# **The Song of Returning**

by [**Paul D. Deane**](https://alliteration.net/poets/deane/)

*This poetry is part of a cycle of alliterative epics that I wrote "in character" as the Avarin poet Rhunedhel, a resident of Imladris during the Third Age, while I was playing on Elendor MUSH, an online roleplaying game, in the 1990s and the first decade or so of the 2000s. When I wrote these poems, I was working my way toward an original alliterative stanza form only loosely patterned on traditional alliterative verse.The form I ended up with is what I call the "Daeron Stanza", characterized by 4-stresss accentual (mostly iambic tetrameter) lines alliterating in the pattern AA/BB, with a final rhyming couplet. It demonstrates the possibilities of alliterative forms not based on the traditional Old English and Middle English metrics. This poem continues an imagined history of the Avarin elves in the far East of Middle Earth, focusing on the Avarin elf Cordil's escape from Angband, and a reunion which leads to the founding of a secret even refuge in the East of Middle Earth.*

*This poem continues an imagined history of the Avarin elves in the far East of Middle Earth, focusing on the Avarin elf Cordil's escape from Angband, and a reunion which leads to the founding of a secret even refuge in the East of Middle Earth. Other poems in this cycle include* [The Song of Marwen and Fithurin](https://alliteration.net/poetry/marwen-and-fithurin/), [The Song of Woe](https://alliteration.net/poetry/the-song-of-woe/), [The Song of Shadows](https://alliteration.net/poetry/the-song-of-shadows/), *and* [The Redemption of Daeron](https://alliteration.net/poetry/the-redemption-of-daeron/). *This poem was originally published on the* [Imladris Poetry Page](https://web.archive.org/web/20041218050114/http%3A/imladris.elendor.net/writings.html).

Let the mirrors of memory bring you back

To the Elder Age, to awful Angband

To the smoking towers of Thangorodrim

Crouched in the North

-- pits and prisons –

-- and the throne of Morgoth. --

Sweltering slaves delved in the deep,

Urged on by uruks with whining whips.

Noldor, Teleri, Avari and men

slaved and sighed

-- cursed their fate –

-- and soon enough, died. --

Defying despair, eager for escape,

Gwindor the wily, the Noldor noble,

Met there his match, his cousin Cordil,

Avari yet kin

-- scarred by Sauron –

-- yet not cowed within. --

Planning plots and plotting plans,

Watching and waiting, whispering words,

Bewaring betrayal, delving deep,

They made a door

-- opening upwards –

-- unknown to orcs. –

They fled to the forest, wary of wolves

Tracing tracks through the thickets.

Baleful baying fulfilled their fears;

Rapid they run

-- trackless their path –

-- through Taur-nu-Fuin. --

Alone and lost, for Gwindor was gone,

Cordil crept down through Dorthonion,

crawled clear through Thargelion

famished and faint

-- stumbled and fell –

-- his powers spent. --

Naugrim came next, bearing to Belegost

Merchandise from Menegroth. Aiding the elf,

As burden they bore him across Ered-luin.

Long there he lived

-- craftsmanship teaching –

-- to repay their gift. --

Heartsick with horror, gaunt and grim,

Riders rode in with word from the west.

Nargothrond no more, Doriath destroyed,

Gondolin lost:

-- homesick himself, --

-- Cordil rode east. --

Ever eastward, over Misty Mountains:

On across Anduin: through Greenwood the Great:

through Rhun he rode, through its pathless prairies:

He came home

-- to Nen Echui, Cuivienen, --

-- where once his people roamed. --

By the Waters of Awakening steaming mists stirred

And night-blooms blossomed where nightingales sang,

But call as he could his answers were echoes

And on Amon-Gil

-- grass-grown ruins, --

-- silent, sad and still. --

Who knows how far the wanderers wandered

When from the waters they strayed under star

But vacant the vale and silent stones

By the water

-- abandoned to wind –

-- and empty of laughter. --

He strode in silence through misty meadows

Where fountains flowed through fields of yellow flowers

And suddenly stopped -- and stood stock still

And stared ahead:

-- behold, a maiden there –

-- asleep, or dead. –

Not dead, but dreaming, for she stirred in her sleep

And breathed deep breaths of silent slumber

And looked so like a very vision

Of the dawning night

-- when sleepers rose –

-- as yet unstained by time. --

But her features flexed in a dreaming dance

And she cried and she called as from pity and pain

And she tossed and turned as if nightmares rode her

On an endless ride

-- from which none return –

-- on the tossing back of time. –

He found his flute, and a soothing song

Softly sounded through the eery air

Like a spirit singing of light and life

Undying

-- over mortal lands –

-- which it blew past crying. --

Since she knew no name, he found one for her:

The Shining Spirit, Fèhaglin the Fair.

Though her history was hidden, when in dark dreams

She cried

-- her voice was the voice –

-- of a Noldorin maid. –

He would never know how she came to Cuivienen:

Whether fleeing fear; or witlessly wandering;

Or - finding form at last - a soul ensorceled

Returning to rest

-- in the womb of its waking, --

-- not the light of the West. --

But she stood and she smiled and she held out her hand

And danced with delight in the mist-ridden meadows.

And he stood and he smiled and held her hand

And danced with delight

-- in the mist-ridden meadows –

-- golden with light. --

In the fall when the fields were brown and bare
Fithurin's folk, his comrades and kin
Came to Cuivienen to weep by the water -
By Amon-Gil:
-- by its grass-grown ruins, --
-- silent, sad, and still. --

But Cordil came down and their tears were turned

To jewels of joy in their awe-struck eyes.

Tenderly they touched him, disbelief dispelling:

Astonished to find

-- after long years' absence, --

-- their lord's son, alive. –

Fèhaglin found them and held out her hand

And he held hers before his father's folk

And danced with delight in the mist-ridden meadows

Forgetting all shadow

-- of pain and fear –

-- and bitterness of sorrow. --

Soon now white winds would wail in the waste

And glittering glass enshroud Amon-Gil

But flowers they found for Fèhaglin the Fair:

Golden and red

-- And there Cordil kissed her –

-- The day they were wed. --

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