



The Despair of Kréchellia

Ken Scott

**THE DESPAIR OF
KRÉCHELLIA**

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KRÉCHELLIA**

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To all dreamers...

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Of Forms and Reason

A Brief Introduction

The Way It Was:

“The Despair of Kréchellia” harkens back to a time when heroic and mythic tales were shared orally, sometimes accompanied by harp or another stringed instrument. Picture it now: As dusk settles, a man drags a rough cut log onto the fire, causing the fire, for a moment, to reach skyward and then sink down. The others, huddled close around in the cool, dank air, listen to another man tune up his psaltery. After a moment’s silence, when all that can be heard is the crackling fire, he plucks the first note and begins to sing a tale about a Scandinavian warrior pursuing a monster who is terrorizing the towns. This of course is the story of Beowulf. This is the setting I envision such a tale as “The Despair of Kréchellia” being told.

Whether they were sung this way or not, most of the heroic tales from medieval times are recorded in formal verse. I could have written this tale in prose or in free verse for that matter. With these options at my disposal, why write in formal poetry at all?

Personally one of the reasons I wrote “The Despair of Kréchellia” in form is because the inherent

challenge of doing so. For a poet, it is a challenge of constraining oneself to a form and meter and making it flow and sound good.

But “The Despair of Kréchellia” is more than just a personal challenge. The musicality of the forms harkens back to a day when tales were recited by bards, where oracles would pass the tales down to younger generations; this way history was maintained and not forgotten, even if it now has become legend.

More important, this poem fits an oral tradition. As I have written and rewritten this tale, one of the ways I have experienced the story is by reading it out loud. There is a certain pleasure that comes from hearing the rhythms and meters as the story is recited.

The First Despair of Kréchellia

The first section of the story details the first despair of Kréchellia, the most fair Elvish Maiden to have ever lived. It is written in what is called Heroic Verse made up of Heroic Quatrains (also known as the Elegiac Verse containing Elegiac Stanzas). This form is generally found in epic poetry, which recounts the deeds of some long forgotten hero. The rhyme scheme is *abab* and lines are written in iambic pentameter, except where some places I change the iambs into anapest. Chaucer used this

form in his *Legend of Good Women* and later in *Canterbury Tales*.

Take a look at the second stanza for example. I have shown the scansion as I read it. One will note that Kréchellia is technically 4 syllables. My pronunciation of the words makes the *-lia* one syllable, pronouncing it more as a *-ya*. Though is not necessarily consistent through out the poem.

U / U / U / U / U /

Princess Kréchellia loved the wild and wold,

U / U / U / U / U /

Adored the woods and the green realm of elves,

U / U / U / U / U /

Wherein Dúrain, the oaks, the willows old

U / U / U / U / U /

Did guard the brooks, the glades, and mossy dells.

Why use the Heroic Quatrain in the first despair? The first despair sets up the story and tells of the fairness and beauty of Kréchellia and how, after her mother had prayed to the Old Ones for this gift, her mother turned against her in jealousy. The Elven people rose up

heroically against the king and queen, allowing her to flee to the woods. So to start the tale I used this form because the free flowing iambic lines and the length of the pentameter reflected the stately, heroic nature of the Elves in general.

Regarding the Union of Kréchellia

This section is the only one not titled “The Despair of...” mainly because it is the only part of the story recounted here where Kréchellia does not have some despair thrust upon her. It is considerably lighter in tone and mood than the other parts and therefore it is only appropriate that I use the Lyric Ballad form. The traditional ballad stanza consists of four lines, rhymed *abcb*. Most of the lines are iambic, usually tetrameter with contrasting trimeter lines, a trait suggestive of the ballad stanza.

This section ends with a vow, a declaration of love, spoken by Ethnor and is written in Elizabethan Sonnet form (sometimes called the Shakespearean Sonnet).

The Second Despair of Kréchellia

This third part in “The Despair of Kréchellia” deals with Ethnor and Kréchellia being newly married, out of jealousy Enote stealing his brother’s wife away,

Ethnor pursuing, then killing him, and then fleeing his country. The King of Men is left with a law that states a man cannot take his life into his own hands, and though he loves Ethnor, he is forced to carry his law. These complications set up the third and final despair. Because of these complexities, that I used the form Rime Royal, a form which I consider to be the most complex of the forms I used.

Rhyme Royal, as Rime Royal is commonly written, is sometimes known as the Troilus stanza, after Geoffery Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyd*. It typically contains 7 lines of iambic pentameter and a rhyme scheme of ababbcc. William Shakespeare uses this form in *The Rape of Lucrece*, a poem that deals with complexity of deeds ill-done.

Personally, I prefer the older spelling of Rime Royal, because the word “rime” has another meaning which I feel fits this section of the story. Rime carries the denotation of “frost” which symbolically reflects the chilled relationship between the characters in this scene.

The Third Despair of Kréchellia

In the final despair, men and elves war each other, Ethnor is torn away from Kréchellia again, unable to take it anymore, she curses her birth, and the Old Ones rend a deep chasm between the land Elves and Men into

which many of both races fall including King Aúl. The pacing is much faster and events are happening quicker. It should come as no surprise then that I used long meter for this form.

While it is true this form was often used in pastorals like Christopher Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* and Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*, the tone is far from pastoral in any sense. The quick iambic tetrameter quatrains allow for quicker movement through the line than Iambic Pentameter does. This of course reflects the quickness of the action. As many English Romantic poets did, I adapted this traditional form to suit my own poetics. T.S. Elliot would have argued that this was where "tradition and the individual talent" lay juxtaposed.

Dramatis Persona

(In Order of Appearance)

- Kréchellia = (Kre – chell – ya) or (Kreh – chel
- lee – a) Elven Princess, Daughter
of King Aul and Queen Iana
- Old Ones = Also referred to as they “Ancient Ones,”
celestial beings that created and watched
over the world.
- Queen Iana = (E-ana) Queen of the Elves
- King Aúl = (A-ool) King of Elves
- Dúrain = The proper name for the Elves that lived
in Dura
- Darthnorian = All things living in Darthnor; the men
and women of Darthnor

- Ethnor = Watchman and head guard in the
Darthnorian Army; married to
Kréchellia; son of Kenor
- Enóte = (E – no – the) Brother of Ethnor
- Sounor = (Sow – nor) King of men
- Erol = Chief of Aúl's Men (Scouts and Message
Runners)

PART I

THE FIRST DESPAIR OF KRECHELLIA

The First Despair of Kréchellia

The Despair of Kréchellia is one few men will tell,
A tale of sorrow, of sadness, of grief unquelled,
Of the separation between men and elves,
Of the rending of earth and of time when peace dispelled.

Princess Kréchellia loved the wild and wold,
Adored the woods and the green realm of elves,
Wherein Dúrain, the oaks, the willows old
Did guard the brooks, the glades, and mossy dells.

Often when morning light broke evening's chill,
It found her golden hair, her rosy cheeks
To where she slept in peace on grassy hills
Where doves would warm her arms and fawns her feet.

