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# Unfinished Tales

of Númenor and Middle-earth

by

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*edited with introduction,  
commentary, index, and maps by*

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Númenor to Middle-earth. [Author's note.] – The story of the Ring of Barahir is told in *The Silmarillion*, Chapter XIX, and its later history in *The Lord of the Rings* Appendix A (I, iii and v). Of 'the great Axe of Tuor' there is no mention in *The Silmarillion*, but it is named and described in the original 'Fall of Gondolin' (1916–17, see p. iv), where it is said that in Gondolin Tuor carried an axe rather than a sword, and that he named it in the speech of the people of Gondolin *Dramborleg*. In a list of names accompanying the tale *Dramborleg* is translated 'Thunder-Sharp': 'the axe of Tuor that smote both a heavy dint as of a club and cleft as a sword'.

## II

## ALDARION AND ERENDIS

*The Mariner's Wife*

Meneldur was the son of Tar-Elendil, the fourth King of Númenor. He was the King's third child, for he had two sisters, named Silmarien and Isilmë. The elder of these was wedded to Elatan of Andúnië, and their son was Valandil, Lord of Andúnië, from whom came long after the lines of the Kings of Gondor and Arnor in Middle-earth.

Meneldur was a man of gentle mood, without pride, whose exercise was rather in thought than in deeds of the body. He loved dearly the land of Númenor and all things in it, but he gave no heed to the Sea that lay all about it; for his mind looked further than Middle-earth: he was enamoured of the stars and the heavens. All that he could gather of the lore of the Eldar and Edain concerning Eä and the deeps that lay about the Kingdom of Arda he studied, and his chief delight was in the watching of the stars. He built a tower in the Forostar (the northernmost region of the island) where the airs were clearest, from which by night he would survey the heavens and observe all the movements of the lights of the firmament.<sup>1</sup>

When Meneldur received the Sceptre he removed, as he must, from the Forostar, and dwelt in the great house of the Kings in Armenelos. He proved a good and wise king, though he never ceased to yearn for days in which he might enrich his knowledge of the heavens. His wife was a woman of great beauty, named Almarian. She was the daughter of Vëantur, Captain of the King's Ships under Tar-Elendil; and though she herself loved ships and the sea no more than most women of the land her son followed after Vëantur her father, rather than after Meneldur.

The son of Meneldur and Almarian was Anardil, afterwards renowned among the Kings of Númenor as Tar-Aldarion. He had two sisters, younger than he: Ailinel and Almiel, of whom the elder married Orchaldor, a descendant of the House of Hador, son of Hatholdir, who was close in friendship with Meneldur; and the son of Orchaldor and Ailinel was Soronto, who comes later into the tale.<sup>2</sup>

Aldarion, for so he is called in all tales, grew swiftly to a man

of great stature, strong and vigorous in mind and body, golden-haired as his mother, ready to mirth and generous, but prouder than his father and ever more bent on his own will. From the first he loved the Sea, and his mind was turned to the craft of ship-building. He had little liking for the north country, and spent all the time that his father would grant by the shores of the sea, especially near Rómenna, where was the chief haven of Númenor, the greatest shipyards, and the most skilled shipwrights. His father did little to hinder him for many years, being well-pleased that Aldarion should have exercise for his hardihood and work for thought and hand.

Aldarion was much loved by Vëantur his mother's father, and he dwelt often in Vëantur's house on the southern side of the firth of Rómenna. That house had its own quay, to which many small boats were always moored, for Vëantur would never journey by land if he could by water; and there as a child Aldarion learned to row, and later to manage sail. Before he was full grown he could captain a ship of many men, sailing from haven to haven.

It happened on a time that Vëantur said to his grandson: 'Anardilya, the spring is drawing nigh, and also the day of your full age' (for in that April Aldarion would be twenty-five years old). 'I have in mind a way to mark it fittingly. My own years are far greater, and I do not think that I shall often again have the heart to leave my fair house and the blest shores of Númenor; but once more at least I would ride the Great Sea and face the North wind and the East. This year you shall come with me, and we will go to Mithlond and see the tall blue mountains of Middle-earth and the green land of the Eldar at their feet. Good welcome you will find from Círdan the Shipwright and from King Gil-galad. Speak of this to your father.'<sup>3</sup>

When Aldarion spoke of this venture, and asked leave to go as soon as the spring winds should be favourable, Meneldur was loath to grant it. A chill came upon him, as though his heart guessed that more hung upon this than his mind could foresee. But when he looked upon the eager face of his son he let no sign of this be seen. 'Do as your heart calls, *onyá*,' he said. 'I shall miss you sorely; but with Vëantur as captain, under the grace of the Valar, I shall live in good hope of your return. But do not become enamoured of the Great Lands, you who one day must be King and Father of this Isle!'

Thus it came to pass that on a morning of fair sun and white wind, in the bright spring of the seven hundred and twenty-fifth year of the Second Age, the son of the King's Heir of Númenor<sup>4</sup> sailed from the land; and ere day was over he saw it sink shimmering into

the sea, and last of all the peak of the Meneltarma as a dark finger against the sunset.

It is said that Aldarion himself wrote records of all his journeys to Middle-earth, and they were long preserved in Rómenna, though all were afterwards lost. Of his first journey little is known, save that he made the friendship of Círdan and Gil-galad, and journeyed far in Lindon and the west of Eriador, and marvelled at all that he saw. He did not return for more than two years, and Meneldur was in great disquiet. It is said that his delay was due to the eagerness he had to learn all that he could of Círdan, both in the making and management of ships, and in the building of walls to withstand the hunger of the sea.

There was joy in Rómenna and Armenelos when men saw the great ship *Númerrámar* (which signifies 'West-wings') coming up from the sea, her golden sails reddened in the sunset. The summer was nearly over and the *Eruhantalë* was nigh.<sup>5</sup> It seemed to Meneldur when he welcomed his son in the house of Vëantur that he had grown in stature, and his eyes were brighter; but they looked far away.

'What did you see, *onyá*, in your far journeys that now lives most in memory?'

But Aldarion, looking east towards the night, was silent. At last he answered, but softly, as one that speaks to himself: 'The fair people of the Elves? The green shores? The mountains wreathed in cloud? The regions of mist and shadow beyond guess? I do not know.' He ceased, and Meneldur knew that he had not spoken his full mind. For Aldarion had become enamoured of the Great Sea, and of a ship riding there alone without sight of land, borne by the winds with foam at its throat to coasts and havens unguessed; and that love and desire never left him until his life's end.

Vëantur did not again voyage from Númenor; but the *Númerrámar* he gave in gift to Aldarion. Within three years Aldarion begged leave to go again, and he set sail for Lindon. He was three years abroad; and not long after another voyage he made, that lasted for four years, for it is said that he was no longer content to sail to Mithlond, but began to explore the coasts southwards, past the mouths of Baranduin and Gwathló and Angren, and he rounded the dark cape of Ras Morthil and beheld the great Bay of Belfalas, and the mountains of the country of Amroth where the Nandor Elves still dwell.<sup>6</sup>

In the thirty-ninth year of his age Aldarion returned to Númenor, bringing gifts from Gil-galad to his father; for in the following year, as he had long proclaimed, Tar-Elendil relinquished the Sceptre to his son, and Tar-Meneldur became the King. Then Aldarion restrained

his desire, and remained at home for a while for the comfort of his father; and in those days he put to use the knowledge he had gained of Círdan concerning the making of ships, devising much anew of his own thought, and he began also to set men to the improvement of the havens and the quays, for he was ever eager to build greater vessels. But the sea-longing came upon him anew, and he departed again and yet again from Númenor; and his mind turned now to ventures that might not be compassed with one vessel's company. Therefore he formed the Guild of Venturers, that afterwards was renowned; to that brotherhood were joined all the hardiest and most eager mariners, and young men sought admission to it even from the inland regions of Númenor, and Aldarion they called the Great Captain. At that time he, having no mind to live upon land in Armenelos, had a ship built that should serve as his dwelling-place; he named it therefore *Eäambar*, and at times he would sail in it from haven to haven of Númenor, but for the most part it lay at anchor off Tol Uinen: and that was a little isle in the bay of Rómenna that was set there by Uinen the Lady of the Seas.<sup>7</sup> Upon *Eäambar* was the guildhouse of the Venturers, and there were kept the records of their great voyages;<sup>8</sup> for Tar-Meneldur looked coldly on the enterprises of his son, and cared not to hear the tale of his journeys, believing that he sowed the seeds of restlessness and the desire of other lands to hold.

In that time Aldarion became estranged from his father, and ceased to speak openly of his designs and his desires; but Almarian the Queen supported her son in all that he did, and Meneldur perforce let matters go as they must. For the Venturers grew in numbers and in the esteem of men, and they called them *Uinendili*, the lovers of Uinen; and their Captain became the less easy to rebuke or restrain. The ships of the Númenóreans became ever larger and of greater draught in those days, until they could make far voyages, carrying many men and great cargoes; and Aldarion was often long gone from Númenor. Tar-Meneldur ever opposed his son, and he set a curb on the felling of trees in Númenor for the building of vessels; and it came therefore into Aldarion's mind that he would find timber in Middle-earth, and seek there for a haven for the repair of his ships. In his voyages down the coasts he looked with wonder on the great forests; and at the mouth of the river that the Númenóreans called Gwathir, River of Shadow, he established Vinyalondë, the New Haven.<sup>9</sup>

But when nigh on eight hundred years had passed since the

beginning of the Second Age, Tar-Meneldur commanded his son to remain now in Númenor and to cease for a time his eastward voyaging; for he desired to proclaim Aldarion the King's Heir, as had been done at that age of the Heir by the Kings before him. Then Meneldur and his son were reconciled, for that time, and there was peace between them; and amid joy and feasting Aldarion was proclaimed Heir in the hundredth year of his age, and received from his father the title and power of Lord of the Ships and Havens of Númenor. To the feasting in Armenelos came one Beregar from his dwelling in the west of the Isle, and with him came Erendis his daughter. There Almarian the Queen observed her beauty, of a kind seldom seen in Númenor; for Beregar came of the House of Bëor by ancient descent, though not of the royal line of Elros, and Erendis was dark-haired and of slender grace, with the clear grey eyes of her kin.<sup>10</sup> But Erendis looked upon Aldarion as he rode by, and for his beauty and splendour of bearing she had eyes for little else. Thereafter Erendis entered the household of the Queen, and found favour also with the King; but little did she see of Aldarion, who busied himself in the tending of the forests, being concerned that in days to come timber should not lack in Númenor. Ere long the mariners of the Guild of Venturers became restless, for they were ill content to voyage more briefly and more rarely under lesser commanders; and when six years had passed since the proclamation of the King's Heir Aldarion determined to sail again to Middle-earth. Of the King he got but grudging leave, for he refused his father's urging that he abide in Númenor and seek a wife; and he set sail in the spring of the year. But coming to bid farewell to his mother he saw Erendis amid the Queen's company; and looking on her beauty he divined the strength that lay concealed in her.

Then Almarian said to him: 'Must you depart again, Aldarion, my son? Is there nothing that will hold you in the fairest of all mortal lands?'

'Not yet,' he answered; 'but there are fairer things in Armenelos than a man could find elsewhere, even in the lands of the Eldar. But mariners are men of two minds, at war with themselves; and the desire of the Sea still holds me.'

Erendis believed that these words were spoken also for her ears; and from that time forth her heart was turned wholly to Aldarion, though not in hope. In those days there was no need, by law or custom, that those of the royal house, not even the King's Heir, should wed only with descendants of Elros Tar-Minyatur; but Erendis deemed that Aldarion was too high. Yet she looked on no man with favour thereafter, and every suitor she dismissed.

