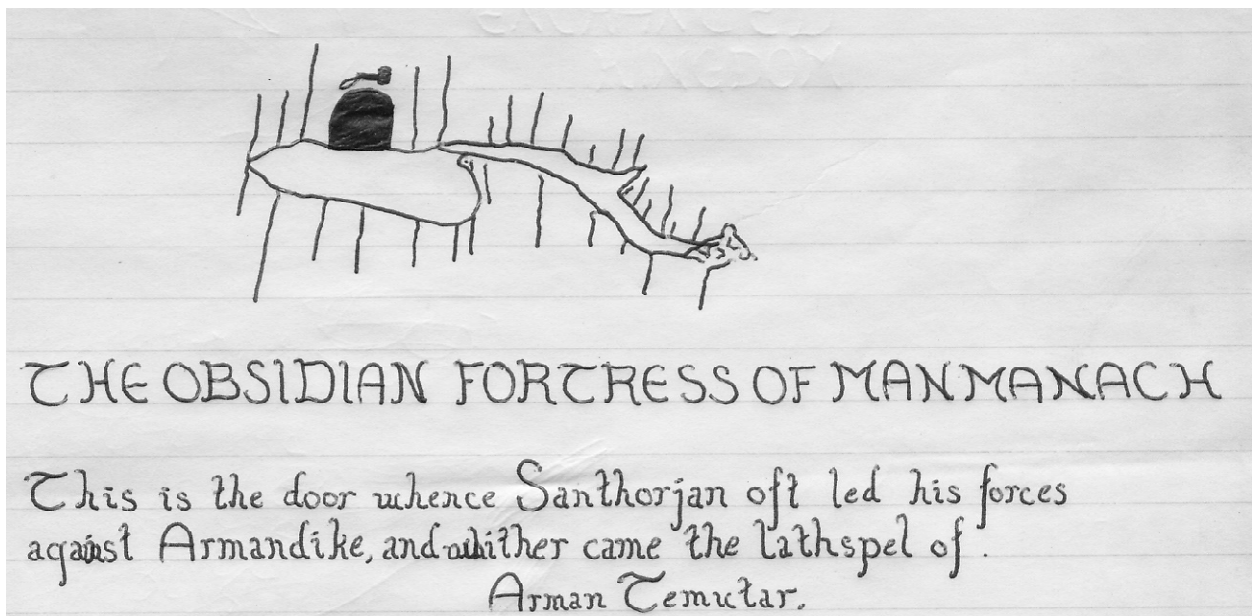
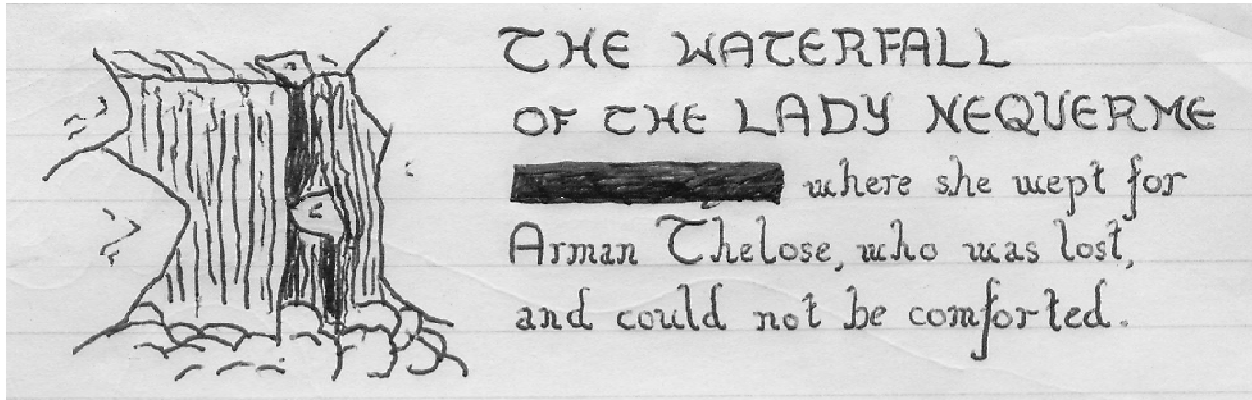


