister for the last time and watched her go standing next to our mother and father. The sea splashed little waves onto the side of the boat as it skimmed through the mist and out of site. I

tired to think of the hope that she would be given by going back to her old land but I could only hope that I would never stop loving Middle Earth even with its faults.

\*\*\*

I found no joy in myself as we passed through the Gap of Rohan and entered Lorien once again. I followed like a sheep into Calas Galadhon with no objection and to my old room, untouched by the years I had spent away except of the thick layer of dust.

I looked through old yellowing books but found myself uninterested until I stumbled across a book of Haradrim history. I felt disgusted by it but still read it.

In dreams I was shot by that man, and lay in the snow as the land about me seemed to twist with shadows until the land was a distorted nightmare.

I went to the armory and saw in a place of honor was Gil-galad's. I looked up at it for a time and then sharpened my sword.

\*\*\*

'Lantathae.' Tirndur demanded. 'It has been three months, why can you not be happy once.'

I looked up at him and sighed. 'I know that it is not my fault. But when such things happen to me I can think of no one else to blame.'

'What are you talking about it was that-'

'It was not just then, where you in the Last Alliance?'

He nodded his head.

'I was not because my mother had seen that I would die and so she tricked me to stay and because of that it was not I who died but the High King... Gil-galad.'

Tirndur took a step back horrified.

'I know that to have revenge I must go to the mines. I can see no other way.'

'I will not let you do anything so stupid. Lantathae you go in and you will die.'

'Tirndur, you know of my visions the first one I ever saw was of that man that I saw kill my *sister*. I must do this or else forever live in this sadness.'

'I love you too much to let you go.'

'I must, and I must do it alone... so do not follow me.' I remembered my second vision of Tirndur in the same dark place being attacked.



I did not take my eyes off him. `Do not follow me.'

He said nothing but held me close to him and kissed me hard. Once again I melted into his arms. I swept hair from his face and closed my eyes savouring our love.

In the woods I loved so much and with the man I loved so much I wanted time to freeze and for this never to stop but my fate that I had put before me lurked like a shadow in front of me, and it would not go away.

We lay on soft ground for hours and I did not leave until he was asleep and I watched him, crying. Then I ran through the darkness until I stood before Gil-galad's armour once again. I could not wear all of it as most of it was too big but I could wear items over the armour that had been made for me. I took his spear and went back into the night air. For once Calas Galadhon was empty and I could go unnoticed to take revenge for my sister and Gil-galad.

## 3 - Part 3

### **Part 3**

I could only get to the gate by dawn. The gaping hole in the mountain showed to me that no matter how light it was outside it would always be night in there.

I entered. The coldness hit my bones that very second and I wanted to get out, get away from the darkness that was now suffocating me with dread and the smell of death. I went as silently as I could, disturbing nothing that might show my presence.

I heard footsteps near and I hid away between rocks. The Haradrim guard passed expecting nothing as I pounced on him, muffling his cries with my hand but not killing him, I would not do that. When he was unconscious I took his dark red cloak wearing it with the hood up covering as much of me as I could, I discarded my own.

I walked with less care in my new disguise. I soon heard the echoing of a town in the mountain and I kept towards it. It was deeper than I had thought that they would go but in the huge halls I could see that they hardly went any further inwards.

I was soon between the houses. People spoke in voices that were barely a whisper. I saw no happiness and there were hardly any children. I sat by a hut and looked at what it was selling. I was surprised at their knowledge of herbs and they had a wider range of spices than I had ever known. I was almost disgusted by this interest in their culture and got up again.

I felt the blood rush out of my head and I fell back to the ground. The fit cleared as I reached to my belt where the stone was. I looked through the street I was in and up some stairs to where there was no light but a tunnel of darkness.

When my vision came back to me I saw that the Haradrim had circled around me curious looks on their faces. In my small knowledge of their language I thought I said 'I'm fine.' Whatever I said their faces moved from me to the figure in the distance holding a torch.

They all started to shout something in unison that I did not know. I kept listening and thought back, it had been so long since I had looked at my books.

Wolf.

The leader walked through the street and did not stop.

Wolf.

He disappeared into the darkness and soon the torchlight vanished.

Wolf.

He was the one that had wounded my sister. My vengeance was close. I started hunting for the wolf.