Seven years passed before Aldarion came back, bringing with him ore of silver and gold; and he spoke with his father of his voyage and his deeds. But Meneldur said: 'Rather would I have had you beside me, than any news or gifts from the Dark Lands. This is the part of merchants and explorers, not of the King's Heir. What need have we of more silver and gold, unless to use in pride where other things would serve as well? The need of the King's house is for a man who knows and loves this land and people, which he will rule.'

'Do I not study men all my days?' said Aldarion. 'I can lead and govern them as I will.'

'Say rather, some men, of like mind with yourself,' answered the King. 'There are also women in Númenor, scarce fewer than men; and save your mother, whom indeed you can lead as you will, what do you know of them? Yet one day you must take a wife.'

'One day!' said Aldarion. 'But not before I must; and later, if any try to thrust me towards marriage. Other things I have to do more urgent to me, for my mind is bent on them. "Cold is the life of a mariner's wife"; and the mariner who is single of purpose and not tied to the shore goes further, and learns better how to deal with the sea.'

'Further, but not with more profit,' said Meneldur. 'And you do not "deal with the sea", Aldarion, my son. Do you forget that the Edain dwell here under the grace of the Lords of the West, that Uinen is kind to us, and Ossë is restrained? Our ships are guarded, and other hands guide them than ours. So be not overproud, or the grace may wane; and do not presume that it will extend to those who risk themselves without need upon the rocks of strange shores or in the lands of men of darkness.'

'To what purpose then is the gracing of our ships,' said Aldarion, 'if they are to sail to no shores, and may seek nothing not seen before?'

He spoke no more to his father of such matters, but passed his days upon the ship *Eäambar* in the company of the Venturers, and in the building of a vessel greater than any made before: that ship he named *Palarran*, the Far-Wanderer. Yet now he met Erendis often (and that was by contrivance of the Queen); and the King learning of their meetings felt disquiet, yet he was not displeased. 'It would be more kind to cure Aldarion of his restlessness,' said he, 'before he win the heart of any woman.' 'How else will you cure him, if not by love?' said the Queen. 'Erendis is yet young,' said Meneldur. But Almarian answered: 'The kin of Erendis have not the length of life

that is granted to the descendants of Elros; and her heart is already won.'<sup>11</sup>

Now when the great ship *Palarran* was built Aldarion would depart once more. At this Meneldur became wrathful, though by the persuasions of the Queen he would not use the King's power to stay him. Here must be told of the custom that when a ship departed from Númenor over the Great Sea to Middle-earth a woman, most often of the captain's kin, should set upon the vessel's prow the Green Bough of Return; and that was cut from the tree *oiolairë*, that signifies 'Ever-summer', which the Eldar gave to the Númenóreans,<sup>12</sup> saying that they set it upon their own ships in token of friendship with Ossë and Uinen. The leaves of that tree were evergreen, glossy and fragrant; and it throve upon sea-air. But Meneldur forbade the Queen and the sisters of Aldarion to bear the bough of *oiolairë* to Rómenna where lay the *Palarran*, saying that he refused his blessing to his son, who was venturing forth against his will; and Aldarion hearing this said: 'If I must go without blessing or bough, then so I will go.'

Then the Queen was grieved; but Erendis said to her: '*Tarinya*, if you will cut the bough from the Elven-tree, I will bear it to the haven, by your leave; for the King has not forbidden it to me.'

The mariners thought it an ill thing that the Captain should depart thus; but when all was made ready and men prepared to weigh anchor Erendis came there, little though she loved the noise and bustle of the great harbour and the crying of the gulls. Aldarion greeted her with amazement and joy; and she said: 'I have brought you the Bough of Return, lord: from the Queen.' 'From the Queen?' said Aldarion, in a changed manner. 'Yes, lord,' said she; 'but I asked for her leave to do so. Others beside your own kin will rejoice at your return, as soon as may be.'

At that time Aldarion first looked on Erendis with love; and he stood long in the stern looking back as the *Palarran* passed out to sea. It is said that he hastened his return, and was gone less time than he had designed; and coming back he brought gifts for the Queen and the ladies of her house, but the richest gift he brought for Erendis, and that was a diamond. Cold now were the greetings between the King and his son; and Meneldur rebuked him, saying that such a gift was unbecoming in the King's Heir unless it were a betrothal gift, and he demanded that Aldarion declare his mind.

'In gratitude I brought it,' said he, 'for a warm heart amid the coldness of others.'

'Cold hearts may not kindle others to give them warmth at their goings and comings,' said Meneldur; and again he urged Aldarion to take thought of marriage, though he did not speak of Erendis. But Aldarion would have none of it, for he was ever and in every course the more opposed as those about him urged it; and treating Erendis now with greater coolness he determined to leave Númenor and further his designs in Vinyalondë. Life on land was irksome to him, for aboard his ship he was subject to no other will, and the Venturers who accompanied him knew only love and admiration for the Great Captain. But now Meneldur forbade his going; and Aldarion, before the winter was fully gone, set sail with a fleet of seven ships and the greater part of the Venturers in defiance of the King. The Queen did not dare incur Meneldur's wrath; but at night a cloaked woman came to the haven bearing a bough, and she gave it into the hands of Aldarion, saying: 'This comes from the Lady of the Westlands' (for so they called Erendis), and went away in the dark.

At the open rebellion of Aldarion the King rescinded his authority as Lord of the Ships and Havens of Númenor; and he caused the Guildhouse of the Venturers on Eäambar to be shut, and the shipyards of Rómenna to be closed, and forbade the felling of all trees for shipbuilding. Five years passed; and Aldarion returned with nine ships, for two had been built in Vinyalondë, and they were laden with fine timber from the forests of the coasts of Middle-earth. The anger of Aldarion was great when he found what had been done; and to his father he said: 'If I am to have no welcome in Númenor, and no work for my hands to do, and if my ships may not be repaired in its havens, then I will go again and soon; for the winds have been rough,<sup>13</sup> and I need refitment. Has not a King's son aught to do but study women's faces to find a wife? The work of forestry I took up, and I have been prudent in it; there will be more timber in Númenor ere my day ends than there is under your sceptre.' And true to his word Aldarion left again in the same year with three ships and the hardiest of the Venturers, going without blessing or bough; for Meneldur set a ban on all the women of his house and of the Venturers, and put a guard about Rómenna.

On that voyage Aldarion was away so long that the people feared for him; and Meneldur himself was disquieted, despite the grace of the Valar that had ever protected the ships of Númenor.<sup>14</sup> When ten years were gone since his sailing Erendis at last despaired, and believing that Aldarion had met with disaster, or else that he had determined to dwell in Middle-earth, and also in order to escape the importuning of suitors, she asked the Queen's leave, and departing

from Armenelos she returned to her own kindred in the Westlands. But after four years more Aldarion at last returned, and his ships were battered and broken by the seas. He had sailed first to the haven of Vinyalondë, and thence he had made a great coastwise journey southwards, far beyond any place yet reached by the ships of the Númenóreans; but returning northwards he had met contrary winds and great storms, and scarce escaping shipwreck in the Harad found Vinyalondë overthrown by great seas and plundered by hostile men. Three times he was driven back from the crossing of the Great Sea by high winds out of the West, and his own ship was struck by lightning and dismasted; and only with labour and hardship in the deep waters did he come at last to haven in Númenor. Greatly was Meneldur comforted at Aldarion's return; but he rebuked him for his rebellion against king and father, thus forsaking the guardianship of the Valar, and risking the wrath of Ossë not only for himself but for men whom he had bound to himself in devotion. Then Aldarion was chastened in mood, and he received the pardon of Meneldur, who restored to him the Lordship of the Ships and Havens, and added thereto the title of Master of the Forests.

Aldarion was grieved to find Erendis gone from Armenelos, but he was too proud to seek her; and indeed he could not well do so save to ask for her in marriage, and he was still unwilling to be bound. He set himself to the repairing of the neglects of his long absence, for he had been nigh on twenty years away; and at that time great harbour works were put in hand, especially at Rómenna. He found that there had been much felling of trees for building and the making of many things, but all was done without foresight, and little had been planted to replace what was taken; and he journeyed far and wide in Númenor to view the standing woods.

Riding one day in the forests of the Westlands he saw a woman, whose dark hair flowed in the wind, and about her was a green cloak clasped at the throat with a bright jewel; and he took her for one of the Eldar, who came at times to those parts of the Island. But she approached, and he knew her for Erendis, and saw that the jewel was the one that he had given her; then suddenly he knew in himself the love that he bore her, and he felt the emptiness of his days. Erendis seeing him turned pale and would ride off, but he was too quick, and he said: 'Too well have I deserved that you should flee from me, who have fled so often and so far! But forgive me, and stay now.' They rode then together to the house of Beregar her father, and there Aldarion made plain his desire for betrothal to Erendis; but now Erendis was reluctant, though according to custom

and the life of her people it was now full time for her marriage. Her love for him was not lessened, nor did she retreat out of guile; but she feared now in her heart that in the war between herself and the Sea for the keeping of Aldarion she would not conquer. Never would Erendis take less, that she might not lose all; and fearing the Sea, and begrudging to all ships the felling of trees which she loved, she determined that she must utterly defeat the Sea and the ships, or else be herself defeated utterly.

But Aldarion wooed Erendis in earnest, and wherever she went he would go; he neglected the havens and the shipyards and all the concerns of the Guild of Venturers, felling no trees but setting himself to their planting only, and he found more contentment in those days than in any others of his life, though he did not know it until he looked back long after when old age was upon him. At length he sought to persuade Erendis to sail with him on a voyage about the Island in the ship *Eäambar*; for one hundred years had now passed since Aldarion founded the Guild of Venturers, and feasts were to be held in all the havens of Númenor. To this Erendis consented, concealing her distaste and fear; and they departed from Rómenna and came to Andúnië in the west of the Isle. There Valandil, Lord of Andúnië and close kin of Aldarion,<sup>15</sup> held a great feast; and at that feast he drank to Erendis, naming her *Uinéniel*, Daughter of Uinen, the new Lady of the Sea. But Erendis, who sat beside the wife of Valandil, said aloud: 'Call me by no such name! I am no daughter of Uinen: rather is she my foe.'

Thereafter for a while doubt again assailed Erendis, for Aldarion turned his thoughts again to the works at Rómenna, and busied himself with the building of great sea-walls, and the raising of a tall tower upon Tol Uinen: *Calmindon*, the Light-tower, was its name. But when these things were done Aldarion returned to Erendis and besought her to be betrothed; yet still she delayed, saying: 'I have journeyed with you by ship, lord. Before I give you my answer, will you not journey with me ashore, to the places that I love? You know too little of this land, for one who shall be its King.' Therefore they departed together, and came to Emerië, where were rolling downs of grass, and it was the chief place of sheep pasturage in Númenor; and they saw the white houses of the farmers and shepherds, and heard the bleating of the flocks.

There Erendis spoke to Aldarion and said: 'Here could I be at ease!'

'You shall dwell where you will, as wife of the King's Heir,' said Aldarion. 'And as Queen in many fair houses, such as you desire.'

'When you are King, I shall be old,' said Erendis. 'Where will the King's Heir dwell meanwhile?'

'With his wife,' said Aldarion, 'when his labours allow, if she cannot share in them.'

'I will not share my husband with the Lady Uinen,' said Erendis.

'That is a twisted saying,' said Aldarion. 'As well might I say that I would not share my wife with the Lord Oromë of Forests, because she loves trees that grow wild.'

'Indeed you would not,' said Erendis; 'for you would fell any wood as a gift to Uinen, if you had a mind.'

'Name any tree that you love and it shall stand till it dies,' said Aldarion.

'I love all that grow in this Isle,' said Erendis.

Then they rode a great while in silence; and after that day they parted, and Erendis returned to her father's house. To him she said nothing, but to her mother Núneth she told the words that had passed between herself and Aldarion.