THE PEACE OF ARMANDIKE

When I was in tenth grade or so, while on a family vacation in New Hampshire, I made three drawings in my notebook. I had been an enthusiastic reader of Tolkien for some years, but at the time I was reading E.R. Eddison's *The Worm Ouroboros*. The three pictures had captions, suggesting a story. They were:



Now that I had drawn the pictures—just little sketches in ballpoint pen on one page—I decided to write the story including the incidents mentioned in the captions. That story and the pictures are now, I think, long since lost. Many years later (in about 1985 or so) I decided to try to recreate the story. This is as far as I got. As you can see, I did not even get to the first incident I illustrated so long ago.

[Note: “Thelosë” and “Nequermë” are both pronounced in 3 syllables. I have added a dieresis to indicate this.]

I

When Arman Thelosë came to sit on his father’s throne as lord of Armandike, the lands were at peace, and had been for many lives of men. The broad and fertile farmsteads feared no marauding host, the busy ports no hostile fleet. The nobles had no test for their courage but the boar of the forest, nor of their skill save the chase of the hart. Only in the north, where the Carquen flowed before black and nigh-impassible mountains, did enemy hosts threaten Armandike. There garrisons stood on watch, but foes who tried to pass their guard, fierce as they might be when they issued through the dark pass, ever failed in courage and strength if they crossed the stream.

Wisdom and lore preserved some memory of older days, when Armandike knew war as other lands. Therefore the knighthood of Armandike preserved their skill of arms. By practice with sword and bow, by exercise of limb and horsemanship, the knights and lords maintained the vigilance of the land. A martial spirit they nurtured by songs and tales of valiant deeds, for which they no longer had occasion. For not by their strength nor by their vigilance was the peace of Armandike maintained.

Those who were courageous and adventuresome in spirit ventured from time to time over Carquen into the mountains. Others dared the voyage to distant lands; yet few who journeyed thus, whether by land or by sea, returned to Armandike. Few but the wise knew the tales that came from the north. For beyond the mountains were other lands, lands of darkness, of tyranny, and of war. Ever into these tales came the name of Santhorjan, a master of evil, a wizard whose days endured beyond those of men, who, they said, held all the North in his unbreakable sway. His stronghold of terror and death was the mountain fastness of Manmanach, the obsidian fortress that guarded the pass beyond Carquen whence his armies, grown proud and cruel and fearsome under his wizardry, issued to plunder all the northern lands. Yet they could not cross the Carquen or enter the realm of Armandike.

Thus the men of Armandike gave little thought to the evil that lay without. The castles of the nobles were less fortresses than inns, offering generous hospitality. The tenantry, not oppressed by onerous dues, tilled the fields with joyous industry. Ships plied from port to port bearing goods between the prosperous towns. Lightning and wind, the wild beasts of the forests, the wolf that harried the shepherd’s flock: these were the greatest dangers to the folk of Armandike. Such was the land when Arman Thelosë came to rule in the city of Armandike on the throne of his fathers.

Arman Thelosë was then come to the flower of his manhood. Strong he was, and tall; well could he ride and wield the sword. As a youth he had killed the great boar of Matlath Forest, that measured a full fathom from nose to rump; he had ridden from the great city to Carquen field, three days’ ride, without a rest. He had traveled all over his domain and knew the hearts of men from the fishers of the coast to the nobles in their castles, from the peasants who worked the fields to the merchant captains who plied the sea. Yet most of all he loved the tales

and songs of ancient days, the deeds of his valiant sires of old. He longed to venture forth and test his courage and strength against more than brute beasts.