In the still morning would silent forest wait
To hear her voice the melody of stirring.
Then with fluttering eyes she would awake
And to all forest creatures joy would bring.

The Old One's granted Queen Iana's prayer
That in her child all splendor would reside.
For though all elves stood tall, proud and fair,
Her daughter's highest beauty did not hide.

Her laughter fell like rain on the parched world.
When heard, men stilled their work, women their chores.
For in her the Dura saw the Ones of Old,
Yet few recalled the lay written in lore.

For long ago a minstrel did foretell
While playing fortune's music on the lyre's strings
That one with unmatched beauty, a sign to tell,
On Elvish peace so loved an end would bring.

Despite this truth were all the Dura moved
That attention strayed to Kréchellia alone.
For though in Iana sovereignty reigned true,
The light of Ancient's through her daughter shone.

She then forgot her prayers and jealous grew,
And spoiled the love she once felt toward her child,
This seed of spite within her heart she knew,
And spawned a cauldron, furious, burning vile.

So in the blackened hall of King Aúl
Of her child, the Queen spoke things most ill.
At times her itching jealous hand turned cruel,
And bruised her daughter's cheek in her ill will.

By the Queen's serpent tongue, the King was swayed
To treat Kréchellia harsh and still her sound.
Often with no cause, food he forebade.
So after time Kréchellia fled the grounds.

The wind upon its wings carried this news,
So that all of Dura learned what had transpired.
The King's actions the elves did disapprove,
Their love for the fairest maid never did tire.

For from the rest of Dura such love she knew,
And among them Kréchellia freely moved.
Though from the King, she in distance grew,
She won Elven hearts and with wisdom proved.

When months had passed and Halbraun's feast drew near
That recounted the Elven journey to this place,
From all around the Dura gathered with cheer,
And joined the King and Queen at their estate.

Then came Kréchellia appareled in leafy robes,
Wove by the willows and sewn by the oaks.
Her face with radiance so brightly glowed,
It kept all Elvish eyes, no words were spoke.

She broke the awe and laughed, then waved her hand,
And bade that all continue their gaiety.
Yet Aul and Iana waited for their chance,
This, the cause, of Kréchellia's failing ease.

The King could not the Elves's response forbear,
And ordered his guards on her their hands were laid,
And though they loved the Elven princess fair,
Their duty to their King did hold its sway.

They tore the raiment that the woods had made.
With stone-laced thongs, they marred her blessed skin,
They striped the beauty that the Old Ones gave
'Til blood spilled down her cheeks and stained her shins.

And then the King brought her before the elves,
The naked, blood red maiden 'tween guards of blue.
With shame pierced heart, sorrow now in her dwelled,
Her hope in Elvish good broken in two.

In horror against the King, the elves now rose;
The guards leapt to his side and let her be.
The Old Ones gave her strength, bidding her go,
With fear her whip, she slackened not her speed.

By sword were many slewn in the royal hall,
Where the blood of envy and the innocent flowed,
Though Aúl prevailed and for many years reigned long,
His people hearts he never again did own.

Spent Kréchellia fell, ending her flight
By the spring that birthed the stream of the Perinor.
The Old Ones watched, as still she lay in fright,
They sang healing, her skin bleeding and torn.

New garments did the oaks and willows make,
That covered the many scars of cruelty.
Her voice once broken, soon with new songs bade,
The songs of all things wild and all things free.

Though often her songs woodland walkers heard,
They never again saw Kréchellia.
She tarried not, warned by the woods and birds,
She faded into mists among the dells.

PART II

**REGARDING THE
UNION OF KRÉCHELLIA**

Regarding the Union of Kréchellia

Though separate from the King and Queen

She never lived alone.

She the woods did clothe and feed,

They became her home.

She learned the language of the trees

Through patience and with care.

The Old Ones quickened her ears to hear

To speak their language fair.

In the glade she tuned her ears
 To hear the tales of old,
To hear the tales that began time
 Before the elves were born.

From her hands she fed the doves
 Fed the stag and hart.
Singing songs of merriment
 Peace she did impart.

One day while walking with the oaks
 She strayed near the southern trees.
Where Dúrain bordered the Valley of Men
 The land which bordered the sea.

With keen eyesight that graced all elves,
 She saw the rolling sea
This beauty did enchant her heart
 Its might she longed to see.

But unfriendly were the woods of men

The woods of the Darthnor.

There oaks and willows dared not go

And the same to her implored.

So she sat by the edge on a barren rock

Canopied by the trees.

And so remained for many days

Enchanted by the sea.

This the reason when woods did warn

Their voice she did not heed.

When a man from Darthnor's Northern guard

Heard the songs she weaved.

With his golden greaves and a baldric slung

Like fire his helmet's crest.

Ethnor stood, a champion

Of man stock the best.

Night gave way to morning rays,
As he walked the Northern land.
Her voice, it fell like the dawn rain
On the dry land of men.

For great was the weariness of men
A curse upon their land,
But that fateful tale is told else where,
In the *Chronicles of Men*.

And she enraptured by the sea,
In the throes of song,
Did not see at the glen's edge,
Ethnor standing long.

Startled she at once arose
Quickly prepared to flee.
His semblance echoed that so close
Of the elves that she did leave.

But to men, Old Ones granted skill,

Healing in all forms

With gentle voice he bade her stay

Promising no harm.

Such tender kindness filled his voice,

That she did check her run.

The trees in leafy silence stilled

Witnessed a new thing done.

For many days he walked with her

Under Dúrain's boughs,

Using water from the Perinor,

He made her scarring mild.

She was returned to former glory

Beauty 'gain unmatched.

Yet blinded Ethnor could not see,

Her heart with pain still scratched.

After many days had waned and passed,

She left the Elven glades.

Hand in hand into Darthnor

With Ethnor went away.

They followed the path by the tumbling brook

Into the Valley of Men

Where the stream became a river

That at the sea did end.

He wrapped his shield arm round her waist

His hand was on his hilt,

For the path was narrow and the way was long

The wilds were dangerous still.

They reached the walls of the great Talnor

The greatest city of men,

With walls stacked high, red banners blown.

A mote did round it bend.

Ethnor's brother did guard the gate
In the dusk of the setting sun;
From under his helmet he recognized
Of the two but one.

“My brother Ethnor of the Northern guard,
I know without a doubt.
But not the stranger, this fair maid,
From whom such beauty shouts.”

“She walks with me, is that not enough?
My dear Enóte, please.
Must you here now hassle her
As from her land she flees?”

Enóte then said nothing more,
And opened the gate for them.
But in his heart he desired her,
Eyeing as they passed then.

Ethnor noted his brother's eyes

Never left the Elven maid.

The bond that once did hold them close

Was tested now and weighed.

They traveled east to the citadel,

To Sounor King of Men.

Though many stared, none stilled their way

As they passed by horse and wren.

Kréchellia uttered not her song

Knowing the power it bore.

On Ethnor ever her gaze remained

And the earthen road before.

The King sat throned ere they arrived

Gate messengers had come running.

