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## Quenti Lambardillion: Among the Trees: Seeking the Spirit of Nargelion

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### Quenti Lambardillion: Among the Trees: Seeking the Spirit of Nargelion

#### Abstract

Further discussion of the poem "Nargelion" and several other poems composed around the same time.

# Quenti Lambardillion

A Column on Middle-earth Linguistics

Paul Nolan Hyde

## Among the Trees: Seeking the Spirit of 'Nargelion'

In a dim and perilous region, down whose great tempestuous ways  
I heard no sound of men's voices; in those eldest of the days,  
I sat on the ruined margin of the deep voiced echoing sea  
Whose roaring foaming music crashed in endless cadency  
On the land besieged for ever in an aeon of assaults  
And torn in towers and pinnacles and caverned in great vaults.  
(from 'Sea Chant of an Elder Day', by J.R.R. Tolkien 4 December 1914, *Biography*, pp. 73-74)

When we embark upon a study of J.R.R. Tolkien's linguistic achievements by looking at an isolated poem or phrase, it is as if we were standing on the brink of a precipice overlooking the boundary between the Waters and the Land with a single shell held to our ear, hoping to hear the voice of the sea, but hearing not much more than the coursing of our own blood. What few of us realize is that in order to come an understanding of the shell we must be off upon the waters from whence the shell came. But to our dismay, the shores of the Linguistic Ocean of Middle-earth are troubled, foaming waters rife with treacherous shoals. Few of us, if any, have been able to venture much past the incoming swells of the Anfalas, our sail-less crafts futilely striving to sound out the certain currents of the deep while yet plying the foam of the noisome shallows. Others of us are resigned to wait breathlessly for the successive linguistic *tsunamis* caused by each Middle-earthshaking publication which annually originates in southern France, in order to ride the wave to wisdom, but find ourselves cascading into the rocks upon the shore. Very little of what we discern in this fashion has bearing on the little shell, its origin and meaning. [I'm truly sorry about this marine metaphor gone amuck, but it does accurately portray the conditions that surround Tolkien-language analysis in general and my specific mental-emotional condition after each issue of *Mythlore* is posted.]

The history of how the poem 'Nargelion' came to be published has been related elsewhere in the article that accompanied its printing in *Mythlore* 56. Needless to say, having had a small part in bringing to light such an extraordinary piece of linguistic material has been a source

of great joy to me personally. The value of 'Nargelion' has yet to be ascertained, partially because it has yet to be definitively translated, a task which may, at present, be beyond those of us who have a compulsive interest in all things philological. Those of you attending this session of the Mythopoeic Conference here at Vancouver, British Columbia, expecting the consummate parsing, or even the consummate target, stand none of consolation; I do not propose to do any such thing. But then, that has never really been my course of action in any event.

## The Problematic Unknownables

The translation problem is not due to a lack of linguistic material; in fact, it is quite the opposite: there is literally too much material to take into consideration as a translation of 'Nargelion' is attempted. The more textual material that is made available, the more variables are introduced into the system; and the more difficulties attend the translation process. The "Lhammas" in *The Lost Road*, for example, is a frightening joy. While it is true that many of the inter-relationships between the various dialects of Elvish speech are clarified to one degree or another, it is also true that no one of us expected such a plethora of dialects, nearly two score at first count. The dialects and the resultant historical languages that proceeded from those dialects are not mere whimsical ruminations of a linguistically minded poet, but they represent the formation a detailed superstructure upon which the creation of Middle-earth rests. I suspect that it will be many years, if ever, before the correlations between the languages and the historical narratives are accurately articulated. It would be a massive and time-consuming undertaking at best, and not many of us have a sinecured position such that it would allow us to pursue such a task.

In addition, although there is an enormous Elvish glossary, we are not often privy as to which dialect or language the identified morphological elements belong. Less than two-thirds of the entire corpus is blessed with a language family name. Thus, in my own *A Working Tolkien Glossary* there are many entries which appear to be redundant or cross-identifiable. I have not coalesced the entries for fear that the product would be erroneous or at least not reflective of the possible divergence in dialect that is not explicit in the text, but is implicit when the dialect or language is not identified. But when the translation process begins on an unknown piece, what does the translator use as a criteria? How does he know which historical linguistic environment to suppose in order to set up the translation? He must guess. Speculation, even conservative speculation, as a result, runs rampant on the linguist's crest.