"I would fain lead a host of the finest knights and lords of Armandike," he said in the midst of his court. "Beyond the mountains are other lands, that lie enslaved. Can I sit in my hall in peace while, even far away, there is such evil in the world?" And all who heard him were amazed, and not a few hearts quivered with excitement at the prospect.

Then up spoke an ancient sage, and all were hushed. For there was in Armandike a close and secret brotherhood who dedicated themselves to the pursuit of wisdom. Bird and beast they knew, and stone and tree, and the courses of the stars, and the lore of olden days. The eldest of their number was called Father of the Land, and attended constantly upon the lord. He spoke but seldom, yet when he spoke, none could contradict his word. No counsel he gainsaid might be followed.

"Think of it not, my lord," said the Father of the Land to Arman Thelosë. "For none can venture forth from here and live. Would you destroy the flower of Armandike for some private whim, however brave and noble? And were it you going forth alone, would you leave the land headless? For you have taken no wife, and have no heir."

All were silent now and pondered the sage's words. Arman Thelosë dismissed all from his presence, and sat long on his throne, lost in thought.

II

One day it chanced that Arman Thelosë went a-hunting with a great company of knights and lords in the Forest of Nemelian. This forest lay on the knees of a great mountain to the north and east of the land. On the seaward side the mountain fell in sheer and impassible cliffs; to the other side, the Carquen River flowed across the breadth of the land. Nemelian Forest was dark and deep, and none had penetrated its deepest secrets. At its eaves and for many leagues more it was like any other forest in Armandike; but as the ground rose on the mountain slopes more than the darkness of the interlacing boughs and the difficulty of the ground broken by rocks and ravines kept men from going that way farther. An awe and terror, though not of evil, fell on all who dared that way, and they were unmanned. If any of the wise knew what power dwelt in those hallowed woods, they told it not.

It was to this forest that Arman Thelosë came on a day in spring with a noble company to chase the hart. One great beast in special they longed to see, a hart long famed for his size, his strength, and his sagacity, that had long eluded all who sought him. And lo! on a fair morning, Arman Thelosë and his companions sighted this hart; forthwith they set off on the chase. But before they could ride within bowshot, the great beast drove deeper into the forest, and the nobles of Armandike followed hard behind.

Further into the forest ran the hart, straight toward the mountain. As the ground grew rougher and the forest less passable to horses, the companions of Arman Thelosë one by one dropped the chase and turned back from the pursuit. At last the lord of Armandike and five companions faced a ravine filled with underbrush, where no man could pass mounted. In the distance stood the hart, out of bowshot, still, as if to mock them. Already the sun, which had just begun to show when the chase began, had passed noon and was declining in the sky. Arman Thelosë sat still in the saddle a moment. Then he sprang to the ground, and called to his friends:

"Gentlemen, the ground is difficult for our horses; we must pursue this beast on foot."

"My lord," replied the foremost of his companions. "Let us abandon this chase. For how can we approach such an animal dismounted? Besides, I fear we approach some holy place of great terror. My heart misgives me for the great awe that lies before us. I beg you, my lord, forgive me if I go no further."

And by their faces all the other four showed that they felt some awe too great for mortal man.

"I know not of what you speak," said Arman Thelosë. "I feel no panic fear, no awe but of the great prize that stands before us. But each must follow his own fate. If you will not follow, take my horse and return to our camp. Await me there: for I will take this hart or come to some greater adventure."

In vain the knights spoke to their lord to dissuade him from his course. In vain he urged them to overcome the dread that held them back. At last they saw that Arman Thelosë was determined to go deeper into the forest that man had ever gone. Some fate was upon him that shielded him from the awe of Nemelian. At last they agreed to return, all but one, who waited there for Arman Thelosë to hear what news he would bring from those awesome depths.

