

## THE LEGEND OF THE DRAGON KNIGHT

### 1. Chapter A chance of fate

Many years had passed from the day when hobbits shaped the fortunes of all creatures in Middle earth, for none who lives remembers of a nameless fear coming from the south. But our story starts far from the worries of the world, in a quiet city, except made for that day.

In the court there were voices of fear, hate and disrespectfulness, all on one subject: the dragon knight, the one who intended to kill all dragons, but who failed. "SILENCE!" said the judge, and silence there was "Dragon knight! you are executed!" and with that he was executed, suddenly a glance of hope shone across his eyes. The queen! his only hope of survival, the queen spoke - " I am your eternal friend, and I give you eighty-eight moons to fulfill your destiny and you will start your quest tomorrow with this hourglass you will determine your future." he nodded and silently walked out of the court .

### 2. Chapter - Thorny Forest

At the first light of dawn, when the clouds were tinged with warm colors, Davion set off towards the path of prestige, determined to regain his former fame and trust, he was fully booked and couldn't wait to start his journey to eternal glory.

He passed through mountains and hills, from village to village, fording minor rivers and streams, and continued like this for several days. Until the day he came to a forest bristling with thorns , -"Then this is the Thorny Forest" he thought. Then he drew his sword and walked towards it. A passage opened with sword blows, but as he advanced the thorns were more and more numerous, more and more intersected and tangled, soon not even the sunlight was able to penetrate that maze bristling with thorns. Only then Davion stopped, even though he felt a shiver running down his spine, fearless as he was, he said to himself «Going back? Not even a chance! Going sideways, not even in a dream, going forward is the only thing to do, so on the march!» Having uttered these words, he gathered all of his courage and began to strike even harder. Time passed, but there was no trace of the exit, it seemed that the forest was without end.

Suddenly in the pitch blackness he saw two lights moving, then a couple more, then another and in the fraction of seconds there were a thousand.

And then everything went dark.

As soon as Davion opened his eyes again, he found himself in a cell, cold and barred among many others dug into a rocky wall, supervised by some tall creatures. Looking better, there were elves. Yes, elves! Immortal creatures of slender build and infinite knowledge. Only then he saw a bit of hope so Davion shouted as loud as he could, trying to talk to the guards to explain the situation, but he was totally ignored. Suddenly a blast of trumpets interrupted his thoughts, from a door elf ladies entered, then servants and finally a haughty-looking elf, dressed in silver and with a youthful face, the latter approached his cell - "Honored elf! let me explain, I'm-" Davion began to explain but was interrupted by the elf who answered: "I am the honorable master of the Thornwood elves! And you are convicted for trespassing! you are the knight of queen Jeroha, that which! So you will remain here to rot and reflect on your mistake, remember, I am patient, and a millennium is nearly a blink in the life of an elf!" and just as he had come he left - "What a character!" - Davion said to himself - "The dragon knight laughs in the face of death!" - he whispered to himself and looked at the hourglass. -"Seventy-eight days' '-he thought, and so he closed his eyes, thinking whether at the end of this journey his head would still be attached to the torso or not. -"Hey you! human!" - called a voice, Davion reopened his eyes and turned towards the locked door! - "Yes! you! come!" - incited the voice.- Davion wondered if he had hallucinations but his doubts were swept away when the door opened, and an elf with a female face appeared in front of him, armed with a bow and arrow and with hair as red as fire, he then launched himself towards the door of freedom, but was blocked by the young woman who said: "There is a pact, you continue the adventure with me!" - "How? You? a girl?" - Davion escaped, he tried to push her away but in vain, and she threatened: "If you do not accept... I 'll call the guards!" and Davion reluctantly accepted,- "I'm Lobelia Greenwood" -

And so the two began their journey towards a fishing village, after Thornwood, between thorns and lakes.

### 3. Chapter - The Fisherman Village

After having faced a long journey through the Thorny Wood, Davion and Lobelia arrived in the fishing village, after having forded the river with a ferry the two headed towards an inn from which they came: thunderous mouthpieces, unbridled laughter, happy music and a inviting scent, as soon as they crossed the threshold they were overwhelmed by a dancing crowd that took them with them making pirouettes and leaps. Lobelia danced with them, while Davion was on the side sipping wine. Suddenly he was seized by the premonition that something was missing, he touched his pockets but the hourglass wasn't there, so he looked

around the whole room, but he only saw a shadow on the threshold that slipped silently out. Davion then tried to reach him, in vain, as soon as he came out there was no trace of a shadow. But turning, discouraged he noticed a hooded figure leaning against the wall playing with... his hourglass! His long, braided beard trailed from his face, he was wearing a pair of leather boots and a hammer - "Do you want it back?" - asked what undoubtedly looked like a dwarf - "Give it back to me!" - replied Davion, extending his hand - "Whoever finds it takes it!" The dwarf replied, continuing to fiddle with the hourglass, then added "Today I feel generous, and I'll make you a proposal: fifty gold coins to get it back!" - "I don't have that much, thief of a dwarf!" - Protested the knight, - "Oh! really? What a shame! Then I'll keep it!" - Replied the dwarf, and started to move away, until Davion counter-proposed: "I accept! but I also have an offer! If you help us, in the end you'll get a reward for it!" - "Um... let's hear it!" - agreed the dwarf- "We need a ride! and if you can get us one, fifty more coins!" said Davion - "Very well, then we start tomorrow" - replied the dwarf, - "by the way, I'm Gimil, at your service!" - added the dwarf.

