

HIGH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE

FREE FOR LOVERS OF TOLKIEN, C.S. LEWIS, URSULA
LE GUIN, ALEXANDER MARSHALL AND OTHERS

ISSUE # 6

SSS

BY GARY BONN

AT THE BACK OF
THE NORTH WIND
BY GEORGE
MACDONALD

A Window into
Middle-earth

CLARENDON HOUSE
PUBLICATIONS

HIGH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE

Welcome to the sixth issue of High Fantasy and Science Fiction Magazine!

The magazine is associated with the social media group **High Fantasy and Science Fiction** designed to interest and excite anyone interested in the above genres.

Please feel free to write to Clarendon House Publications via this email address if you'd like to comment or have any questions!

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We hope to hear from you!

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HIGH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE



WELCOME TO THE
HIGH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE!

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THIS MAGAZINE FEATURING SUCH AUTHORS
AS ALEXANDER MARSHALL, TOBIAS GREEN, J.R.R. TOLKIEN AND
OTHERS!

THE MAGAZINE IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOCIAL MEDIA GROUP
HIGH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION.
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CLARENDON HOUSE AUTHOR ALEXANDER MARSHALL

Who is Miss Starlight?
And can her
tremendous powers
prevent the Nega Wave
from overwhelming
Earth?

Chicago, 1942: the
dawn of the Atomic
Age. Private
Investigator John
McLeod has to find out
what gangster moll
Carol Wyland's terribly
scarred arm has to do
with a Nazi conspiracy
to create superhumans
on American soil,
before it's too late.

What is the dreadful
mystery of the lonely
streaming station of
Kern, far out in space?

The Eye of Lyubov, a
mysterious artefact in
the heart of Siberia: will
Ursula Stone, uniquely
trained agent from the
British Museum's
Department of Select
Antiquities, be able to
obtain it before she
freezes to death?

Waking after two
million years of
quantum displacement,
will Senior Technician
O'Malley be able to
work out why the Red
Seven Ark has overshot
its target and is deep in
intergalactic space?

The 25th Century:
Earth rules over a
hundred worlds
assisted by the
superpowers of the
Enhanced Class. But is
there something
fundamentally rotten at
the core of the system?
A cosmic entity known
as the Challenger has
arrived with one
question: Who exactly
is responsible for the
death of the woman
without a name?

All these questions and
many more are
addressed in this
unique collection of
superpowered tales
from the author of *The
Sword Sundergost*, *The
Phantom Sword of Rondar*, *Raven Stark*:
Hyperean Wars and
many more.



SUPERHEROIC STORIES

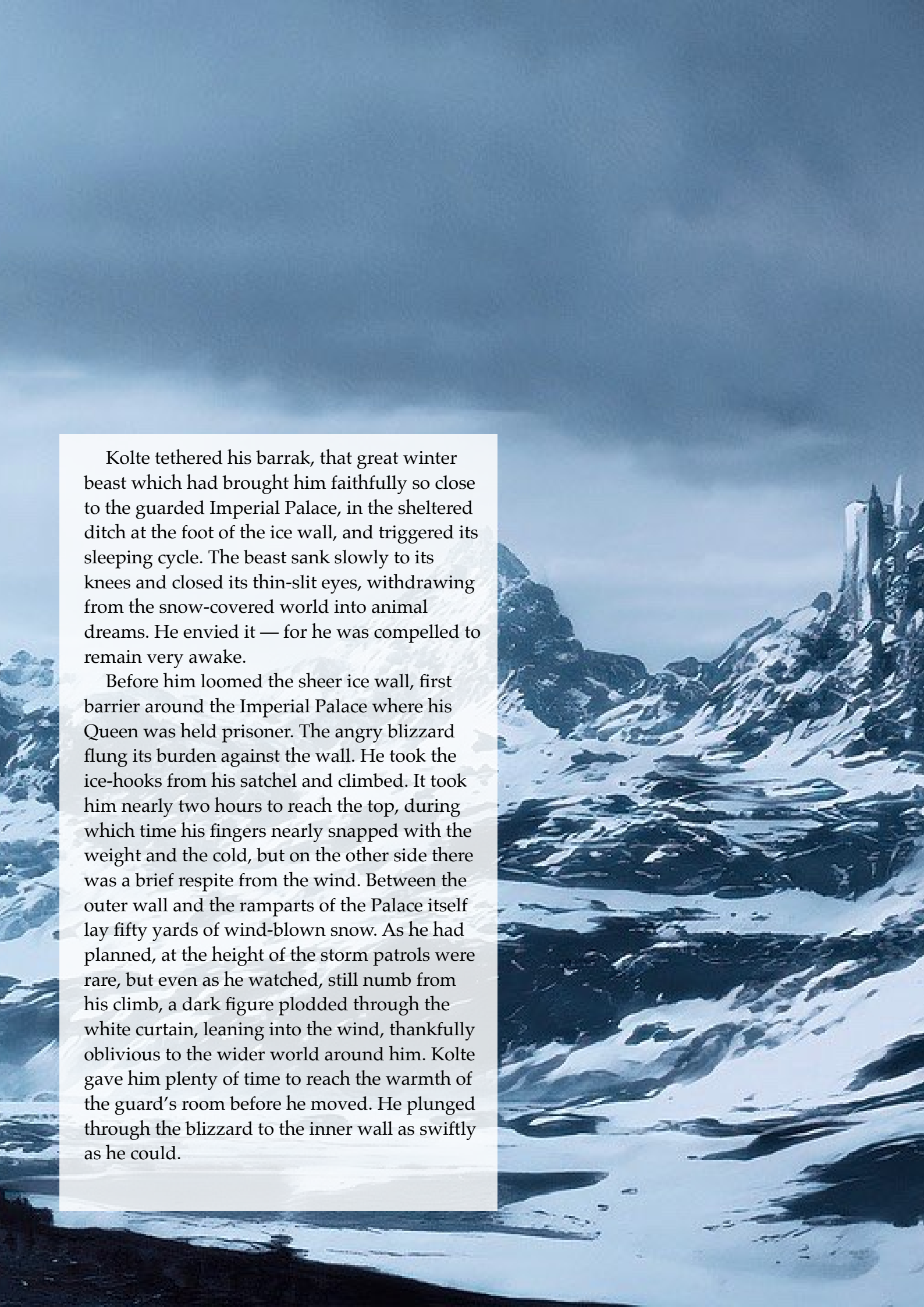
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THE DRAGON IN WINTER

BY ALEXANDER MARSHALL





Kolte tethered his barrak, that great winter beast which had brought him faithfully so close to the guarded Imperial Palace, in the sheltered ditch at the foot of the ice wall, and triggered its sleeping cycle. The beast sank slowly to its knees and closed its thin-slit eyes, withdrawing from the snow-covered world into animal dreams. He envied it — for he was compelled to remain very awake.

Before him loomed the sheer ice wall, first barrier around the Imperial Palace where his Queen was held prisoner. The angry blizzard flung its burden against the wall. He took the ice-hooks from his satchel and climbed. It took him nearly two hours to reach the top, during which time his fingers nearly snapped with the weight and the cold, but on the other side there was a brief respite from the wind. Between the outer wall and the ramparts of the Palace itself lay fifty yards of wind-blown snow. As he had planned, at the height of the storm patrols were rare, but even as he watched, still numb from his climb, a dark figure plodded through the white curtain, leaning into the wind, thankfully oblivious to the wider world around him. Kolte gave him plenty of time to reach the warmth of the guard's room before he moved. He plunged through the blizzard to the inner wall as swiftly as he could.



The snow had mounted high and was packed hard against the stone, and it was a simple matter to scale, but the battlements at the top were filled with it, looser and deeper, and Kolte sank to his shoulders as he tried to get across to the other side. With some difficulty he pushed and swam and crawled along, and, just as a head poked around a stiffly-opened shutter in the nearby tower, he plunged into the empty darkness over the inner wall, landing heavily in a shallow drift in the courtyard. The shutter closed again.

As Kolte lay bruised and buried in the snow, thankful that the cold was numbing most of his pain, a clustered group of guards, shivering, marched by, hastening to shelter. In their wake he gathered himself and dashed across the courtyard.

The stone door to the secret way thankfully opened to his touch and he was suddenly in the strange and windless silence beyond it. The air seemed almost warm. He rested there in the hidden passage for a few moments while the pounding blood of his youth found its way back into his limbs and fingers, carrying with it the sting of cold bruises and the unbearable tingling of reviving flesh. He moved on, slowly and painfully, into darkness, chanting the directions to himself in his mind. Only the Royalists knew of the secret passages in the Palace — he was hoping that they had remained hidden from the agents of the accursed Rebellion, who held his Queen.

Light at last glimmered through a thin slit along the bottom of an inner door, and Kolte drew breath to listen through the thickness of stone.

*

Somewhere a gong struck midnight.

Tua Vespria, Empress of Teshring,
Monarch of the Margin, snuffed the candle's
flame between finger and thumb, and the
room was dark but for a shadowy, shifting
paleness from the high window slit, and
silent but for the distant howling of the storm
through the stone.

Tua stood in the night for some time —
she dared not hope again that someone
would come, but prepared for her nightly
ritual without emotion. Taking her cane she
moved to the wall and paused again, head
bowed as though listening. Suddenly,
sweeping a tapestry aside, she rapped her
cane sharply three times against the wall.
Then she turned to her bed.

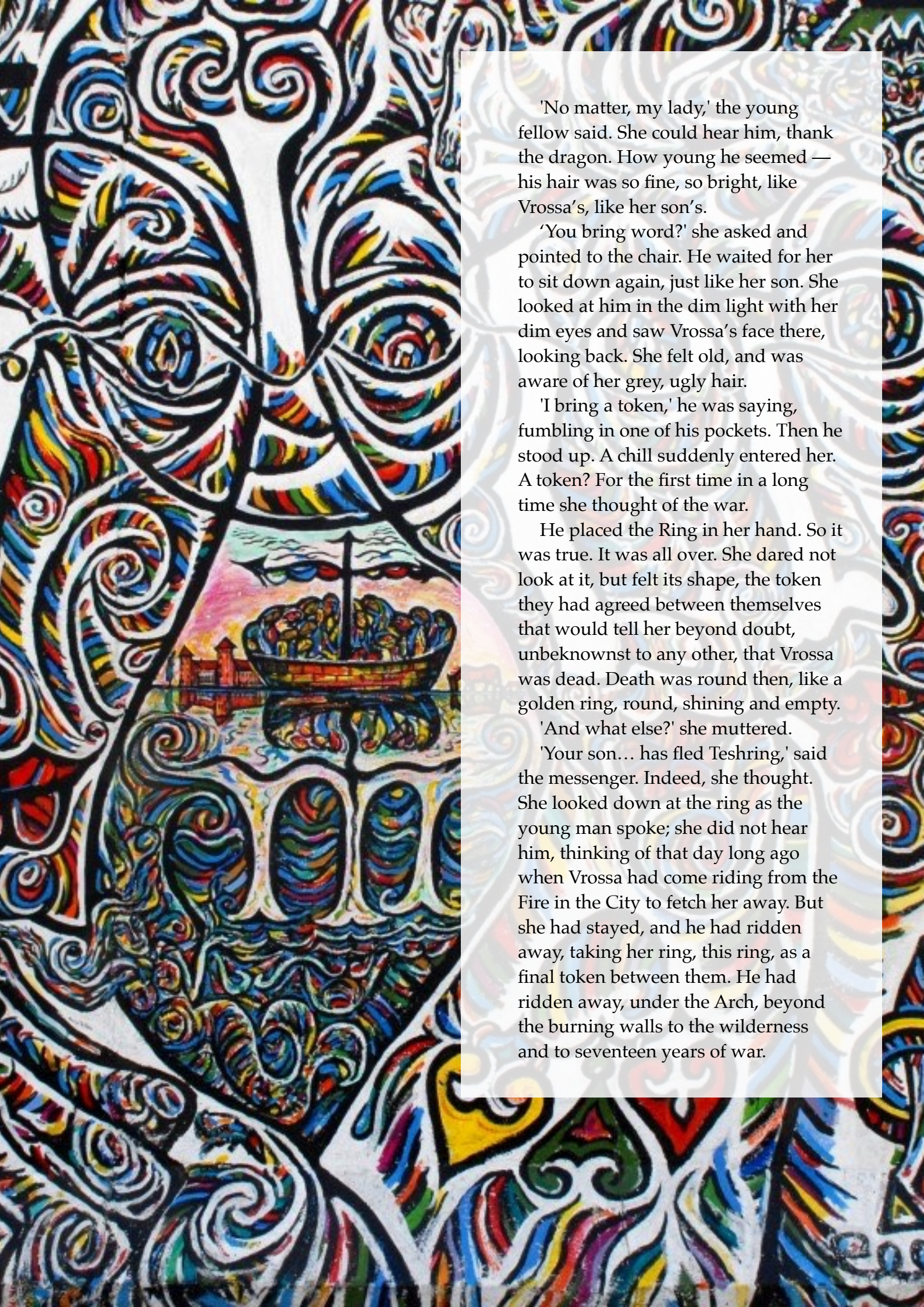
It became cold as the wall opened and a
shape stepped into the room, a young man.
She drew her cloak around her.