'All or nothing, Erendis,' said Núneth. 'So you were as a child. But you love this man, and he is a great man, not to speak of his rank; and you will not cast out your love from your heart so easily, nor without great hurt to yourself. A woman must share her husband's love with his work and the fire of his spirit, or make him a thing not loveable. But I doubt that you will ever understand such counsel. Yet I am grieved, for it is full time that you were wed; and having borne a fair child I had hoped to see fair grandchildren; nor if they were cradled in the King's house would that displease me.'

This counsel did not indeed move the mind of Erendis; nevertheless she found that her heart was not under her will, and her days were empty: more empty than in the years when Aldarion had been gone. For he still abode in Númenor, and yet the days passed, and he did not come again into the west.

Now Almarian the Queen, being acquainted by Núneth with what had passed, and fearing lest Aldarion should seek solace in voyaging again (for he had been long ashore), sent word to Erendis asking that she return to Armenelos; and Erendis being urged by Núneth and by her own heart did as she was bid. There she was reconciled to Aldarion; and in the spring of the year, when the time of the *Erukjermë* was come, they ascended in the retinue of the King to the summit of the Meneltarma, which was the Hallowed Mountain of the Númenóreans.<sup>16</sup> When all had gone down again Aldarion and Erendis remained behind; and they looked out, seeing all the Isle of Westerneße laid green beneath them in the spring, and they saw

the glimmer of light in the West where far away was Avallónë,<sup>17</sup> and the shadows in the East upon the Great Sea; and the Menel was blue above them. They did not speak, for no one, save only the King, spoke upon the height of Meneltarma; but as they came down Erendis stood a moment, looking towards Emerië, and beyond, towards the woods of her home.

'Do you not love the Yôzâyan?' she said.

'I love it indeed,' he answered, 'though I think that you doubt it. For I think also of what it may be in time to come, and the hope and splendour of its people; and I believe that a gift should not lie idle in hoard.'

But Erendis denied his words, saying: 'Such gifts as come from the Valar, and through them from the One, are to be loved for themselves now, and in all nows. They are not given for barter, for more or for better. The Edain remain mortal Men, Aldarion, great though they be: and we cannot dwell in the time that is to come, lest we lose our now for a phantom of our own design.' Then taking suddenly the jewel from her throat she asked him: 'Would you have me trade this to buy me other goods that I desire?'

'No!' said he. 'But you do not lock it in hoard. Yet I think you set it too high; for it is dimmed by the light of your eyes.' Then he kissed her on the eyes, and in that moment she put aside fear, and accepted him; and their troth was lighted upon the steep path of the Meneltarma.

They went back then to Armenelos, and Aldarion presented Erendis to Tar-Meneldur as the betrothed of the King's Heir; and the King was rejoiced, and there was merrymaking in the city and in all the Isle. As betrothal gift Meneldur gave to Erendis a fair portion of land in Emerië, and there he had built for her a white house. But Aldarion said to her: 'Other jewels I have in hoard, gifts of kings in far lands to whom the ships of Númenor have brought aid. I have gems as green as the light of the sun in the leaves of trees which you love.'

'No!' said Erendis. 'I have had my betrothal gift, though it came beforehand. It is the only jewel that I have or would have; and I will set it yet higher.' Then he saw that she had caused the white gem to be set as a star in a silver fillet; and at her asking he bound it on her forehead. She wore it so for many years, until sorrow befell; and thus she was known far and wide as Tar-Elestirnë, the Lady of the Star-brow.<sup>18</sup> Thus there was for a time peace and joy in Armenelos in the house of the King, and in all the Isle, and it is recorded in ancient books that there was great fruitfulness in the golden summer

of that year, which was the eight hundred and fifty-eighth of the Second Age.

But alone among the people the mariners of the Guild of Venturers were not well content. For fifteen years Aldarion had remained in Númenor, and led no expedition abroad; and though there were gallant captains who had been trained by him, without the wealth and authority of the King's son their voyages were fewer and more brief, and went but seldom further than the land of Gil-galad. Moreover timber was become scarce in the shipyards, for Aldarion neglected the forests; and the Venturers besought him to turn again to this work. At their prayer Aldarion did so, and at first Erendis would go about with him in the woods; but she was saddened by the sight of trees felled in their prime, and afterwards hewn and sawn. Soon therefore Aldarion went alone, and they were less in company.

Now the year came in, in which all looked for the marriage of the King's Heir; for it was not the custom that betrothal should last much longer than three years. One morning in that spring Aldarion rode up from the haven of Andúnië, to take the road to the house of Beregar; for there he was to be guest, and thither Erendis had preceded him, going from Armenelos by the roads of the land. As he came to the top of the great bluff that stood out from the land and sheltered the haven from the north, he turned and looked back over the sea. A west wind was blowing, as often at that season, beloved by those who had a mind to sail to Middle-earth, and white-crested waves marched towards the shore. Then suddenly the sea-longing took him as though a great hand had been laid on his throat, and his heart hammered, and his breath was stopped. He strove for the mastery, and at length turned his back and continued on his journey; and by design he took his way through the wood where he had seen Erendis riding as one of the Eldar, now fifteen years gone. Almost he looked to see her so once more; but she was not there, and desire to see her face again hastened him, so that he came to Beregar's house before evening.

There she welcomed him gladly, and he was merry; but he said nothing touching their wedding, though all had thought that this was a part of his errand to the Westlands. As the days passed Erendis marked that he now often fell silent in company when others were gay; and if she looked towards him suddenly she saw his eyes upon her. Then her heart was shaken; for the blue eyes of Aldarion seemed to her now grey and cold, yet she perceived as it were a hunger in his gaze. That look she had seen too often before, and



feared what it boded; but she said nothing. At that Númeth, who marked all that passed, was glad; for 'words may open wounds', as she said. Ere long Aldarion and Erendis rode away, returning to Armenelos, and as they drew further from the sea he grew merrier again. Still he said nothing to her of his trouble: for indeed he was at war within himself, and irresolute.

So the year drew on, and Aldarion spoke neither of the sea nor of wedding; but he was often in Rómenna, and in the company of the Venturers. At length, when the next year came in, the King called him to his chamber; and they were at ease together, and the love they bore one another was no longer clouded.

'My son,' said Tar-Meneldur, 'when will you give me the daughter that I have so long desired? More than three years have now passed, and that is long enough. I marvel that you could endure so long a delay.'

Then Aldarion was silent, but at length he said: 'It has come upon me again, Atarinya. Eighteen years is a long fast. I can scarce lie still in a bed, or hold myself upon a horse, and the hard ground of stone wounds my feet.'

Then Meneldur was grieved, and pitied his son; but he did not understand his trouble, for he himself had never loved ships, and he said: 'Alas! But you are betrothed. And by the laws of Númenor and the right ways of the Eldar and Edain a man shall not have two wives. You cannot wed the Sea, for you are affianced to Erendis.'

Then Aldarion's heart was hardened, for these words recalled his speech with Erendis as they passed through Emerië; and he thought (but untruly) that she had consulted with his father. It was ever his mood, if he thought that others combined to urge him on some path of their choosing, to turn away from it. 'Smiths may smithy, and horsemen ride, and miners delve, when they are betrothed,' said he. 'Therefore why may not mariners sail?'

'If smiths remained five years at the anvil few would be smiths' wives,' said the King. 'And mariners' wives are few, and they endure what they must, for such is their livelihood and their necessity. The King's Heir is not a mariner by trade, nor is he under necessity.'

'There are other needs than livelihood that drive a man,' said Aldarion. 'And there are yet many years to spare.'

'Nay, nay,' said Meneldur, 'you take your grace for granted: Erendis has shorter hope than you, and her years wane swifter. She is not of the line of Elros; and she has loved you now many years.'

'She held back well nigh twelve years, when I was eager,' said Aldarion. 'I do not ask for a third of such a time.'

'She was not then betrothed,' said Meneldur. 'But neither of you are now free. And if she held back, I doubt not that it was in fear of what now seems likely to befall, if you cannot master yourself. In some way you must have stilled that fear; and though you may have spoken no plain word, yet you are beholden, as I judge.'

Then Aldarion said in anger: 'It were better to speak with my betrothed myself, and not hold parley by proxy.' And he left his father. Not long after he spoke to Erendis of his desire to voyage again upon the great waters, saying that he was robbed of all sleep and rest. But she sat pale and silent. At length she said: 'I thought that you were come to speak of our wedding.'

'I will,' said Aldarion. 'It shall be as soon as I return, if you will wait.' But seeing the grief in her face he was moved, and a thought came to him. 'It shall be now,' he said. 'It shall be before this year is done. And then I will fit out such a ship as the Venturers made never yet, a Queen's house on the water. And you shall sail with me, Erendis, under the grace of the Valar, of Yavanna and of Oromë whom you love; you shall sail to lands where I shall show you such woods as you have never seen, where even now the Eldar sing; or forests wider than Númenor, free and wild since the beginning of days, where still you may hear the great horn of Oromë the Lord.'

But Erendis wept. 'Nay, Aldarion,' she said. 'I rejoice that the world yet holds such things as you tell of; but I shall never see them. For I do not desire it: to the woods of Númenor my heart is given. And, alas! if for love of you I took ship, I should not return. It is beyond my strength to endure; and out of sight of land I should die. The Sea hates me; and now it is revenged that I kept you from it and yet fled from you. Go, my lord! But have pity, and take not so many years as I lost before.'

Then Aldarion was abashed; for as he had spoken in heedless anger to his father, so now she spoke with love. He did not sail that year; but he had little peace or joy. 'Out of sight of land she will die!' he said. 'Soon I shall die, if I see it longer. Then if we are to spend any years together I must go alone, and go soon.' He made ready therefore at last for sailing in the spring; and the Venturers were glad, if none else in the Isle who knew of what was done. Three ships were manned, and in the month of Viressë they departed. Erendis herself set the green bough of *oiolairë* on the prow of the Palarran, and hid her tears, until it passed out beyond the great new harbour-walls.

Six years and more passed away before Aldarion returned to Númenor. He found even Almarian the Queen colder in welcome,

and the Venturers were fallen out of esteem; for men thought that he had treated Erendis ill. But indeed he was longer gone than he had purposed; for he had found the haven of Vinyalondë now wholly ruined, and great seas had brought to nothing all his labours to restore it. Men near the coasts were growing afraid of the Númenóreans, or were become openly hostile; and Aldarion heard rumours of some lord in Middle-earth who hated the men of the ships. Then when he would turn for home a great wind came out of the south, and he was borne far to the northward. He tarried a while at Mithlond, but when his ships stood out to sea once more they were again swept away north, and driven into wastes perilous with ice, and they suffered cold. At last the sea and wind relented, but even as Aldarion looked out in longing from the prow of the Palarran and saw far off the Meneltarma, his glance fell upon the green bough, and he saw that it was withered. Then Aldarion was dismayed, for such a thing had never befallen the bough of *oiolairë*, so long as it was washed with the spray. 'It is frosted, Captain,' said a mariner who stood beside him. 'It has been too cold. Glad am I to see the Pillar.'

When Aldarion sought out Erendis she looked at him keenly but did not come forward to meet him; and he stood for a while at a loss for words, as was not his wont. 'Sit, my lord,' said Erendis, 'and first tell me of all your deeds. Much must you have seen and done in these long years!'

Then Aldarion began haltingly, and she sat silent, listening, while he told all the tale of his trials and delays; and when he ended she said: 'I thank the Valar by whose grace you have returned at last. But I thank them also that I did not come with you; for I should have withered sooner than any green bough.'

'Your green bough did not go into the bitter cold by will,' he answered. 'But dismiss me now, if you will, and I think that men will not blame you. Yet dare I not to hope that your love will prove stronger to endure even than fair *oiolairë*?'

'So it does prove indeed,' said Erendis. 'It is not yet chilled to the death, Aldarion. Alas! How can I dismiss you, when I look on you again, returning as fair as the sun after winter!'

'Then let spring and summer now begin!' he said.

'And let not winter return,' said Erendis.