The next morning they were traveling on a modest cart, crossing hills and paths, fording rivers and minor waters, until one day the wheel of the cart broke, and they were forced to abandon horse and cart on the path and continue on foot towards the Mountains of the north. They traversed snowy mountain passes and paths. But soon the climate became difficult and provisions were scarce, and what was more they were lost among those snow-capped peaks. Until the day when they came across a strange cave, within the cave there were holes big and small. Then the company, seeing that there was no better way, began to enter these holes, which as they entered turned into tunnels, and almost immediately the company regretted that they had entered, but they continued though their sixth sense said it did not promise their choice was good.

#### 4. Chapter - Orc Town

The tunnels crossed, intersected, and suddenly stopped, leaving the company to wander around for a while, inside those tunnels in semi-darkness, scattered with bones, corpses of men and carcasses of animals. With every step they took forward, the company could feel the danger crawling beside them, suddenly everyone was surprised by ... orcs!

Then complete darkness. They couldn't feel anything, much less look around, they could only hear the singing, or rather the croaking of the orcs:

*What good smell there is for meal,*

*We won't leave you even a leftover,  
Crunchy little bones, fresh meat and flesh,  
we are here to devour you like a rat,  
our goal is always to latch,  
animals, humans insects, we all suck it up,  
be satisfied who can!*

Their wicked cackles echoed through the tunnels, then they took out their whips and beat them on their captives, Gimil, who was the last one, was groaning in pain. After a forced march, the small group of orcs and the company arrived in a large cavern lit, with torches and filled with hundreds of other heavily armed orcs. On a stone throne sat the Great Orc, who arrogantly asked: "Who are these? Nuisances? Assassins? Infiltrators? Intruders?" " - "O T-t-t-terrible we f-f-found them wandering in our b-b-b-burrows..." -stammered an orc- "Silence! Who gave you permission to open your mouth? Next time I'll make you work until the day you perish!" - thundered the Great Orc, then the orc made himself small, small, small and disappeared into the group - "What a rotten attitude..." - Lobelia whispered to Davion, then the Great Orc looked out from his throne and asked: "Do you have any last words before being devoured " - Davion promptly replied: "We came here by mistake" - "I have a deal, if you let me go I will give you this young elf!" - Davion proposed, Lobelia protested in disbelief: "What? " - " uhm... I accept, but go right away, understand?" - "No, Davion you can not do it..." - screamed Lobelia, but her voice was overwhelmed by the exaltation of the orcs who were now already holding fork and knife ready for the meal. Just finished the initial excitement, and the crowd had calmed down, then they approached drooling towards the poor girl. She had lost sight of her companions, who seemed to have abandoned her to her fate, just then, the torches went out, and AH! A pained cry was heard, then Lobelia felt someone take her hand and then began to flee, while the confused orcs did not immediately notice the deception and ran after them angrily.

The company had lost the orcs in the tunnels by pure luck, now they ran very fast towards the exit of the gloomy realm of the orcs, behind them echoed the angry screams of the orcs, which spurred them to run faster and faster with every single step they took. Finally the light of the sun made itself admired after so much time spent wandering through the tunnels in the shadows, but BOOM! Suddenly Davion, who was leading the group, collided with something, or rather someone, but the only thing he could see were two large pale eyes that shone in the dim light, before tumbling together with that "someone" out from the exit and

blinded by the intense brightness of the sunlight. As soon as he recovered from the blindness, he looked around him and his gaze landed on a bony creature with long legs and a deformed face.

"The being" was unwatchable, especially the gaunt and wrinkled face.- "sssssss...who are you?" - he asked the company, then he noticed the radiant light of the sun, and with a leap, he jumped away from Davion and sheltered in the shadow under a rocky depression. The company, confused as never before looked at the newcomer with an inquisitive gaze, despite Lobelia's doubt, she approached the being and was about to offer him a hand, but was forced to withdraw it when the latter hissed, then Davion cleared his throat and in detached words he explained: "We...are... good.... and we want..... to help you.... " the being then seemed calmer and a little at a time he put his almost completely bald head out of the basin and slowly his hand reached out to him and Davion who sympathetically explained to him: "we... are... in... search.... of.... a.... dragon....." - but the being seemed not to have understood, and in return replied - " drrragon ?" - and then Davion added: "treasure.... "- In the mind of this creature named Rhathrak , an evil thought flashed, and in turn an evil smile appeared on his face, but he tried his best not to notice it, and ran away with these words in his mouth: "treasure, treasure.." leaving the company even more confused by his reaction.hey decided not to think about it and started descending the mountains, but they were unaware that someone was watching them not too far away.