Tua turned up the light from the lamp, but
no light other than the sun's own could bring
things clear to her old eyes now. The young
man was a blur. He knelt down. That meant
she had to stand up. Her bones were still
trembling with the shock of his sudden
appearance; she cursed her age. She stood
and walked to him as gracefully as she could
manage; after all, the boy had risked his life
to get here to see an old woman who was no
doubt the subject of many rumours and fears
outside, the great Empress of Teshring,
whom they were afraid to kill. Ha!

He was young. His hands were cold.

'Rise,' she said, her voice croaking deeply.
'Speak softly. I am alone, but a guard may
come to the door. I have no fire — you are
cold.' She hoped he would not speak too
softly — she could barely hear anything
these days.





'No matter, my lady,' the young fellow said. She could hear him, thank the dragon. How young he seemed — his hair was so fine, so bright, like Vrossa's, like her son's.

'You bring word?' she asked and pointed to the chair. He waited for her to sit down again, just like her son. She looked at him in the dim light with her dim eyes and saw Vrossa's face there, looking back. She felt old, and was aware of her grey, ugly hair.

'I bring a token,' he was saying, fumbling in one of his pockets. Then he stood up. A chill suddenly entered her. A token? For the first time in a long time she thought of the war.

He placed the Ring in her hand. So it was true. It was all over. She dared not look at it, but felt its shape, the token they had agreed between themselves that would tell her beyond doubt, unbeknownst to any other, that Vrossa was dead. Death was round then, like a golden ring, round, shining and empty.

'And what else?' she muttered.

'Your son... has fled Teshring,' said the messenger. Indeed, she thought. She looked down at the ring as the young man spoke; she did not hear him, thinking of that day long ago when Vrossa had come riding from the Fire in the City to fetch her away. But she had stayed, and he had ridden away, taking her ring, this ring, as a final token between them. He had ridden away, under the Arch, beyond the burning walls to the wilderness and to seventeen years of war.

The messenger was describing the battle: some detail of interest to the world but nothing to her, not anymore. They had fought their way to a river, he was saying.

'Frozen?' she asked, without listening to him — nor could her eyes see anything now but the darkness, the great swirling snow-filled darkness of time which rushed to meet her. How could she live now? Her throat burned. The young man was asking her something, wanting her to command him.

'What do I know more than the commanders of the army? More than you? I am old — too old for this wind that howls about me. Too old for this snow which falls upon me,' she said abruptly.

She laughed then, a harsh, ringing laugh which sounded fey to her. Life then, indomitable even in her own heart, even in the face of death, put words in her mouth still. Her own blood burned her. How she longed for an end! But, like the ring, there was no end. She crushed it in her hand, turning away from him. It would be better for him not to see her weep, she thought.

'You want guidance from me? Fight on! Tell them to fight on. There is no ending. Fight to the last!' she said. And when she looked again — who could tell how much later? — he was gone, and she was alone in her own darkness.





*

Somewhere a gong struck midnight.

Tua Vespria, Empress of Teshring, snuffed the candle's flame between finger and thumb, and the room was dark but for a shadowy, shifting paleness from the high window-slit, and silent but for the distant howling of the storm through the stone.

Tua stood in the night for some time. Then, taking her cane, she moved to the wall and paused again, head bowed as though listening. Suddenly, sweeping a tapestry aside, she rapped her cane sharply three times against the wall. Then she turned to her bed.

The wall moved. A faint grating of stone against stone, an almost imperceptible darkening of shadow, a light movement of air. Tua drew her fur cloak around her and at once lit her lamp.

A young man stepped into the light. He peered into the room, and stood there staring at her like a blind man restored to sight.

There, to his eyes, on the edge of the bed, sat the Empress Tua Vespria, Empress of Teshring, Monarch of the Margin, the royal heroine whose undying spirit he worshipped as though she were a goddess, and to whose cause he felt he could give his life. Tall, graceful, an image in the light of the lamp of majesty itself, she waited for him to deliver his message as she waited every night for word from beyond the walls of the Palace where she was held prisoner by the Rebellion's forces. He found he could not speak — darkness had no place here.

'My lady,' he whispered at last, and knelt. She did not move at first, then rose and drifted towards him in her long furs.

'Rise,' she said. Her voice was deeper, older, than he had expected — but the strength was there. He slowly stood.

Her face was in shadow, the lamp behind her. 'Speak softly — I am alone, but a guard may come to the door. I have no fire — you are cold.'

'No matter, my lady,' he said. There was a silence. She waited for him.

'You bring word?' she asked at last, signing for him to move to a chair. He waited for her to sit again on the bed, then sank gratefully into deep cushions.

Her face was lined with wisdom to his eyes, the cares of a kingdom in torment. Her hair was a silvery cascade about her thin shoulders; her eyes saw through him.

'I bring a token,' said Kolte, and brought from its place in his jacket the Ring. He stood and gave it to her — she did not move. She said nothing, looking at him, ignoring it.

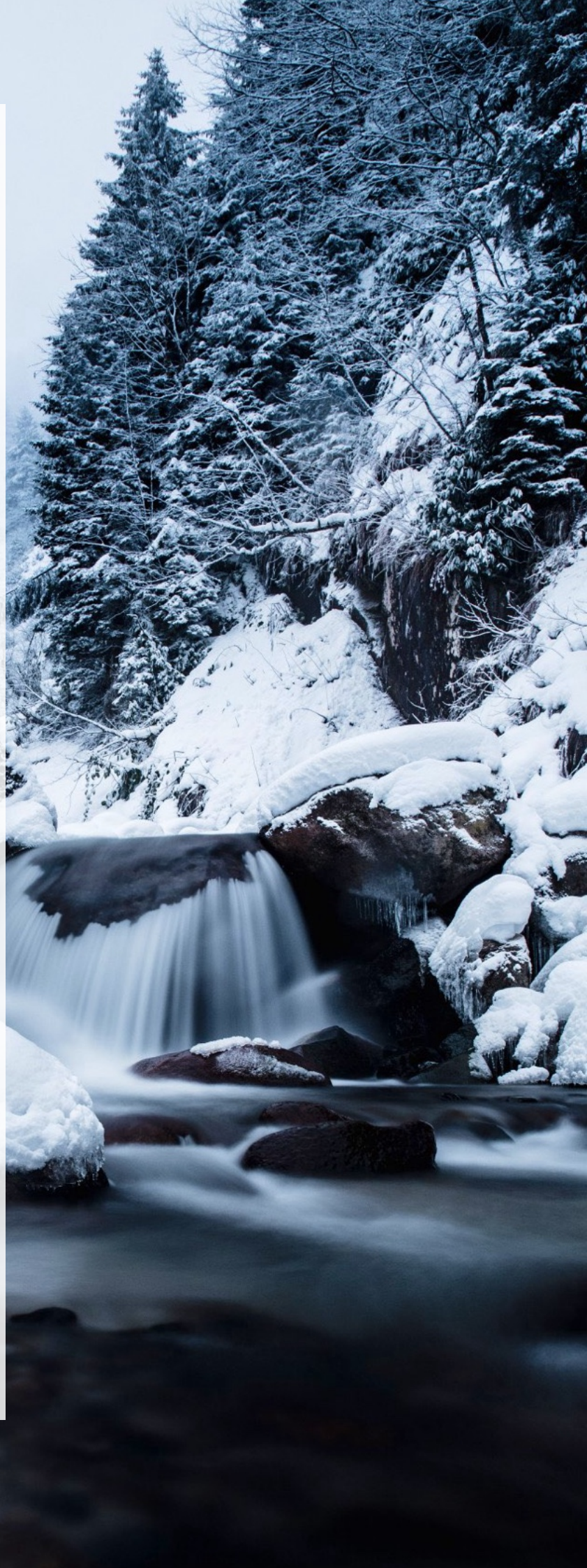
'And what else?' she said at last.

How could he tell her that Vrossa, her son, captain of the Royalists, was dead?

'Your son... has fled Teshring,' he said.

She looked down at the Ring.

'He led a company into the North. They fought long and hard this autumn, but the Rebel Imperium is too strong now in the North. He was driven out — but hope will return with the spring.'





She looked up at him.

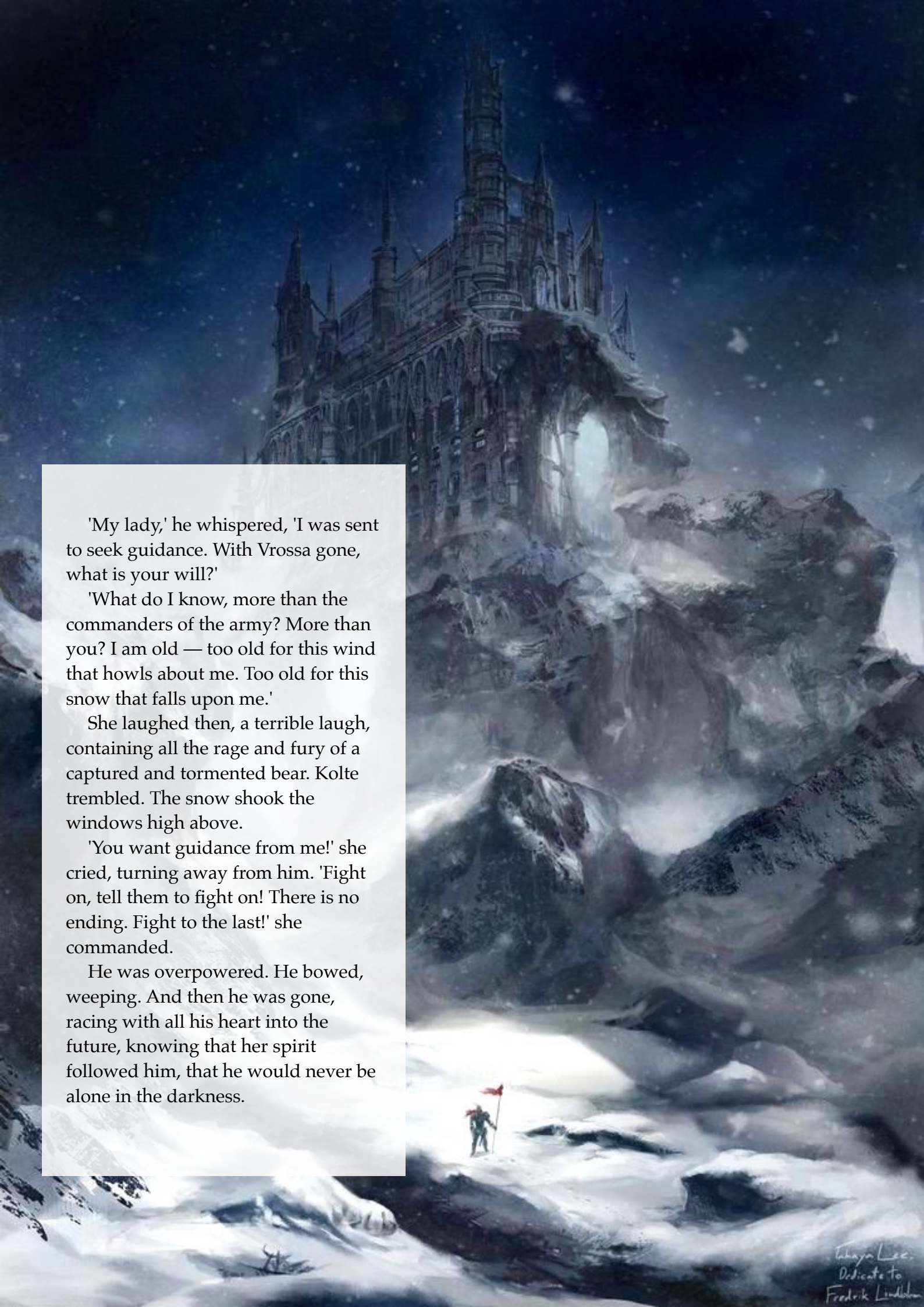
He was talking nonsense, he knew — but it was as though he had stepped into the world of stories, speaking as he was to the Empress herself at last. She listened, she believed, she was patient with him; fleetingly he was reminded of his own mother.

'There was battle at Koralvan,' he went on, drawing near to the terrible truth. 'It was a hard meeting. Vrossa, captaining the Shard, was cut off, but the company of Heressal, coming from the east, hacked a way through their troops towards the Banner of the Flame, rescuing the captain and pushing towards the river.'

'Frozen?' she asked, looking up, but her face was still in shadow.

'At this time of year, yes, but only just beginning to freeze at the time of the battle. Many were lost. But Vrossa escaped, into the mountains,' he lied.