Attendants ushered both them in

To the royal Halls of Hearing.

In boldness now did Ethnor speak,

“My lord, I beg you hear,

Hear the plight of this fair maid,

The plight of my love dear.”

The maiden fair did inward start,

Of love first time pronounced,

While outward the Princess did remain

Moved on no account.

She knew he held such, long before

Pent deep within his heart.

Though love had long since fled from her,

She felt in now in part.

To Sounor, Ethnor did tell all

Of the jealousy of Aúl,

Of the burning envy of the Queen,

Of exile from their rule.

He begged the King, “Please grant her leave

To freely walk the land.

Let this place a refuge be

Free from the cruel hands.”

Then turned the King to the Elven Maid

And spoke deep gentleness

“What say you now, Oh Princess fair,

To Ethnor’s bold request?

“It’s been long while since such as thee

Did travel in this land.

In these dark times does evil stretch

Bonds forging elves and men.”

For the first time since the Dúrain woods

Her voice in song did spring.

A laughing song of freedom clear,

A peace tune of blessing.

As she sang the fires brightened,
Shadows from room did flee.

The weariness that held all men
Gave way to jubilee.

Servants, guards, all had hope
Until the last note stirred.

In the Halls of Hearing a hush did fall,
Until the King whispered.

“In these times, you’re most welcome here.
Than one hundred soldiers more.

One condition I only give
That you stay with Ethnor.”

For to Sounor the Old Ones gave
Wisdom with this decree.
He knew the heart weakness of men,
Towards one of such beauty.

From the Halls of Hearing, Ethnor did walk,

In declared love did lead her.

From Talnor City to the Perinor

From the Perinor to the sea.

With joyous hearts, men watched her go,

She did much gladness bring.

They could not see the wound beneath,

Though it lie festering.

With Ethnor walking by her side,

None dared lay hand on her.

Though Enóte watched them leave the gate,

He uttered not a word.

Alas Kréchellia saw the sea

The sea for which she longed.

She dipped her feet in the rolling waves

And then burst forth in song.

Through these waters the woods whispered,

Told tidings of her home.

She learned then of her mother's death

Though grief she did not know.

With Ethnor's arm strong 'round about,

The pain and memories ceased.

She was content and did find peace

There by the pounding sea.

For from his words did healing flow;

The song she sang brought hope.

There on the sea's white sandy shore,

Their songs of love did float.

Thus began the first and last

Union of man and Elf.

With love, and honor, and his will,

Ethnor's vow did tell.

*(What follows is the written account
of Ethnor's vow to Kréchellia.)*

O Elven Princess with a voice adored
That stills the Perinor and quells the breeze.
At last our journey's brought us to these shores.
Now rest your weary soles here in this sea.

O Kréchellia your unmatched beauty reigns
Gift to the world from Ancient Ones above,
Who am I that your heart this mortal man has gained?
Whose fountain has given out such boundless love?

Now my ungainly gift to you much less,
My pledge to you that when I stand my watch
Etched in my shield by skilled craftsmen best,
Your likeness wreathed in silver will be wrought.

O Kréchellia, Kréchellia so fair,
I give you all, and nothing have I spared.

PART III

THE SECOND DESPAIR OF KRÉCHELLIA

The Second Despair of Kréchellia

Kréchellia, the Princess of Dúrain,
With Ethnor lived among the men of Darthnor.
In Elvish songs she sang her love to him,
Her music's beauty flowing to the shore.
It freed the heavy hearts of which men bore.
But in Enóte's heart, the lust desire of men,
Brought the curse that befell this blessed land.

Early one morning when darkness lay on land,
She bathed along the shore of the Perinor.

Enote came and silenced her with hand.
From river and from home, she, he now bore,
Though she struggled, more strength he had in store.
Nearby in their riverhouse did Ethnor lay
When the second despair of Kréchellia fell that day.

In early morning Ethnor woke with fear
Troubled by the silence all around,
To the doorway, he leapt and there he peered,
To the Perinor River still without a sound.
Ethnor to the river's edge did bound.
To find the story told in the scuffing trail,
On this the day his hope in men did fail.

With tracking skills, the story there he learned
Of Kréchellia's plight and of her voice now choked.
And now he ran, a fire in him burned,
Courage rose recounting his warrior's stroke,
Beneath his feet land flew as morning woke.
The trail was fresh and clear, though morning gray

When the second despair of Kréchellia fell that day.

Hark! His love lay straight ahead of him
As near he drew to Darthnor's western edge.
Through her trial her beauty did not dim,
Though from Enóte's grip her side had bled.
In pleas, her cries for help, was anger fed.
Then Ethnor knew his brother's shape, his size,
His kin with cauldron's hate he now despised.

Seeing now his brother close at hand,
Enóte tried to cross the Western Fjord.
With desperate, unsound mind, this path he ran.
That led to the wastes scourged by the Ancient War,
But stopping his flight, with hand on hilt, stood Ethnor,
Whose sword did slide from sheath and was not quelled,
On this, the day the despair of Kréchellia fell.

Still Enóte held with bruising grip pulled tight.
To Ethnor's love and to his dearest hope.

As his blade rang and readied for the fight,
His grip was less; then the anquished maiden smote,
And pushed Enóte to the edge of the rocky slope.
Here he stumbled, loosening his prize,
On this the day the trust of Kréchellia died.

Kréchellia fled to the wooded Dúrain land,
While Ethnor's anger burned in flashing sword,
And met his brother's blade, now fresh in hand,
Who fought in fierce frenzy, all lusts ignored,
Though with blurring blade, a great defense he ward,
Under Ethnor's mighty stokes that fell that day,
Enóte dropped dead ending the bloody fray.

While Enóte's blood still flowed upon the land,
Ethnor's anger waned and did subside.
He remembered, then, the hallowed King's command,
That men's own justice, they should not decide,
But by the King's judgment all should abide.
So in the dawning day, he fled Darthnor.

An exile from his land, his home no more.

He fled northeast where woods unfriendly lay,
Though him they bothered not for quick he sped,
As a grouse does fly when hounds do hunt and bay.
In dawn, among the Northern Watch was said,
“Is this not Kenor’s son and newly wed,
Who runs as if pursued with vilest fear?”
But some did doubt for nothing followed near.

He ran the river road toward the Dúrain woods
To where he knew Kréchellia would flee,
For oft’ for Elven trees her heart would brood.
These woods stood guard and would not let him free
To walk in grassy glades by Kréchellia’s side,
Not even through the river could he pass nigh.

For in the stream did oaken boughs dip low,
The roots of nearby elms did weave a web,
That intertwined a wall beneath the flow

So that in the depths he could not swim ahead,
His way was blocked by the gnarled arms instead.
In last attempt with desperateness he cried,
To Kréchellia that he be by her side.

“Kréchellia, my love, my princess fair,
Of your adversary feared I bear the blood.”
His lifted hands, wet scarlet still did bear.
“Since this the deed I did for my beloved,
I’m exiled from the land that I once loved.
For the King declared if man would take one’s life,
Be it fair or foul, this man would pay the price.”