The men still looked at their leader going and I was able to go away without notice. I did not take a torch up the steps to avoid notice but when I was up there, I ended up wishing I had. I used my hands to guide my blind way. I soon came to a room lit with one torch. I saw that it was the wolf's residence. There were old cloths on heaps and a pile of blankets in a cold corner. For a leader he had hardly any things of value or luxury compared to the other Haradrim. I looked in another corner and I saw a pile of armour that was not Haradrim. I picked it up and dust fell off it. I recognised it as I was wearing armour to match it. The elves in the last alliance had that armour.

I was so deep in thought I saw the figure behind me a second too late and fell to the ground. My vision saw nothing but his feet and the darkness behind him.

\*\*\*

I felt the pain before I opened my eyes. I breathed in and cried out hard. The guard that had been in the corner got up and hit me across my face so I shut up. I tried to pull my arms but they were fixed onto the stone above me. I wriggled in the chains but nothing would make them move.

As I tried to move my hands the rusting metal cut deeper into my skin, I watched as a stream of blood ran down from my wrist and dripped onto my face. They kept running down like tears and would not stop. I hardly slept, longing to sit down but knowing that my hands would pain even more if I tried.

I gave up all hope of leaving after the third day, I almost longed for the vision I had so many years ago when I first met Tirindur, but I still did not want him to come.

I watched space until I heard tapping feet which I could tell by the slow pace were not the guard's. The leader, the wolf looked at me from the doorway.

"Why were you in my chamber?" He asked slowly speaking in the common tongue. "What did you want?"

I did not answer and he bent down so his face was almost touching mine. I did not want to return his stare but I could not help it. His eyes were not like any I had ever seen before, but a blurred mix of purple and green. All his face was covered apart from the eyes, his mouth covered but his speech was still clear.

I felt my blood prickle in my veins and the pain took over me, I did not know where my stone was so there was nothing to take the pain away. I cried out and moved making cuts reopen and bleed. I saw Tirindur walking into the gates, I wanted to cry out to him so that he would stop but my voice was only a soft wind that carried no sound. I saw him pause on a rock and look back, I could not move to stop him walking again into the darkness.

Once my vision returned I was sure that I would bleed to death but some cruel fate ignored my plea and

left me there in that chamber. The man was now at the other side of the room with his back to me. "Please." I hardly whispered. "Let me go."

He looked at me again. "I will, if you kill me." he announced and unlocked the chains. I fell to the floor and could not get up again, my legs were exhausted and my hands pained even more.

As soon as my legs gained strength I retrieved my armour. I tore off strips of the cloak and wrapped them around my wrists; the blood went through the material immediately. I leant against the walls as I looked for him. The labyrinth that the tunnels made did not help my search. It was hours until I came back to the village in the mines and the first thing I saw was the grouped soldiers in the great hall.

As I got closer people started to see me and whisper to each other, moving out of the way for me to pass. I saw my opponent and he saw me. I was still hobbling from my aching legs but I walked with as much pride as I could muster.

We faced each other, ready to attack when we heard running steps. I stood straight wondering what the noise was from knowing that the wolf could attack me with resistance.

Even before he came into the wide hall I know who it was. I called Tirndur's name as loud as I could and ordered him to go back but the running steps became louder. I called again but as I did the wolf spoke in a voice that drowned mine out "Kill him."

The guards ran to him arrows, spears and swords all against him. He hardly had enough time to draw his sword when the first arrow hit him and the first men reached him. I ran to help him, but I knew as soon as I had had that vision so many years ago that he would die and I would not be able to save him.

"Stop." The voice filled the hall so all went silent hearing the short echo. I did not stop; nothing would ever stop me running now to Tirndur. The silence and stillness ached in my heart as the tears in my eyes blurred my vision.

I kneeled by Tirndur's side, his broken body was slashed and cut in so many places that no part of his clothes was dry. I wanted so much for him to live, but no matter what I could do then, with all the medicine or magic in the world could stop this.

"Lantathae." His whispered. "Lantathae."

"I'm here." I said through the tears.

"I love you, Lantathae."

"I know. I love you too, more than anything." I choked.

"That first day we met, you remember?"

"Yes."

"I kissed you because when I saw you in the forest I knew I loved you."