Again she said nothing — but this was the way of the great, he thought, to speak only at need. Sitting there in the pale glow of the lamp, surrounded by shadows, Kolte felt the burden of events lifting from him, passing silently across the room to her. What would she now bid him do? How would she command those forces still loyal to her beyond the palace which was her prison?



'My lady,' he whispered, 'I was sent to seek guidance. With Vrossa gone, what is your will?'

'What do I know, more than the commanders of the army? More than you? I am old — too old for this wind that howls about me. Too old for this snow that falls upon me.'

She laughed then, a terrible laugh, containing all the rage and fury of a captured and tormented bear. Kolte trembled. The snow shook the windows high above.

'You want guidance from me!' she cried, turning away from him. 'Fight on, tell them to fight on! There is no ending. Fight to the last!' she commanded.

He was overpowered. He bowed, weeping. And then he was gone, racing with all his heart into the future, knowing that her spirit followed him, that he would never be alone in the darkness.

CLARENDON HOUSE AUTHORS
BERNARD CRISPIN
WITH ALEXANDER MARSHALL

THE JOURNALS OF
SUSAN COVENTRY
VOLUME ONE

WINTER'S
DOOR

When Susan Coventry and her brother Reggie are evacuated to a huge rambling ruin of a house in Yorkshire after a bomb in the London Blitz kills their parents, little do they suspect the adventures they'll have...

Like meeting Professor Cassius Clocktower, the mysterious man from another world, and his tiny lightbird, Erith...

Or discovering the strange mystery of the Beckenwith Necklace...

Or encountering the Ghost of Greenbridge Gate...

Or trying to figure out how on earth to get rid of the horrible Skelthorpes...

And what is the real significance of the portal known as Winter's Door?

Begin following the exploits of Susan and her brother in this first of the journals of Susan Coventry.

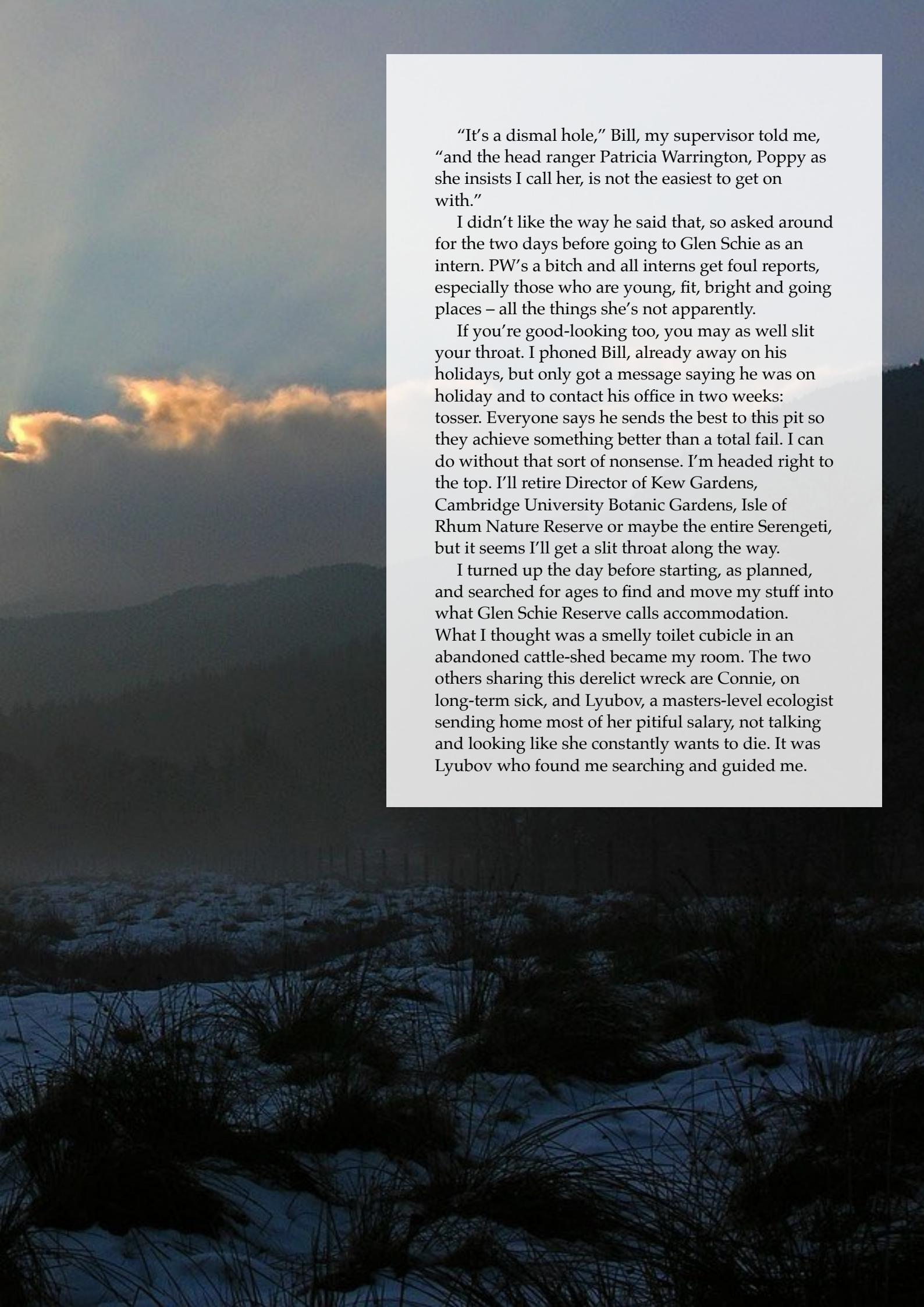


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SSS

BY GARY BONN

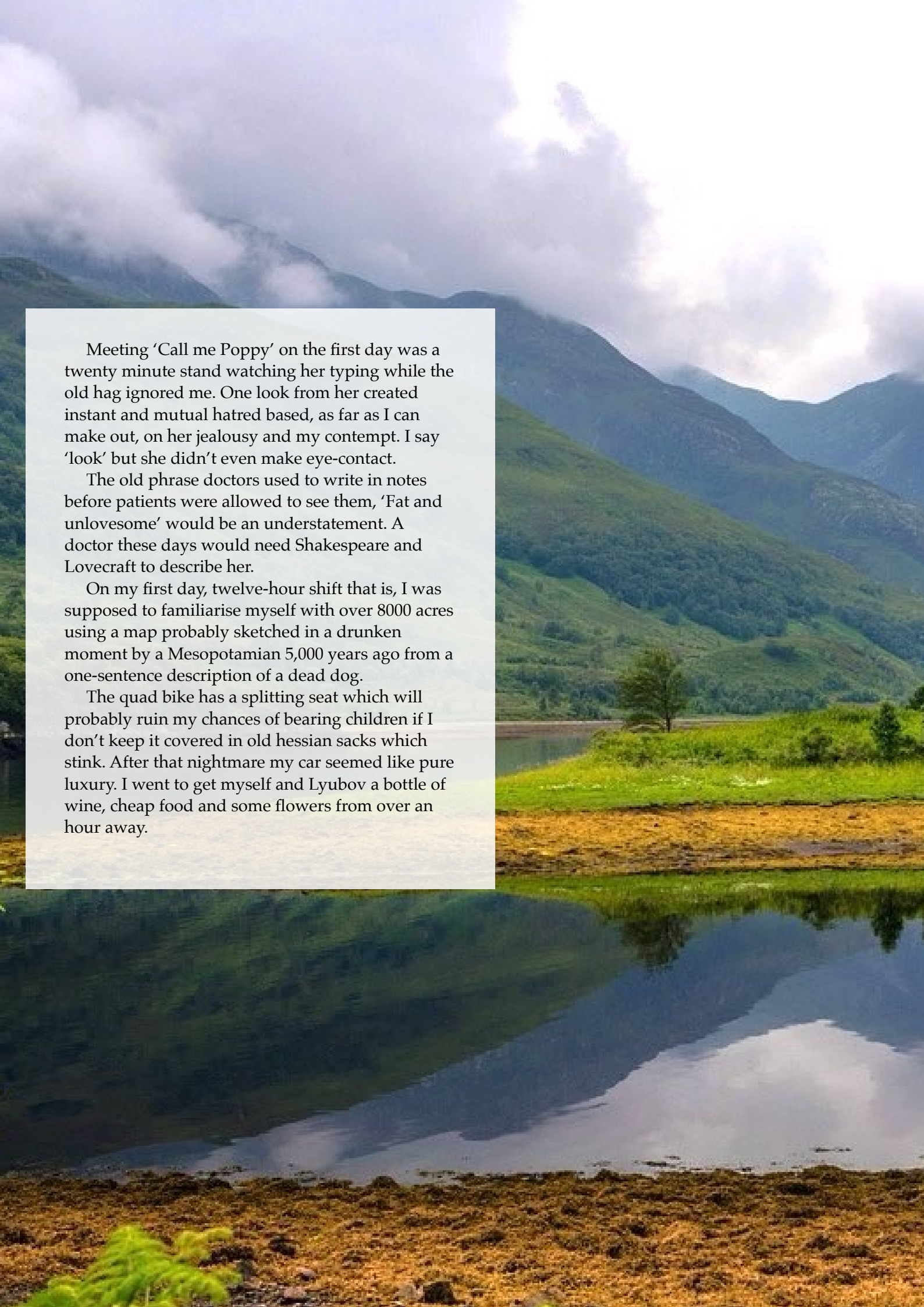


"It's a dismal hole," Bill, my supervisor told me, "and the head ranger Patricia Warrington, Poppy as she insists I call her, is not the easiest to get on with."

I didn't like the way he said that, so asked around for the two days before going to Glen Schie as an intern. PW's a bitch and all interns get foul reports, especially those who are young, fit, bright and going places – all the things she's not apparently.

If you're good-looking too, you may as well slit your throat. I phoned Bill, already away on his holidays, but only got a message saying he was on holiday and to contact his office in two weeks: tosser. Everyone says he sends the best to this pit so they achieve something better than a total fail. I can do without that sort of nonsense. I'm headed right to the top. I'll retire Director of Kew Gardens, Cambridge University Botanic Gardens, Isle of Rhum Nature Reserve or maybe the entire Serengeti, but it seems I'll get a slit throat along the way.

I turned up the day before starting, as planned, and searched for ages to find and move my stuff into what Glen Schie Reserve calls accommodation. What I thought was a smelly toilet cubicle in an abandoned cattle-shed became my room. The two others sharing this derelict wreck are Connie, on long-term sick, and Lyubov, a masters-level ecologist sending home most of her pitiful salary, not talking and looking like she constantly wants to die. It was Lyubov who found me searching and guided me.

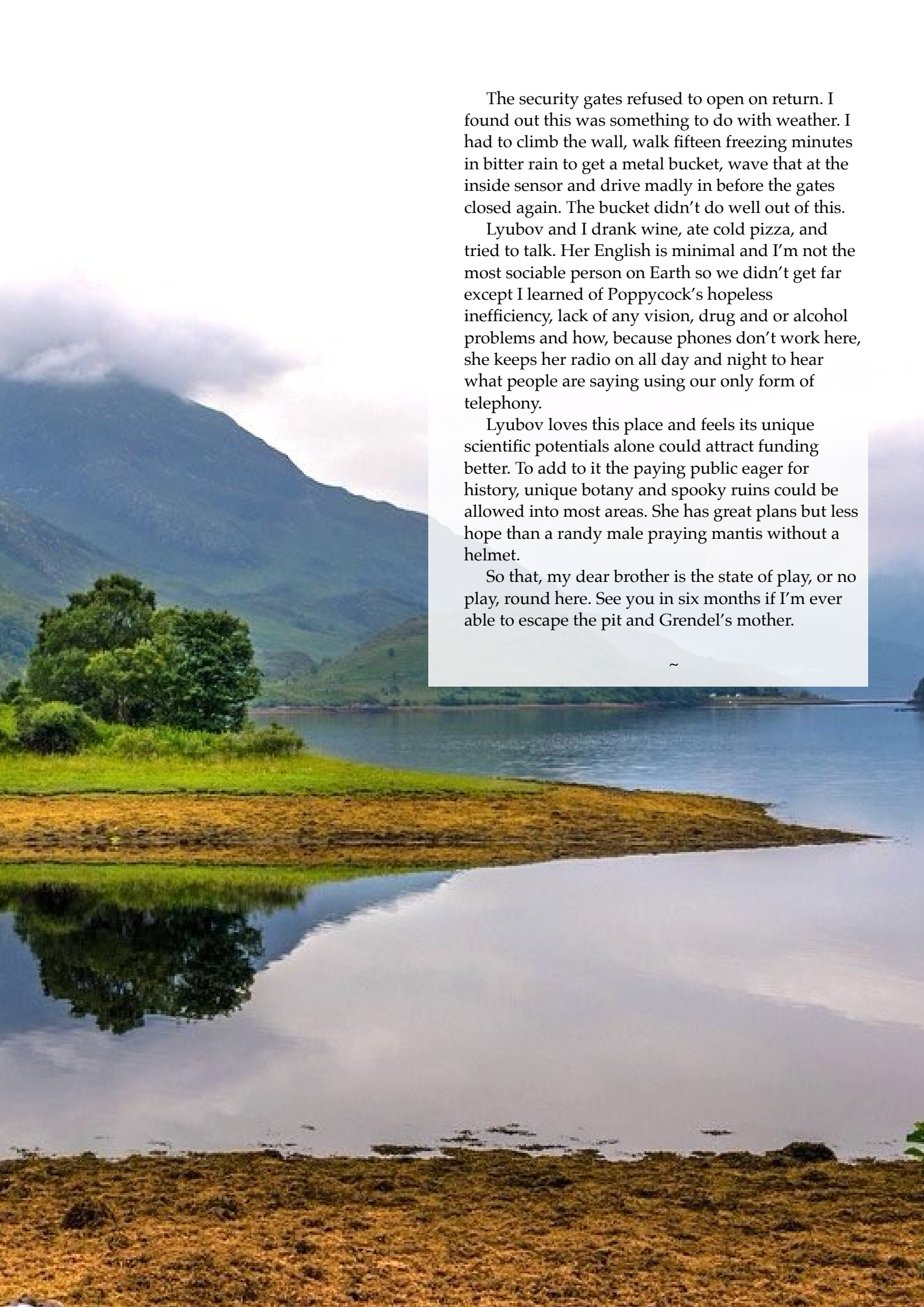
The background image is a scenic landscape. In the foreground, there is a body of water, possibly a lake or a wide river, reflecting the sky and the surrounding landscape. The water is calm, with some ripples. The middle ground features a grassy field with a few trees and a small body of water. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains with green vegetation. The sky is filled with large, white clouds, and the overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