Over crag and down ravine Arman Thelosë tracked the hart as day declined. His path lay around the west slope of the mountain, until as the westering sun sank into the valley below, he came to glade where flowed a river, swift, cold, and dark. Following the thunder of a mighty waterfall, he walked upstream until it came in view. Beside the cataract there sat a maiden, and she was singing a song without words, a song at once wild and sad, laden with nameless fate and unimagined hope. In the fading light, Arman Thelosë saw that she was beautiful beyond any woman he had ever seen, and there was that in her face and her song that he loved her at once. But she raised her eyes, and was Arman Thelosë, and fled among the trees.

"Here is a quarry above any hart!" thought Arman Thelosë to himself. "For I thought to slay the hart, but she has slain me with one glance. I cannot live longer, but that she restore life to me." And swifter than thought he followed her into the darkness under the trees.

Under the trees it was dark, but the path was clear. The great crag whence fell the cataract made a wall on the right hand as Arman Thelosë went into the forest. He had not gone far when he came to an opening in the wall. Beyond it lay a cavern like a great hall, where a fire blazed upon a hearth. Before Arman Thelosë could wonder whether or not to pass this door, a tall man, ancient and yet strong, with a long robe and a white beard, carrying a staff, stepped forward into the firelight and spoke to him:

"Enter, stranger; it must be some fate has brought you here. I am Nemelian, lord of all this forest. Sit by my hearth and sup, for this night you shall abide with me."

Arman Thelosë wondered greatly at his words, and stood speechless a moment. In truth he was hungry, yet until now he had not thought of it; and more than meat and drink he desired to see the maiden again.

"My lord," he said at last, "I cannot tell you yea or nay. I saw a maiden anon, by yonder waterfall, and I am seeking her. If you can tell . . ." And here he broke off, for the very maiden of whom he spoke had stepped into the firelight from some chamber off the hall. When she saw Arman Thelosë, she lowered her eyes.

"There is only one maiden in this forest," said Nemelian. "This is Nequermë; she is my daughter, and the fairest thing is Armandike." Then turning to her he said, "My dear, make ready a place for our guest. He has come a long way today, and fasting, unless I mistake."

The old man and his daughter prepared a seat for Arman Thelosë, and set before him an ample supper. When he had eaten and drunk, he said to his host, "My lord, I thank you for your hospitality. You have not asked of me my name, but I will give it gladly."

"I know who you are," replied Nemelian. "You are Thelosë, and you are called lord of all these lands. Fate has brought you here, else you could not pass so far into this forest."

"Indeed, lord, I know it not," replied Arman Thelosë. "But it comes into my mind now that though I am a lord, yet I am not free. For while my land is at peace, my heart is not."

Nemelian looked thoughtfully into the fire. "We must take counsel of this in the morning. Now it is time to sleep. Nequermë, show the lord of Armandike to the guest

chamber.” The girl led him down a passage to a fair chamber where a bed was ready. The window for the chamber opened under the waterfall itself, and through the water gleamed the light of the waxing crescent moon, descending over the shoulder of the hill.

Arman Thelosë had lost none of the love he had conceived for her at his first sight at sunset, indeed, that love had come to be mixed with awe. Yet his heart burst so that he could not restrain himself from speaking to her.

“Lady, have you ever lived here, alone with your father, as you do?”

“Indeed, my lord,” she replied with downcast eyes. “You are the first man beside I have seen in the flesh.” As she said this, she looked up at Arman Thelosë’s face, and read the wonder in his eyes. “Indeed I have seen many men in visions. For my father is a magician of great power, and has caused to appear many things in the world both past and present. So that here, alone, I have seen more than many who travel in the wide world.”

Arman Thelosë saw for a moment in her eyes an experience beyond many lives of men. Then she smiled, tenderly but almost mocking.

“I have seen you also, Thelosë.”

An unspoken thought hung in the air about them. Arman Thelosë longed to declare his love, to tell her she was indeed the fairest maiden he had ever seen. But she took a step back from the door of the chamber.