“So Kréchellia, my love, my princess fair,
Would you keep me here, and thus surely be taken,
As now the King’s pursuers do draw near?
Indeed if you come not, I am now slain,
For without your love, my life is surely vain.”
With whispered song, she bade the woods to part,
And he rushed forward to hold her close at heart.

For though the woods distrusted man and Elf,
They listened to the maid, the one they loved,
Their branches opened near the stream's low shelf,
Allowing Ethnor to through their branches shove,
To where she hid by the side of a tiny cove.
With terror writ across her brow she lay.
Her former scarring now boldly was replayed.

Her raiment blue was torn around the waist,
Blood still flowed that Enóte's nails had drawn.
When he did hold her with a forced embrace,
His mighty grip many bruises has spawned,
But the greater pain Aúl and Iana had caused.
At the wounding deep, Ethnor's tears did well.
This when the second despair of Kréchellia fell.

PART IV

THE FINAL DESPAIR OF KRÉCHELLIA

The Final Despair of Kréchellia

Once again to point of death
Kréchellia lay with no breath.
Her flight to Dúrain woods was long
Her pain severe, she voiced no song.

She lay devoid of all such hope
In despair she could not cope.
For now she feared both men and elves
Their crime for which she blamed herself.

Ethnor feared losing his love,
He prayed aloud to Ones above.
And used his healing skills and breath,
To lead her from the brink of death.

Fear slowly faded from her eyes
And bruises vanished by and by.
In time the princess once again
Did walk the woods of the Dúrain.

Rumors came to King Aúl
From spies that told the story full
Of Kréchellia now full restored
With beauty increased ever more.

And stories travelers oft' did lend
Of how she lived among the men.
So he plotted against his very own
To find a way to bring her home.

For the bitterness of Halbraun's Day
A scourge that still upon him lay.
His elves his deeds did not forget
His daughter marred did stir them yet.

To Darthnor he had runners sent
By the eastern road where the forest met.
To where the Elven road did end
At the northern edge of the land of men.

The road was laden thick with grass
For many ages long had past.
Since men and elves had traveled there,
Yet watchers still stood 'ware.

Darthnor Centuries still stood guard,
Where to their land the Elves were barred.
So Erol, chief of Aúl's men
Stood tall and strong and did command.

“By will of Aúl, King of Elves
Please let us pass, for sadness dwells.
Tidings he seeks of his daughter lost,
Because of such, Elves’ joy was cost.

“Indeed we thought that she had passed
Where beyond reach she laid at last,
But echoes from the south have called
That do suggest such truth was false.”

But the elves did true intentions hide.
The men withdrew now to confide.
Kechellia’s story was well known
Men’s heavy hearts she did atone.

For while in Darthnor she did live,
The weariness of men did lift.
But since her fleeing all seemed dark,
The land felt cold, the wind grew harsh.

Back to the messengers they came,
Revealing not they knew her name.
They bid them to submit their arms
To be escorted to Sounor.

Great the host of men and elves,
As traveled over hill and dell.
They took the road by Perinor,
To the city of men, the great Talnor.

Many a child, woman, and man,
Did watch them as they crossed the land.
For generations had come then gone,
Since such elves had come along.

Many deemed it a good sign
With Kréchellia still fresh in mind.
That heaviness again would lift.
Still others thought it evil's twist.

Upon reaching Thagnor's bridge,
They crossed over onto the ridge,
Into the city elves men did bring
And brought them now before the king.

In the Halls of Hearing did Sounor,
Listen to Elven messengers.
Long and still did the King sit,
For his two losses grievous yet.

Kréchellia's leaving did give way
To a weariness the land substained.
Enóte by his brother slewn,
This greater heaviness the King knew.

Though Ethnor was beloved and dear,
And Enóte's heart held evil clear.
The King stood powerless to change
His edict now become his bane.

But in the King's discernment wise,
He knew Aúl, his evil lies,
So he sent a message to him clear,
Through elves that stood before him here.

“Tis true that I did once with care,
Grant leave to Kréchellia most fair,
To walk upon our glades and dens,
But she is no longer in this land.”

The Elven messengers returned,
Told to Aúl all they had learned,
But King Aúl hardened his heart,
Supposed Sounor hid in his parts,
The fair Kréchellia.

Without the elders' council true,
His anger could not be subdued.
He declared war on the Darthnor,
On land of men and on their Lord.

When rumor of the coming war
Echoed halls of King Sounor,
Great weariness the King knew then,
The future deaths of elves and men.

But duty beckoned Sounor King
From far and wide his call did bring.
The grand army that gathered there
On steed, and stallion, donkey, mare.

Out through the gates of the Talnor,
Did Sounor boldly ride to war.
Legions marched following nigh
Rode with crest and banners high.

They marched the road 'long western bank
Precision clear, rank on rank
Until they reached the northern plain
Camped by the woods of the Dúrain.

Meanwhile the elves with bow and sword
On Aúl's command came southward.
Some marched the road on the eastern edge,
Others through trees, breaking hedge.

Though oaks and elms could not stop elves,
Their comings nigh tidings did tell
To their Kréchellia beloved,
To Ethnor and his healing love.

Against all hope did Ethnor arm
His baldric slung, tattered and torn.
He cinched his scabbard 'gainst his waist
Its gold laced jewels on studded case.

Once again he drew her near,
But this time with a hint of fear.
They backed their way to the southern side,
As Aúl's Elves did draw nigh.

When at the edge of these fair woods,
In saddened sorrow the lovers stood,
For over Darthnor rolled a sea
Of men in arms from west to east.

So they stood between strong and stout,
Elves from the North, men from the South,
The echoing drums rang “boom, che - boom.”
Now the lovers felt their doom.

With a despair wedged in his breast
He bade Kréchellia by him nest,
And not to stray during the fight.
For this was love’s last desperate plight.

When the elves came in bow shot range,
First arrow loosed, Aúl to blame.
His anger hot, his longbow shot
A shaft that hit the truest spot.

At its flight's end, with strength it bore,
A fatal shot to the heart's core,
The King's shield barer, its first kill.
For a silent moment, all stood still.

The bearer swayed and then did fall,
A cry rose up from men appalled.
As arrows fell like storming rain,
Men surged toward the woods Dúrain.

With blazing torches, barbaric yells,
They lit the forest, oaks and elms.
So thick the smoke that it did hide,
The eyes of one from the other side.

And long Ethnor and Kréchellia stood,
Where the sea was seen from these fair woods.
When one drew near, be it elf or man,
Ethnor cut them down with sword in hand.

The Earth, she trembled and did groan,
For it birthed to bloom, the woods, her own.
By the hands of men all now ablaze,
Oak and elm now blackened, razed.

As the wyrd of Old Ones would befall,
Smoke and flame hindered Ethnor,
An arrow loosed, an elven shaft,
Sank in his chest, his armor passed.

He fell as smoking billows rolled,
Not fatal, though his arm grew cold,
Out of sight fell his fair maid,
On whom his eyes no more would stray.