They managed not to lose their way, and arrived in a wood and camped among the trees for the night, the fire blazing vividly in the darkness of the night, which they had left after a frugal dinner of rabbit and berries. That night not everyone closed their eyes as usual, Lobelia was unable to fall asleep that night. Remaining awake for a long time, then being careful not to make noise, she got up and sat down in front of the fire: from there, the starry sky seemed so close that she could almost touch it..... - "Can't you rest too ? " - a voice suddenly whispered behind her.

Lobelia would have recognized it out of a thousand. - "Are you worried about tomorrow?" - Davion asked, sitting next to her. - "Yes, of course, just like you I guess, but it's not just that..." - The girl remained silent for a long time, then suddenly continued: "I'm sorry if sometimes I take it out on you, and I'm sorry that you were chased by the orcs. It's just that..." - In the dark she felt her cheeks on fire. - "When I started to embark on the journey with you, I realized that I had only brought problems, and therefore I was silent throughout the journey.... and I thought that once the mission was finished you would abandon me" - She said everything in one breath. Davion looked straight into her eyes. - "I would have done the

same, but since I started to know you, everything has changed.” The girl felt her heart beat faster. The young hunter's face was so close to hers that she could see it reflected in her eyes. - "I don't, I could never abandon you, never." - Davion whispered before touching her lips with a light kiss. Time seemed to have stopped for a few long moments, then the two remained in silence, hand in hand, admiring the stars that shone in the sky above them.

After Lobelia fell asleep, Davion was constantly thinking about the attack plan discussed during dinner in the company of the crackling fire, but suddenly a hiss reached his ears: "Ssss, treasure, darling, my, mine only." This made him jump, however turning around he saw only two lively and pale little eyes staring at him in the dark. Slowly it faded and disappeared completely, that happened for both nights spent in the woods. Davion began to wonder if he had hallucinations, but he was wrong. Oh how wrong he was, and he even started to think that someone was following him.

Finally in the remaining nine days they managed to get to the cave, which apparently would be the lair of the monster. They crept in like rats and were dazzled by an intense golden light.

## 5. Chapter -Dragon Cave

Gold, gems, crystals, silver, jewels and shining armor were piled up in a mountain, on which the amber-scaled dragon rested peacefully. The company proceeded with soft steps, from time to time they looked around amazed by the accumulation of treasures, which certainly not even an elven king would possess riches comparable to all this splendor. The company proceeded, ready to execute the plan formed the previous night, but they would have had to look behind them, lest the whole plan go awry. In fact some metallic jingles accompanied by exultation of joy echoed vividly throughout the cave, making the company jump, who looked at each other in alarm. It seemed that there would be complications. Then a thousand jingles followed in response: the dragon had been awakened, and now was rising from its mountain of treasures. They had just time to take shelter in an inlet of the cave before everything was engulfed in fire and flames - "WHO DARE TO DISTURB SLYRAK DRAGON'S ETERNAL SLEEP?" - Thundered the dragon puffing gray smoke from its nostrils, like an active volcano, then turned the gaze of its amber eyes towards a charred body. With one mighty paw sent it away, it rolled to the feet of the company, who could easily guess whom belonged: Rhathrak, now, and as before skeletal, but pitch black, incandescent and more misshapen still, lying at their feet. Davion thought to himself: "And the right punishment for a miser like him." In the meantime to their detriment the dragon had begun to smell the air, and certainly had discovered their presence, in fact thundered with his big voice: "I KNOW

THAT YOU THIEVES ARE HERE! COME OUT! THE INTRUSION IS OVER!" but since Davion and company there was still no trace, he still blew a flame that set even the pines and oaks on fire outside the cave.

Then out of nowhere appeared the orcs, apparently following them and well armed, and flames and fire again, and as soon as Davion managed to peek from the nearby creek there were only ashes and black and shriveled bodies, like Rhathrak. By now it was inevitable, a battle was about to begin, and Davion was determined to bring the dragon's head to court as never before, and among the bodies in flames, he launched into a reckless attack, towards the dragon, which was still busy incinerating the new nuisances.

#### 6. Chapter - Life flashing before the eyes

A battle ensued, between orcs, the company and the dragon. Between blows of sword, hammer, bow, and flames, by now the forest, then green and full of life, had now changed into a battlefield, with trunks set on fire, felled, scattered by bodies and weapons.

An epic fight began between the dragon knight and the dragon, flames reached beyond the mountain and up in the clouds. Davion was losing his stamina and patience, his enemy was stronger, what could he possibly do to have the wind of victory blow in his way. Then Lobelia jumped out of nowhere and with her sword tried to save his companion from the dragon, but to her misfortune, the dragon beat her easily. With its claws it ripped her in pieces, Davion then stopped the tragedy by ending the dragon's life with a sword blow full of rage and vengeance. After the battle came to its end, the time came to mourn the dead, the bodies of the heroic fallen were returned to the families with the dragon's treasure and given a proper burial. Gimil returned to his home under the mountains, and, well, you may say he rested there till the end of his days.

And the fearless Davion? ah, well, Davion made another journey, but this time not towards home, but towards the unknown...