“As my father has said, we will take counsel in the morning. Good-night, my lord.”

“Good-night, lady,” replied Arman Thelosë, as the light of the lamp she carried disappeared down the passage. He was alone with the rushing water, and the moon, and his wondering thoughts.

III

In the morning, after they had broken fast, Nemelian bade Arman Thelosë walk with him in the forest. They walked in silence until they had come to the stream that flowed below the waterfall.

“Do you know what stream this is?” asked Nemelian. “This is Carquen. The river rises above us on the mountain, and is already broad and strong before it leaves the forest. Beyond the eaves of the forest, it is the border between Armandike and the lands to the north, the lands of Santhorjan.”

“What virtue does it have, that it guards our land so well? For the wise tell that no enemy can pass Carquen to hurt the peace of Armandike.”

“We are all servants of a fate greater than ourselves,” replied the magician. “It is I who by my art have guarded the peace of Armandike these many years. Yet all things pass in this world of change. . .” The last words seemed spoken in a reverie. The magician and the young lord walked along the river. Arman Thelosë was speechless with wonder, learning the secret of the peace of Armandike. He felt shamed in the presence of so great a benefactor, as one powerless before his fate. Yet his heart burned still more for some adventure of his own. He and his whole land had been protected like children behind the privy fence of Carquen; all the more he longed to venture forth to live the life of a man.

Nemelian seemed loath to speak, yet as one who sees a great enterprise before him. Then, at the borders of the grove beside the waterfall, he stopped.

“Long have I dwelt here, studying the arts of Santhorjan, my heart bent on the preservation of Armandike. Since long before the grandmothers of grandmothers of the eldest now alive were born, I have exerted every effort of my art on behalf of this land. And from this love, by arts magical, my daughter was born in this grove. Thus she is the fruit of my years of protection of Armandike. Even as the strength of my love, she is ever young, though she is older

in years than the most aged sage, and of my wisdom I have taught her much. Yet all things come to their fruition, and the long preservation of Armandike is close to its end. Thus you have passed through the enchanted woods.” He looked hard into the eyes of Arman Thelosë before he began again. “I know the longing of your heart, Thelosë. Not for you the peaceful life I have given Armandike. You would go forth to bring freedom to all the lands oppressed by Santhorjan. Even when you know—for know it now—that it would cost the peace of Armandike, you would still have it so?”

“Indeed, my lord,” replied Arman Thelosë. “Why should one land be at peace when all others are in slavery?”

“So be it,” continued Nemelian. “Yet the price is higher yet, both for you and for me. My daughter, Nequermë. . .”

Arman Thelosë could not restrain the ardor of his heart. He had looked in Nequermë’s eyes the night before, he had heard her wondrous parentage a few moments before; he could no longer hold back his love. “Your daughter, my lord, is the fairest maiden I have yet beheld or even heard speak of. Since I first laid eyes on her beside yon waterfall, I have loved her with a love as strong as ever man could. I hope I do not speak too impetuously, yet my heart burns within my breast.”

Nemelian’s face did not change, unless it became yet more grim. “My daughter, Nequermë, is in herself the weal and woe of Armandike. She has beheld you, too, even as I have, in vision from afar, as I have that art; and I fear her heart has gone out to you and to your dreams. How otherwise would you have so loved her when you heard her song? It is your fate as well as the desire of both your hearts that you be wed. But with her goes the fate of all these lands.”

“My lord and father,” exclaimed Arman Thelosë, suddenly stirred within, “would I be a prince, nay, would I be a man, if I shrank from so high a destiny, whither moreover love and fate alike call me? I will wed your daughter, though it be to take the whole world in my two hands. Let no one say that this is too much for the lord of Armandike!”

“So be it,” pronounced Nemelian, “if such is truly your will. Let us return to my house, where you will take food before I send you on your way. For you will not take her now; first you must take counsel, as befits a prince.”