With her dear Ethnor of man kin,
Fallen, hidden amid the din,
Kréchellia now lost all hope,
This pain with which she could not cope.

Despairing her woods, her people great,
The marring herself, she long unfaced,
Rose from her heart a welling cry,
She sang to Old Ones one last time

This song of grief, this song lament,
To all who heard, their fighting pent.
This song of grief, their limbs did quake,
They lamented with her for her sake.

She pleaded with the Ones of Old
To stop the scarring of the world.
Renouncing Iana's prayer as cursed,
Pronounced doom upon her birth.

Her heart no longer cared nor burned,
For the world of elves and men upturned.
Without warrant did she bare
The blame for all these worldly cares.

This her despair the Old Ones knew,
Her loss of hope, without renew,
So they cut a chasm to the Earth's core,
Split the Dúrain from the Darthnor.

Many a man and Elf that day,
Did fall into this chasm made.
With his loyal ranks, King Aúl fell,
Of his passing no songs now tell.

Little mourned his passing was,
His deeds did not win Elves' love.
They never forgot Halbraun's day
When Kréchellia's joy, alas, he slayed.

Stumbling back from chasm deep,
King Sounor, his life did keep.
But long remained his grief unquelled,
For many men he lost as well.

This ends the battle between men and elves.

For a great expanse no one could tell

A way to bridge this gulf so great,

And so forced, war did abate.

What of Kréchellia this fair maid,

In which the glory of Dura laid?

What elves saw no tongues declare,

For in Darthnor none such live there.

But of men few, some claimed to see

The maiden fair crowned with beauty,

Of two accounts these stories are,

Though one of men is favored far.

Some claim the Ones granted her wish,

Death came to her in the abyss,

She plunged along with many elves

Into the chasm, her ending hell.

But another story long was told,
The one to which Sounor did hold,
Of which, when world was rent in two,
The Old Ones sent a bird that flew,

Down to the Dúrain woods and glade,
To gently cradle the Elven maid,
Whisked her away to heaven's stars,
To ever after be seen no more.

Yet rumor tells this of Ethnor,
The greatest of the famed Darthnor,
Among the elves, some say he lives,
He now their king, much hope doth give.

Still other claim that when he saw,
His fairest love Kréchellia gone.
He threw himself into the deeps,
Where there he would no longer weep.

This ends the tale few men will tell,
Of sorrow, sadness, grief unquelled,
Of separation of men and elves.
When peace between became dispelled.

Appendix:

Map:

Dura (City and Country)

Darthnor

Perinor

Valley of Men

Talnor

The sea

Western Fjord of Darthnor

The Wastes

The Unfriendly Woods

The Northern Watch

River Road

Thagnor's Bridge * So named for Thagnor who, being among the first men, first carved a home out of the Darthnor wilderness and built the first foot bridge over the Perinor River.

Halls of Hearing (in Talnor)

Western Bank Road

Eastern Bank Road

Northern Plain

Eastern Edge Road (elves)

Chronicles of Men

Events:

Haulbraun's Day = A day that celebrated the Elves arrival in the wooded valleys of Dura; They had traveled from the North Country, the land of the forefathers, due to the longevity and increasing population of the Elves.

Haulbraun was the king that led the elves to their new land and established them there.

The Ancient War = A war that took place in what is now commonly called the "Wasted Lands" over ten centuries ago. The war, although little is known of their adversaries, was waged by men, with weapons that scarred the land in such a way that even now only the scruff of trees and brush manages to survive. No creatures live there.

THE DESPAIR OF KRÉCHELLIA

The Original Short Story

The First Tragedy of Kréchellia

The despair of Kréchellia is a tale few men will whisper for in it lays darkness, sorrow, and loss. In days of old, it could be read in full from the Annals of Dúrain; but alas in these current times their volumes are now nowhere to be found. In tales, the bards recount it's lost through a slow and mournful dirge and claim it was during the time of separation that the whereabouts of the Annals of Dúrain passed out of the memories of man. Lest the despair of Kréchellia be waylaid and remembered no more, it is here in the Darthnor Chronicles of Men that it shall be recounted and preserved

The Elven Princess Kréchellia loved the world and especially that which grew wild among the trees. She especially adored those things which grew and lived in Dúrain, the sacred realm of the Elves. Often when the sun would spread its morning rays over the canopy of the forest, her light would fall on Kréchellia, sleeping peacefully in the glen tall with grass. In the crooks of her slender arms as she slept, doves would nestle and coo. Spring fawns would gather 'round her feet, keeping them

warm through out the darkness of night. Indeed, even the elms and the oaken trees stretched their branches out so that no dew would befall that beautiful face. The woods of Dúrain and all that was in them cherished her and nothing fulfilled her more than walking in them and singing the ethereal Elven songs she crafted with her love.

Though all her people were fair and beautiful, none ever came close to surpassing the beauty of Kréchellia. The Old Ones bestowed favor upon her and granted her mother's desire for a daughter to whom would be esteemed the glory and splendor of Dúrain, for her mother was Queen Iána of the Elves. But while Kréchellia was still young, Iána grew jealous and began despise the young maiden, for although all the eyes of Dura, the central city of Dúrain, extolled the infant child and mother, their attention strayed only to Kréchellia as she grew in years and beauty. Her laughter in those days fell like rain on the parched dry earth of summer and where it was heard, men stopped their labor, women their chores, and all sense of arguments ceased. In the secrecy of the royal halls, Iána mistreated her and spoke foul of her to her father, Aúl the Elven King, so that even his face turned against her. Despised by her elders, she fled

the royal halls at her coming of age and lived there no more.

But among the people she was loved, and, as in the woods of Dúrain, she walked freely among them. From them and the woods of Dúrain she gleaned much wisdom and grew in stature.

Soon after Kréchellia's exile from the royal halls, the feast day of Halbraun drew near in which the elves celebrated the journey of their kind to Dúrain. All of Dura and the surrounding areas of Dúrain came to the halls of feasting in the royal palace for it was a celebration not to be missed. Knowing that their estranged daughter would come to the feasting and be with her people, Aúl and Iána schemed against her.

When she entered, the radiance of her face and the exquisiteness of her raiment crafted from the woods of Dúrain far surpassed that of the King and Queen and all heads were turned towards her. In the silent hush that had fallen over them, she waved her hand, bade them continue, and laughed with merriment at the occasion. But foreboding and sadness filled Kréchellia's heart,

because in spite of her father and mother were alive, she was orphaned from them.

The king was angered by this. When the attention of all had left Kréchellia, King Aúl signaled the royal guard and they seized her and taking her, stripped her bare. Though they loved Kréchellia, they did not wish to disobey their king. With whips they marred the beauty the Old Ones had granted her. Then, bleeding from breasts, legs, back and face, Aúl bade the guard to bring her out. Shamed as they were by the deeds they had been asked to commit, the guards decked in blue and silver led the bleeding naked maiden out. The shame they felt was nothing compared to the shame that welled within Kréchellia.

