

Memories

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Kapitel 2: To The Sea – Or: Which way should we chose this century?

As I told you in my last letter I lived in a deep forest in the trees. Maybe you remember that I mentioned paintings of the sea. That's where my journey took me several times in my life, or our journey I should say, because I usually travelled with my beloved partner.

There has always been a desire burning in my heart which would never let me forgive the sea. It had been the place where I had met my husband and where his kin lived, my own family once had come over the sea to the shores of Middle Earth.

It was a long way from the green treetops of my home to the white shores in the west, to Eryn Vorn. My homeland lays in the south of Eryn Lasgalen near the East Bight. Our family would look for our houses which went usually smoothly, but we needed a year for preparations. We sent and received lots of letters, making sure everyone knows when to expect us and asking for news. We sometimes asked the merchants who travelled to and from Erebor about the quality of the paths. World is always busy and it's always useful to know where orcs and trolls were roaming or where you could expect a homely place.

We renewed our traveling clothes and boots. We also sharpened our knives and swords and made arrows for bows. I never liked the bows, my fingers are made for art, not war... my husband was a fine archer, though, and he shot birds and other animals we could eat. I rather liked my small ax I bought at Dale, but he would give me an odd look. "Dwarven stuff!" - "An axe can be useful, too", I used to answer, "I don't intend to actually kill somebody with it." Fortunately, we seldom travelled alone, and if we were the two of us, we chose peaceful times for our journey.

We went to the Elven King asking him kindly for strong horses. He never said no, but he always gave us a task. Sometimes we brought wine and other goods, like books, instruments or jewelry, to the elves we met. That's why he not only gave us horses, but also a wagon. Sometimes we had to report to him what's going on in the lands outside of our forest. Sometimes we had to fetch other things for him.

For many years we went south, passing an old fortress. Then we crossed the mighty Anduin, where we met a group of Elves who lead us to Lothorien. We really liked those Elves, because they appreciated trees as much as we do. Caras Galadhon was

indeed the most impressive way of living within nature we know. Our houses were just cottages and our trees young and small compared to that silver city with huge mallorn-trees. We walked on the naked earth, they had white streets and silver fountains. Our trees would lose their leaves in late autumn and were naked in winter, the flowers dying, the meadows sleeping, until spring came back, but their trees were forever golden and green and there were always white flowers growing in the meadows. We would stay there for two weeks or three, meeting friends, talking and strolling. Sometimes we would bring a message from King to Queen. Seeing Lady Galadriel was always quiet interesting, but also pretty intense. She was wise and beautiful, with piercing eyes.

Leaving Lorien behind we had to walk through *Hithaeglin*, the Misty Mountains, as you call it. We didn't like that part, because the mountains were cold and grey and dangerous, although we heard that there was a mysterious lake showing the night-sky. We hurried through the south of *Hadhodrond* following sweet *Glanduin*, we didn't look back, until we reached the plain. We would follow Glanduin's course until we had to go in a southward direction, because we wanted to avoid the Nin-in-Eilph. Although the flight of the swans were a delightful event, its marshes were too inscrutable, water everywhere! Although there was a time when we would see little humans (or were they even humans?) living there. After that we crossed Gwathló, which is called Greyflood in your language, using the fort at Tharbad. There we would rest and watch the swans and white wagtails.

When the orcs became bolder we had to walk other roads. We would either use the Old Forest Road starting from the Woodland Realm, passing the Wilderland and the Old Ford. We marched until we reached Imladris, which was different from Lorien. They lived in houses build on earth. It was very comfortable and the Elves residing there were very educated, noble and kind. We would stay very long, listening to stories and history, but our desire would become unbearable, because the First Homeley House was a constant reminder of the cold North, far far away from our destiny. We rode alongside the Bruinen, until we reached Tharbad again.

In other years we decided to explore the southern roads which proved to be even more wicked and unsafe. We chose to pass Sîr Angren, but that meant a voyage through Rohan, where grim and fierce human lived. They didn't attack us, but they weren't as pleasant as our kin. And it meant a long journey through the Wold, which was barren. Once we became very curious and visited the edge of Fangorn. This was most memorable, because we have never seen a forest so old and strange. Those were the first trees which doesn't evoke a feeling of home and safety, no, they made us rather wary. I admit, my husband was even frightened. He walked along the edge and touched bark and root and shook his head. Camping in the shadows of the forrest we became childish and giggly, neither of us wanted to confess our worries. This was a silly night indeed.

Crossing Sîr Angren the sight of Enedwaith made us upset. We heard that there once had grown an old forest, but it wasn't there anymore. Men, an almost forgotten folk, had lumbered the trees, later the War of our kin against Sauron had burnt the last of the trees. Later there raged a plague. Although Eryn Vorn was part of that old forest, it never woke our grieve as Enedwaith did. Maybe it was because of all the Men and

the strange dwellers there who made us uncomfortable, while walking through the fen was difficult. On the other hand, fens can be pretty and rich of colors, red and gold and warm brown, if you visit them in summertime. We found strange and beautiful flowers there. There is beauty even in abandoned and hostile regions.

Reaching Tharbad or Gwathló was usually the time which lifted our spirits, because we knew it was a nice region there and we had an actual two ways to walk on. The first and preferred one was the Greenway which was a detour., but a lovely one We loved the green gras, the hedges and bushes, we ate sour apples, sweet pears and red cherries from the wild trees. We listened to the song of the birds and watched the deers and rabbits play. Then we would ride alongside of the Baranduin to Eryn Vorn. The second way led us across Minhiriath, the land between Gwathló and Baranduin. There, too, lived Men who were even wilder than the others, following foreign and rough costumes. And again, the landscape showed us the scars of war.

Catching the glimpse of Eryn Vorn we euphorically greeted the dark pine trees, warped from the wind, the heralds of the sea. We could already scent the salt of the sea before we heard the crushing and rushing of the waves, the song of the sea and old times.

There it was! Warm and white sand tickling our feet, cold and blue water welcoming us home. We dove into the ocean and swam, cooling us down. Our family would laugh in delight and throw a party at our arrival, with lots of music and food and bonfires. This was the moment where my husband and I would look into each other's eyes. We didn't say a word, but we knew: The journey has been long and hard, and the return wouldn't be easier, but we never travel in vain. And there will be a time when we will take a boat to travel to Mithlond for our final and expected journey.