

My dear Faramir,

It eases my mind greatly to know that you have arrived safely. Give my greetings to Imrahil and our other friends who are there. I worried more than usual about this journey, though I do not know why. In any case, I am glad that you arrived without much trouble, except for Narâk. Why does it not surprise me that he would be the one to cause a ruckus? It must be the Southron in him.

Speaking of Southrons, a letter, a very long letter, arrived from Khorazîr two days ago. I have sent it along with this one, so I will not bother with telling you the details since you can read it for yourself. Mainly he wrote about Azrahil, and that the lad had trouble on the journey south through Ithilien (that account will not please you, I'm afraid), and once he had crossed the Poros he was captured by his half-brother and tormented for many days. Finally he was used as bait to lure Narjede and Khorazîr into a trap. Once that trap was sprung, however, the fight went ill for our foes. Apparently the Dreadful Doom lived up to her name, though she was injured during the fight. Azrahil was severely injured as well, but from the account he is recovering well.

That said, Khorazîr echoed your concerns that the errand-riders are not getting through. He speaks of slayings and escapes, and that he has not received word from us in quite some time. Now, I know as well as you do that we have sent him letters recently, congratulating him on his upcoming marriage and telling of our intentions to attend.

But what are our intentions now? I must admit I scoffed somewhat at your reservations for traveling, since we are likely to go with more escort than any errand-rider could have, but that was before Khorazîr's tidings arrived. Now I am not as confident. The attack Khorazîr recounted was well-planned and executed, much of it occurring in his own realm unknown to his scouts and patrols. Doubtless he will have more eyes watching now, but still, it happened once without their knowledge, it could happen again.

Though I am fearful of what could happen if we traveled to the South, there is just as much likelihood of a safe and uneventful passage through those lands. The blow has already fallen once, and it will take time for them to reorganize and try a new venture, if that even has a chance of happening now that key players are no longer in the match. I still want to go. Khorazîr has done much for us lately, especially during your captivity. Need I remind you that we were absent at Aravôr's wedding? He I would like to see again as well, and little Hanneh.

But enough of this talk. The sun is bright today and a fresh breeze is drifting through the window. It is not a day to talk of such dark tidings.

Your sons are as wild as when you left them, though their pranks have not been as troublesome as the pea incident. I can hear them squealing out in the garden right now. Rían is watching them. I wondered if she could handle all three at once, but she just laughed and said she would be fine. Elboron showed his stubbornness early today, refusing to eat most of his breakfast, saying he did

not like any of the food. When have we ever known him not to like eggs or cheese or toast with jelly? I told him that if he did not eat more of his breakfast that he would not get his horse-ride today, but even that did not sway him. I hope that he changes this attitude by his birthday, otherwise I am not sure how much he deserves his presents. The little boat does sound delightful, though. I am sure he could find all sorts of rocks or sticks to be passengers.

Meriadoc and Peregrin are behaving themselves for the most part. Peregrin did get a scratch on his hand after chasing Berúthiel. He caught her by the tail, and, well, she did not like that very much. He sulked for awhile, then seemed to get over it instantly and started playing a game with Meriadoc and the wooden blocks.

But ours are not the only little boys here right now. Visilya and Vorondil arrived late yesterday evening, much to my surprise. I did not speak much with Visilya last night, as she was very tired from the journey, but today I have had time to talk with her, and it was not the best of conversations.

She is not happy that Túrin is in Pelargir, nor is she pleased that the King was the one who talked him into going. She said she brooded in Minas Tirith for several days before deciding to come here. "If Túrin can have an unannounced holiday, so can I," she told me. (Vorondil does not seem to mind having three friends all at once to play with, either.)

"He only told me the night before he left that he was even going," she said.

"Maybe he did not know he would be, until then," I suggested. "Faramir wrote saying that it sounded like it took the King a long time to persuade him."

"That still does not make it any less rash!"

"But certainly no more than your own sudden decision to come here?" I countered. Here she bit her lip and said nothing. "What happens if he returns from Pelargir and you and Vorondil are not at home?"

"Maybe he will rejoice," she said bitterly. At my stunned look, she continued, "Well, it seems like he hardly notices or cares if Voro and I are there or not. He's either busy with his work or some other business. I hardly see him during the day, and at night he's usually so tired that he barely kisses me goodnight before he's asleep."

"Have you spoken to him about it?" I asked, recognizing a very familiar story.

"Yes, but I did not see any changes," she said. "And I do not want to be the nagging wife, constantly telling him to stay around the house and play nursemaid to his son, but if I do not, I wonder if I will ever see him. I have wanted another child for some time now, but I am not sure anymore if I should, since Túrin hardly has time for the one he has. At times I wonder if he loves us still," she said, her voice trailing off at the end.

Angry now at such foolish talk, I showed her what you had written about Túrin being loath to go, but it did not go as I had planned.

“And see where he writes later that Túrin feels better now that he’s away from us!” she said, the color rising in her cheeks.

Now I knew she was being foolish, and told her so. She did not like that very much at all, and for a moment I thought we were going to have a real argument, but then she sighed and sat back down in her chair. “Perhaps I am,” she said. “But lately it seems that he is avoiding me.”

“What if it only appears that way because he does not know what’s best to say? Faramir can be like that too, sometimes.”

She thought about it for several moments. “Perhaps,” she said softly, then sighed. “I don’t know anymore.”

And that was the end of that. She did not seem willing to talk of it anymore, and I did not press her to. She and Voro went out to the garden afterward, and maybe they have met up with our three by now. Even though it was not with the best of reasons she came out here, I think the time will be good for her. If nothing else, she has room to roam instead of being cooped up inside the city walls.

As for being penned up, it appears that Pharzi may have made it all the way to Khiblat Pharazôn. I am relieved that she is accounted for, and in a way glad that nothing terrible happened to her. Now, before you start scolding me about not caring for the lion, you know I never liked having her near the children, even with close supervision. Besides, I think the land down there is more suited to her temperament.

As for you, I hope that your business in Pelargir finishes with you soon that you can return home quickly. The days here are too nice for you to be away when you could be teaching Elboron how to fish or the twins how to build a fort out of sticks and leaves. But I will end this now before I turn into the dreaded nagging wife.

The boys send their love, and muddy handprints, and hope that you come back soon. I share their thoughts (but not the mud). I hope that whatever it is Falastur has called you for will not take very long, nor bring more ill news. Return to us swiftly and safely!

*All my love,
Éowyn*

