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One-Handed

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One-Handed

As left hand traces the line of battle
Across spread chart in shadowed pavilion,
A loop of gold on the least finger
Catches the light of a lone candle.

I wear it there now, since hands grew larger,
The slender hands of an eager elf-child,
His grey eyes wide with his love and wonder
At a golden gift of his sire's crafting.

A red stone flashes the fire of the forges;
As the son watches, the father fashions,
And hands of a skill still unsurpassed
Shape fantasies of a fiery spirit.

Those were the days when hands were open,
When giving was gladness great as making,
Ere the holy fires claimed love and spirit
And stole all light with their light's stealing.

The red stone flashes the fires of Losgar,
The red of blood on the forged weapons;
The hands of skill in ash have perished,
Left spirits bound in the Oath's irons.

Now a golden bracer binds empty wrist;
The left hand serves for the sword's wielding,
But one-handed there will be no crafting,
And to Valinor there is no returning.

Maedhros Hilde Fëanáro

Margaret R. Purdy