There is another problem, an almost devastating historical note, that attends the writing of 'Narqelion'. Humphrey Carpenter is quite candid about it, even though it is just mentioned in passing. Speaking of Tolkien's early attempts at poetry:

He soon came to feel that the composition of occasional poems without a connecting theme was not what he wanted. Early in 1915 he turned back to his original Earendel verses and began to work their theme into a larger story. He had shown the original Earendel lines to G.B. Smith, who had said that he liked them but asked what they were really about. Tolkien had replied: 'I don't know. I'll try to find out.' Not try to invent: *try to find out*. He did not see himself as an inventor of story but as a discoverer of legend. And this was really due to his private languages.

He had been working for some time at the language that was influenced by Finnish, and by 1915 he had developed it to a degree of some complexity. He felt that it was 'a mad hobby', and he scarcely expected to find an audience for it. But he sometimes wrote poems in it, and the more he worked at it the more he felt that it needed a 'history' to support it. In other words, you cannot have a language without a race of people to speak it. He was perfecting the language; now he had to decide to whom it belonged. (*Biography*, p. 75).

"He was perfecting the language", Carpenter asserts, at the very time the poem 'Narqelion' was being written. The inscription on the holograph of 'Narqelion' contains two dates, "Nov 1915" and "March 1916", the period of time when Tolkien was in training with the Lancashire Fusiliers at Rugeley Camp in Staffordshire. In a letter to his sweetheart, Edith, dated 2 March 1916, the "perfecting" process is confirmed:

This miserable drilling afternoon I have been reading up old military lecture-notes again: — and getting bored with them after an hour and a half. I have done some touches to my nonsense fairy language — to its improvement.

I often long to work on it and don't let myself 'cause though I love it so it does seem such a mad hobby! (*Letters*, p. 8)

The obvious question to be asked, which is probably not resolvable, is when was 'Narqelion' written: before, during, or after the "nonsense fairy language" went in flux? There is also the additional question as to whether the emendations on the holograph are a result of the language creatively shifting or simply an early reflection of Tolkien's penchant for frequently rewriting and restructuring his works. We may not know for a certainty; hence, another variable.

Finally, and perhaps the most disheartening to the insipient translator, is that 'Narqelion' probably does not fit into a traditional body of like material. In Christopher Tolkien's letter to me which included the copy of the original holograph and a typed transcript, he qualified one of Humphrey Carpenter's statements about the language practice and poem writing that went with it: "I don't think,

by the way, that Humphrey Carpenter meant to imply that this was one of many that are extant: I think it is probably unique" (Letter of 19 May 1988 to PNH). What we apparently have, then, is an isolated text, written in an unknown dialect of a language in transition. Hardly an enviable position for the most adroit linguist, much less for those of us who dabble.

### Fair Copies of His Poems

To say that 'Narqelion' is unique is not to say that it appeared *ex nihilo*; it is not an anachronistic poem completely devoid of association with the life and writings of J.R.R. Tolkien in the latter part of 1915 and the early spring of 1916. But we do need to be careful about what we suggest is the possible theme of the 'Narqelion' poem as we come to an awareness as to what Tolkien was about at the time the poem was composed and later revised.