After the horror and shock at seeing the glory of Dúrain marred, the elves rose up against King Aúl and Queen Iána. In rising to the defense their king and queen, the elf guards released Kréchellia and she fled to the woods of Dúrain and never returned to Dura nor the halls of the king again. The blood of envy and the innocents fell, though King Aúl squelched the uprising quickly by the hands of his royal guard. Many years after did Aúl and Iána reign, but never again did they earn the hearts of

their people. Halbraun's Day became a day of mourning because of the abomination of the king and queen and because Kréchellia never again walked freely among her own.

Kréchellia, Princess of the Elves, ran until exhaustion overcame her. Naked, she fell as dead in the heart of the Dúrain woods. The Old Ones grieved. Birds were sent with healing flowers and herbs to tend to her wounds. Even before she gained awareness of the world around her, her healing had begun. But she bore on her body the rest of her days the scars given to her on Halbraun's Day. Though much of the wounding lay hidden by the delicate leafy raiment of the woods, the places where the whips fell slicing and gouging her face could not be concealed. When travelers from Dura passed near her, they did not recognize her for her façade had been so marred. She still, at times, wove the songs of the elves for her love of the natural world had only increased for their love of her was great. If travelers from Dúrain were near enough hear the music, they would say, "Is this not the song and voice of Kréchellia, daughter of Iána and Aúl?" But warned by the woods, she would stop ere they drew nigh and she remained hidden from them.

Even though her music was beautiful, it held sorrow and the marring of innocence. Thus befell the first tragedy of Kréchellia.

Regarding the Union of Kréchellia

Kréchellia lived severed from her own kind yet she was not alone. The Dúrainian Woods fed, clothed and watched over her. In time, through patience and Old Ones opening her ears, she learned the language of the trees and spent her days in their presence listening to them recount tales from long before the time of the elves. From her hand, she feed the stag and the hart, and like the elves of Dura, the Durian woods cherished her and were silent while she sang. For a time, there was peace.

One day as she walked with the great oaks she strayed near the southern edge, where the woods bordered Darthnor, the valley of men bordering the sea. Seeing the sea for the first time in the far distance, Kréchellia was enchanted by its beauty and longed to see the mighty waters up close, but the great oaks that walked with her would go no further than the edge of their

domain for the woods of Darthnor were unfriendly. So she sat on a barren rock canopied by the trees and stared out at the distant sea. Mesmerized by the far off waters, Kréchellia remained so for days.

In this way, Ethnor of Darthnor's northern guard happened upon her. From far off, he heard her voice singing the songs of the woods and was enchanted and drawn to her. The weariness that lay on the land of men seemed somehow lighter to him. This story of men's weariness is told elsewhere in the Darthnor Chronicles of Men.

Being in the throes of song and enraptured by the far off sea, she did not hear nor heed the wood's warning of Ethnor's coming and he stood entranced at the edge of the glen watching her, for though she was marred, he could see the beauty that once was. When Kréchellia noticed him, she was startled and rose quickly preparing to flee, for though he was not elf, Ethnor resembled them close enough and she had not forgotten what they had done to her.

But to the men, the Old Ones had given a measure skill in the arts of healing of all forms. Coming

out of his trance, Ethnor bade her stay. His voice spoke with such a kindness and tenderness that something broke with in her and she did not run, though she came no nearer. Then the woods knew they were witness of a change in their beloved adopteddaughter.

Since she would not yet leave the woods of Dúrain, Ethnor walked with her under the great boughs and in time she felt the stirrings of love, though she had almost forgotten it and would not have been able to say what it was. By the bubbling streams of Dúrain, Ethnor used the skills the Old Ones had given to men and in time and under his healing arts, the scars that so marred her face faded. Under the surface part of her remained marred, but Ethnor could not see it. Yet to all who saw her, she appeared to them as in her former glory.

After many months, Kréchellia left the woods of Dúrain, though part of her heart always remained there, and traveled with Ethnor, following the stream that sprang and flowed out of the Elven land and tumbled through the valley of men till it became the Perinor River and reached the sea. He wrapped his shield arm around her and traveled with one hand on the hilt of his sword because the stream was still narrow and the edges of the

Darthnorian Woods were not deemed safe, even for men. In this way, they traveled till they reached Talnor, the city of men near the edge of the sea.

When they reached the outer gates of Talnor, the gatekeeper Enóte hailed them.

“Ethnor I recognize. But the fair maiden, whose beauty surpasses all I have seen, I do not.”

Ethnor replied, “She travels with me. Is that not enough, Enóte, that you must harass my companion?”

At this Enóte said nothing, but his heart desired her. He opened the gate and they passed through. However, Ethnor took notice that Enóte’s eyes never left Kréchellia. In the times of their youth, Ethnor and Enóte had been like brothers studying the lore of Darthnor together and learning the ways of the guard. They shared all things. But now their relationship was tested.

They journeyed to the citadel of the king, as was the custom. Since Ethnor was a guard, they were not bothered nor hindered by anyone else, though many stopped to stare at Kréchellia’s Elven beauty. She remained quiet knowing the power of her

song, and looked no strangers in the eyes. Her gaze remained ever on Ethnor and the earthen road ahead.

Upon arriving at the Citadel of the King, attendants ushered Ethnor in to the hall of hearing where King Sounor sat. Beside Ethnor stood Kréchellia radiating in her beauty.

Ethnor spoke with boldness. “I beseech you, my lord and king, to hear the plight of my companion and my love.” Kréchellia outwardly maintained composure, but inside her heart was caught off guard for this was the first time he ever openly spoke of his love for her, though it had been there for quite some time. Ethnor recounted the tale of the envy of Aúl and Iána and the exile of Kréchellia from her own people. He begged him to grant her leave to travel freely in the realm of men.

The king turned and faced Kréchellia. He asked, “And what say you, O Kréchellia Princess of the Elves, to the request of your companion, Ethnor. For the times are dark and even now an evil stretches the bonds between elves and men.”

In reply, she sang a song of blessing. While she sang, the fires in the hall seemed to grow brighter and the

darkness of the room dimmed to the corners. The servants, the other guards, the king, and everyone else in the room had hope, the weariness of the times seeming lighter. When the last note fell from her, a hush descended into the room.

Finally, King Sounor spoke. “In these times of woe, I would welcome you here more than having another hundred soldiers at my side. This condition only will I make. Roam wherever you will, but Ethnor must always travel with you.” The Old Ones had graced the king with wisdom, and from that measure of wisdom came the decree. He saw the glory of Kréchellia and knew the weakness of his men, though King Sounor himself spoke with a pure heart.

In the days that followed, Ethnor led Kréchellia by the hand having now openly declared his love for her and they followed the Perinor to the sea. Many of the inhabitants of Darthnor watched them go, for though Ethnor and people of Darthnor could not perceive the festering wounding beneath, outwardly and by the hand of Ethnor her beauty was paramount to none. None dared lay hand on her for Ethnor, the great guard of Darthnor, was with her.