Meeting 'Call me Poppy' on the first day was a twenty minute stand watching her typing while the old hag ignored me. One look from her created instant and mutual hatred based, as far as I can make out, on her jealousy and my contempt. I say 'look' but she didn't even make eye-contact.

The old phrase doctors used to write in notes before patients were allowed to see them, 'Fat and unlovesome' would be an understatement. A doctor these days would need Shakespeare and Lovecraft to describe her.

On my first day, twelve-hour shift that is, I was supposed to familiarise myself with over 8000 acres using a map probably sketched in a drunken moment by a Mesopotamian 5,000 years ago from a one-sentence description of a dead dog.

The quad bike has a splitting seat which will probably ruin my chances of bearing children if I don't keep it covered in old hessian sacks which stink. After that nightmare my car seemed like pure luxury. I went to get myself and Lyubov a bottle of wine, cheap food and some flowers from over an hour away.



The security gates refused to open on return. I found out this was something to do with weather. I had to climb the wall, walk fifteen freezing minutes in bitter rain to get a metal bucket, wave that at the inside sensor and drive madly in before the gates closed again. The bucket didn't do well out of this.

Lyubov and I drank wine, ate cold pizza, and tried to talk. Her English is minimal and I'm not the most sociable person on Earth so we didn't get far except I learned of Poppycock's hopeless inefficiency, lack of any vision, drug and or alcohol problems and how, because phones don't work here, she keeps her radio on all day and night to hear what people are saying using our only form of telephony.

Lyubov loves this place and feels its unique scientific potentials alone could attract funding better. To add to it the paying public eager for history, unique botany and spooky ruins could be allowed into most areas. She has great plans but less hope than a randy male praying mantis without a helmet.

So that, my dear brother is the state of play, or no play, round here. See you in six months if I'm ever able to escape the pit and Grendel's mother.

~

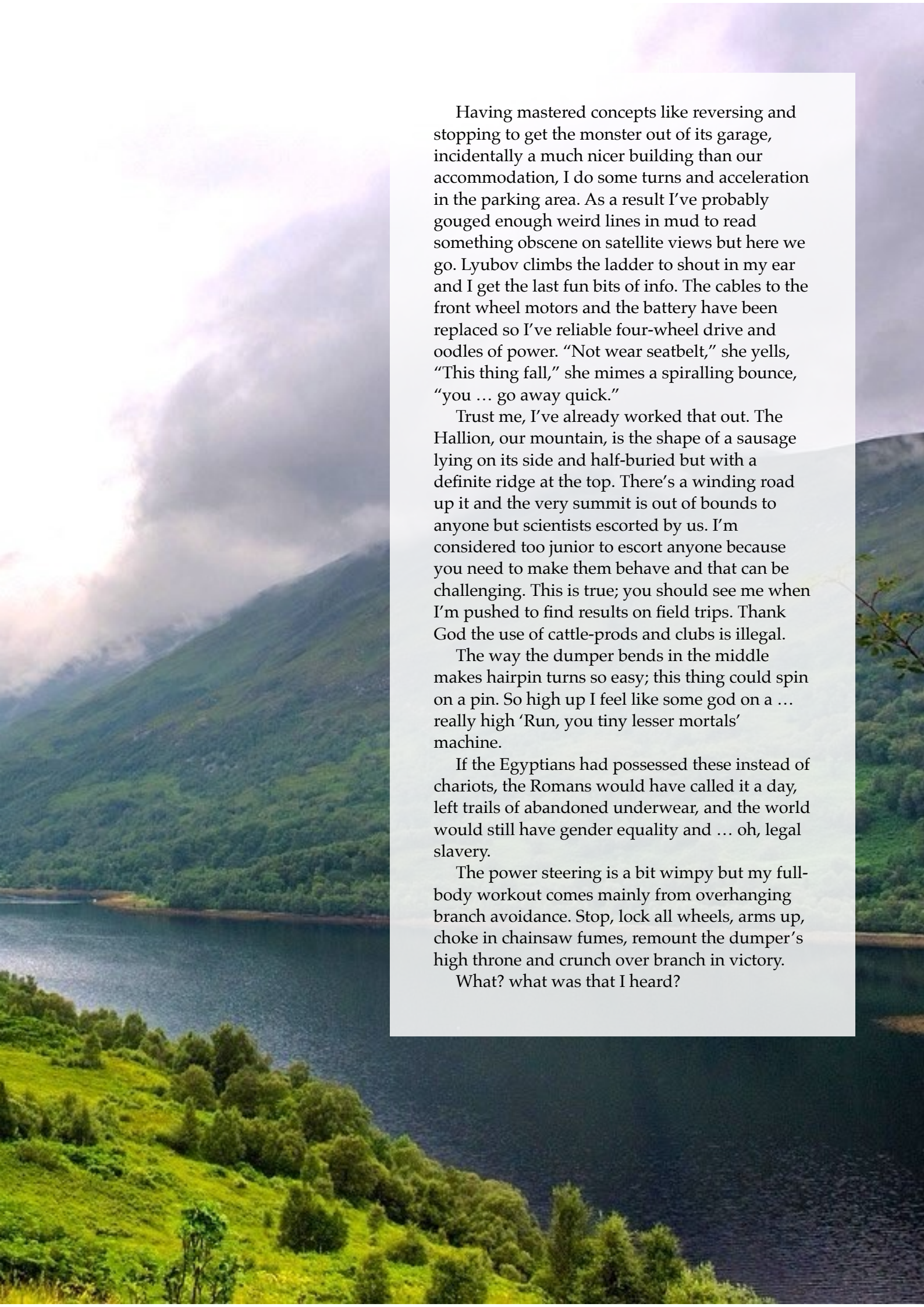
After receiving that forlorn email, my darling big brother sent me a satellite phone the gorgon remains unaware of. It works in the shack area but tree cover around here is generally impenetrable, so there it stays. Five weeks in and I'm more or less on autopilot, picking up my tasks daily and getting on with them, not a word shared with Princess Poppet.

My next task is simple enough, but thank the Lord Lyubov knows how to drive the dumper truck. Fat-arse Plopper could do it but never does. According to Lyubov, Poppy has only been on the Hallion once, years ago before Lyubov ever came here.

I don't need the dumper for load, only traction up the zig-zag track. Despite this being a clear day, the quad would sink without trace and me with it in what's become malevolent mud with anthropophagic aspirations.

Lyubov will do anything for me since bro says she can call home with his phone. After picking up the keys thrown on the floor beside me, and getting, "If you can drive a car you can drive a dumper," spat roughly in my direction, I went to Lyubov for help. The dumper is no car, weighing at least five or six times as much, with tyres two thirds my height. It steers by bending in the middle – exactly not like a car.



A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, surrounded by lush green hills and dense vegetation. In the background, a large mountain rises, partially shrouded in mist or low clouds. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and a hint of sunlight is visible on the left side, creating a serene and atmospheric setting.

Having mastered concepts like reversing and stopping to get the monster out of its garage, incidentally a much nicer building than our accommodation, I do some turns and acceleration in the parking area. As a result I've probably gouged enough weird lines in mud to read something obscene on satellite views but here we go. Lyubov climbs the ladder to shout in my ear and I get the last fun bits of info. The cables to the front wheel motors and the battery have been replaced so I've reliable four-wheel drive and oodles of power. "Not wear seatbelt," she yells, "This thing fall," she mimes a spiralling bounce, "you ... go away quick."

Trust me, I've already worked that out. The Hallion, our mountain, is the shape of a sausage lying on its side and half-buried but with a definite ridge at the top. There's a winding road up it and the very summit is out of bounds to anyone but scientists escorted by us. I'm considered too junior to escort anyone because you need to make them behave and that can be challenging. This is true; you should see me when I'm pushed to find results on field trips. Thank God the use of cattle-prods and clubs is illegal.

The way the dumper bends in the middle makes hairpin turns so easy; this thing could spin on a pin. So high up I feel like some god on a ... really high 'Run, you tiny lesser mortals' machine.

If the Egyptians had possessed these instead of chariots, the Romans would have called it a day, left trails of abandoned underwear, and the world would still have gender equality and ... oh, legal slavery.

The power steering is a bit wimpy but my full-body workout comes mainly from overhanging branch avoidance. Stop, lock all wheels, arms up, choke in chainsaw fumes, remount the dumper's high throne and crunch over branch in victory.

What? what was that I heard?

I stop and switch off the dumper again. Definitely music from somewhere. It's not tinny so from no device I've ever possessed, not distorted by distance ... not even slightly except it's very quiet. I shouldn't be able to hear anything like that here. Someone must be on the Hallion. That's actually a criminal offence. Sadly, with no cattle-prod ... ah, the chainsaw. I have people-control potential after all. Where these sounds originate is a mystery. This music seems to come from nowhere. Looking in all directions I can't identify a potential source or work out even vague possibilities other than nearby, right here. On a mad hunch I look up, maybe a glider, hot air balloon, but no, just the sun, a crescent moon and blue sky.

One more sharp turn and it's time to go on foot: no vehicles at the top, only cameras, sample bags and measuring equipment. I almost crush the sign saying Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Restricted Access: Do not Enter.

Turning to prepare the dumper for descent, I braked hard and spun almost a whole extra turn. Even the most cloying mud finds five tons of momentum a challenge.

Suitably equipped to check the weather stations, photograph flora and take samples, I'm stunned to hear laughter ... or was that music again?

No, I'm not going to use the radio. If I call Poppy I'll regret it. If I call Lyubov, Poppy will hear anyway and I'll still regret it.

Cool air creeps between the summit trees bringing with it a heavy musk I've only ever experienced here but never identified the source and it's never this choking. I must mention it to Lyubov sometime. Maybe she knows more.

Music again, louder, with words intermingled as if part of it. Not singing as such but it has a definite and very complex structure like ... like nothing I've ever heard.

I stop walking, nearly jumping with surprise.





I don't remember setting off and don't need to go in this direction. Sweat makes my overalls stick and chafe like they're made of tarpaulin. The air becomes oppressive, almost a barrier in itself. I stop again. This is ridiculous. Again I don't know why I started walking this way except ... no: I just don't know. Louder, the music's source must be closer now but it's still coming from all around. I've lost my sense of direction. I should be able to see lowland either side between trees.

I can't. At least I don't think I can. I do try to look but get distracted by the way shadows darken, even turning to the black of an infinite void. Lighter shades brighten to shimmering white. But everything is changing, shrinking or growing so fast. Colours seem washed out or brighter, or change from one to another.

For a fleeting moment I worry something is wrong with me ... something ... medically? What? My mind's so foggy I can't remember what I was thinking. A curl of spiky bramble shoot comes too close, though it didn't. I jump away but it hadn't moved as such, just grew. It's so thick, like a tree with thorns longer than me. I see faces everywhere – almost. They fade as I look, like they were just my imagination. It's creepy like I'm in a crowd and everyone's looking at me and I don't know why. If I look at them ... they're not there. This is not normal ... something isn't. Oh yes, I was worried about ... what was it?