Then to the joy of Meneldur and Almarian the wedding of the King's Heir was proclaimed for the next spring; and so it came to pass. In the eight hundred and seventieth year of the Second Age

Aldarion and Erendis were wedded in Armenelos, and in every house there was music, and in all the streets men and women sang. And afterwards the King's Heir and his bride rode at their leisure through all the Isle, until at midsummer they came to Andúnië, where the last feast was prepared by Valandil its lord; and all the people of the Westlands were gathered there, for love of Erendis and pride that a Queen of Númenor should come from among them.

In the morning before the feast Aldarion gazed out from the window of the bedchamber, which looked west-over-sea. 'See, Erendis!' he cried. 'There is a ship speeding to haven; and it is no ship of Númenor, but one such as neither you nor I shall ever set foot upon, even if we would.' Then Erendis looked forth, and she saw a tall white ship, with white birds turning in the sunlight all about it; and its sails glimmered with silver as with foam at the stem it rode towards the harbour. Thus the Eldar graced the wedding of Erendis, for love of the people of the Westlands, who were closest in their friendship.<sup>19</sup> Their ship was laden with flowers for the adornment of the feast, so that all that sat there, when evening was come, were crowned with *elanor*<sup>20</sup> and sweet *lissuin* whose fragrance brings heart's ease. Minstrels they brought also, singers who remembered songs of Elves and Men in the days of Nargothrond and Gondolin long ago; and many of the Eldar high and fair were seated among Men at the tables. But the people of Andúnië, looking upon the blissful company, said that none were more fair than Erendis; and they said that her eyes were as bright as were the eyes of Morwen Eledhwen of old,<sup>21</sup> or even as those of Avallónë.

Many gifts the Eldar brought also. To Aldarion they gave a sapling tree, whose bark was snow-white, and its stem straight, strong and pliant as it were of steel; but it was not yet in leaf. 'I thank you,' said Aldarion to the Elves. 'The wood of such a tree must be precious indeed.'

'Maybe; we know not,' said they. 'None has ever been hewn. It bears cool leaves in summer, and flowers in winter. It is for this that we prize it.'

To Erendis they gave a pair of birds, grey, with golden beaks and feet. They sang sweetly one to another with many cadences never repeated through a long thrill of song; but if one were separated from the other, at once they flew together, and they would not sing apart.

'How shall I keep them?' said Erendis.

'Let them fly and be free,' answered the Eldar. 'For we have spoken to them and named you; and they will stay wherever you

dwell. They mate for their life, and that is long. Maybe there will be many such birds to sing in the gardens of your children.'

That night Erendis awoke, and a sweet fragrance came through the lattice; but the night was light, for the full moon was westering. Then leaving their bed Erendis looked out and saw all the land sleeping in silver; but the two birds sat side by side upon her sill.

When the feasting was ended Aldarion and Erendis went for a while to her home; and the birds again perched upon the sill of her window. At length they bade Beregar and Númeth farewell, and they rode back at last to Armenelos; for there by the King's wish his Heir would dwell, and a house was prepared for them amidst a garden of trees. There the Elven-tree was planted, and the Elven-birds sang in its boughs.

Two years later Erendis conceived, and in the spring of the year after she bore to Aldarion a daughter. Even from birth the child was fair, and grew ever in beauty: the woman most beautiful, as old tales tell, that ever was born in the line of Elros, save Ar-Zimraphel, the last. When her first naming was due they called her Ancalimë. In heart Erendis was glad, for she thought: 'Surely now Aldarion will desire a son, to be his heir; and he will abide with me long yet.' For in secret she still feared the Sea and its power upon his heart; and though she strove to hide it, and would talk with him of his old ventures and of his hopes and designs, she watched jealously if he went to his house-ship or was much with the Venturers. To Eämbar Aldarion once asked her to come, but seeing swiftly in her eyes that she was not full-willing he never pressed her again. Not without cause was Erendis' fear. When Aldarion had been five years ashore he began to be busy again with his Mastership of Forests, and was often many days away from his house. There was now indeed sufficient timber in Númenor (and that was chiefly owing to his prudence); yet since the people were now more numerous there was ever need of wood for building and for the making of many things beside. For in those ancient days, though many had great skill with stone and with metals (since the Edain of old had learned much of the Noldor), the Númenóreans loved things fashioned of wood, whether for daily use, or for beauty of carving. At that time Aldarion again gave most heed to the future, planting always where there was felling, and he had new woods set to grow where there was room, a free land that was suited to trees of different kinds. It was then that he became most

widely known as Aldarion, by which name he is remembered among those who held the sceptre in Númenor. Yet to many beside Erendis it seemed that he had little love for trees in themselves, caring for them rather as timber that would serve his designs.

Not far otherwise was it with the Sea. For as Númeth had said to Erendis long before: 'Ships he may love, my daughter, for those are made by men's minds and hands; but I think that it is not the winds or the great waters that so burn his heart, nor yet the sight of strange lands, but some heat in his mind, or some dream that pursues him.' And it may be that she struck near the truth; for Aldarion was a man long-sighted, and he looked forward to days when the people would need more room and greater wealth; and whether he himself knew this clearly or no, he dreamed of the glory of Númenor and the power of its kings, and he sought for footholds whence they could step to wider dominion. So it was that ere long he turned again from forestry to the building of ships, and a vision came to him of a mighty vessel like a castle with tall masts and great sails like clouds, bearing men and stores enough for a town. Then in the yards of Rómenna the saws and hammers were busy, while among many lesser craft a great ribbed hull took shape; at which men wondered. *Turuphanto*, the Wooden Whale, they called it, but that was not its name.

Erendis learned of these things, though Aldarion had not spoken to her of them, and she was unquiet. Therefore one day she said to him: 'What is all this busyness with ships, Lord of the Havens? Have we not enough? How many fair trees have been cut short of their lives in this year?' She spoke lightly, and smiled as she spoke.

'A man must have work to do upon land,' he answered, 'even though he have a fair wife. Trees spring and trees fall. I plant more than are felled.' He spoke also in a light tone, but he did not look her in the face; and they did not speak again of these matters.

But when Ancalimë was close on four years old Aldarion at last declared openly to Erendis his desire to sail again from Númenor. She sat silent, for he said nothing that she did not already know; and words were in vain. He tarried until the birthday of Ancalimë, and made much of her that day. She laughed and was merry, though others in that house were not so; and as she went to her bed she said to her father: 'Where will you take me this summer, *tatanya*? I should like to see the white house in the sheep-land that *mamil* tells of.' Aldarion did not answer; and the next day he left the house, and was gone for some days. When all was ready he returned, and bade Erendis farewell. Then against her will tears were in her eyes. They grieved him, and yet irked him, for his mind was resolved, and he

hardened his heart. 'Come, Erendis!' he said. 'Eight years I have stayed. You cannot bind for ever in soft bonds the son of the King, of the blood of Tuor and Eärendil! And I am not going to my death. I shall soon return.'

'Soon?' she said. 'But the years are unrelenting, and you will not bring them back with you. And mine are briefer than yours. My youth runs away; and where are my children, and where is your heir? Too long and often of late is my bed cold.'<sup>22</sup>

'Often of late I have thought that you preferred it so,' said Aldarion. 'But let us not be wroth, even if we are not of like mind. Look in your mirror, Erendis. You are beautiful, and no shadow of age is there yet. You have time to spare to my deep need. Two years! Two years is all that I ask!'

But Erendis answered: 'Say rather: "Two years I will take, whether you will or no." Take two years, then! But no more. A King's son of the blood of Eärendil should also be a man of his word.'

Next morning Aldarion hastened away. He lifted up Ancalimë and kissed her; but though she clung to him he set her down quickly and rode off. Soon after the great ship set sail from Rómenna. *Hirilondë* he named it, Haven-finder; but it went from Númenor without the blessing of Tar-Meneldur; and Erendis was not at the harbour to set the green Bough of Return, nor did she send. Aldarion's face was dark and troubled as he stood at the prow of *Hirilondë*, where the wife of his captain had set a great branch of *oiolairë*; but he did not look back until the Meneltarma was far off in the twilight.

All that day Erendis sat in her chamber alone, grieving; but deeper in her heart she felt a new pain of cold anger, and her love of Aldarion was wounded to the quick. She hated the Sea; and now even trees, that once she had loved, she desired to look upon no more, for they recalled to her the masts of great ships. Therefore ere long she left Armenelos, and went to Emerië in the midst of the Isle, where ever, far and near, the bleating of sheep was borne upon the wind. 'Sweeter it is to my ears than the mewing of gulls,' she said, as she stood at the doors of her white house, the gift of the King; and that was upon a downside, facing west, with great lawns all about that merged without wall or hedge into the pastures. Thither she took Ancalimë, and they were all the company that either had. For Erendis would have only servants in her household, and they were all women; and she sought ever to mould her daughter to her own mind, and to feed her upon her own bitterness against men. Ancalimë seldom indeed saw any man, for Erendis kept no state, and her few farm-servants and shepherds had a homestead at a

distance. Other men did not come there, save rarely some messenger from the King; and he would ride away soon, for to men there seemed a chill in the house that put them to flight, and while there they felt constrained to speak half in whisper.

One morning soon after Erendis came to Emerië she awoke to the song of birds, and there on the sill of her window were the Elven-birds that long had dwelt in her garden in Armenelos, but which she had left behind forgotten. 'Sweets fools, fly away!' she said. 'This is no place for such joy as yours.'

Then their song ceased, and they flew up over the trees; thrice they wheeled above the roofs, and then they went away westwards. That evening they settled upon the sill of the chamber in the house of her father, where she had lain with Aldarion on their way from the feast in Andúnië; and there Núneth and Beregar found them on the morning of the next day. But when Núneth held out her hands to them they flew steeply up and fled away, and she watched them until they were specks in the sunlight, speeding to the sea, back to the land whence they came.

'He has gone again, then, and left her,' said Núneth.

'Then why has she not sent news?' said Beregar. 'Or why has she not come home?'

'She has sent news enough,' said Núneth. 'For she has dismissed the Elven-birds, and that was ill done. It bodes no good. Why, why, my daughter? Surely you knew what you must face? But let her alone, Beregar, wherever she may be. This is her home no longer, and she will not be healed here. He will come back. And then may the Valar send her wisdom – or guile, at the least!'

When the second year after Aldarion's sailing came in, by the King's wish Erendis ordered the house in Armenelos to be arrayed and made ready; but she herself made no preparation for return. To the King she sent answer saying: 'I will come if you command me, *atar aranya*. But have I a duty now to hasten? Will it not be time enough when his sail is seen in the East?' And to herself she said: 'Will the King have me wait upon the quays like a sailor's lass? Would that I were, but I am so no longer. I have played that part to the full.'

But that year passed, and no sail was seen; and the next year came, and waned to autumn. Then Erendis grew hard and silent. She ordered that the house in Armenelos be shut, and she went never more than a few hours' journey from her house in Emerië. Such love as she had was all given to her daughter, and she clung to her, and would not have Ancalimë leave her side, not even to visit Núneth

and her kin in the Westlands. All Ancalimë's teaching was from her mother; and she learned well to write and to read, and to speak the Elven-tongue with Erendis, after the manner in which high men of Númenor used it. For in the Westlands it was a daily speech in such houses as Beregar's, and Erendis seldom used the Númenórean tongue, which Aldarion loved the better. Much Ancalimë also learned of Númenor and the ancient days in such books and scrolls as were in the house which she could understand; and lore of other kinds, of the people and the land, she heard at times from the women of the household, though of this Erendis knew nothing. But the women were chary of their speech to the child, fearing their mistress; and there was little enough of laughter for Ancalimë in the white house in Emerië. It was hushed and without music, as if one had died there not long since; for in Númenor in those days it was the part of men to play upon instruments, and the music that Ancalimë heard in childhood was the singing of women at work, out of doors, and away from the hearing of the White Lady of Emerië. But now Ancalimë was seven years old, and as often as she could get leave she would go out of the house and on to the wide downs where she could run free; and at times she would go with a shepherdess, tending the sheep, and eating under the sky.