At last, Kréchellia saw the sea she had so longed for and dipped her feet in the resting place of the stream of Dúrain. The waters that flowed from Dúrain and mixed with the waters of the Perinor brought tidings from the woods. In that way she learned of Queen Iána's death. Even when the natural instinct between a daughter and mother stirred, she could not grieve for Iána had done her much harm.

Ethnor wrapped his strong arm around her and memories and pain subsided, as she was content. As the sea pounded relentlessly at the sand and rock strewn shore, Ethnor and Kréchellia declared their love and vowed themselves to each other. The words he spoke were healing. The song she sang brought hope. There on the beach, in the consummation of their vows, Ethnor son of men and Kréchellia daughter and princess of the elves began the first and the last union between the men of Darthnor and the elves of Dúrain.

The Second Tragedy of Kréchellia

In the months that followed, they settled at the home Ethnor had hewn from the rock at edge of Talnor and found favor among the people and the king. King Sounor granted leave of Ethnor from his duties on the northern watch, as was the custom given to soldiers newly wed. While Kréchellia lived in Talnor, the city had hope.

Kréchellia loved Ethnor more than anyone else she had known, for his kindness and affection were great. Nevertheless, she would stand on the roof of the house of Ethnor and stare out towards the edges of the valley of men where the woods of Dúrain lay. Because their kindness to her, they were like a mother. She did not forget them and longed to visit them. Many took note that, though she gave them hope, her heart was not totally with the people of Darthnor. Enóte was among those who watched her and he coveted her though she belonged to someone else. Ethnor promised her that soon they would go and look upon the fair woods of Dúrain.

Late one night as Kréchellia and Ethnor walked towards their home hand in hand, they stopped to marvel at the spread of stars the Old Ones had given them this late summer eve. In the cool, crystalline air, they seemed to dance and shone even brighter. Kréchellia sang a song proclaiming the splendor of the Old Ones and their jewels for the Old Ones wore the stars like diamonds around the edges of their crowns. They brightened even more at the sound of her voice. Indeed all the natural world that surrounded them seemed to listen.

Kréchellia's song about the glory of the Old One's so marveled Ethnor he stood transfixed looking up towards the heavens of which she sang and his hand strayed. Enóte, who's obsession with her had caused him always to follow the duo remaining hidden though not far away, sprang upon opportunity. And with Ethnor yet entranced and Kréchellia in the midst of the song of the ancients, he swept down, gathered her up, and stole her away. Of this, she had no premonition. Because she no longer lived in the Dúrainian Woods, they could not warn. Caught off her guard, the song of Kréchellia died slowly.

The trance of Ethnor was broken. Upon regaining his awareness, he saw Kréchellia no longer stood beside him and his heart was stricken. He grieved for he remembered the edict of the king. But far off he heard the fearful cry of her voice. He lost no moment and seizing the hilt of his sword, he ran swiftly in the direction he had heard it. In his mind he knew no doubt. Enóte's lust overruled his reason.

Ethnor was among the fastest men, even when he was in full armor. When they were still quite young, Enóte and Ethnor challenge each other to races and at one time they were equal. But in time, Ethnor's legs became the stronger of the two. And because Enóte was burdened by Kréchellia, Ethnor over took them at the Western Ford of Darthnor for Enóte inflamed by passion and lack of reason was attempting to carry her over the treacherous path into the black desert.

Enóte turned and faced Ethnor; a look of menace in his eyes and he held Kréchellia to him as a hostage with his right arm around her chest and up under her breasts. She cried out in anguish for the Enóte's grip was strong. Hearing her pain, Ethnor became more desperate and he prayed to the Old Ones for wisdom.

Enóte held her as hostage and threatened her life if he were to take one step closer. Time stood still in the blackness of night illuminated only by the stars.

Enóte backed away from Ethnor. He thought not to the Old Ones whose grace no longer was with him; his thought remained bent on his lust for Kréchellia and on ravishing of her. He failed to see his precarious situation. There in the dark, where things lay hidden, he stumbled. Unbalanced, he reached to steady himself, loosing his grip on Kréchellia and she hesitated not. Twisting out from under his arms, she fled from his grasp and was swallowed by the darkness.

Ethnor's anger burned against Enóte and unsheathing his sword they fought until the dawn. Enóte fought for survival, fueled as well by losing the object of his lust. Ethnor wielded his sword against him. He cared not that Enóte was a fellow man, nor did he give thought to him as gatekeeper being under the royal guard. In his fury he considered their childhood bond naught. When the rosy beams of the sun bleed over the mountain in the East, he slew Enóte and thus brought down upon himself the curse of King Sounor. For the king had decreed

that men must not take justice in their own hands, but that it must be left for his wisdom.

As Enóte still lay there bleeding, Ethnor's wrath subsided and he remembered the edict of the king. He fled the land of Darthnor knowing that when his deed be found out, a doom would be placed on him. He traveled northeast through the unfriendly woods of Darthnor and they did not bother him, for he ran as a man escaping through the flames. In the growing light of dawn, some men of the northern watch saw him and said, "Is that not Ethnor, son of Kenor, running as if in pursuit of some vile creature?" Others doubted this saying, "Clearly not, for we watched and nothing ran before him. Let's watch and see from what he flees." But he was gone before they could make decision and the rumor of what he had done had not yet reached him.

When he reached the Perinor, Ethnor traveled straight north for he remained convinced that of all the places Kréchellia would flee to, it would be the woods of Dúrain. Even though a year had passed since she last left, he knew her heart was still drawn to there. But when he arrived at the most northern part of the Perinor, he found the way blocked by the Dúrainian Woods . He waded

into the stream thinking he could pass through the edge of the woods by the waters of the Dúrainian stream, but even there the branches of the trees were intertwined as a wall reaching towards the canopy and dipping low in the biting waters of Dúrain.

Exasperated he cried out into the wood hoping Kréchellia would hear him. “Alas, my Elven Princess, the blood on my hands is from your adversary, the one who tried to bring you harm.” He held out his hands towards the trees and indeed the blood of Enóte was on them. “And now, because of the deed I committed so that no harm would befall you, I am spent in the land of men for the king has declared that whosoever would shed a fellow Darthnorian’s blood would be cursed. Would you have me stay here and be slain by them? Indeed if you come not, I am slain already for I cannot go on without your love.”

With a whispered song, Kréchellia bade the woods part and, though they distrusted men because of the harm they had brought to this daughter of Dúrain, they reluctantly did this for her and an opening appeared allowing Ethnor to pass through. There in a glen that was nestled on one side by the stream of Dúrain,

Kréchellia lay and on her face was a terror only time could remove. Her blue raiment was torn around the waste where Enóte had grabbed her and whisked her away. Indeed the nails of his hands had drawn blood, and Ethnor saw the bruises the strength of Enóte's arms had made. But even more, he saw in her eyes the pain and fear of the memories of what Aúl and Iána had done. Now it was compounded by the fear of men. And the wounding of her heart was deeper than the wounding of her skin. Ethnor wept. Thus this was the second tragedy of Kréchellia.