As was indicated above, Tolkien was in Staffordshire training with his company. In another of his letters to Edith he describes his activities during the latter part of November 1915:

The usual kind of morning standing about and freezing and then trotting to get warmer so as to freeze again. We ended up by an hour's bomb-throwing with dummies. Lunch and a freezing afternoon. All the hot days of summer we doubled about at full speed and perspiration, and now we stand in icy groups in the open being talked at! Tea and another scramble—I fought for a place at the stove and made a piece of toast on the end of a knife: what days! I have written out a pencil copy of 'Kortirion'. I hope you won't mind my sending it to the T.C.B.S. [Tea Club and Barrovian Society; comprised of Tolkien, Rob Gilson, Geoffrey Smith and Christopher Wiseman]. I want to send them something: I owe them all long letters. I will start on a careful ink copy for you now and send it tomorrow night, as I don't think I shall get more than one copy typed (it is so long). No on second thoughts I am sending you the pencil copy (which is very neat) and shall keep the T.C.B.S. waiting till I can make another. (*Letters*, p. 8; hard bracket insertion mine, PNH)

Three elements in the letter stand out as having bearing on the 'Narqelion' poem: (1) "Kortirion Among the Trees" was written at about the same time as "Narqelion" was first composed; (2) "Kortirion" was first written in pencil; and (3) the text of "Kortirion" that Tolkien sent to his fiancée was said to have been "very neat". The first point is a given, but we will return to it in a moment. The second and third points have significance because of Christopher's description of the holograph: "It is written fairly quickly in pencil, and though if it were written in English it would present no difficulty, in Quenya there are some doubts as to the readings" (Letter of 19 May 1988 to PNH). As an aside: I speculated in *ML* 56 that the holograph appeared to have been originally written in a bound notebook of some kind and then later removed by cutting it away on the right-hand margin. In a letter some time later, Christopher confirmed my speculation: "You are entirely correct in your deduction that the page was removed from a bound notebook: I possess the book — one used by my

father for writing fair copies of his poems at that period" (Letter of 16 January 1989 to PNH). The probability is that the holograph of the poem "Kortirion Among the Trees" which Tolkien sent to Edith was first written in that book as well.

### A Song of Faded Longing

A summary perusal of the *Book of Lost Tales*, Volumes I and II, reveal that there were many poems composed during the fall and winter of 1915, and the spring of 1916: "Song of Aryador", 12 September 1915 (LT, p. 139); "Habbanan beneath the Stars", December 1915 (LT, pp. 91-92); "Over Old Hills and Far Away", December 1915 (ibid., pp. 108-110); "The Wanderer's Allegiance", March 16-18, 1916 (LT2, pp. 295-298). There was one other short poem of a similar tone and atmosphere; "Kor" written 30 April 1915 (LT, p. 136), while early, has some bearing on the overall products of that year. The most revealing of all of the poetry is "Kortirion Among the Trees", in its several versions, the first having been written in November 1915. Each of the poems will be treated briefly below in terms of its subject and tone.

"A Song of Aryador" is a lament that concerns the "shadow-folk" that inhabit the upper reaches of the mountains of Hisilome, the Land of Shadow. The "shadow-people" are, of course, the remnants of the Elves who, though led by Inwe (King of the Eldar of Kor) and Orome himself, became entangled in the forests of Middle-earth. The narrative recounts:

Grievous had been their march, and dark and difficult the way through Hisilome the land of shade, despite the skill and power of Orome. Indeed long after the joy of Valinor had washed its memory faint the Elves sang still sadly of it, and told tales of many of their folk whom they said and say were lost in those old forests and ever wandered there in sorrow. Still were they there long after when Men were shut in Hisilome by Melko, and still do they dance there when Men have wandered far over the lighter places of the Earth. Hisilome did Men name Aryador, and the Lost Elves they did call the Shadow Folk, and feared them. (LT, pp. 118-119)

In *Unfinished Tales*, the "Narn I Hin Hurin" tells of the advent of the Easterlings and their dealings among the House of Hador, but of Morwen Eledhwen:

But they dared not yet lay their hands on the Lady of Dor-lomin, or thrust her from her house; for the word ran among them that she was perilous, and a witch who had dealings with the white-fiends: for so they named the Elves, hating them, but fearing them more. For this reason they also feared and avoided the mountains, in which many of the Eldar had taken refuge, especially in the south of the land (U, p. 68).