One day in the summer of that year a young boy, but older than herself, came to the house on an errand from one of the distant farms; and Ancalimë came upon him munching bread and drinking milk in the farm-courtyard at the rear of the house. He looked at her without deference, and went on drinking. Then he set down his mug.

'Stare, if you must, great eyes!' he said. 'You're a pretty girl, but too thin. Will you eat?' He took a loaf out of his bag.

'Be off, Íbal!' cried an old woman, coming from the dairy-door. 'And use your long legs, or you'll forget the message I gave you for your mother before you get home!'

'No need for a watch-dog where you are, mother Zamîn!' cried the boy, and with a bark and a shout he leapt over the gate and went off at a run down the hill. Zamîn was an old country-woman, free-tongued, and not easily daunted, even by the White Lady.

'What noisy thing was that?' said Ancalimë.

'A boy,' said Zamîn, 'if you know what that is. But how should you? They're breakers and eaters, mostly. That one is ever eating - but not to no purpose. A fine lad his father will find when he comes back; but if that is not soon, he'll scarce know him. I might say that of others.'

'Has the boy then a father too?' asked Ancalimë.

'To be sure,' said Zamîn. 'Ulbar, one of the shepherds of the great lord away south: the Sheep-lord we call him, a kinsman of the King.'

'Then why is the boy's father not at home?'

'Why, *hérinkë*,' said Zamîn, 'because he heard of those Venturers, and took up with them, and went away with your father, the Lord Aldarion: but the Valar know whither, or why.'

That evening Ancalimë said suddenly to her mother: 'Is my father also called the Lord Aldarion?'

'He was,' said Erendis. 'But why do you ask?' Her voice was quiet and cool, but she wondered and was troubled; for no word concerning Aldarion had passed between them before.

Ancalimë did not answer the question. 'When will he come back?' she said.

'Do not ask me!' said Erendis. 'I do not know. Never, perhaps. But do not trouble yourself; for you have a mother, and she will not run away, while you love her.'

Ancalimë did not speak of her father again.

The days passed bringing in another year, and then another; in that spring Ancalimë was nine years old. Lambs were born and grew; shearing came and passed; a hot summer burned the grass. Autumn turned to rain. Then out of the East upon a cloudy wind Hirilondë came back over the grey seas, bearing Aldarion to Rómenna; and word was sent to Emerië, but Erendis did not speak of it. There were none to greet Aldarion upon the quays. He rode through the rain to Armenelos; and he found his house shut. He was dismayed, but he would ask news of no man; first he would seek the King, for he thought he had much to say to him.

He found his welcome no warmer than he looked for; and Meneldur spoke to him as King to a captain whose conduct is in question. 'You have been long away,' he said coldly. 'It is more than three years now since the date that you set for your return.'

'Alas!' said Aldarion. 'Even I have become weary of the sea, and for long my heart has yearned westward. But I have been detained against my heart: there is much to do. And all things go backward in my absence.'

'I do not doubt it,' said Meneldur. 'You will find it true here also in your right land, I fear.'

'That I hope to redress,' said Aldarion. 'But the world is changing again. Outside nigh on a thousand years have passed since the Lords of the West sent their power against Angband; and those days are

forgotten, or wrapped in dim legend among Men of Middle-earth. They are troubled again, and fear haunts them. I desire greatly to consult with you, to give account of my deeds, and my thought concerning what should be done.'

'You shall do so,' said Meneldur. 'Indeed I expect no less. But there are other matters which I judge more urgent. "Let a King first rule well his own house ere he correct others", it is said. It is true of all men. I will now give you counsel, son of Meneldur. You have also a life of your own. Half of yourself you have ever neglected. To you I say now: Go home!'

Aldarion stood suddenly still, and his face was stern. 'If you know, tell me,' he said. 'Where is my home?'

'Where your wife is,' said Meneldur. 'You have broken your word to her, whether by necessity or no. She dwells now in Emerië, in her own house, far from the sea. Thither you must go at once.'

'Had any word been left for me, whither to go, I would have gone directly from the haven,' said Aldarion. 'But at least I need not now ask tidings of strangers.' He turned then to go, but paused, saying: 'Captain Aldarion has forgotten somewhat that belongs to his other half, which in his waywardness he also thinks urgent. He has a letter that he was charged to deliver to the King in Armenelos.' Presenting it to Meneldur he bowed and left the chamber; and within an hour he took horse and rode away, though night was falling. With him he had but two companions, men from his ship: Henderch of the Westlands, and Ulbar who came from Emerië.

Riding hard they came to Emerië at nightfall of the next day, and men and horses were weary. Cold and white looked the house on the hill in a last gleam of sunset under cloud. He blew a horn-call as soon as he saw it from afar.

As he leapt from his horse in the forecourt he saw Erendis: clad in white she stood upon the steps that went up to the pillars before the door. She held herself high, but as he drew near he saw that she was pale and her eyes over-bright.

'You come late, my lord,' she said. 'I had long ceased to expect you. I fear that there is no such welcome prepared for you as I had made when you were due.'

'Mariners are not hard to please,' he said.

'That is well,' she said; and she turned back into the house and left him. Then two women came forward, and an old crone who went down the steps. As Aldarion went in she said to the men in a loud voice so that he could hear her: 'There is no lodging for you here. Go down to the homestead at the hill's foot!'

'No, Zamîn,' said Ulbar. 'I'll not stay. I am for home, by the Lord Aldarion's leave. Is all well there?'

'Well enough,' said she. 'Your son has eaten himself out of your memory. But go, and find your own answers! You'll be warmer there than your Captain.'

Erendis did not come to the table at his late evening-meal, and Aldarion was served by women in a room apart. But before he was done she entered, and said before the women: 'You will be weary, my lord, after such haste. A guest-room is made ready for you, when you will. My women will wait on you. If you are cold, call for fire.'

Aldarion made no answer. He went early to the bedchamber, and being now weary indeed he cast himself on the bed and forgot soon the shadows of Middle-earth and of Númenor in a heavy sleep. But at cockcrow he awoke to a great disquiet and anger. He rose at once, and thought to go without noise from the house: he would find his man Henderch and the horses, and ride to his kinsman Hallatan, the sheep-lord of Hyarastorni. Later he would summon Erendis to bring his daughter to Armenelos, and not have dealings with her upon her own ground. But as he went out towards the doors Erendis came forward. She had not lain in bed that night, and she stood before him on the threshold.

'You leave more promptly than you came, my lord,' she said. 'I hope that (being a mariner) you have not found this house of women irksome already, to go thus before your business is done. Indeed, what business brought you hither? May I learn it before you leave?'

'I was told in Armenelos that my wife was here, and had removed my daughter hither,' he answered. 'As to the wife I am mistaken, it seems, but have I not a daughter?'

'You had one some years ago,' she said. 'But my daughter has not yet risen.'

'Then let her rise, while I go for my horse,' said Aldarion.

Erendis would have withheld Ancalimë from meeting him at that time; but she feared to go so far as to lose the King's favour, and the Council<sup>23</sup> had long shown their displeasure at the upbringing of the child in the country. Therefore when Aldarion rode back, with Henderch beside him, Ancalimë stood beside her mother on the threshold. She stood erect and stiff as her mother, and made him no courtesy as he dismounted and came up the steps towards her. 'Who are you?' she said. 'And why do you bid me to rise so early, before the house is stirring?'

Aldarion looked at her keenly, and though his face was stern he smiled within: for he saw there a child of his own, rather than of Erendis, for all her schooling.

'You knew me once, Lady Ancalimë,' he said, 'but no matter. Today I am but a messenger from Armenelos, to remind you that you are the daughter of the King's Heir; and (so far as I can now see) you shall be his Heir in your turn. You will not always dwell here. But go back to your bed now, my lady, until your maidservant wakes, if you will. I am in haste to see the King. Farewell!' He kissed the hand of Ancalimë and went down the steps; then he mounted and rode away with a wave of his hand.

Erendis alone at a window watched him riding down the hill, and she marked that he rode towards Hyarastorni and not towards Armenelos. Then she wept, from grief, but still more from anger. She had looked for some penitence, that she might extend after rebuke pardon if prayed for; but he had dealt with her as if she were the offender, and ignored her before her daughter. Too late she remembered the words of Núneth long before, and she saw Aldarion now as something large and not to be tamed, driven by a fierce will, more perilous when chill. She rose, and turned from the window, thinking of her wrongs. 'Perilous!' she said. 'I am steel hard to break. So he would find even were he the King of Númenor.'

Aldarion rode on to Hyarastorni, the house of Hallatan his cousin; for he had a mind to rest there a while and take thought. When he came near, he heard the sound of music, and he found the shepherds making merry for the homecoming of Ulbar, with many marvellous tales and many gifts; and the wife of Ulbar garlanded was dancing with him to the playing of pipes. At first none observed him, and he sat on his horse watching with a smile; but then suddenly Ulbar cried out 'The Great Captain!' and Íbal his son ran forward to Aldarion's stirrup. 'Lord Captain!' he said eagerly.

'What is it? I am in haste,' said Aldarion; for now his mood was changed, and he felt wrathful and bitter.

'I would but ask,' said the boy, 'how old must a man be, before he may go over sea in a ship, like my father?'

'As old as the hills, and with no other hope in life,' said Aldarion. 'Or whenever he has a mind! But your mother, Ulbar's son: will she not greet me?'

When Ulbar's wife came forward Aldarion took her hand. 'Will you receive this of me?' he said. 'It is but little return for six years of a good man's aid that you gave me.' Then from a wallet under his tunic

he took a jewel red like fire, upon a band of gold, and he pressed it into her hand. 'From the King of the Elves it came,' he said. 'But he will think it well-bestowed, when I tell him.' Then Aldarion bade farewell to the people there, and rode away, having no mind now to stay in that house. When Hallatan heard of his strange coming and going he marvelled, until more news ran through the countryside.

Aldarion rode only a short way from Hyarastorni and then he stayed his horse, and spoke to Henderch his companion. 'Whatever welcome awaits you, friend, out West, I will not keep you from it. Ride now home with my thanks. I have a mind to go alone.'

'It is not fitting, Lord Captain,' said Henderch.

'It is not,' said Aldarion. 'But that is the way of it. Farewell!'

Then he rode on alone to Armenelos, and never again set foot in Emerië.

When Aldarion left the chamber, Meneldur looked at the letter that his son had given him, wondering; for he saw that it came from King Gil-galad in Lindon. It was sealed and bore his device of white stars upon a blue rondure.<sup>24</sup> Upon the outer fold was written:

Given at Mithlond to the hand of the Lord Aldarion King's Heir of Númenórë, to be delivered to the High King at Armenelos in person.

Then Meneldur broke the seal and read:

Ereinion Gil-galad son of Fingon to Tar-Meneldur of the line of Eärendil, greeting: the Valar keep you and may no shadow fall upon the Isle of Kings.

Long I have owed you thanks, for you have so many times sent to me your son Anardil Aldarion: the greatest Elf-friend that now is among Men, as I deem. At this time I ask your pardon, if I have detained him overlong in my service; for I had great need of the knowledge of Men and their tongues which he alone possesses. He has dared many perils to bring me counsel. Of my need he will speak to you; yet he does not guess how great it is, being young and full of hope. Therefore I write this for the eyes of the King of Númenórë only.

A new shadow arises in the East. It is no tyranny of evil Men, as your son believes; but a servant of Morgoth is stirring, and evil things wake again. Each year it gains in strength, for most Men are ripe to its purpose. Not far off is the day, I judge, when

it will become too great for the Eldar unaided to withstand. Therefore, whenever I behold a tall ship of the Kings of Men, my heart is eased. And now I make bold to seek your help. If you have any strength of Men to spare, lend it to me, I beg.