Third and Final Tragedy of Kréchellia – The Rape of the Dúrain Woods

For a day and half, Kréchellia lay unmoving because her flight to the Dúrainian Woods had wearied her to the point of death and this was compounded by the pain within. She teetered on the edge of giving up all hope, for the despair was a great burden for which she blamed herself and she could trust neither elves nor men. Ethnor feared the thought of losing her and in his

yearning to have her back, he petitioned the Old Ones. Using the skills of water, herbs, and healing they had given granted him, he led her away from the edge of life. The fear in her eyes faded and the bruises healed. In the passing of time, Kréchellia, Princess of the Elves, and Ethnor of men walked the Dúrainian Woods and love again flowed between them.

But King Aúl, her father and king of the elves, had not forgotten her and rumors came to him through his spies that Kréchellia's beauty had been restored and she now lived in the world of men. And bitter he still was towards her for because of her, he had lost the favor of the elves of Dúrain (though was his and Iána's deeds that had caused this to be and not hers.) So once more, he plotted against her, devising a way to have her returned.

He sent messengers to the realm of men on Darthnor. They traveled by a road that ran around the eastern edge of the Dúrainian Woods to where it delved into the land of men. The road was laden with grass since ages had passed since the traveling of men and elves there. However, Darthnorian Centuries still stood guard and threatened their way.

“By the will of King Aúl of the Elves we implore you let us pass for we go seeking tidings of his daughter whom he lost many years ago during the feast of Halbraun’s Day. Indeed it was thought she was dead, but rumors out of the South have suggested this false.” The messengers hid their true intention from them.

The Darthnorian Centuries withdrew to talk amongst themselves. The Princess of the Elves was well known to them for while she lived among them, the weariness of land had lifted, but the land was now dark. They returned to the messengers, giving no indication they knew her and bade them submit their arms and be escorted to the King Sounor.

The company took the southern road that led along the east side the Perinor. Many a man, woman, and child stopped what they were doing and watched as they passed by for it had been ages since such a great company of men and elves had traveled together. The people of Darthnor thought it boded a good sign and that the weariness was again soon to be lifted. For fresh in their minds was the memory of Kréchellia. But other suspected some great evil was a foot.

The following day, they reached the bridge of Thangnor, which led over the Perinor and to the city of Talnor. Into the city they came and were brought before the king. In the hall of hearing, King Sounor listened carefully to the words of the elves. For a long time he said nothing for grievous was the loss of Kréchellia and at her going weariness had once again come over the land. Fresh as well was the memory of Ethnor and his slaying of Enóte. For though he loved Ethnor dearly and discerned evil intent in the heart of Enóte, he could overturn the degree the Ethnor had broken.

But in the wisdom that grew from the Old Ones, the king also perceived the ill heart of King Aúl. “While it is true that for a while the Princess of Elves had leave to walk in the land of men, she is no longer here. Go tell your king that if his search has brought him to the land of men, then his search is vain.” With that, the messengers returned to King Aúl and recounted all that had been said. But King Aúl hardened his heart and supposed that King Sounor was hiding the Elven Princess. Without council from his elders, he declared war on the land of men, for by now jealousy and hatred had clouded his vision. When

the rumor of war come to the King of men, he sighed and the weariness of men seemed even greater for he perceived the loss of men and elves would be great.

But King Sounor gave the order and a great assembly of soldiers gathered between the gates of Talnor and banks of the Perinor. In rank and formation with the King's crest mounted on banners held high, they began their march up the road that ran along the western bank of the Perinor. When they reached the woods of Dúrain and Northern Border of men, they stopped and made encampment there.

The elves of Dura and the greater Dúrain armed themselves for battle and on King Aúl's command pressed southward. While some took the road that skirted 'round the edge of the woods, many marched through the woods towards Darthnor and the woods could not stop them. But the rumor of the elves coming could be heard far off so that even before the woods warned her, Kréchellia knew of their coming.

Ethnor, though without hope against such a large company, armed himself for battle, and with Kréchellia, they backed their way to the southern edge. There they

saw stretched east to west along the northern border of Darthnor the great hosts of men prepared for battle, but because Ethnor and Kréchellia remained hidden among the trees the men of Darthnor did not see them. Though heaped with despair, he bade

Kréchellia to stay near him for the fight was imminent and he did not want to lose her again. When the elves of the north came within a bow shot of Darthnor, King Aúl himself loosed the first arrow and it fell striking Huron, Sounor's shield bearer, fatally wounding him. And for a moment all stood still. Then Huron fell to the ground. Cry rose up among men and they surged forward to the edge of the woods as arrows fell like rain among them. With torches they lit the woods ablaze.

And Kréchellia and Ethnor stood by the great rock where she had first laid eyes on the sea. With one arm, he surrounded her trembling body with his shield and with the other, he swung with might his sword slaying all who came near whether be it man or elf. The earth groaned in pain for the woods that had been birthed from

her bosom were being marred by the flame of men. The anguish of nature overwhelmed Kréchellia.

As fate would have it, the flames and smoke hindered the defense of Ethnor. An arrow loosed by an elf and pierced him in the chest, though not fatally. As he fell and billows of smoke rolled around him, he lost sight of the Elven princess Kréchellia and saw her no more. In lament and much despair, he pulled himself to the now muddied stream of Dúrain and began healing himself there.

Discovering that Ethnor her love now lay hidden from her, Kréchellia lost all hope and the despair of her woods, her people, and what had happened to her overwhelmed her. She cried out to the Old

Ones one last time. And the song of grief and lament she sang stopped the fighting of those who heard her; so powerful was the song, that they lamented with her. She pleaded with the Old Ones to stop the scarring of the world and renounced the prayer of Iána, cursing the day of her birth. Her heart no longer cared to be in the world of men and elves; unjustly and without warrant,

she viewed herself as the root of all the problems between elves and men

The Old Ones heard her despair and saw she had no hope for the world. So they split the earth creating a huge chasm between Darthnor and Dúrain. Such a huge gulf separated them so that one could not see the edge of the other. The bottom was far and deep so that no one who dared long down into the depths could not see the bottom of it. That day, many elves and men fell into the pit and were seen no more. Indeed, King Aúl tumbled into the chasm with much of his army. Little was his passing mourned. King Sounor himself barely escaped. Thus ended the battle between elves and men.

And what of Kréchellia? What the elves saw can not be told for no elf lives in Darthnor to tell it, but of men there are a few who claim to have seen the Elven maiden in the time of separation. Of the countless variations, two main thoughts persist. Some men say the One Ones granted her wish. Death befell her and she plunged with the rest of her kind into the endless chasm. But the more popular thought and the one king Sounor held to was this. Some say in the midst the rending the

world, the Old Ones sent a great bird, though of what kind they know not, and it swooped down and cradled the despairing Kréchellia in its talons. They then carried her back up to heaven and she was seen no more.

Rumor only tells us of what happened to the great Ethnor. Some say he still lives and walks among the elves for he was in their land when the world was rent. Still other myths carry that in seeing Kréchellia gone; he cast himself into the great deep.

Thus ends the tale of the despair of Kréchellia