

What Elrond might have said to Arwen

by

Helen Smith

When I would stand together with him
(Outside his chamber, far above the town
 Facing overland towards the sea,
 A passour in the West, the furthest edge
 Of the mortal earth, where almost beyond thought
The Un-bent ocean flows into the Sky,
He would look long: but I looked more at him
Until his eyes fell slowly to the city,
 Flowing away below us in the sunlight,
 And stay there, on the treetops and the roofs,
 Streets, towers, nestling in its beauty,
Well known to him. After a little while
He'd smile, and without turning, say most quietly,
"This is a peaceful place." The usual thing,
 Lindon was home to him, as he to me,
 Where wind was always beating in our hair
 Down from the mountains, up from the ocean shore,
While we, content beyond the call of dreaming,
Loving our home, would think upon another,
 Instant beyond years, with wind around us
Singing of our half-imagined parting.
This we dreamed together. More than this,
My dream was you, although I hardly guessed.
He knew it. "You'll tell this to your children, El."
He told me once. By this I had some earnest
That I, at least, would see my home again,
And never dreamed but he should share my hope
So much in him.

 It was to be Glorfindel,
(Who told me, though I never told you yet,)
That saw him once, some hours before the daybreak,
Sitting in his accustomed place alone,
His arms bowed down upon the parapet,
His head bowed in his arms to hide his face,
Unseen, he thought, leaning upon the stone,
But 'Findle stood that night upon the watch ...
Otherwise, he never made it known

What touched his heart, or why he hid his eyes,
Who loved his country so, I cannot tell.
At least, I will not try. I do not know.
But shortly came Elendil's call: for when
Glorfindel came to Rivendell again,
My Lord came too. We turned out thoughts to war.
I had ceased to live in Lindon long before.
My Lord will never see Lindon again,
And truly, I will never see it the more,
Though I go back there in the autumn year.
I must return, but he will not be there.

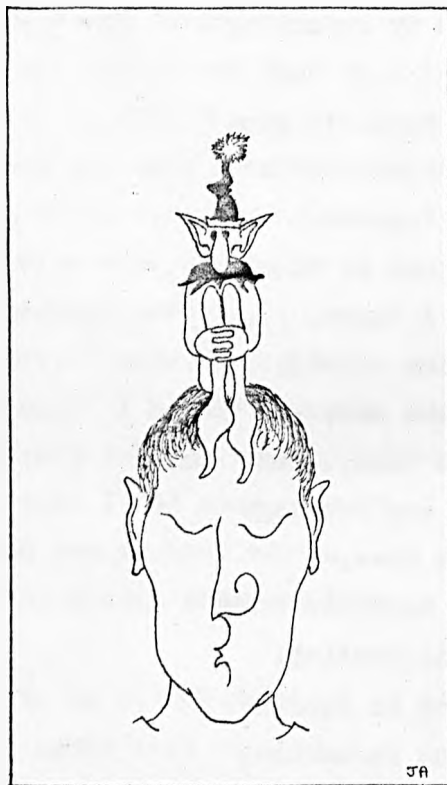
Never again. Down through the darkening years
Behind all other more important fears,
I've borne this dread that I should ever know
What "ever" really means. That I should fall,
By some mischance, or in some last disaster,
And not survive to bring my family there,
Which would have been to me as my returning
To whence I never came. I had such joy
First from the years when you began to grow
Until your mother's leaving, that I wished
Only to see our gladness last forever.
Remembered from before. I found so much
For all that I had lost, that I began,
Although I was from time to time afraid,
To feel, that if we won unto the end,
(Whatever end that should have been), that this
Must be our heritage, and all our heritage
Must needs be this. And I am here,
The end at last is won; that hour has come,
The scene of just another final parting.
It feels at once so strange and so familiar
To know that I shall never, but in memory,
Stand by some I loved, and hear their voices.
Time has passed, so quickly; only ten
Maybe eleven years since my hope
Was young again in you. Now fivescore years,
Or six at most remain on earth for you.
And yet, in you ... I do not speak of hope,

But which of us is exiled, you or I?
Of endless loss, tell me, is there no end?
Maybe even you will find an answer.
But I cannot tell.

Since we must part, let us part well,
We both have chosen as we both must choose,
We both have lost that which we least would lose,
And what we most desired we both have gained.

Thus everything is said, as for me
Peace I may find at least beyond the Sea:
In Evereve, Undying, Everfair ...
Never again. My dearest loss is thee.

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Elfhelm