The music ... the swelling of plants uncurling, blossoming, dying, flicking seeds is both music and musician. Everything is all so everything else. I look at a butterfly and it's my breathing. A pace I take crossing this bridge of bramble to a male-fern is a song, a gesture, the hissing wind all mixed up. And the faces – everything has a face, fugitive and invisible if I look. Zephyrs harmonise with fluttering leaves, thoughts, feelings and heartbeats.

The air, tough, almost crystalline, slows me. I'm held, hugged by it. Is it smothering? no ... we like each other; we're best friends.

I'm tiny now, crouched on a high leaf of nettle, jumping, bouncing and spiralling down ever-larger leaves. I don't remember starting. As I think something, so it happens. There's a tiny droplet of water gripping a nettle-hair. I must take it. Catching it in a sample vial, I lift and watch magical sunlight flashing diamond colours vivid across my arm and trousers. Looking through the twinkling drop, everything behind is transparent, only details of light. I see through a shoot to the next, bud after bud, leaf, blossom, seed... I'm peering through them all, fine detail lost in complexity. Looking so deep, so far away distorts perception, toying with me. Wonder overwhelms thought. Awe mingles in glimmers and hues, merging into ... a face which winks and, unlike the others, doesn't disappear. I think it was always there. Forming a body and limbs borrowed or flowing from whatever is near. The man, naked but for a cloak of glittering hues, strides from kaleidoscope foliage but is never quite separate.

His movement, face, everything about him radiates power, lordly yet kind, mischievous and playful, not to be crossed, always loyal: a terrible enemy. I know him more than myself for he has no mysteries, no deceit. He is nought but himself and I've always known him. I've seen him in my brother.

Taking a flute? a pipe? of ice or crystal – or simply light, the figure plays. Glittering shapes weaving in twisting symbols radiate from his pipe, dissolving like mist and turning to words, "Welcome, uninvited thief. So very welcome my soul blossoms. You heard, you came, you passed through the wall. You stole a gift; yours to take though not my gift to you. You see me and I rejoice. Like a gift you invade that I can behold you with love and humble gratitude."





The words burst on my skin like bubbles.
Each leaves a silvery shape before breaking into
fragments swirling away: vanishing.

"Tell me you," his words chime, "Tell me your
story, the story of how you walked through the
walls." Whoever, whatever he is can read me. For
he adds, "Ah ... walls, walls so many daren't
pass through. Walls like pages of words, like
poetry you fly to only to bounce back to your
very eyes, blind, uninspired, not drawn through
doorways and into their beyond. The doorway
you yearn for, which yearns for you."

I want to answer him but not from my mind,
for that would be clumsy and unlovely. I want to
speak from me, "I came because I didn't resist
coming." I reflect on that. "Though I don't think I
moved much ... at all. It's like... It's like I only
had to know I was here all along but hadn't
noticed."

"A beautiful story; a perfect poem. You bless
me by offering a door into you. I am truly
graced."

"Tell me a story, a story of you," I ask this but
even coming up with the idea to talk came after I
spoke. Long after that came any thoughts about
whether I wanted to, whether it was a good or
bad thing, appropriate, impolite... Whatever is
me is faster than my mind.

He tilts his head, eyes full of laughter. "Of
me? Of course, how can I tell another's story?
My story is that I love you dearly but another has
my heart. Foolish and mad with love, I invited
her. Horrified, I learned to invite can be to scare,
to prompt terror and pain. Fears like you'll be
taken, imprisoned, enslaved, that one year with
me is a hundred to you, a thousand, an eternity."

"I see," I reply, "I see that ... that makes no
sense here: it doesn't matter."

"She turned away, departed, and so did I,
though perforce. I wished to meet her again, woo
her, charm, show my truth. But so long passed.
There are hours, days – call them what you will –
for you that pass and yet I cannot share them,
cannot be here."

I know this! I know why. Some things don't need to be learned. Why is it I understand this magical place so well? It feels like home. My words are a sigh, a whisper, "You can see into our world only when the sun and moon shine on it together."

He nods, doesn't answer this. Instead his words stroke my lips and eyes, "My lady so timid, so afraid, turned away. I left a bloom but when I returned it was dead, cut and slain yet my love will last forever." Tilting his head back, tears sparkle, iridescent streaks and tumbling pearls on his face. "Horror, sadness and bleakest shame. My love became her curse. She feels me calling – it repels her. I give her freedom – she's trapped in love and terror's battle. Feeling my passion, she freezes in fear. Thus the sweetness we are is poison, cruel and bitter. It kills her."

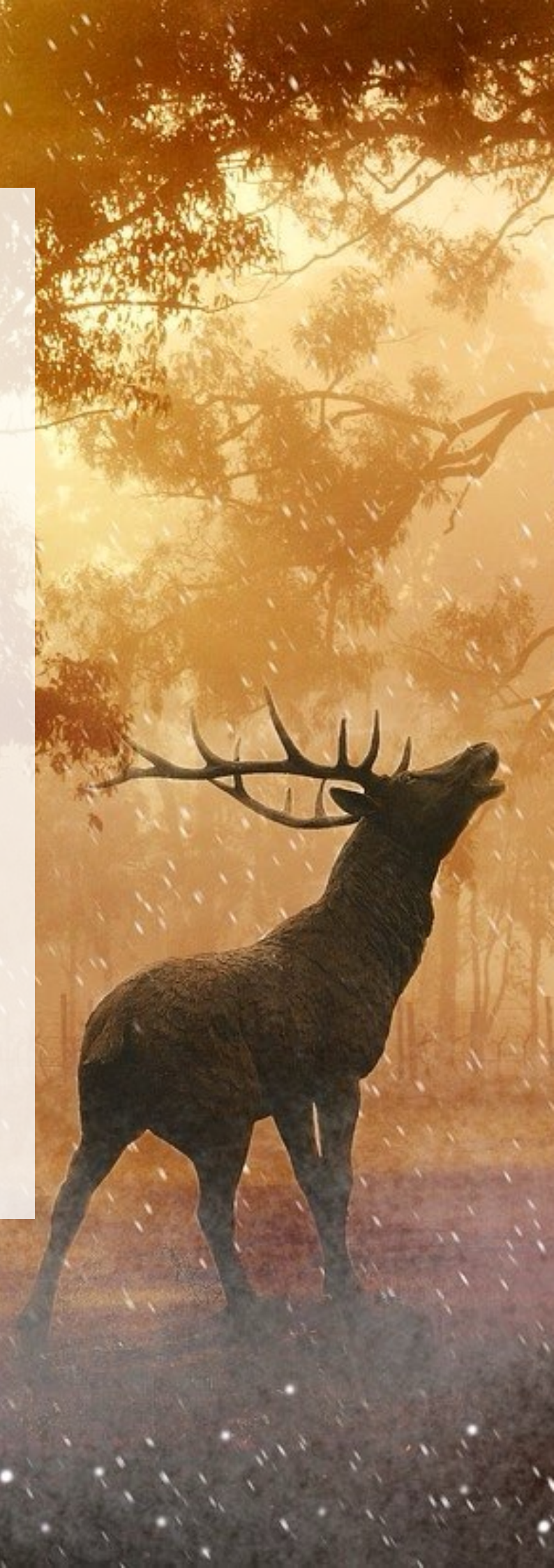
"As you will it, so be it," I say. Taking a deep breath and shaking my head, damp hair stinging skin, I sever myself, sober up, wrench from this phantasm back towards my world of dull colours.

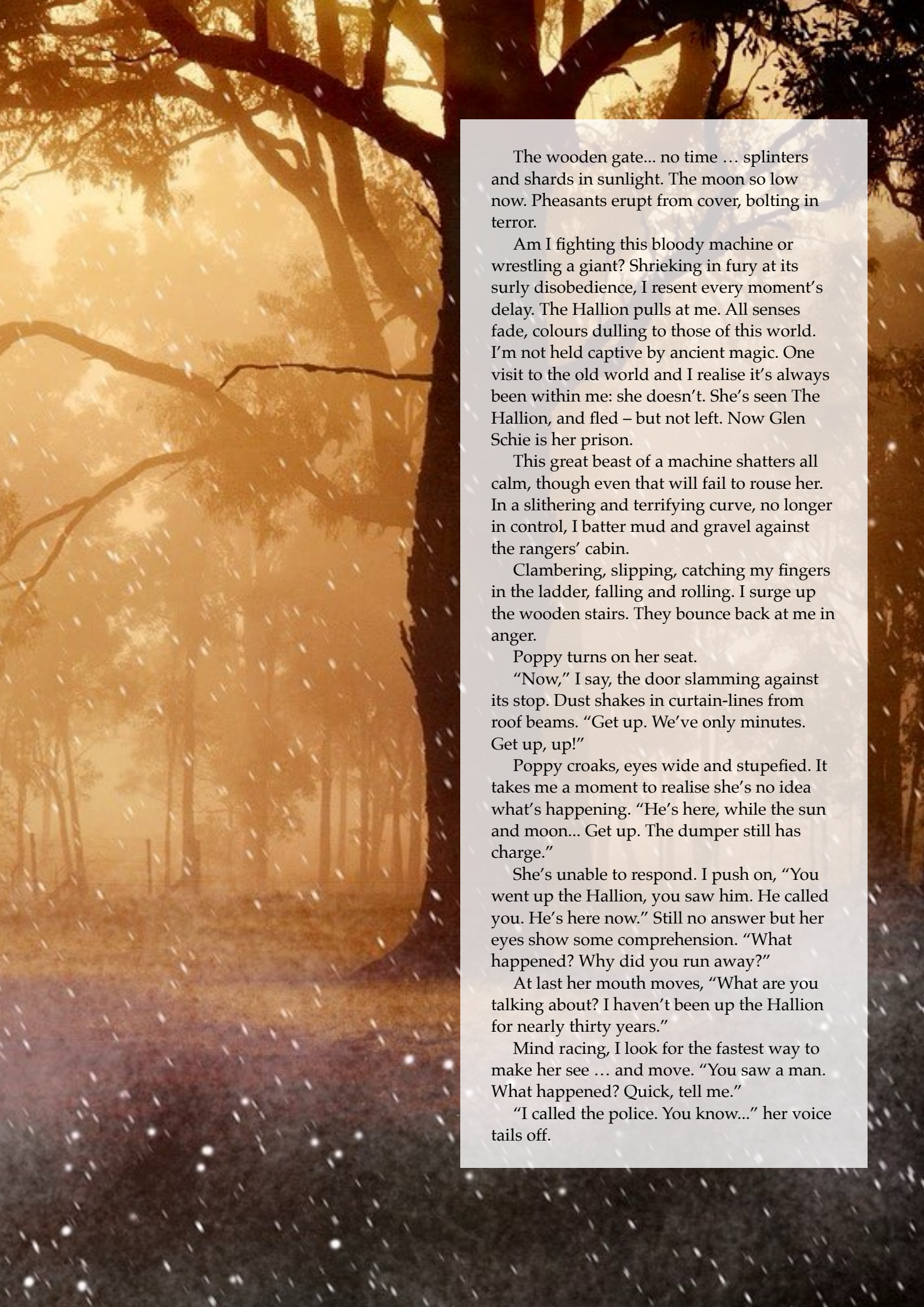
The sun and the moon shine right through leaf and branch, no matter how thick, how dense.

I don't know where I abandoned my equipment, not good, bad practice. I'm running, sprinting, leaping over roots, bramble and fern. Birds scatter from above. A stag leaps away in silent ballet, vanishing like smoke.

Panic, curses, shouting, I can't move fast enough, lungs burning. So little time. How am I to do this? Thank God the dumper is turned, precious moments spared. Full power, foot hard down, flying mud obliterates the sign.

I'm off, sliding, heaving wet soil in arcing waves; four pillars of it rocketing from the tyres and tearing leaves from overhead boughs.





The wooden gate... no time ... splinters and shards in sunlight. The moon so low now. Pheasants erupt from cover, bolting in terror.

Am I fighting this bloody machine or wrestling a giant? Shrieking in fury at its surly disobedience, I resent every moment's delay. The Hallion pulls at me. All senses fade, colours dulling to those of this world. I'm not held captive by ancient magic. One visit to the old world and I realise it's always been within me: she doesn't. She's seen The Hallion, and fled – but not left. Now Glen Schie is her prison.

This great beast of a machine shatters all calm, though even that will fail to rouse her. In a slithering and terrifying curve, no longer in control, I batter mud and gravel against the rangers' cabin.

Clambering, slipping, catching my fingers in the ladder, falling and rolling. I surge up the wooden stairs. They bounce back at me in anger.

Poppy turns on her seat.

"Now," I say, the door slamming against its stop. Dust shakes in curtain-lines from roof beams. "Get up. We've only minutes. Get up, up!"

Poppy croaks, eyes wide and stupefied. It takes me a moment to realise she's no idea what's happening. "He's here, while the sun and moon... Get up. The dumper still has charge."