Your son will report to you, if you will, all our reasons. But in fine it is his counsel (and that is ever wise) that when assault comes, as it surely will, we should seek to hold the Westlands, where still the Eldar dwell, and Men of your race, whose hearts are not yet darkened. At the least we must defend Eriador about the long rivers west of the mountains that we name Hithaeglin: our chief defence. But in that mountain-wall there is a great gap southward in the land of Calenardhon; and by that way inroad from the East must come. Already enmity creeps along the coast towards it. It could be defended and assault hindered, did we hold some seat of power upon the nearer shore.

So the Lord Aldarion long has seen. At Vinyalondë by the mouth of Gwathló he has long laboured to establish such a haven, secure against sea and land; but his mighty works have been in vain. He has great knowledge in such matters, for he has learned much of Círdan, and he understands better than any the needs of your great ships. But he has never had men enough; whereas Círdan has no wrights or masons to spare.

The King will know his own needs; but if he will listen with favour to the Lord Aldarion, and support him as he may, then hope will be greater in the world. The memories of the First Age are dim, and all things in Middle-earth grow colder. Let not the ancient friendship of Eldar and Dúnedain wane also.

Behold! The darkness that is to come is filled with hatred for us, but it hates you no less. The Great Sea will not be too wide for its wings, if it is suffered to come to full growth.

Manwë keep you under the One, and send fair wind to your sails.

Meneldur let the parchment fall into his lap. Great clouds borne upon a wind out of the East brought darkness early, and the tall candles at his side seemed to dwindle in the gloom that filled his chamber.

'May Eru call me before such a time comes!' he cried aloud. Then to himself he said: 'Alas! that his pride and my coolness have kept our minds apart so long. But sooner now than I had resolved it will be the course of wisdom to resign the Sceptre to him. For these things are beyond my reach.'

'When the Valar gave to us the Land of Gift they did not make us their vice-gerents: we were given the Kingdom of Númenor, not of the world. They are the Lords. Here we were to put away hatred and war; for war was ended, and Morgoth thrust forth from Arda. So I deemed, and so was taught.

'Yet if the world grows again dark, the Lords must know; and they have sent me no sign. Unless this be the sign. What then? Our fathers were rewarded for the aid they gave in the defeat of the Great Shadow. Shall their sons stand aloof, if evil finds a new head?

'I am in too great doubt to rule. To prepare or to let be? To prepare for war, which is yet only guessed: train craftsmen and tillers in the midst of peace for bloodspilling and battle: put iron in the hands of greedy captains who will love only conquest, and count the slain as their glory? Will they say to Eru: *At least your enemies were amongst them?* Or to fold hands, while friends die unjustly: let men live in blind peace, until the ravisher is at the gate? What then will they do: match naked hands against iron and die in vain, or flee leaving the cries of women behind them? Will they say to Eru: *At least I spilled no blood?*

'When either way may lead to evil, of what worth is choice? Let the Valar rule under Eru! I will resign the Sceptre to Aldarion. Yet that also is a choice, for I know well which road he will take. Unless Erendis . . .'

Then Meneldur's thought turned in disquiet to Erendis in Emerië. 'But there is little hope there (if it should be called hope). He will not bend in such grave matters. I know her choice – even were she to listen long enough to understand. For her heart has no wings beyond Númenor, and she has no guess of the cost. If her choice should lead to death in her own time, she would die bravely. But what will she do with life, and other wills? The Valar themselves, even as I, must wait to discover.'

Aldarion came back to Rómenna on the fourth day after Hirilondë had returned to haven. He was way-stained and weary, and he went at once to Eäambar, upon which he now intended to dwell. By that time, as he found to his embitterment, many tongues were already wagging in the City. On the next day he gathered men in Rómenna and brought them to Armenelos. There he bade some fell all the trees, save one, in his garden, and take them to the shipyards; others he commanded to raze his house to the ground. The white Elven-tree alone he spared; and when the woodcutters were gone he looked at it, standing amid the desolation, and he saw for the first time that



it was in itself beautiful. In its slow Elven growth it was yet but twelve feet high, straight, slender, youthful, now budded with its winter flowers upon upheld branches pointing to the sky. It recalled to him his daughter, and he said: 'I will call you also Ancalimë. May you and she stand so in long life, unbent by wind or will, and unclipped!'

On the third day after his return from Emerië Aldarion sought the King. Tar-Meneldur sat still in his chair and waited. Looking at his son he was afraid; for Aldarion was changed: his face was become grey, cold, and hostile, as the sea when the sun is suddenly veiled in dull cloud. Standing before his father he spoke slowly with tone of contempt rather than of wrath.

'What part you have played in this you yourself know best,' he said. 'But a King should consider how much a man will endure, though he be a subject, even his son. If you would shackle me to this Island, then you choose your chain ill. I have now neither wife, nor love of this land, left. I will go from this misenchanted isle of daydreams where women in their insolence would have men cringe. I will use my days to some purpose, elsewhere, where I am not scorned, more welcome in honour. Another Heir you may find more fit for a house-servant. Of my inheritance I demand only this: the ship Hirilondë and as many men as it will hold. My daughter I would take also, were she older; but I will commend her to my mother. Unless you dote upon sheep, you will not hinder this, and will not suffer the child to be stunted, reared among mute women in cold insolence and contempt of her kin. She is of the Line of Elros, and no other descendant will you have through your son. I have done. I will go now about business more profitable.'

Thus far Meneldur had sat in patience with downcast eyes and made no sign. But now he sighed, and looked up. 'Aldarion, my son,' he said sadly, 'the King would say that you also show cold insolence and contempt of your kin, and yourself condemn others unheard; but your father who loves you and grieves for you will remit that. The fault is not mine only that I have not ere now understood your purposes. But as for what you have suffered (of which, alas! too many now speak): I am guiltless. Erendis I have loved, and since our hearts lean the same way I have thought that she had much to endure that was hard. Your purposes are now become clear to me, though if you are in mood to hear aught but praise I would say that at first your own pleasure also led you. And it may be that things would have been otherwise if you had spoken more openly long ago.'

'The King may have some grievance in this,' cried Aldarion, now more hotly, 'but not the one you speak of! To her at least I spoke long and often: to cold ears uncomprehending. As well might a truant boy talk of tree-climbing to a nurse anxious only about the tearing of clothes and the due time of meals! I love her, or I should care less. The past I will keep in my heart; the future is dead. She does not love me, or aught else. She loves herself with Númenor as a setting, and myself as a tame hound, to drowse by the hearth until she has a mind to walk in her own fields. But since hounds now seem too gross, she will have Ancalimë to pipe in a cage. But enough of this. Have I the King's leave to depart? Or has he some command?'

'The King,' answered Tar-Meneldur, 'has thought much about these matters, in what seem the long days since last you were in Armenelos. He has read the letter of Gil-galad, which is earnest and grave in tone. Alas! To his prayer and your wishes the King of Númenor must say *nay*. He cannot do otherwise, according to his understanding of the perils of either course: to prepare for war, or not to prepare.'

Aldarion shrugged his shoulders, and took a step as if to go. But Meneldur held up his hand commanding attention, and continued: 'Nevertheless, the King, though he has now ruled the land of Númenor for one hundred and forty-two years, has no certainty that his understanding of the matter is sufficient for a just decision in matters of such high import and peril.' He paused, and taking up a parchment written in his own hand he read from it in a clear voice:

Therefore: first for the honour of his well-beloved son; and second for the better direction of the realm in courses which his son more clearly understands, the King has resolved: that he will forthwith resign the Sceptre to his son, who shall now become Tar-Aldarion, the King.

'This,' said Meneldur, 'when it is proclaimed, will make known to all my thought concerning this present pass. It will raise you above scorn; and it will set free your powers so that other losses may seem more easy to endure. The letter of Gil-galad, when you are King, you shall answer as seems fit to the holder of the Sceptre.'

Aldarion stood still for a moment in amaze. He had braced himself to face the King's anger, which wilfully he had endeavoured to kindle. Now he stood confounded. Then, as one swept from his feet by a sudden wind from a quarter unexpected, he fell to his knees before his father; but after a moment he raised his bowed head and

laughed – so he always did, when he heard of any deed of great generosity, for it gladdened his heart.

‘Father,’ he said, ‘ask the King to forget my insolence to him. For he is a great King, and his humility sets him far above my pride. I am conquered: I submit myself wholly. That such a King should resign the Sceptre while in vigour and wisdom is not to be thought.’

‘Yet so it is resolved,’ said Meneldur. ‘The Council shall be summoned forthwith.’

When the Council came together, after seven days had passed, Tar-Meneldur acquainted them with his resolve, and laid the scroll before them. Then all were amazed, not yet knowing what were the courses of which the King spoke; and all demurred, begging him to delay his decision, save only Hallatan of Hyarastorni. For he had long held his kinsman Aldarion in esteem, though his own life and likings were far otherwise; and he judged the King’s deed to be noble, and timed with shrewdness, if it must be.

But to those others who urged this or that against his resolve Meneldur answered: ‘Not without thought did I come to this resolution, and in my thought I have considered all the reasons that you wisely argue. Now and not later is the time most fit for my will to be published, for reasons which though none here has uttered all must guess. Forthwith then let this decree be proclaimed. But if you will, it shall not take effect until the time of the *Erukyermë* in the Spring. Till then, I will hold the Sceptre.’

When news came to Emerië of the proclamation of the decree Erendis was dismayed; for she read therein a rebuke by the King in whose favour she had trusted. In this she saw truly, but that anything else of greater import lay behind she did not conceive. Soon afterwards there came a message from Tar-Meneldur, a command indeed, though graciously worded. She was bidden to come to Armenelos and to bring with her the lady Ancalimë, there to abide at least until the *Erukyermë* and the proclamation of the new King.

‘He is swift to strike,’ she thought. ‘So I should have foreseen. He will strip me of all. But myself he shall not command, though it be by the mouth of his father.’

Therefore she returned answer to Tar-Meneldur: ‘King and father, my daughter Ancalimë must come indeed, if you command it. I beg that you will consider her years, and see to it that she is lodged in quiet. For myself, I pray you to excuse me. I learn that my house in Armenelos has been destroyed; and I would not at this time

willingly be a guest, least of all upon a house-ship among mariners. Here then permit me to remain in my solitude, unless it be the King’s will also to take back this house.’

This letter Tar-Meneldur read with concern, but it missed its mark in his heart. He showed it to Aldarion, to whom it seemed chiefly aimed. Then Aldarion read the letter; and the King, regarding the face of his son, said: ‘Doubtless you are grieved. But for what else did you hope?’

‘Not for this, at least,’ said Aldarion. ‘It is far below my hope of her. She has dwindled; and if I have wrought this, then black is my blame. But do the large shrink in adversity? This was not the way, not even in hate or revenge! She should have demanded that a great house be prepared for her, called for a Queen’s escort, and come back to Armenelos with her beauty adorned, royally, with the star on her brow; then well nigh all the Isle of Númenor she might have bewitched to her part, and made me seem madman and churl. The Valar be my witness, I would rather have had it so: rather a beautiful Queen to thwart me and flout me, than freedom to rule while the Lady Elestirnë falls down dim into her own twilight.’

Then with a bitter laugh he gave back the letter to the King. ‘Well: so it is,’ he said. ‘But if one has a distaste to dwell on a ship among mariners, another may be excused dislike of a sheep-farm among serving-women. But I will not have my daughter so schooled. At least she shall choose by knowledge.’ He rose, and begged leave to go.

#### *The Further Course of the Narrative*

From the point where Aldarion read the letter from Erendis, refusing to return to Armenelos, the story can only be traced in glimpses and snatches, from notes and jottings: and even those do not constitute the fragments of a wholly consistent story, being composed at different times and often at odds with themselves.

It seems that when Aldarion became King of Númenor in the year 883 he determined to revisit Middle-earth at once, and departed for Mithlond either in the same year or the next. It is recorded that on the prow of *Hirilondë* he set no bough of *orolairë*, but the image of an eagle with golden beak and jewelled eyes, which was the gift of Círdan.