They turned their steps to the door of the cave, yet before they reached it, Nequermë ran up to them bearing a chaplet of flowers which she placed on Arman Thelosë’s brow. Her father slipped into the cave, leaving the two before it in the sunlight. How he made the offer of his hand and heart Arman Thelosë could never afterward say. For it seemed that no speech had been needed to gain her eager consent. Yet the foreboding words of her father mingled with his love. As he took her by the hand as his betrothed, he thought of their uncertain fate.

“Your father tells me of some fate that hangs over us,” he said. “I fear our love will not be unclouded, and in our joy we will have sorrow.”

“So says my heart,” replied Nequermë. “Yet any sorrow would I have that I may have this joy.”

“So would I,” said Arman Thelosë, and kissed her.

In the cave, Nemelian waited beside a table spread with a simple meal. He was grave as they ate in silence. When all had eaten, he rose. Arman Thelosë likewise rose, and taking Nequermë’s hand, asked her father’s consent.

“As I said, you shall not take her now,” he replied. “You must take counsel with the wise men of the land, and with your own heart. For I tell you this: while great and good things may come of this, you will not see them. I shall suffer much: that I am willing. So shall both of you: be assured of it. And so shall all the land, though there be new dawn beyond the night.

Therefore be not hasty, but remember that you are a prince entrusted with the lives of all your people. As long as Nequermë stays with me, unwed, the land will have peace. You can

marry any woman in Armandike, and pass your land on to your sons as your fathers passed it on to you. Or you can follow this urging of your heart, and bring down on all the land a fate which, for good or ill, you do not know.

“Now speak no further word, but go. If you return, we will be here awaiting you.”

Arman Thelosë looked into the eyes of Nequermë before he left, and read there a longing kin to his own. He turned and walked quickly through the forest to the spot where his companion still awaited him. He would answer no question as they rode back to their camp, nor on the road back to his court. Yet all knew that some great adventure had befallen him, and wondered what it bode.

IV

Arman Thelosë returned to his city at once blithe and grim, like a brave warrior before a battle who strives to forget the peril into which he rides. He retired to his bed without answering one word to his companions about what had befallen him in the forest; but he sent out word that he would hold a most solemn council yet a fortnight hence. Until that day he spoke but little, and men wondered what this might mean, that their lord should so swiftly change his wonted mirth for gravity. When the appointed day came, there gathered before the throne the great nobles of the land, some young, his own comrades, and others old, graybeards who had counseled his father in bygone days. He gathered too those learned in law and lore, merchant and castellan, scholar and seer. All those who on most solemn occasions waited on the lord of Armandike in his Council Arman Thelosë called before him. And first in honor among them was the Father of the Land, now an old man carried in a litter by two grave young novices in the brotherhood of the Wise. Before all these counselors, Arman Thelosë at last opened his heart and told what had befallen him in the Forest of Nemelian. When he spoke of Carquen, and of the power of Nemelian, and of what guarded the peace of Armandike, the wise whispered among themselves, and nodded their heads as if agreeing.

At last Arman Thelosë concluded his discourse: “And so, my lords, were I ruled by my heart alone, I would wed the lady Nequermë, whom I love with all my heart, and brave whatever adventure may befall the land of Armandike and all the lands beyond. Yet I would be ruled by you, for this matter concerns all the land. Your lives, as well as mine, will be at hazard; your families, your cities, your tenants—all your people may suffer before whatever dawn breaks, which none of us may ever see. However that may be, I would have you weigh against the risk the conscience of the land—for we are keepers of that conscience, you and I—and ponder how one land may hoard all peace unto itself, while all others remain prey to war and tyranny. For the lord Nemelian, by whose power our peace has remained so long inviolate, has said that fate has brought me to this hour; and if that is so, then fate will yet carry us to the blessed conclusion. And which of us, if virtue and courage move him, could refuse to lay down even life itself for the good of all the world? I promise you that I will be the first to take that burden on myself.