The spirit of the lament, the lost golden age and the sorrow of abandonment, is summed up in the fourth stanza of "A Song of Aryador"

Men are kindling tiny gleams  
Far below by mountain streams  
Where they dwell among the beechwoods

near the shore,  
But the great woods on the height  
watch the waning western light  
And whisper to the wind of days of yore.  
(LT, p. 139)

The city of Kor (sometimes Cor, Tun, Tirion, etc.) was built in Valinor by the Eldar (under the leadership of Ingwe or Inwe) in Eldamar (the land variously called Aman, Eglamar, Eressea, Alalminore, etc., depending on the detail given in the narratives). In the process of time, the city is diminished. The Vanyar are the first to leave, preferring the mountain of Manwe (S, p. 61). Fearon and the Noldoli later depart Kor for Middle-earth after the fierce debate concerning the Silmarils. Only a tenth of the original inhabitants remained in the city after Fearon leads the Noldor forth (S, p. 84). In "Of the Flight of the Noldor", the narrator recounts that many of the followers of Fearon had no second thoughts about the exodus. However,

Slower and less eagerly came the host of Fingolfin after them. Of those Fingon was the foremost; but at the rear went Finarfin and Finrod, and many of the noblest and wisest of the Noldor; and often they looked behind them to see their fair city, until the lamp of the Mindon Eldalieva was lost in the night. More than any others of the Exiles they carried thence memories of the bliss they had forsaken, and some even of the things that they had made there they took with them: a solace and a burden on the road. (S, p. 85)

"Kor: In a City Lost and Dead" is reflective of that loss felt by the Noldor. The poem is notable on several counts, but especially for Tolkien's marvelous use of adjectives, particularly colors. The essence of the poem's title, however, is its last four lines:

There slow forgotten days for ever reap  
The silent shadows counting out rich hours;  
And no voice stirs; and all the marble towers  
White, hot and soundless, ever burn and sleep.  
(LT, p. 136)

"Habbanan beneath the Stars" is an extraordinary poem, inasmuch as its initial subject matter has to do with the realm of the spirits of Men after death. Without going into the obvious linguistic and mythological ramifications of the poem, we can safely say that in its original conception the land of Habbanan was near Valinor south of Taniquetil. The first stanza recalls the musings of the two previous poems, but with a touch more ethereal distance:

In Habbanan beneath the skies  
Where all roads end however long  
There is a sound of faint guitars  
And distant echoes of a song,  
For there men gather into rings  
Round their red fires while one voice sings—  
And all about is night. (LT, p. 91)

The poem "Over Old Hills and Far Away" is a light piece when compared to the others cited above. The poem is told in the first person, unnamed, who has a nocturnal

encounter with the piper Tinfang Warble (elsewhere, Timpinen and Tinfang Gelion), who is declared to be one of the three greatest pipers among the Elves. In "The Chaining of Melko", Vaire tells Eriol (the traveler, Aelfwine, from England) of the one who has piped in Eriol's dreams for two nights running:

'There be none,' said Vaire, 'not even of the Solosimpi, who can rival him therein, albeit those same pipers claim him as their kin; yet 'tis said everywhere that this quaint spirit is neither wholly of the Valar nor of the Eldar, but is half a fay of the woods and dells, one of the great companies of the children of Palurien, and half a Gnome or a Shoreland Piper. Howso that he be is a wondrous wise and strange creature, and he feared hither away with the Eldar long ago, marching nor resting among them but going aways ahead piping strangely or whistles sitting aloof. Now does he play about the gardens of the land; but Alalminore he loves the best, and this garden best of all. Ever and again we miss his piping for long months, and we say: "Tinfang Warble has gone heart-breaking in the Great Lands, and many a one in those far regions will hear his piping in the dusk outside tonight." But on a sudden will his flute be heard again at an hour of gentle gloaming, or will he play beneath a goodly moon and the stars go bright and blue.' (LT, pp. 94-95)

The narrator (Eriol, perhaps, or someone in the Great Lands) in "Over Old Hills and Far Away" hears the fluting, and races to the window and into the garden. After a moment's contact:

His slim little body went fine as a shade,  
And he slipped through the reeds like a mist in the glade;

And he laughed like thin silver, and piped a thin note,  
As he flapped in the shadows his shadowy coat.  
O! the toes of his slippers were twisted and curled,  
But he danced like a wind out into the world.