She's unable to respond. I push on, "You went up the Hallion, you saw him. He called you. He's here now." Still no answer but her eyes show some comprehension. "What happened? Why did you run away?"

At last her mouth moves, "What are you talking about? I haven't been up the Hallion for nearly thirty years."

Mind racing, I look for the fastest way to make her see ... and move. "You saw a man. What happened? Quick, tell me."

"I called the police. You know..." her voice tails off.

I interrupt, "What did the man say? What was he doing?"

"Sitting under a tree. He wouldn't move," she replies. Looking straight at me for the first time, I have her complete attention.

"What did he say? Tell me, Poppy."

"Just poetry ... and singing. Either he was some drugged hippy or..."

"Or?" She doesn't reply so I push on, "You thought he was an elf, a fairy, a sprite? and you ran away."

Poppy stands up, reddening with fury. "The man," she stresses the word, "the man had gone by the time the police arrived."

Man, she still thinks of him as a man. She's right and wrong. I say, "He can't be in this world all the time. He's here now waiting for you but the moon is sinking. He..." I run through memory of his story, "he left a bloom for you, a token, remember? A bloom ... where he sat."

A tiny jerk and eyebrows raised, she doesn't reply but I've strengthened the connection. "You cut it down, rejected him."

She tenses. "I hacked the whole damn thing down. It was ... it wasn't native, shouldn't have been there. He must have planted it..."

I'm losing her. "Get on the dumper right now. I'm taking you up there. Run, for fuck's sake!"

"Don't be ridiculous. If you've seen someone up there it'll need to be reported." She reaches for the landline handset.

That's it, all her shields are back in full force. I'm letting both Poppy and her lover down: pathetic. "Wait," I shout, "Just a moment." Pulling the sample vial from my chest pocket I walk forward to show her. I don't need to. The vial gleams, shines as if from everywhere without casting shadows. That wonderful perfume fills the cabin.

Poppy backs away, one hand raised, the other toppling her chair. She stumbles backwards, trying to press herself against the wall. "No, no. They're, they're not... Do you know what Hallion means?"

"Don't believe a word of it. He won't hurt you. He wouldn't ever. It's you hurting you both."



"It's a fairy mound. They're not natural. They're ... it's all..." She can't take her eyes off the vial. Everything about her softens, giving in ... wanting. "Poppy," I bark out, "do I look as if I've been enchanted, enslaved, abducted for a hundred years? The man loves you. He's not even just a man. He's what's inside all men but in this world it's mostly hidden, distorted, suppressed. Shit, you..." I pause for emphasis, "are the luckiest woman alive."

She looks at me, confusion and fear boiling behind dilated pupils. "But you've heard all the..."

I snap at her, too blunt, too harsh, "Don't believe anything anyone ever tells you. You have to find out everything in this life for yourself." Trying to soften my tone, I add, "Think: how many of the people who spout legends of the old ones, gods or even bloody dragons have ever met one?"

Cowed, eyes closing, hugging herself, she answers, "I can't. Look at me. Look at this wreck of a woman. I'm not how I looked all those years..."

Short of vital time, I interrupt, "Like he cares? It's you he wants, not the wrapping. Forget that. How beautiful would you look, happy, all those decades of pain and torment falling away? That's beauty. You love him. Right now you're loving him enough to destroy yourself. Half of you is missing and that half is him. If you can't love yourself let him show you how to. Poppy, in a moment there will be one of two Poppies in this room. One who stays trapped in this misery of self-loathing torment or one who takes the plunge she knows she should have taken decades ago. Which is it to be?" In a few strides I'm close enough to press the vial into her hand. Drying mud falls from my clothes, dripping down her desk or spattering the floor. Poppy looks at me, wide-eyed, terrified: a small animal paralysed by speeding headlights.

Hand on her shoulder, I say, "Come. I'm taking you to him."



CLARENDON HOUSE AUTHOR GARY BONN



Face in dust and stones, you must have fallen.

Sheer walls like molten glass shimmer in searing sunlight.

You don't know where you are.

With numb limbs flailing you're fighting, struggling to find which way is up, to stand.

Crying out in confusion, you make a sound, a word? A name? You don't remember.

Standing, you lurch and stumble, fall and rise again.

It's desolate here, stark and silent, like nothing you could imagine.

From reflected glare emerge people dressed in red.

Armed and cautious, they creep towards you.

Confuse them. Discard anything threatening.

Their weapons won't save them from... you wonder what you are.

Deceive them, look friendly. Trying to greet them, you can only make that noise.

One stranger sprints from the group, heedless of their shouted warnings.

Radiating something perfect, she touches it in you.

Mind clearing, laughing in relief, you remember who you are...

**Journey nameless to a strange world:
your arrival is critical.**

HARSH REALITY



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At The Back Of The North Wind by George MacDonald

Chapter 5: The Summer House

DIAMOND said nothing to his mother about his adventures. He had half a notion that North Wind was a friend of his mother, and that, if she did not know all about it, at least she did not mind his going anywhere with the lady of the wind. At the same time he doubted whether he might not appear to be telling stories if he told all, especially as he could hardly believe it himself when he thought about it in the middle of the day, although when the twilight was once half-way on to night he had no doubt about it, at least for the first few days after he had been with her. The girl that swept the crossing had certainly refused to believe him. Besides, he felt sure that North Wind would tell him if he ought to speak.



It was some time before he saw the lady of the wind again. Indeed nothing remarkable took place in Diamond's history until the following week. This was what happened then. Diamond the horse wanted new shoes, and Diamond's father took him out of the stable, and was just getting on his back to ride him to the forge, when he saw his little boy standing by the pump, and looking at him wistfully. Then the coachman took his foot out of the stirrup, left his hold of the mane and bridle, came across to his boy, lifted him up, and setting him on the horse's back, told him to sit up like a man. He then led away both Diamonds together.

The boy atop felt not a little tremulous as the great muscles that lifted the legs of the horse knotted and relaxed against his legs, and he cowered towards the withers, grasping with his hands the bit of mane worn short by the collar; but when his father looked back at him, saying once more, "Sit up, Diamond," he let the mane go and sat

up, notwithstanding that the horse, thinking, I suppose, that his master had said to him, "Come up, Diamond," stepped out faster. For both the Diamonds were just grandly obedient. And Diamond soon found that, as he was obedient to his father, so the horse was obedient to him. For he had not ridden far before he found courage to reach forward and catch hold of the bridle, and when his father, whose hand was upon it, felt the boy pull it towards him, he looked up and smiled, and, well pleased, let go his hold, and left Diamond to guide Diamond; and the boy soon found that he could do so perfectly. It was a grand thing to be able to guide a great beast like that. And another discovery he made was that, in order to guide the horse, he had in a measure to obey the horse first. If he did not yield his body to the motions of the horse's body, he could not guide him; he must fall off.

The blacksmith lived at some distance, deeper into London. As they crossed the angle of a square, Diamond, who was now quite comfortable on his living throne, was glancing this way and that in a gentle pride, when he saw a girl sweeping a crossing scuddingly before a lady. The lady was his father's mistress, Mrs. Coleman, and the little girl was she for whose sake he had got off North Wind's back. He drew Diamond's bridle in eager anxiety to see whether her outstretched hand would gather a penny from Mrs. Coleman. But she had given one at the last crossing, and the hand returned only to grasp its broom. Diamond could not bear it. He had a penny in his pocket, a gift of the same lady the day before, and he tumbled off his horse to give it to the girl. He tumbled off, I say, for he did tumble when he reached the ground. But he got up in an instant, and ran, searching his pocket as he ran. She made him a pretty courtesy when he offered his treasure, but with a bewildered stare. She thought first: "Then he was on the back of the

North Wind after all!" but, looking up at the sound of the horse's feet on the paved crossing, she changed her idea, saying to herself, "North Wind is his father's horse! That's the secret of it! Why couldn't he say so?" And she had a mind to refuse the penny. But his smile put it all right, and she not only took his penny but put it in her mouth with a "Thank you, mister. Did they wollop you then?"

"Oh no!" answered Diamond. "They never wollops me."

"Lor!" said the little girl, and was speechless.

Meantime his father, looking up, and seeing the horse's back bare, suffered a pang of awful dread, but the next moment catching sight of him, took him up and put him on, saying--

"Don't get off again, Diamond. The horse might have put his foot on you."

"No, father," answered the boy, and rode on in majestic safety.





The summer drew near, warm and splendid. Miss Coleman was a little better in health, and sat a good deal in the garden. One day she saw Diamond peeping through the shrubbery, and called him. He talked to her so frankly that she often sent for him after that, and by degrees it came about that he had leave to run in the garden as he pleased. He never touched any of the flowers or blossoms, for he was not like some boys who cannot enjoy a thing without pulling it to pieces, and so preventing every one from enjoying it after them.

A week even makes such a long time in a child's life, that Diamond had begun once more to feel as if North Wind were a dream of some far-off year.

One hot evening, he had been sitting with the young mistress, as they called her, in a little summer-house at the bottom of the lawn — a wonderful thing for beauty, the boy thought, for a little window in the side of it was made of coloured glass. It grew dusky, and the lady began to feel chill, and went in, leaving the boy in the summer-house. He sat there gazing out at a bed of tulips, which, although they had closed for the night, could not go quite asleep for the wind that kept waving them about. All at once he saw a great bumble-bee fly out of one of the tulips.

“There! that is something done,” said a voice — a gentle, merry, childish voice, but so tiny. “At last it was. I thought he would have had to stay there all night, poor fellow! I did.”



Diamond could not tell whether the voice was near or far away, it was so small and yet so clear. He had never seen a fairy, but he had heard of such, and he began to look all about for one. And there was the tiniest creature sliding down the stem of the tulip!

"Are you the fairy that herds the bees?" he asked, going out of the summer-house, and down on his knees on the green shore of the tulip-bed.

"I'm not a fairy," answered the little creature.

"How do you know that?"

"It would become you better to ask how you are to know it."

"You've just told me."

"Yes. But what's the use of knowing a thing only because you're told it?"

"Well, how am I to know you are not a fairy? You do look very like one."

"In the first place, fairies are much bigger than you see me."

"Oh!" said Diamond reflectively; "I thought they were very little."

"But they might be tremendously bigger than I am, and yet not very big. Why, I could be six times the size I am, and not be very huge. Besides, a fairy can't grow big and little at will, though the nursery-tales do say so: they don't know better. You stupid Diamond! have you never seen me before?"

And, as she spoke, a moan of wind bent the tulips almost to the ground, and the creature laid her hand on Diamond's shoulder. In a moment he knew that it was North Wind.

"I am very stupid," he said; "but I never saw you so small before, not even when you were nursing the primrose."

"Must you see me every size that can be measured before you know me, Diamond?"

"But how could I think it was you taking care of a great stupid bumble-bee?"

"The more stupid he was the more need he had to be taken care of. What with sucking honey and trying to open the door, he was nearly dated; and when it opened in the morning to let the sun see the tulip's heart, what would the sun have thought to find such a stupid thing lying there —with wings too?"

"But how do you have time to look after bees?"

"I don't look after bees. I had this one to look after. It was hard work, though."

"Hard work! Why, you could blow a chimney down, or--or a boy's cap off," said Diamond.

"Both are easier than to blow a tulip open. But I scarcely know the difference between hard and easy. I am always able for what I have to do. When I see my work, I just rush at it — and it is done. But I mustn't chatter. I have got to sink a ship to-night."

"Sink a ship! What! with men in it?"

"Yes, and women too."

"How dreadful! I wish you wouldn't talk so."

"It is rather dreadful. But it is my work. I must do it."

"I hope you won't ask me to go with you."

"No, I won't ask you. But you must come for all that."

"I won't then."

"Won't you?" And North Wind grew a tall lady, and looked him in the eyes, and Diamond said —





"Please take me. You cannot be cruel."

"No; I could not be cruel if I would. I can do nothing cruel, although I often do what looks like cruel to those who do not know what I really am doing. The people they say I drown, I only carry away to —to—to —well, the back of the North Wind — that is what they used to call it long ago, only I never saw the place."

"How can you carry them there if you never saw it?"

"I know the way."

"But how is it you never saw it?"

"Because it is behind me."

"But you can look round."

"Not far enough to see my own back. No; I always look before me. In fact, I grow quite blind and deaf when I try to see my back. I only mind my work."

"But how does it be your work?"

"Ah, that I can't tell you. I only know it is, because when I do it I feel all right, and when I don't I feel all wrong. East Wind says — only one does not exactly know how much to believe of what she says, for she is very naughty sometimes — she says it is all managed by a baby; but whether she is good or naughty when she says that, I don't know. I just stick to my work. It is all one to me to let a bee out of a tulip, or to sweep the cobwebs from the sky. You would like to go with me to-night?"

"I don't want to see a ship sunk."

"But suppose I had to take you?"

"Why, then, of course I must go."

