My Shining Stars

by Oshun

Summary

And now for something a bit controversial: Elrond stands on the deck of the ship carrying him to Aman writing notes in a journal.

MEFA 2008, Second Place, Elves: House of Elrond

SWG Silmarillion Anniversary Contest, Third Place Winner, Short Works

When I was young, it was Maglor who first pointed out to me a shining star in the night sky and told me it was my father. Later I saw Eärendil again, close enough not to see his face but to recognize the Silmaril that he wore aboard the ship Vingilot, lighting the battlefield of the War of Wrath. I was proud of the role he played in assisting the combined forces of the Eldar and the Valar in finally removing Morgoth from our world. By then, however, I no longer felt any personal affection. He had left my brother and me to our doom, hadn't he? Children are unforgiving.

Frankly, I remember little of my illustrious father. I recall he was absent more often than not on extended sea voyages. The tightening around my mother's mouth when Elros and I asked when he would return or why he was always gone did not endear him to me. She never criticized nor did she defend his reasons for leaving us alone years at a time or for taking so little interest in our upbringing. When he did return for short visits, my parents acted like a couple of newly-bound lovers, with eyes for nothing or no one but each other. I have heard it said that circumstances often result in creating a distance between heroes and their children. I learned later that this is not always true. Fëanor's sons did not take their oath out of injured pride or loyalty to their House alone.

In contrast, I remember my foster fathers well and think of them often. And, yes, many say they caused the death of my mother when she threw herself into the sea clutching a Silmaril. I will not debate that question, but would beg anyone who may read this to think of the damage to the heart of a ten-year-old child to know his mother would not only take her own life for the sake of hanging onto a treasure, originally stolen in the most hideous way imaginable from another, but
further could leave her small sons at the mercy of those she believed to be monsters, the purported murderers of her own brothers. When my lovely wife bore me children, I determined they would never doubt my love, never lack for a nearly smothering daily affection and attention to every detail of their education and care, however inane or irrelevant—actually quite in the style of Fëanor himself, as I understood it from the tales Maedhros and Maglor told me of their own childhoods.

It was, in those first frightening days after the loss of our mother, far easier to love the two men who washed the splattered gore from Elros and me (never mind that they and their followers had spilt the blood that day) and dried our tears. They soothed us and cosseted us, wrapped us in warm cloaks, each taking one of us upon those tall, marvelous horses—bred true from the ones they had brought with them from Valinor—and swiftly fled with us.

They both explained that our mother had no doubt escaped and they would look after us until she came to claim us (the only lie I remember from them and a kind one it was, which I did not for a moment believe even as young as I was then). That fateful night following the events at the Havens of Sirion, they fed us and consoled us. The incomparable Maglor sang to us a children's song that he said he had originally written in his halcyon youth in Valinor for his only nephew. By the time they had explained to us that the details of their taking of us would better be defined as kidnapping than rescue, it mattered not at all to me. I doubly believed them when they told us that their first motivation for carrying us away with them had been to protect us because they did not hide the fact that we were in every tangible sense hostages. Elros was less forgiving than I, but that is his story not mine.

I still remember the unique beauty of each of them: Maglor of the sensitive mouth and unruly, fine dark hair, without the imposing height of his family, yet with their classic Noldorin features, had a voice that could make the Valar weep, or so I was told and absolutely believe. And flame-haired Maedhros the tall, of the unparalleled visage and proud stance, caused one to hold one's breath at first sight. The effect of him could never completely be disregarded however long one knew him and his tortured eyes even unto the end held the softest warmth for those he loved.

As I stand now looking out over the waters silvered by moonlight, the sails of our ship fluttering against an indigo sky, I look not above but toward the horizon, hoping against foolish hope that I will see my shining stars when we drop anchor tomorrow.

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