He is gone, and the valley is empty and bare  
Where lonely I stand and lonely I stare.  
Then suddenly out in the meadows beyond,  
Then back in the reeds by the shimmering pond,  
Then far from the copse where the mosses are thick  
A few little notes came trilling quick.

I leapt o'er the stream and I sped from the glade,  
For Tinfang Warble it was that played;  
I must follow the hoot of his twilight flute  
Over reed, over rush, under branch, over root,  
And over dim fields, and through rustling grasses  
That murmur and nod as the old elf passes,  
Over old hills and far away  
Where the harps of the Elvenfolk softly play.  
(LT, pp. 109-110)

The three-part poem "The Wanderer's Allegiance", is admittedly not a living part of Middle-earth mythology, at least not at first blush. After the "Prelude", there are two short pieces, "The Town of Dreams" and "The City of Present Sorrow". The first is a portrait of Warwick on the river Avon and the second of Oxford, on the Thames. Without going into extraordinary detail and without delv-

ing into the psychological implications of such an association, suffice it to say that Warwickshire and environs are the models for Alalminore, Kortirion, and Tuna. Christopher Tolkien, explaining this relationship, further speculates:

Koromas or Kortirion, the town in the center of Tol Eressea to which Eriol comes in *The Cottage of Lost Play*, would become in after days Warwick...; Alalminore, the Land of Elms, would be Warwickshire; and Tavrobel, where Eriol sojourned for a while in Tol Eressea, would afterwards be the Staffordshire village of Great Haywood.... The great tower or *tirion* that Ingil son of Inwe built... and the great tower of Warwick castle are not identified, but at least it is certain that Koromas has a great tower because Warwick has one. (LT, pp. 24-25)

The section entitled "The Town of Dreams" has particular interest because of the manner in which the castle and the woods are described. Here follows the section in its entirety:

Here many days once gently past me crept  
In this dear town of old forgetfulness;  
Here all entwined in dreams once long ago I slept  
And heard no echo of the world's distress  
Come through the rustle of the elm's rich leaves,  
While Avon gurgling over shallows wove  
Unending melody, and morns and eves  
Slipped down her waters till the Autumn came,  
(Like the gold leaves that drip and flutter then,  
Till the dark river gleams with jets of flame  
That slowly float far down beyond our ken.)

For here the castle and the mighty tower,  
More lofty than the tiered elms,  
More grey than long November rain,  
Sleep, and nor sunlit moment nor triumphal hour,  
Nor passing of the season or the Sun  
Wakes their old lords too long in slumber lain.

No watchfulness disturbs their splendid dream,  
Though laughing radiance dance down the stream;  
And they be clad in snow or lashed by windy rains,  
Or may March whirl the dust about the winding lanes,  
The Elm robe and disrobe her of a million leaves  
Like moments clustered in a crowded year,  
Still their old heart unmoved nor weeps nor grieves,  
Uncomprehending of this evil tide,  
Today's great sadness, or Tomorrow's fear:  
Faint echoes fade within their drowsy halls  
Like ghosts; the daylight creeps across their wall.  
(LT2, p. 296)

By now the thematic echoes ought to be apparent even to the most avid poetry despiser. The faded land, the spectral people, the great melancholy, the persistent longing for a time long since past pervades Tolkien's writings in the period of time just prior to leaving for France and the War. All of these are manifest and find their full expression in "Kortirion Among the Trees"

Christopher Tolkien gives three versions of Kortirion in *The Book of Lost Tales*: the first, dating from late November 1915; the second, a considerable reworking of the poem dating from 1937; the third, a version dating from the early 1960's. It is the earliest working which should attract our attention, begun as it was in November 1915, dedicated to Warwick, and entitled (in one of the early copies) "*Nar-quelion la-tu y aldalin Kortirionwen*" (translated by Christopher as "Autumn (among) the trees of Kortirion").