I could not speak, he raised his hand and touched my face, leaving a line of blood where he touched. I bent down and kissed him softly, the last time, I looked at him and he smiled at me through the pain and tears in his eyes until he went limp and his eyes lost their focus. I gently ran my hand down his face to close his eyes, I longed to feel the same peace that showed on his face.

I stood up slowly and walked past the people, men, women and children all watched me. I walked despite the tears, despite my legs and wrists. I wanted to die there and then but not before the man in front of me. I looked at him coldly and raised my hand to his face. I ripped off the cloth that hid his face from me and gapped at what I saw even though I already knew that it was him.

His hair had become dirty and greasy, his eyes had changed because of the evil that had possessed him and the light hardly let me see anything but it was Lómdraug that looked back at me.

"I know that it is not you that is in control of your body, Lómdraug. I know you can hear me, I will save you." I spoke in such a weak voice that I hardly believed myself.

"I would like to see you try." Said the dark wolf that was in my old friend's body. "You're too late to help him, you should have come years ago."

"I can save him and I know I will." I took up my spear that I had dropped on the floor when I started to run to Tirndur. I prayed for Gil-galad and Tirndur to give me the strength I needed now.

I attacked first then he did. The fight rang out with echoing clashes that filled the void that we fought in. The people surrounding us said nothing as they watched with open eyes at the fight. I would not die here, I would not beg for mercy I knew that I just had to give Lómdraug the time he needed to become the master of his mind again. I saw the battle that he had with himself in every attack the wolf made.

The dark wolf broke through my defence and the blade sliced through my arm. I let go of the spear and fell to the ground as blood gushed out of the deep wound. I got out of the way of his attacks but I could not fight with one arm. I stood up but the blade sliced through my skin again and I could not bear the pain of my wounds in my arm. I ran at him, the blade ran through my side but I kept pushing at him until he fell. I stepped hard on the hand that held the staff and I could see the pain on his face. I kicked the staff away from him and placed my foot on his neck pressing hard so he gagged and coughed.

I did not move my foot, the feelings of anger and pain making me want to kill him overwhelmed me. "Lantathae." I looked down again, the anger and pain left me instantly and I lifted my foot off. Brown eyes looked up at me.

I started to walk away but I fell to the ground with the pain after a few steps. The wound at my side had gone right through and I knew that I would die. I let the thought of death taking me into a sleep that I hoped I would not wake from.

\*\*\*

To my disappointment and joy I woke. The lack of light and the cold dampness of the air made me know

I was still in the mines. I got up, ignoring the pain yelling at me to stay in the soft bed, my body still aching from the torture it had been through. I leaned against the walls and walked into the street. I saw that all the houses were busy and there were carts filled with belongings being pushed away from the village. I leant in the doorway until people noticed me. They came up to me and spoke quickly so I did not know what they were saying.

“They say that they are very thankful that you defeated the wolf and will now go back to the east where they belong, you have given them the chance to go back into the daylight.” Lómdraug came through the crowd but I could barely look at him.

“But their hearts will still have that evil.” I said turning my back on them. I took my belongings and started the long walk to the gate. Refusing the offers for lifts I leant on Gil-galad's spear and kept going. I knew that Lómdraug followed me not too far behind.

The light of the afternoon sun warmed my heart and filled my heart with such joy and love that I could no longer feel the pain. I sat on a rock soaking the warm rays, discarding the torn cloak. My head was cleared by the fresh air that blew as gently as feathers.

“Lantathae,” Lómdraug said from behind me. “You know I love you, you know that evil was not me.”

“No.” I said my eyes already stinging with tears. “You may love me, but that evil. It was a part of you, a part that is still there inside you, I have given you a chance to live without it, let it go so that no one will be hurt.”

“That's not right...”

“Yes it is, you became weak, you let it take over you, you let it shoot my sister, and you let it kill...” I could not say any more. I stood up and faced him. “Farwell, Lómdraug, you were my best friend. Forgive me if I never want to see you again.”

I looked up at the sky and forgot all around me, what had happened to me, everything. I became the child I had been and found my competition. I knew, as always, that I could never beat it but as always I tried.

I started running, into the woods where I was myself, running away from the shadow of my past and towards the bright sun, hoping that I could get to Caras Gladhon before the sun set.

