

My dearest Faramir,

With all my heart, I hope this letter finds you safe, well, and whole. I have not had a moment's ease since the 10th. That horrid errand-rider of Al-Jahmîr's waited until dusk to pick up his message! We spent the entire day waiting and worrying about this, wondering if he would come at all, if Al-Jahmîr had inexplicably decided to end negotiations, if if if... I was anxious all day, and the twins must have sensed my anxiety because they did not nurse well at anytime. Even Elboron was not as unconcerned as he usually is. He stayed close to me all day.

I do not know if that errand rider was instructed to wait until nightfall to arrive or if he took his own time to do so, but it was not appreciated. It was best that my letter had been sealed since the night before, otherwise I might have added an unwise postscript. I doubt that would have made much of a difference. The Umbarian probably does not like what my letter has to say as it is. That has been my greatest worry these past days. I would copy it for you, but I don't have the heart to do it. Even now I wonder if I'm too late in writing this letter to you, if there's anyone at Barad Gwaelin to read it. I am terrified that Aiglos will fly forever and not find you...

I should have written to you on the 10th. I should have, there's no way around it. Aiglos would have arrived long before the rider, and you may have even had a chance to write and send the buzzard back. But now I may never know... No! You are alive and well. It cannot be any other way. And yet, part of me says that these are only bold words on paper, that reality is not as controlled as I wish it to be.

These words are bolder than even my current situation. Teherin has ordered me to bedrest again. I do not know why, I feel well enough. She ordered me back to bed on the morning of the 11th after I had gone downstairs for breakfast. I quickly informed her that I had spent the better part of four months in bed under her orders and that I was not about to go back unless by my own choice. I was overruled and outnumbered 5 to 1 as Visilya, Túrin, Khorazîr, and even Éomer told me to listen to her.

I don't know what good this has done for me as I feel I am more restless than before. She is more strict with me this time than she ever was when I carried the twins. Now I have someone "guarding" me at all times, whether Visilya or Éomer or whoever. Apparently she thinks I am less concerned about my health when I am not with child.

Meriadoc is helping me write this now. Between his coos and gurgles he says he misses you and wants you to come home soon. Peregrin is sleeping right now, but I'm sure he agrees with his brother. They have grown so much these past weeks, almost two months old now. They are also starting to smile real smiles at me, and only me. This makes me feel much better for a while, so I am glad that they do it often. Meriadoc still does not like being on his tummy, but I am not too worried about it. Teherin said earlier that he'll learn to appreciate it when he sees his brother beginning to crawl.

They've both discovered their horseys but use them less for play and more for chewing on. I often find one hoof on Peregrin's completely soaked. He is still picky about how long he wants to eat, but as long as he continues gaining weight, I am not going to worry too much about it. They're both getting rounder as the days go by.

As for Elboron, he continues his usual schedule of going to the stables to check on the horses, then out to the gardens to make sure the frogs and toads are still around, and then what other sort of activities his playmates devise. Túrin managed to catch one of the tamer rabbits for Elboron to see, which was quite an event, or so I heard. Our son is learning new words every day and figuring out how to use them correctly too. He is becoming quite the little man nowadays.

I suppose I should tell you about what else went on in our talks here, at least what happened after I sent out my last letter, except that I have not thought about that for several days and I am reluctant to ruin this moment with my son cradled in one arm, in a quiet room, with a warm breeze coming in through the window. I can even hear Elboron outside somewhere (I always wonder what sort of bad habits his friends are teaching him when I'm not around.)

In truth, there is little more to tell about those discussions, and certainly nothing very new or enlightening. We talked in circles often. At times I wished I had one of those talking parrots that we saw in the Harad so it could say my lines for me. I found out nothing else about that mysterious Tarostar Falastur brought. He certainly is quite unlike Falastur: a man of few words. Spoken words, at least. When he left he had sheets and sheets of notes with him. Perhaps this is a case study for if sometime Falastur should find himself in a similar situation? I don't know. I see little potential harm in what we discussed (toward the end we discussed what my message would say, though I will admit I took a few liberties in the wording), since most of it is public knowledge by now, knowing how the gossipers work.

Ah, guess who else is awake now. I'll even give you a hint: he looks exactly like Meriadoc and has the same birthday. I do believe he's hungry too, since he's chewing on his fist like he's never had a meal before. And since I cannot hold two babies and write at the same time, I will end this for now. Fare you well, my love. I can only hope that this letter finds you safely. I am trying not to lose hope, but there are times when it seems so far away.

*I love you always,
Éowyn*