“What say you then, my lords? The lord of Armandike awaits your counsel.”

For a moment all remained silent. Some thrilled at the glorious prospect of adventure; others weighed deliberately the likely cost.

“The younger may speak,” declared an older lord; for it was ever the custom of Armandike in solemn councils that, permission given, the youngest spoke first and debated among themselves, then waited to be corrected by the maturer counsels of the elders.

“Who is this man who lives in a forest?” asked one young lord, who had not been with Arman Thelosë on his hunt. “How do we know to believe his words?”

“Believe them we must,” replied another. “I rode with our lord in that forest, and I felt indeed that power that dwells therein. If he has met the one who wields it, and he has spoken of our fate, then I would gladly heed his words, and bear the high adventure that befalls.”

“Let the host of the north assail us,” said another. “They shall learn that more than enchantments defend Armandike. Peace has not taught the chivalry of Armandike to neglect altogether the arts of war!” And many murmured their assent.

Some of the young lords said one thing, and some another; but to a man they urged Arman Thelosë to follow the leadings of his heart, pledging their swords to the defense of the land. “Whether we conquer or not in war,” said an older lord—and all the young men fell silent—and conquer we may well, yet our suffering will be grievous, and the lives of many women and children, not to speak of men of war, will be forfeit. I say this not to urge a coward’s course, but think of it we must.”

“Of all the lands of the wide world as well,” said another.

“Who knows what riches they may hold?” said a merchant. “We know that there is no gain without adventure. Ofttimes my captains have returned from voyaging with tales of lands seen from afar; perilous perhaps, yet the men there are of such stature as we. Not only will they profit by their freedom, if free they shall be, but so also shall we, mayhap.”

“I set small score by tales of wizardry,” said a duke, lord of wide lands to the south of Armandike. “But I say it is high time my lord were wed. Who knows what the future may hold? This one thing is sure: the land will languish if it have no heir.”

“This matter of the marriage of the lord or of his heir,” said a learned man of law, “has ever been accounted the prerogative of the lord himself. It is only of my lord’s courtesy that he need even ask our counsel.”

Thus spoke the elders among themselves in council before the throne, some this way, some that, but the weight of their voices inclined toward the marriage. Then spoke a scholar, renowned in lore:

“Indeed it is known to those who have studied such things that some enchantment protects our land. Many have surmised that it is some virtue of the Carquen, which, as we well know, rises in the forest called Nemelian. Ancient traditions, however, recall a time when that forest had not that name—though what was its name of old I know not—and these same speak not of Santhorjan nor of a barrier about Armandike. Thus it may be that this Nemelian is indeed some emissary of fate to oppose that tyrant who holds all the world else in thrall. If that be so, then fate has also chosen the time when we who have so long been guarded should arise and oppose him.”

No other voice spoke out. Arman Thelosë, seeing all his other counselors agreed, turned to the Father of the Land, who, as the custom was, reserved his voice for the last.

“What say you, Father?”

The old man raised his head from the litter where he had listened to all the debate.

“My lord,” he said, his voice weak with age, “my lord, do not—”

His lips trembled as if the effort of speech were too great. He tried to take his breath, but his head fell back on the pillows, and he spoke no more. The two novices bent over the litter, searching for a sign of life.

“My lord,” said one of them at last, as all the council waited, “the Father is dead. By your leave, we must take him to our house, where all the brotherhood will mourn and take its counsel.”

The novices lifted the litter containing the lifeless body and bore it from the room.

“This is a grievous blow to us,” said Arman Thelosë. “The voice of wisdom is stilled in our midst, and we can take no counsel. I now proclaim this solemn council suspended. There shall be ten days of mourning, after which we shall again convene, together with the new Father

whom the brotherhood shall choose. No one may speak of these matters to any, on pain of death, be he high or low.”