### Kortirion among the Trees

#### The First Verses

O fading town upon a little hill,  
Old memory is waning in thine ancient gates,  
The robe gone grey, thine old heart almost still;  
The castle only, frowning, ever waits  
And ponders how among the towering elms  
The Gliding Water leaves these inland realms  
And slips between long meadows to  
the western sea —  
Still bearing downward over murmurous falls  
One year and then another to the sea;  
And slowly thither have a many gone  
Since first the fairies built Kortirion.  
O spiry town upon a windy hill  
With sudden-winding alleys shady-walled  
(Where even now the peacocks pace a stately drill,  
Majestic, sapphirine, and emerald),  
Behold thy girdle of a wide champain  
Sunlit, and watered with a silver rain,  
And richly wooded with a thousand whispering  
trees  
That cast long shadows in many a bygone noon,  
And murmured many centuries in the breeze.  
Thou art the city of the Land of Elms,  
Alalminore in the Faery Realms.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sing of thy trees, old, old Kortirion!  
Thine oaks, and maples with their tassels on,  
Thy singing poplars; and the splendid yews  
That crown thine aged walls and muse  
Of sombre grandeur all the day —  
Until the twinkle of the early stars  
Is tangled palely in their sable bars;  
Until the seven lampads of the Silver Bear  
Swing slowly in their shrouded hair  
And diadem the fallen day.  
O tower and citadel of the world!  
When bannered summer is unfurled  
Most full of music are thine elms  
A gathered sound that overwhelms  
The voices of all other trees.  
Sing then of elms, below'd Kortirion,  
How summer crowds their full sails on,  
Like clothed masts of verdurous ships,  
A fleet of galleons that proudly slips  
Across long sunlit seas.

#### The Second Verses

Thou art the inmost province of the fading isle  
Where linger yet the Lonely Companies.  
Still, undespairing, do they sometimes slowly file  
Along thy paths with plaintive harmonies:  
The holy fairies and immortal elves  
That dance among the trees and sing themselves  
A wistful song of things that were, and could be yet.  
They pass and vanish in a sudden breeze,  
A wave a bowing grass — and we forget  
Their tender voices like wind-shaken bells  
Of flowers, their gleaming hair like golden asphodels.  
Spring still hath joy: thy spring is ever fair  
Among the trees; but drowsy summer by thy streams  
Already stoops to hear the secret player  
Pipe out beyond the tangle of her forest dreams  
The long thin tune that still do sing  
The elvish harebells nodding in the jacinth ring  
Upon the castle walls;  
Already stoops to listen to the clear cold spell  
Come up her sunny aisles and perfumed halls:  
A sad and haunting magic note,  
A strand of silver glass remote.  
Then all thy trees, old town upon a windy bent,  
Do loose a long sad whisper and lament;  
For going are the rich-hued hours, th' enchanted nights  
When flitting ghost-moths dance like satellites  
Round tapers in the moveless air;  
And doomed already are the radiant dawns,  
The fingered sunlight dripping on long lawns;  
The odour and the slumbrous noise of meads,  
When all the sorrel, flowers, and plumed weeds  
Go down before the scyther's share.  
Strange sad October robes her dewy furze  
In netted sheen of gold-shot gossamers,  
And then the wide-umbraged elm begins to fail;  
Her mourning multitudes of leaves go pale  
Seeing afar the icy shears  
Of Winter, and his blue-tipped spears  
Marching unconquerable upon the sun  
Of bright All-Hallows. Then their hour is done,  
And wanly borne on wings of amber pale  
They beat the wide airs of the fading vale  
And fly like birds across the misty meres.

#### The Third Verses

Yet this season dearest to my heart,  
Most fitting to the little faded town  
With sense of splendid pomps that now depart  
In mellow sounds of sadness echoing down  
The paths of stranded mists. O! gentle time  
When the late mornings are bejeweled with rime,  
And the blue shadows gather on the distant woods.  
The fairies know thy early crystal dusk  
And put in secret on their twilight hoods  
Of grey and filmy purple, and long bands  
Of frosted starlight sewn by silver hands.  
They know the season of the brilliant night,

When naked elms entwine the cloudy lace  
The Pleiades, and long-armed poplars bar the light  
Of golden-rondured moons with glorious face.  
O fading fairies and most lonely elves  
Then sing ye, sing ye to yourselves  
A woven song of stars and gleaming leaves;  
Then whirl ye with the sapphire-winged winds;  
Then do ye pipe and call with heart that grieves  
To somber men: 'Remember what is gone —  
The magic sun that lit Kortirion!'