It perched there, by the craft of its maker, as if poised for flight unerring to some far mark that it espied. ‘This sign shall lead us to our aim,’ he said. ‘For our return let the Valar care – if our deeds do not displease them.’

It is also stated that 'no records are now left of the later voyages that Aldarion made', but that 'it is known that he went much on land as well as sea, and went up the River Gwathló as far as Tharbad, and there met Galadriel'. There is no mention elsewhere of this meeting; but at that time Galadriel and Celeborn were dwelling in Eregion, at no great distance from Tharbad (see p. 235).

But all Aldarion's labours were swept away. The works that he began again at Vinyalondë were never completed, and the sea gnawed them.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless he laid the foundation for the achievement of Tar-Minastir long years after, in the first war with Sauron, and but for his works the fleets of Númenor could not have brought their power in time to the right place – as he foresaw. Already the hostility was growing and dark men out of the mountains were thrusting into Enedwaith. But in Aldarion's day the Númenóreans did not yet desire more room, and his Venturers remained a small people, admired but little emulated.

There is no mention of any further development of the alliance with Gil-galad, or of the sending of the aid that he requested in his letter to Tar-Meneldur; it is said indeed that

Aldarion was too late, or too early. Too late: for the power that hated Númenor had already waked. Too early: for the time was not yet ripe for Númenor to show its power or to come back into the battle for the world.

There was a stir in Númenor when Tar-Aldarion determined to return to Middle-earth in 883 or 884, for no King had ever before left the Isle, and the Council had no precedent. It seems that Meneldur was offered but refused the regency, and that Hallatan of Hyarastorni became regent, either appointed by the Council or by Tar-Aldarion himself.

Of the history of Ancalimë during those years when she was growing up there is no certain form. There is less doubt concerning her somewhat ambiguous character, and the influence that her mother exerted on her. She was less prim than Erendis, and natively liked display, jewels, music, admiration, and deference; but she liked them at will and not unceasingly, and she made her mother and the white house in Emerië an excuse for escape. She approved, as it were, both Erendis' treatment of Aldarion on his late return, but also Aldarion's anger, impenitence, and subsequent relentless dismissal of Erendis from his heart and concern. She had a profound dislike of obligatory marriage, and in marriage of any constraint on her will. Her mother had spoken unceasingly against men, and indeed a remarkable example of Erendis' teaching in this respect is preserved:

Men in Númenor are half-Elves (said Erendis), especially the high men; they are neither the one nor the other. The long life that they

were granted deceives them, and they dally in the world, children in mind, until age finds them – and then many only forsake play out of doors for play in their houses. They turn their play into great matters and great matters into play. They would be craftsmen and loremasters and heroes all at once; and women to them are but fires on the hearth – for others to tend, until they are tired of play in the evening. All things were made for their service: hills are for quarries, rivers to furnish water or to turn wheels, trees for boards, women for their body's need, or if fair to adorn their table and hearth; and children to be teased when nothing else is to do – but they would as soon play with their hounds' whelps. To all they are gracious and kind, merry as larks in the morning (if the sun shines); for they are never wrathful if they can avoid it. Men should be gay, they hold, generous as the rich, giving away what they do not need. Anger they show only when they become aware, suddenly, that there are other wills in the world beside their own. Then they will be as ruthless as the seawind if anything dare to withstand them.

Thus it is, Ancalimë, and we cannot alter it. For men fashioned Númenor: men, those heroes of old that they sing of – of their women we hear less, save that they wept when their men were slain. Númenor was to be a rest after war. But if they weary of rest and the plays of peace, soon they will go back to their great play, manslaying and war. Thus it is; and we are set here among them. But we need not assent. If we love Númenor also, let us enjoy it before they ruin it. We also are daughters of the great, and we have wills and courage of our own. Therefore do not bend, Ancalimë. Once bend a little, and they will bend you further until you are bowed down. Sink your roots into the rock, and face the wind, though it blow away all your leaves.

Moreover, and more potently, Erendis had made Ancalimë accustomed to the society of women: the cool, quiet, gentle life of Emerië without interruptions or alarms. Boys, like Íbal, shouted. Men rode up blowing horns at strange hours, and were fed with great noise. They begot children and left them in the care of women when they were troublesome. And though childbirth had less of ills and peril, Númenor was not an 'earthly paradise', and the weariness of labour or of all making was not taken away.

Ancalimë, like her father, was resolute in pursuing her policies; and like him she was obstinate, taking the opposite course to any that was counselled. She had something of her mother's coldness and sense of personal injury; and deep in her heart, almost but not quite forgotten, was the firmness with which Aldarion had unclasped her hand and set her down when he was in haste to be gone. She loved dearly the downlands of her home, and never (as she said) in her life could she sleep at peace far from the sound of sheep. But she did not refuse the Heirship, and determined that when her day came she would be a powerful Ruling Queen; and when so, to live where and how she pleased.

It seems that for some eighteen years after Aldarion became King he was often gone from Númenor; and during that time Ancalimë passed her days both in Emerië and in Armenelos, for Queen Almarian took a great liking to her, and indulged her as she had indulged Aldarion in his youth. In Armenelos she was treated with deference by all, and not least by Aldarion; and though at first she was ill at ease, missing the wide airs of her home, in time she ceased to be abashed, and became aware that men looked with wonder upon her beauty, now come to its full. As she grew older she became ever more wilful, and she found irksome the company of Erendis, who behaved like a widow and would not be Queen; but she continued to return to Emerië, both as a retreat from Armenelos and because she desired thus to vex Aldarion. She was clever, and malicious, and saw promise of sport as the prize for which her mother and her father did battle.

Now in the year 892, when Ancalimë was nineteen years old, she was proclaimed the King's Heir (at a far earlier age than had previously been the case, see p. 177); and at that time Tar-Aldarion caused the law of succession in Númenor to be changed. It is said specifically that Tar-Aldarion did this 'for reasons of private concern, rather than policy', and out of 'his long resolve to defeat Erendis'. The change of the law is referred to in *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix A (I i):

The sixth King [Tar-Aldarion] left only one child, a daughter. She became the first Queen [i.e. Ruling Queen]; for it was then made a law of the royal house that the eldest child of the King, whether man or woman, should receive the sceptre.

But elsewhere the new law is formulated differently from this. The fullest and clearest account states in the first place that the 'old law', as it was afterwards called, was not in fact a Númenórean 'law', but an inherited custom which circumstances had not yet called in question; and according to that custom the Ruler's eldest son inherited the Sceptre. It was understood that if there were no son the nearest male kinsman of *male descent* from Elros Tar-Minyatur would be the Heir. Thus if Tar-Meneldur had had no son the Heir would not have been Valandil his nephew (son of his sister Silmarien), but Malantur his cousin (grandson of Tar-Elendil's younger brother Eärendur). But by the 'new law' the (eldest) daughter of the Ruler inherited the Sceptre, if he had no son (this being, of course, in contradiction to what is said in *The Lord of the Rings*). By the advice of the Council it was added that she was free to refuse.<sup>20</sup> In such a case, according to the 'new law', the heir of the Ruler was the nearest male kinsman whether by male or female descent. Thus if Ancalimë had refused the Sceptre Tar-Aldarion's heir would have been Soronto,

the son of his sister Ailinel; and if Ancalimë had resigned the Sceptre or died childless Soronto would likewise have been her heir.

It was also ordained at the instance of the Council that a female heir must resign, if she remained unwed beyond a certain time; and to these provisions Tar-Aldarion added that the King's Heir should not wed save in the Line of Elros, and that any who did so should cease to be eligible for the Heirship. It is said that this ordinance arose directly from Aldarion's disastrous marriage to Erendis and his reflections upon it; for she was not of the Line of Elros, and had a lesser life-span, and he believed that therein lay the root of all their troubles.

Beyond question these provisions of the 'new law' were recorded in such detail because they were to bear closely on the later history of these reigns; but unhappily very little can now be said of it.

At some later date Tar-Aldarion rescinded the law that a Ruling Queen must marry, or resign (and this was certainly due to Ancalimë's reluctance to countenance either alternative); but the marriage of the Heir to another member of the Line of Elros remained the custom ever after.<sup>27</sup>

At all events, suitors for Ancalimë's hand soon began to appear in Emerië, and not only because of the change in her position, for the fame of her beauty, of her aloofness and disdain, and of the strangeness of her upbringing had run through the land. In that time the people began to speak of her as Emerwen Aranel, the Princess Shepherdess. To escape from importunity Ancalimë, aided by the old woman Zamin, went into hiding at a farm on the borders of the lands of Hallatan of Hyarastorni, where she lived for a time the life of a shepherdess. The accounts (which are indeed no more than hasty jottings) vary as to how her parents responded to this state of affairs. According to one, Erendis herself knew where Ancalimë was, and approved the reason for her flight, while Aldarion prevented the Council from searching for her, since it was to his mind that his daughter should act thus independently. According to another, however, Erendis was disturbed at Ancalimë's flight and the King was wrathful; and at this time Erendis attempted some reconciliation with him, at least in respect of Ancalimë. But Aldarion was unmoved, declaring that the King had no wife, but that he had a daughter and an heir; and that he did not believe that Erendis was ignorant of her hiding-place.

What is certain is that Ancalimë fell in with a shepherd who was minding flocks in the same region; and to her this man named himself Mámandil. Ancalimë was all unused to such company as his, and she took delight in his singing, in which he was skilled; and he sang to her songs that came out of far-off days, when the Edain pastured their flocks in Eriador long ago, before ever they met the Eldar. They met thus in the pastures often and often, and he altered the songs of the lovers of old and brought into them the names of Emerwen and Mámandil; and Ancalimë feigned not to understand the drift of the words. But at length he declared his love for her openly, and she drew back, and refused him, saying that her fate lay between them, for she was the Heir of the King. But Mámandil was



But since it cannot be thought that we should ask the Lady Ancalimë, King's Heir, to lie with a farm-steward, then, alas! she must sleep alone tonight.' And Ancalimë perforce remained there, for it was too far to ride back, nor would she go unattended. Neither men nor women hid their smiles; and Ancalimë would not come to the feast, but lay abed listening to the laughter far off and thinking it aimed at herself. Next day she rode off in a cold rage, and Hallacar sent three men to escort her. Thus he was revenged, for she came never back to Emerië, where the very sheep seemed to make scorn of her. But she pursued Hallacar with hatred afterwards.

Of the later years of Tar-Aldarion nothing can now be said, save that he seems to have continued his voyages to Middle-earth, and more than once left Ancalimë as his regent. His last voyage took place about the end of the first millennium of the Second Age; and in the year 1075 Ancalimë became the first Ruling Queen of Númenor. It is told that after the death of Tar-Aldarion in 1098 Tar-Ancalimë neglected all her father's policies and gave no further aid to Gil-galad in Lindon. Her son Anárion, who was afterwards the eighth Ruler of Númenor, first had two daughters. They disliked and feared the Queen, and refused the Heirship, remaining unwed, since the Queen would not in revenge allow them to marry.<sup>23</sup> Anárion's son Súrion was born the last, and was the ninth Ruler of Númenor.

Of Erendis it is said that when old age came upon her, neglected by Ancalimë and in bitter loneliness, she longed once more for Aldarion; and learning that he was gone from Númenor on what proved to be his last voyage but that he was soon expected to return, she left Emerië at last and journeyed unrecognised and unknown to the haven of Rómenna. There, it seems, she met her fate; but only the words 'Erendis perished in water in the year 985' remain to suggest how it came to pass.

