

*Lady Éowyn of Ithilien, greetings!*

*You will have asked yourself what befell your dear husband after he sent off his little note with his horse, and I am sure you have a sound idea of who ambushed and abducted him. Know that he is detained at a safe place. He is alive, and shall remain so as long as it pleases me. I have contrived means to prevent any escape. He is familiar with those means, and since he seems to value his health and general well-being, I doubt he is going to try and escape again, having learned his lesson the painful way.*

*I detain him here at my pleasure, and should he cease to entertain me, I shall get rid of him. I am sure this is something you would like to prevent, for his death, should I decide to kill him, would not be a swift and easy one. But perhaps together we can find a way to spare him this experience, and you deep grief and a guilty conscience.*

*For it is up to you how long his stay here may continue, and in what way and what condition he may come back to you – should he come back at all. Ask yourself how much his life and safe return are worth to you, and then make me an offer! I am sure you can think of something that would please me, something you consider a suitable ransom for one so dear to you. Should this offer indeed please me, I will consider further negotiations. Should it not attract me, or should it annoy me even, our correspondance will cease, and Gondor will have to look for a new Steward. Surely this is not in your interest. And what a grief it would cause to you and the little ones. I very much doubt the twins would remember their father at all, since he spent only two days in their company. And you would have to live with the guilt of failing to save your sweetheart, when his life was in your hands.*

*So, do be reasonable, and consider your reply carefully. Speak to your King, if you want, and then decide what to offer me. A messenger will come to fetch your reply on the 10th of Viressë.*

*Marek Al-Jahmîr*