Now are thy trees, old, old Kortirion,  
Seen rising up through pallid mists and wan,  
Like vessels floating vague and long afar  
Down opal seas beyond the shadowy bar  
Of cloudy ports forlorn:

They leave behind for ever havens throng'd  
Wherein their crews a while held feasting long  
And gorgeous ease, who now like windy ghosts  
Are wafted by slow airs to empty coasts;

There are they sadly glimmering borne  
Across the plumbless ocean of oblivion.  
Bare are thy trees become, Kortirion,  
And all their summer glory swiftly gone.  
The seven lampads of the Silver Bear]  
Are waxen to a wondrous flare

That flames above the fallen year.  
Though cold thy windy squares and empty  
streets;

Though elves dance seldom in thy pale retreats  
(Save on some rare and moonlit night,  
A flash, a whispered glint of white),  
Yet would I never need depart from here.

#### The Last Verse

I need not know the desert or red palaces  
Where dwells the sun, the great seas or the  
magic isles,

The pinewoods piled on mountain-terraces;  
and calling faintly down the windy miles  
Touches my heart no distant bell that rings  
In populous cities of the Earthly Kings.

Here do I find a haunting ever-near content  
Set midmost of the Land of withered Elms  
(Alalminore of the Faery Realms);

Here circling slowly in a sweet lament  
Linger the holy fairies and immortal elves  
Singing a song of faded longing to themselves.  
(LT, pp. 33-36)

I believe that song of faded longing, sung by elvish  
hearts to elvish hearts, is "Narqelion"

N.alalmino lalantila  
Ne.sume lasser pinea  
Ve.sangar voro umeai  
Oikta ramavoite malinai.

Ai lintuilindova Lasselanta  
Piliningeve suyer nalla qanta  
Kuluvai ya karnevalinar  
V'ematte sinq' Eldamar.

San rotser simpetalla pinqe,  
Sulimarya sildai, hiswa timpe  
San sirilla ter i-aldar:  
Lilta lie noldorinwa  
Omalingwe lir' amaldar  
Singitalla laiqaninwa.  
N.alalmino lya lanta lasse  
Torwa pior ma tarasse:  
Tukalia sangar umeai  
Oikta ramavoite karneambarai  
Ai lindorea Lasselanta  
Nierme miritya nara qanta

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We stand upon the brink of a precipice overlooking the  
boundary between the Waters and the Land with a single  
shell held to our ear, hoping to hear the voice of the sea....

#### Autumn

Under the spreading Elms  
Falling leaves heap up in a sheltered place  
Like throngs, never drifting away,  
But always stirring with golden yellow wings.

Behold the swift singing flight of Autumn  
Pale blue arrows blown down from the vales of  
the overflowing  
Golden clouds which once in ages past made glad;  
The leaves and rain, like hands wrung together,  
sigh for Eldamar.

Then faint pipings from the piper dwindle, fade;  
Pale, fallow winds gleaming in the grey, misty rain;  
Then up from the cool, sparkling stream through  
the trees  
Musical voices singing up through the trees  
From sighings of the blue-green waters.

From the spreading Elm trees every leaf falls  
Brothers, of one kin, clustered by a hand beyond  
the heights  
Thick-twined throngs, never to drift away  
But forever stirring, with leafy wings, surrendering  
to Fate.

Behold the Autumn of the Singing Land  
Telling forth my foremost sorrow completely.

[Translation — PNH] ¶

◆◆◆ Editor's Change of Address ◆◆◆  
Glen GoodKnight, Editor of *Mythlore*  
has moved to 742 S. Garfield Avenue,  
Monterey Park, CA 91754. This move to larger quarters  
is now in effect. Please send mail that should go directly  
to him to this new address.