For ten days the land mourned the death of the sage. When the days were completed, the Council met again. The new Father of the Land, a man old yet hale, stood in their midst. His eyes were full of the gravity of wisdom, and with it, a foreboding of one who faces an ineluctable and terrible fate. All waited on his word, and his alone.

“My lord,” he said, “our whole brotherhood has taken counsel on this matter, a matter fraught with fear and possibility. It was, we well know, the intention of our departed father to bid you refuse this danger. Much we have we known, that we may not say, of the wizard Nemelian. It is true that he by his power protects our land, out of love for it and for the peace and freedom preserved here alone of all the lands of the wide world. Well, too, we know—and for this we had in mind to bid you refuse—that your union with his daughter will mean the end of peace and freedom for Armandike. It is true that the restoration of our land will mean the end forever of the reign of Santhorjan; but that this come soon is a thing possible but not certain. You yourself, my lord, will never see it, nor will many here. Therefore we would have counseled against it.

“Before he could bring you this counsel, our departed father died, yea, with those very words on his lips. On this our brotherhood has pondered long and hard. Therefore I bring you a new counsel. Knowing well the dangers, and the certain doom that lies upon you, do the thing that your heart sets upon. It is the hour of fate; fate for Armandike and fate for all the world.

“Your heart is set on love and joy; but this is also doom, and if peace and freedom are to come to all the world, as you desire, it will only be at the price of the peace of Armandike and of your own life.

“I add this word, which will be my last counsel to you: make ready. The time of peace is at an end. Prepare the land for war, and for defeat in war. For what has not come upon our land in the memory of the oldest of the old, nor of their fathers’ fathers, will come without fail. So make ready. Know too that I and the Wise will make ready as well. Therefore you will see us no more. Call me not to your council, for I shall not come; I shall be making ready for the night to come. Wisdom will no longer avail in any case, for from the hour you take the lady Nequermë to wife, we shall all be in the hands of fate.”

With this he turned and walked from the hall, and Arman Thelosë saw him no more within the circle of the world. All the Council stood in silence, neither mourning nor rejoicing. Arman Thelosë sat on his throne, his eyes gazing as one entranced, as if he saw in a vision Armandike and all the world, the past, the present, and the future. At last he spoke.

“My lords, a heavy doom lies upon us. And yet I know the dawn will come, for which sweet life itself is worth casting away. Therefore be not downcast at these words. I will wed the lady Nequermë, and the land shall have its hour of joy. Speak no word of these counsels of doom, for if the spirit of the people is downcast they shall have the less will to stand in the evil day. Rather I will take counsel severally with you concerning how best to prepare ourselves. For now, go out and tell the people to rejoice with their lord, for he takes himself a wife.” And to all of them, this word seemed good.

I think the rest of the story was supposed to go on something like this: Thelosë and Nequermë are married, and she conceives a child. Before the child is born, Santhorjan invades Armandike and Arman Thelosë goes to meet him. Thelosë is killed in the ensuing battle, and Nequermë takes refuge with her father in the forest, spending her time weeping inconsolably by the waterfall. Her child is born and is named Temutar, and is raised by his maternal grandfather in the forest. I think the secret brotherhood comes in here somehow, having some connection to Nemelian. Meanwhile Santhorjan has conquered Armandike and holds its people in bondage. When

Temutar is full-grown, he comes forth from the forest to lead the people of Armandike in a revolt against Santhorjan. Santhorjan is feasting in his fortress of Manmanach, confident that there can be no one to challenge him, when a messenger brings him the “lathspell” (bad news—I got the word from Tolkien) that Arman Temutar, whose existence Santhorjan had not suspected, has arisen and is leading a revolt. By the time he gathers his army, Arman Temutar has managed to gather his and meets him at Far Carquen Field (that is, on the far side of the Carquen from Armandike) and defeats Santhorjan, destroying him and freeing not only Armandike but the other lands to the north that had been enslaved to him.