## NOTES

### *Chronology*

Anardil (Aldarion) was born in the year 700 of the Second Age, and his first voyage to Middle-earth took place in 725-7. Meneldur his father became King of Númenor in 740. The Guild of Venturers was founded in 750, and Aldarion was proclaimed King's Heir in 800. Erendis was born in 771. Aldarion's seven year voyage (p. 178) covered the years 806-13, the first voyage of the Palarran (p. 179) 816-20, the voyage of seven ships in defiance of Tar-Meneldur (p. 180) 824-9, and the voyage of fourteen years that followed immediately on the last (pp. 180-1) 829-43.

Aldarion and Erendis were betrothed in 858; the years of the voyage undertaken by Aldarion after his betrothal (p. 187) were 863-9, and the wedding was in 870. Ancalimë was born in the Spring of 873. The Hirilondë sailed in the Spring of 877 and Aldarion's return, followed by the breach with Erendis, took place in 882; he received the Sceptre of Númenor in 883.

- 1 In the 'Description of Númenor' (p. 167) he is called Tar-Meneldur Elentirmo (Star-watcher). See also his entry in 'The Line of Elros' (p. 219).
- 2 Soronto's part in the story can now only be glimpsed; see p. 211.
- 3 As is told in the 'Description of Númenor' (p. 171) it was Vëantur who first achieved the voyage to Middle-earth in the year 600 of the Second Age (he was born in 451). In the Tale of Years in Appendix B to *The Lord of the Rings* the annal entry for the year 600 states: 'The first ships of the Númenóreans appear off the coasts.'

There is a description in a late philological essay of the first meeting of the Númenóreans with Men of Eriador at that time: 'It was six hundred years after the departure of the survivors of the Atani [Edain] over the sea to Númenor that a ship first came again out of the West to Middle-earth and passed up the Gulf of Lhûn. Its captain and mariners were welcomed by Gil-galad; and thus was begun the friendship and alliance of Númenor with the Eldar of Lindon. The news spread swiftly and Men in Eriador were filled with wonder. Although in the First Age they had dwelt in the East, rumours of the terrible war "beyond the Western Mountains" [i.e. Ered Luin] had reached them; but their traditions preserved no clear account of it, and they believed that all the Men who dwelt in the lands beyond had been destroyed or drowned in great tumults of fire and inrushing seas. But since it was still said among them that those Men had in years beyond memory been kinsmen of their own, they sent messages to Gil-galad asking leave to meet the shipmen "who had returned from death in the deeps of the Sea". Thus it came about that there was a meeting between them on the Tower Hills; and to that meeting with the Númenóreans came twelve Men only out of Eriador, Men of high heart and courage, for most of their people feared that the newcomers were perilous spirits of the Dead. But when they looked on the shipmen fear left them, though for a while they stood silent in awe; for mighty as they were themselves accounted among their kin, the shipmen resembled rather Elvish lords than mortal Men in bearing and apparel. Nonetheless they felt no doubt of their ancient kinship; and likewise the shipmen looked with glad surprise upon the Men of Middle-earth, for it had been believed in Númenor that the

Men left behind were descended from the evil Men who in the last days of the war against Morgoth had been summoned by him out of the East. But now they looked upon faces free from the Shadow and Men who could have walked in Númenor and not been thought aliens save in their clothes and their arms. Then suddenly, after the silence, both the Númenóreans and the Men of Eriador spoke words of welcome and greeting in their own tongues, as if addressing friends and kinsmen after a long parting. At first they were disappointed, for neither side could understand the other; but when they mingled in friendship they found that they shared very many words still clearly recognisable, and others that could be understood with attention, and they were able to converse haltingly about simple matters.' Elsewhere in this essay it is explained that these Men dwelt about Lake Evendim, in the North Downs and the Weather Hills, and in the lands between as far as the Brandywine, west of which they often wandered though they did not dwell there. They were friendly with the Elves, though they held them in awe; and they feared the Sea and would not look upon it. It appears that they were in origin Men of the same stock as the Peoples of Bëor and Hador who had not crossed the Blue Mountains into Beleriand during the First Age.

- 4 The son of the King's Heir: Aldarion son of Meneldur. Tar-Elendil did not resign the sceptre to Meneldur until a further fifteen years had passed.
- 5 *Eruhantalë*: 'Thanksgiving to Eru', the autumn feast in Númenor; see the 'Description of Númenor' p. 166.
- 6 (Sir) Angren was the Elvish name of the river Isen. Ras Morthil, a name not otherwise found, must be the great headland at the end of the northern arm of the Bay of Belfalas, which was also called Andrast (Long Cape).  
The reference to 'the country of Amroth where the Nandor Elves still dwell' can be taken to imply that the tale of Aldarion and Erendis was written down in Gondor before the departure of the last ship from the haven of the Silvan Elves near Dol Amroth in the year 1981 of the Third Age; see pp. 240 ff.
- 7 For Uinen the spouse of Ossë (Maia of the Sea) see *The Silmarillion* p. 30. There it is said that 'the Númenóreans lived long in her protection, and held her in reverence equal to the Valar'.
- 8 It is stated that the Guildhouse of the Venturers 'was confiscated by the Kings, and removed to the western haven of Andúnië; all its records perished' (i.e. in the Downfall), including all the accurate charts of Númenor. But it is not said when this confiscation of Eämbar took place.
- 9 The river was afterwards called Gwathló or Greyflood, and the haven Lond Daer; see pp. 261 ff.
- 10 Cf. *The Silmarillion* p. 148: 'The Men of that House [i.e. of Bëor]

were dark or brown of hair, with grey eyes.' According to a genealogical table of the House of Bëor Erendis was descended from Bereth, who was the sister of Baragund and Belegund, and thus the aunt of Morwen mother of Túrin Turambar and of Rían the mother of Tuor.

- 11 On different life-spans among the Númenóreans see Note 1 to 'The Line of Elros', p. 224.
- 12 On the tree *oiolairë* see the 'Description of Númenor', p. 167.
- 13 This is to be understood as a portent.
- 14 Cf. the *Akallabêth* (*The Silmarillion* p. 277), where it is told that in the days of Ar-Pharazôn 'ever and anon a great ship of the Númenóreans would founder and not return to haven, though such a grief had not till then befallen them since the rising of the Star'.
- 15 Valandil was Aldarion's cousin, for he was the son of Silmarien, daughter of Tar-Elendil and sister of Tar-Meneldur. Valandil, first of the Lords of Andúnië, was the ancestor of Elendil the Tall, father of Isildur and Anárion.
- 16 *Erukyermë*: 'Prayer to Eru', the feast of the Spring in Númenor; see the 'Description of Númenor' p. 166.
- 17 It is said in the *Akallabêth* (*The Silmarillion* pp. 262-3) that 'at times, when all the air was clear and the sun was in the east, they would look out and descrie far off in the west a city white-shining on a distant shore, and a great harbour and a tower. For in those days the Númenóreans were far-sighted; yet even so it was only the keenest eyes among them that could see this vision, from the Meneltarma maybe, or from some tall ship that lay off their western coast. . . . But the wise among them knew that this distant land was not indeed the Blessed Realm of Valinor, but was Avallónë, the haven of the Eldar upon Eressëa, easternmost of the Undying Lands.'
- 18 Thus came, it is said, the manner of the Kings and Queens afterward to wear as a star a white jewel upon the brow, and they had no crown. [Author's note.]
- 19 In the Westlands and in Andúnië the Elven-tongue [Sindarin] was spoken by high and low. In that tongue Erendis was nurtured; but Aldarion spoke the Númenórean speech, although as all high men of Númenor he knew also the tongue of Beleriand. [Author's note.] - Elsewhere, in a note on the languages of Númenor, it is said that the general use of Sindarin in the north-west of the Isle was due to the fact that those parts were largely settled by people of 'Bëorian' descent; and the People of Bëor had in Beleriand early abandoned their own speech and adopted Sindarin. (Of this there is no mention in *The Silmarillion*, though it is said there (p. 148) that in Dor-lómin in the days of Fingolfin the people of Hador did not forget their own speech, 'and from it came the common tongue of Númenor'.) In other regions of Númenor Adúnaic was the native language of the

people, though Sindarin was known in some degree to nearly all; and in the royal house, and in most of the houses of the noble or learned, Sindarin was usually the native tongue, until after the days of Tar-Atanamir. (It is said later in the present narrative (p. 194) that Aldarion actually preferred the Númenórean speech; it may be that in this he was exceptional.) This note further states that although Sindarin as used for a long period by mortal Men tended to become divergent and dialectal, this process was largely checked in Númenor, at least among the nobles and the learned, by their contact with the Eldar of Eressëa and Lindon. Quenya was not a spoken tongue in Númenor. It was known only to the learned and to the families of high descent, to whom it was taught in their early youth. It was used in official documents intended for preservation, such as the Laws, and the Scroll and Annals of the Kings (cf. the *Akallabêth* p. 267: 'in the Scroll of Kings the name Herunúmen was inscribed in the High-elven speech'), and often in more recondite works of lore. It was also largely used in nomenclature: the official names of all places, regions, and geographical features in the land were of Quenya form (though they usually had also local names, generally of the same meaning, in either Sindarin or Adúnaic). The personal names, and especially the official and public names, of all members of the royal house, and of the Line of Elros in general, were given in Quenya form.

In a reference to these matters in *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix F, I (section *Of Men*), a somewhat different impression is given of the place of Sindarin among the languages of Númenor: 'The *Dúnedain* alone of all races of Men knew and spoke an Elvish tongue; for their forefathers had learned the Sindarin tongue, and this they handed on to their children as a matter of lore, changing little with the passing of the years.'

- 20 *Elanor* was a small golden star-shaped flower; it grew also upon the mound of Cerin Amroth in Lothlórien (*The Fellowship of the Ring* II 6). Sam Gamgee gave its name to his daughter, on Frodo's suggestion (*The Return of the King* VI 9).
- 21 See note 10 above for Erendis' descent from Bereth, the sister of Morwen's father Baragund.
- 22 It is stated that the Númenóreans, like the Eldar, avoided the begetting of children if they foresaw any separation likely between husband and wife between the conception of the child and at least its very early years. Aldarion stayed in his house for a very brief time after the birth of his daughter, according to the Númenóreans' idea of the fitness of things.
- 23 In a note on the 'Council of the Sceptre' at this time in the history of Númenor it is said that this Council had no powers to govern the King save by advice; and no such powers had yet been desired or dreamed of as needful. The Council was composed of members from

each of the divisions of Númenor; but the King's Heir when proclaimed was also a member, so that he might learn of the government of the land, and others also the King might summon, or ask to be chosen, if they had special knowledge of matters at any time in debate. At this time there were only two members of the Council (other than Aldarion) who were of the Line of Elros: Valandil of Andúnië for the Andustar, and Hallatan of Hyarastorni for the Mittalmar; but they owed their place not to their descent or their wealth, but to the esteem and love in which they were held in their countries. (In the *Akallabêth* (p. 268) it is said that 'the Lord of Andúnië was ever among the chief councillors of the Sceptre'.)

- 24 It is recorded that Ereinion was given the name Gil-galad 'Star of Radiance' 'because his helm and mail, and his shield overlaid with silver and set with a device of white stars, shone from afar like a star in sunlight or moonlight, and could be seen by Elvish eyes at a great distance if he stood upon a height'.
- 25 See p. 265.
- 26 A legitimate male heir, on the other hand, could not refuse; but since a King could always resign the Sceptre, a male heir could in fact immediately resign to *his* natural heir. He was then himself deemed also to have reigned for at least one year; and this was the case (the only case) with Vardamir, the son of Elros, who did not ascend the throne but gave the Sceptre to his son Amandil.
- 27 It is said elsewhere that this rule of 'royal marriage' was never a matter of law, but it became a custom of pride: 'a symptom of the growth of the Shadow, since it only became rigid when the distinction between the Line of Elros and other families, in life-span, vigour, or ability, had diminished or altogether disappeared.'
- 28 This is strange, because Anárion was the Heir in Ancalimë's lifetime. In 'The Line of Elros' (p. 220) it is said only that Anárion's daughters 'refused the sceptre'.