"There's a good Diamond. I think I had better be growing a bit. Only you must go to bed first. I can't take you till you're in bed. That's the law about the children. So I had better go and do something else first."

"Very well, North Wind," said Diamond. "What are you going to do first, if you please?"

"I think I may tell you. Jump up on the top of the wall, there."

"I can't."

"Ah! and I can't help you--you haven't been to bed yet, you see. Come out to the road with me, just in front of the coach-house, and I will show you."

North Wind grew very small indeed, so small that she could not have blown the dust off a dusty miller, as the Scotch children call a yellow auricula. Diamond could not even see the blades of grass move as she flitted along by his foot. They left the lawn, went out by the wicket in the-coach-house gates, and then crossed the road to the low wall that separated it from the river.

"You can get up on this wall, Diamond," said North Wind.

"Yes; but my mother has forbidden me."

"Then don't," said North Wind.

"But I can see over," said Diamond.

"Ah! to be sure. I can't."

So saying, North Wind gave a little bound, and stood on the top of the wall. She was just about the height a dragon-fly would be, if it stood on end.

"You darling!" said Diamond, seeing what a lovely little toy-woman she was.



"Don't be impertinent, Master Diamond," said North Wind. "If there's one thing makes me more angry than another, it is the way you humans judge things by their size. I am quite as respectable now as I shall be six hours after this, when I take an East Indiaman by the royals, twist her round, and push her under. You have no right to address me in such a fashion."

But as she spoke, the tiny face wore the smile of a great, grand woman. She was only having her own beautiful fun out of Diamond, and true woman's fun never hurts.

"But look there!" she resumed. "Do you see a boat with one man in it— a green and white boat?"

"Yes; quite well."

"That's a poet."

"I thought you said it was a bo-at."

"Stupid pet! Don't you know what a poet is?"

"Why, a thing to sail on the water in."

"Well, perhaps you're not so far wrong. Some poets do carry people over the sea. But I have no business to talk so much. The man is a poet."

"The boat is a boat," said Diamond.

"Can't you spell?" asked North Wind.

"Not very well."

"So I see. A poet is not a bo-at, as you call it. A poet is a man who is glad of something, and tries to make other people glad of it too."

"Ah! now I know. Like the man in the sweetie-shop."

"Not very. But I see it is no use. I wasn't sent to tell you, and so I can't tell you. I must be off. Only first just look at the man."

"He's not much of a rower," said Diamond—"paddling first with one fin and then with the other."

"Now look here!" said North Wind.



And she flashed like a dragon-fly across the water, whose surface rippled and puckered as she passed. The next moment the man in the boat glanced about him, and bent to his oars. The boat flew over the rippling water. Man and boat and river were awake. The same instant almost, North Wind perched again upon the river wall.

"How did you do that?" asked Diamond.

"I blew in his face," answered North Wind. "I don't see how that could do it," said Diamond. "I daresay not. And therefore you will say you don't believe it could."

"No, no, dear North Wind. I know you too well not to believe you."

"Well, I blew in his face, and that woke him up."

"But what was the good of it?"

"Why! don't you see? Look at him--how he is pulling. I blew the mist out of him."

"How was that?"

"That is just what I cannot tell you."

"But you did it."

"Yes. I have to do ten thousand things without being able to tell how."

"I don't like that," said Diamond.

He was staring after the boat. Hearing no answer, he looked down to the wall.

North Wind was gone. Away across the river went a long ripple — what sailors call a cat's paw. The man in the boat was putting up a sail. The moon was coming to herself on the edge of a great cloud, and the sail began to shine white. Diamond rubbed his eyes, and wondered what it was all about. Things seemed going on around him, and all to understand each other, but he could make nothing of it. So he put his hands in his pockets, and went in to have his tea. The night was very hot, for the wind had fallen again.

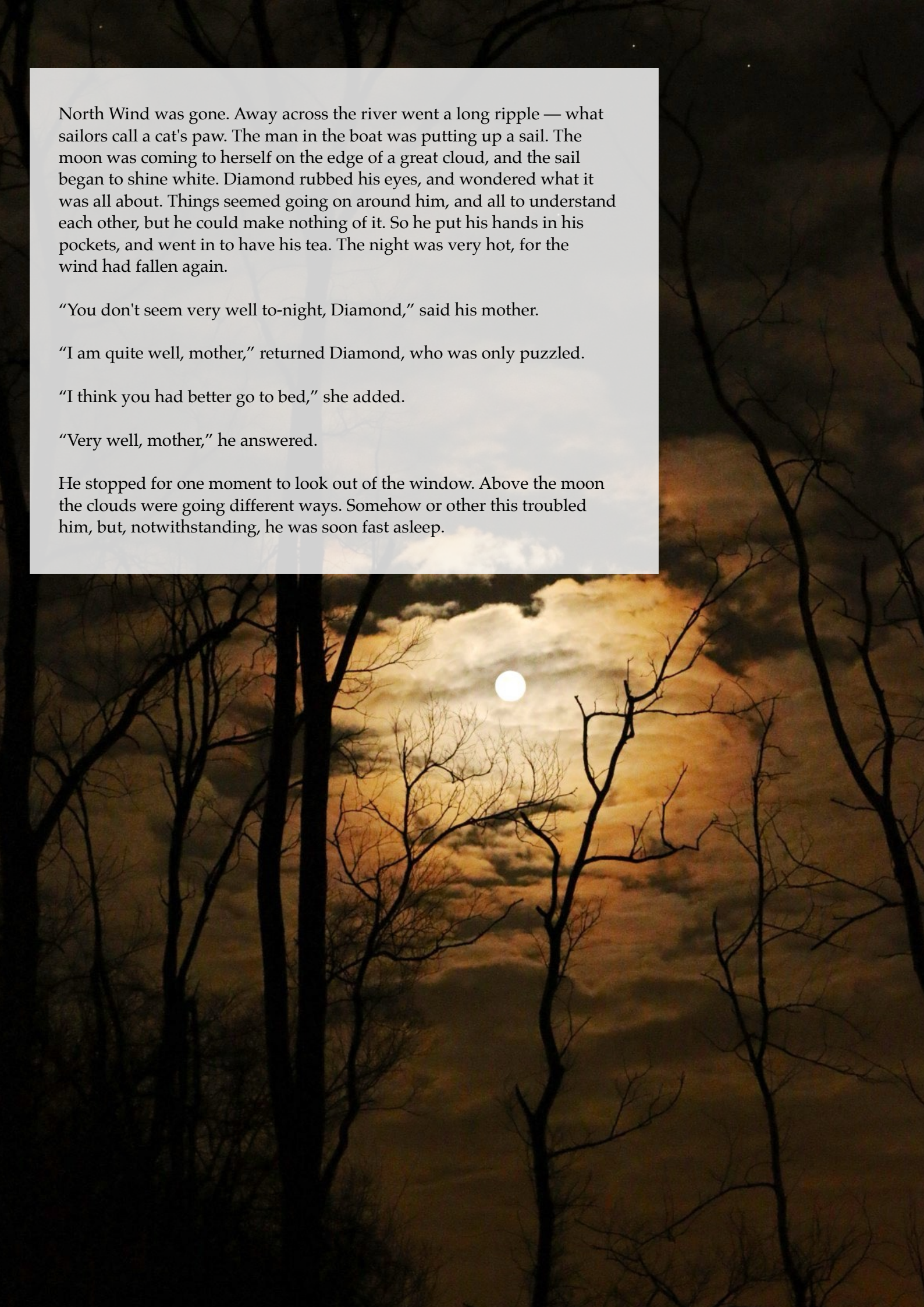
"You don't seem very well to-night, Diamond," said his mother.

"I am quite well, mother," returned Diamond, who was only puzzled.

"I think you had better go to bed," she added.

"Very well, mother," he answered.

He stopped for one moment to look out of the window. Above the moon the clouds were going different ways. Somehow or other this troubled him, but, notwithstanding, he was soon fast asleep.

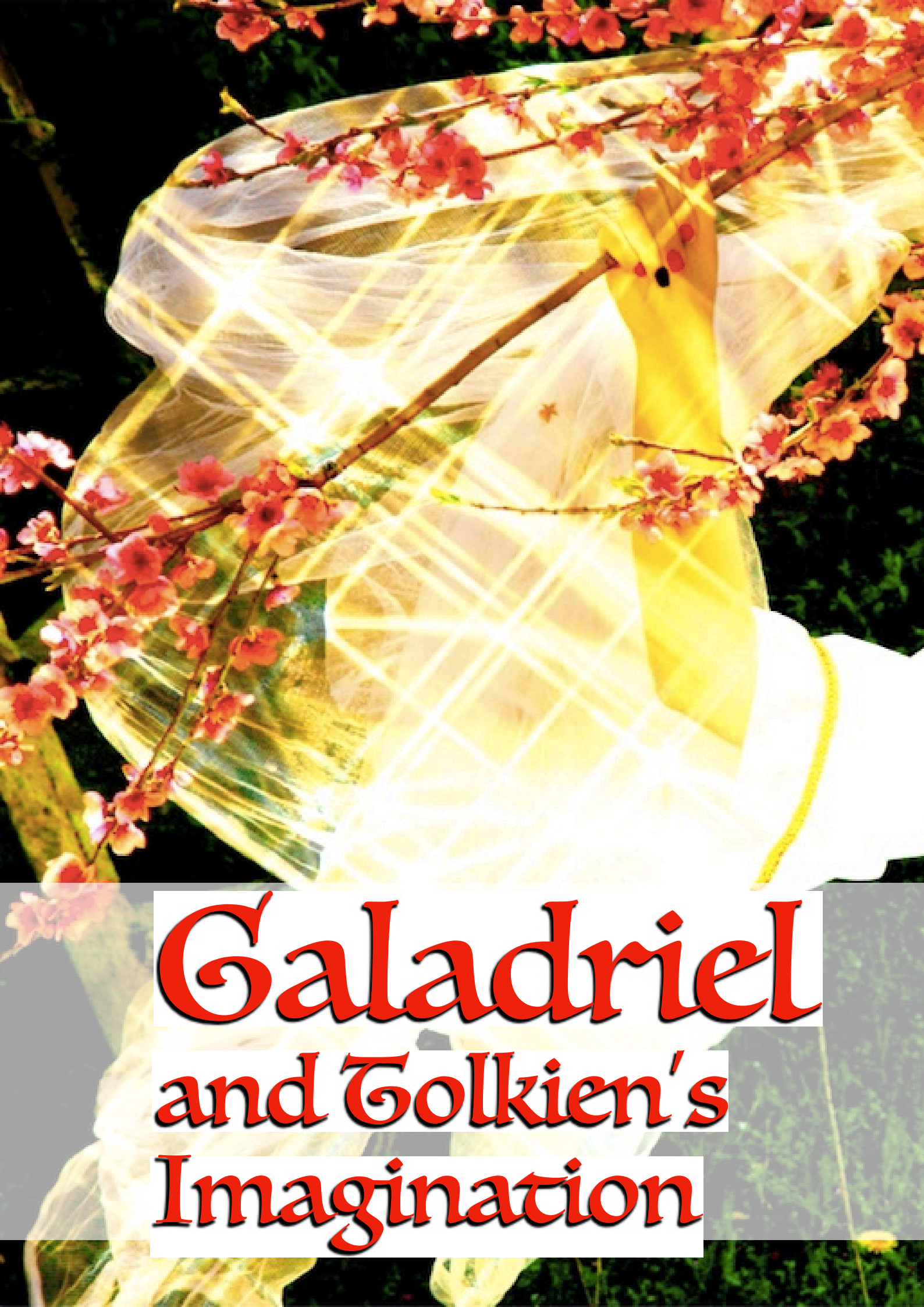




He woke in the middle of the night and the darkness. A terrible noise was rumbling overhead, like the rolling beat of great drums echoing through a brazen vault. The roof of the loft in which he lay had no ceiling; only the tiles were between him and the sky. For a while he could not come quite awake, for the noise kept beating him down, so that his heart was troubled and fluttered painfully. A second peal of thunder burst over his head, and almost choked him with fear. Nor did he recover until the great blast that followed, having torn some tiles off the roof, sent a spout of wind down into his bed and over his face, which brought him wide awake, and gave him back his courage. The same moment he heard a mighty yet musical voice calling him.

“Come up, Diamond,” it said. “It’s all ready. I’m waiting for you.”

He looked out of the bed, and saw a gigantic, powerful, but most lovely arm— with a hand whose fingers were nothing the less ladylike that they could have strangled a boa-constrictor, or choked a tigress off its prey — stretched down through a big hole in the roof. Without a moment’s hesitation he reached out his tiny one, and laid it in the grand palm before him.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a glowing, translucent orb with a grid of golden lines. The orb is surrounded by delicate pink cherry blossoms. The background is dark and out of focus.

Galadriel and Tolkien's Imagination



A Window into Middle-earth

The character of Galadriel is an instance of Tolkien's retroactive imagination at work. Not originally envisaged in his first tales of Middle-earth, Tolkien, having written her into a key role in *The Lord of the Rings*, felt compelled to weave her history backwards into the tapestry of that earlier set of stories — a process which he did not complete before his death, leaving us with various sometimes contradictory versions of her history. We shall see, though, that this very incompleteness, though unintentional, adds to the effect that Tolkien in the end created with this character.

Adopting Tolkien's story-telling technique of trying to see 'what had really happened' rather than merely inventing things out of thin

air, it is possible to look back through the strands of information we have about the Elven queen and to piece together a comprehensive character study which in turn reveals more depths about Middle-earth as a whole.

According to Tolkien's *Legendarium*, Galadriel was the fourth child born to Finarfin, prince of the Noldor, and Eärwen, princess of the Teleri. Her father named her Artanis, meaning 'noble woman', but, due to her unusual height and strength, her mother's name for her was Nerwen, 'man-maiden'. She was free-spirited, wilful and bound up her hair as a crown when taking part in athletic feats. Her unusual beauty and power possibly made her proud.

But then we get a very specific instance of Tolkien's creativity working through images: throughout both the earlier works and the concluding chapters of the tale of Middle-earth as seen in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien's mind operated through a series of resonant images. We have examined other such repeated representations elsewhere, but here the brightness and colour of Galadriel's hair, first described by Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings*, becomes an echo of the magical light of the ancient Two Trees in Valinor: though the source of Galadriel's hair colour was from her parents, the Eldar felt that her gold and silver hair had captured the light of the Two Trees in Valinor perfectly.



Prior to 'inventing' the character of Galadriel, Tolkien had written that the Elf Fëanor conceived the idea of capturing the light of these trees inside jewels which he called the Silmarils, but now, working in his peculiar retroactive way, Tolkien gave Galadriel a key instigating function in his mythology — he asserted that Fëanor had been inspired to capture the Trees' light by Galadriel's hair, after she had refused him a lock of it. This becomes more significant when it is realised that the whole chain of events described in *The Silmarillion*, and consequently the entire history of Middle-earth thereafter, would not have happened had not Fëanor been so refused. It's the first clue as to Tolkien's revisionist notions of Galadriel's central nature as a

character in the fabric of the mythology as a whole.

Tolkien writes that, during the Darkening of Valinor, Galadriel swore no oaths but that Fëanor's words about Middle-earth kindled a desire in her heart. Having passively inspired Fëanor to create the Silmarils, Galadriel's inner motivation as a character now takes shape: she feels a void within, a desire to rule a realm of her own. Perhaps we are not stretching things too far to suggest that she wished to escape the patriarchy of Valinor, and of her own family, weighted to the male side as it was. Her 'man-maiden' nature was prompting her, possibly, to look to the dark and wide unguarded lands to the East. Adding to her complexity, even though she participates in the revolt of the Noldor, she fights against Fëanor in

defence of her mother's kin in the Kinslaying of Alqualondë. There is a suggestion (retroactively revised by Tolkien) that she travels among a second group led by Fingolfin, which joined the battle at Alqualondë late; perhaps she is in the group that does not participate in the killing, although that is not clear. Tolkien is clearly at pains to distance her from the worst of Fëanor's revolt.

As Mandos' prophecy lays out the Doom which the Kinslaying has necessitated, Galadriel's father Finarfin abandons the march of the Noldor and returns to Valinor. But Galadriel and her brothers at this point take their leave from their father and cross the grinding ice of the Helcaraxë to eventually arrive on the northern shores of Middle-earth.

Making it to Beleriand in Middle-earth, Galadriel and her eldest brother Finrod Felagund come to Doriath as guests of Elu Thingol, its king. There Galadriel meets Celeborn, who soon afterwards (in Elvish terms) becomes her husband. But in terms of the way Tolkien's imagination worked, it is Galadriel's friendship with Thingol's wife, Queen Melian the Maia which is key. In effect, Galadriel becomes Melian's protégé.

As Galadriel does not have any particular role in the events of the War of the Jewels (having not yet been created as a character by Tolkien at that point) we do

not hear much of her again until after the cataclysmic War of Wrath and the overthrow of Morgoth. Here we discover that a ban is set upon her return to Aman by the Valar: she expresses a lack of concern, and a desire to remain in Middle-earth. However, two late essays written by Tolkien and published in *Unfinished Tales* contradict this: in one of them, though Galadriel revolts along with the other Noldor, she's offered the pardon of the Valar, but refuses to return to Aman nonetheless. The variations at this point, which were actually a result of Tolkien's imagination trying to settle on

a 'correct' version, serve unintentionally to add to her depth as a character.

She and Celeborn come to Lindon with the other survivors of Beleriand and rule over Harlindon, before moving to Eregion.

Eregion is ruled by Celebrimbor, a grandson of Fëanor and distant cousin of Galadriel. Galadriel is probably present during the crafting of the Rings of Power before she and Celeborn eventually cross the Hithaeglir through Khazad-dûm and relocate in the lands to the East of the mountains, becoming great among the Wood-elves.





When Sauron places the One Ring on his finger and the Elves become aware of his treachery, Celebrimbor, afraid for the safety of the Three Rings, sends them to two of the Wise: Narya and Vilya for Gil-galad, and Nenya for Galadriel, cementing her stature as a key player in the evolving mythology.

As we learn in the back story to *The Lord of the Rings*, in the Battle of Dagorlad during the War of the Last Alliance, Sauron is apparently destroyed and the One Ring lost, leaving Galadriel free to use Nenya. Celeborn and Galadriel rule jointly, as the Lord and Lady of the Galadhrim. They establish Caras Galadhon, and, using the power of the Elven Ring of Power, transform the realm of Lothlórien into one of light and life, protecting it from the intrusion of evil throughout the Third Age in a reflection of the way in which Melian

placed a girdle of protection around the older realm of Doriath. Galadriel becomes in a way a 'mini-Melian', representing in the lower harmonic of the remnants of Middle-earth the kind of superior and far-reaching power that Melian the Maiar had done in the days of Beleriand.

Galadriel's role in the post-Beleriand world is assured, then: the gift of Nenya enhances it, giving her a relatively 'super-natural' power correspondent to that of Melian, her mentor.

In T.A. 2463 the White Council is formed and Galadriel — possibly the greatest threat to Sauron alive at that time — as one of the members of the Council recommends that Gandalf be made head of it. This alignment, though again retroactively inserted into the mythology by Tolkien, makes sure that we as readers know her moral position. The fact

that her recommendation is not taken up but that Saruman is appointed instead, is a narrative necessity given that we already know the events of *The Lord of the Rings* — but the key point is that Tolkien is taking pains with this retroactivity to ensure that Galadriel is seen as 'good' — though she left Valinor at the beginning of the whole story motivated by a desire for power and under the cloud of the Doom of Mandos, and though she refused an opportunity to plead for a return to its shores after the War of Wrath (with the resultant implication that she was prideful and dismissive) we are now being persuaded that she is part of the forces of good. Tolkien is careful, in other words, to build our sympathy for her in the history, while retaining her depth and complexity as a character in a way which is profound.

He has done the same thing with other characters, as we have seen elsewhere: at first glance, Aragorn appears to be a standard Epic hero but on closer inspection is revealed to be much more complicated as a personality. Similarly, Frodo Baggins hovers between typically naive young stalwart hero and a much more nuanced and ironic figure. Gandalf also, in many ways described as the archetypal wise old man of fiction, has been found to possess layers of character

development beyond ordinary parameters. And so it is with Galadriel: one of the 'deserters' of Valinor (though explicitly not an 'Oathbreaker'), motivated by a desire for power similar to that of many of the more villainous figures in the mythology, Galadriel is given shades of rationale which go much deeper and make her a far more rounded personality.

Based on what we know about her innermost motivations so far, for example, it is possible that,

during the War of the Ring, when she meets the Fellowship in T.A. 3019 and Frodo offers her the One Ring, she could fail the extreme temptation and take it for herself. Clearly, it aligns with her goal to be a queen in her own right, which has prompted her into action from the start. If we therefore consider the entire opus of Tolkien's mythology as a study of Galadriel, this moment of temptation is the central one:





"I do not deny that my heart has greatly desired to ask what you offer. For many long years I had pondered what I might do, should the Great Ring come into my hands, and behold! it was brought within my grasp. The evil that was devised long ago works on in many ways, whether Sauron himself stands or falls. Would not that have been a noble deed to set to the credit of his Ring, if I had taken it by force or fear from my guest? And now at last it comes. You will give me the Ring freely! In place of the Dark Lord you will set up a Queen. And I shall not be dark, but beautiful and terrible as the Morning and the Night! Fair as the Sea and the Sun and the Snow upon the Mountain! Dreadful as the Storm and the Lightning! Stronger than the foundations of the earth. All shall love me and despair!"

She lifted up her hand and from the ring that she wore

there issued a great light that illuminated her alone and left all else dark. She stood before Frodo seeming now tall beyond measurement, and beautiful beyond enduring, terrible and worshipful.

Then she let her hand fall, and the light faded, and suddenly she laughed again, and lo! she was shrunk: a slender elf-woman, clad in simple white, whose gentle voice was soft and sad.

"I pass the test," she said. "I will diminish, and go into the West and remain Galadriel."

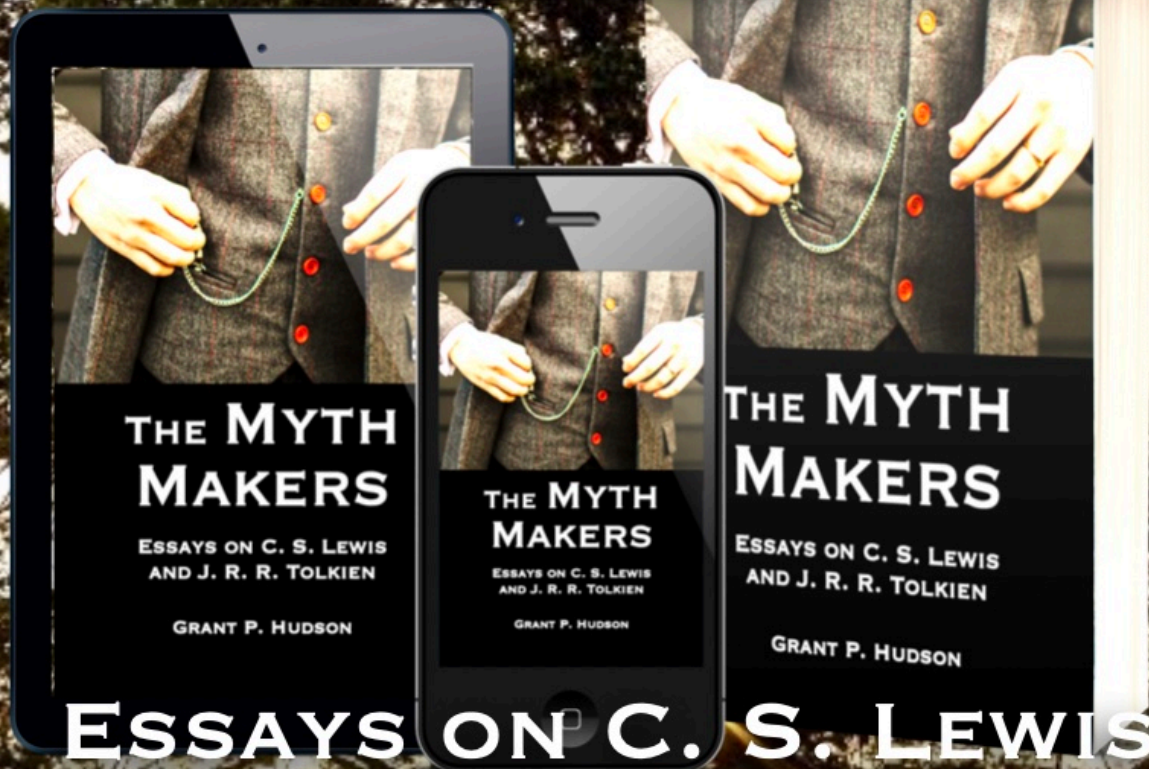
The two central psychological motives that we have sensed Tolkien developing in her — the desire to be a queen, to rule in her own right, and the opposite desire to be virtuous and to serve the greater good — are here played out. Galadriel resists the One Ring successfully.

In giving parting gifts to the Company of the Ring, she is unsure what to give Gimli; he requests a single strand of her hair, as Fëanor had done long ago. Tolkien's vast, incomplete, retro-structured line of imagination has come full circle: Galadriel's refusal to part with her hair which launched the whole narrative is here balanced by her willingness to give it as a gift. She rewards Gimli with three strands, later embedded in Silmaril-like imperishable crystal in memory of her.

Galadriel attends the wedding of Aragorn and Arwen, but in T.A. 3021 she bades farewell to Celeborn her husband and goes West to Valinor, the multi-layered conflict in her character resolved and her salvation assured.

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