

The Song of Marwen and Fithurin

By [Paul D. 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-stress 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 is set early in the history of Middle Earth, when the Valar invited the elves to Valinor, but some of them refused and remained in the far East, where they became the Avari elves. It imagines the choices that divided them from their kin. Other poems in this cycle include [The Song of Woe](#), [The Song of Returning](#), [The Song of Shadows](#), and [The Redemption of Daeron](#). This poem was originally published on the [Imladris Poetry Page](#).

Fithurin

Come with me, love! There is light in the West
Where Two Trees illumine the land they have blessed!
Come with me, love! The Valar will share
Their beauty and wisdom, so let us go there!

Marwen

I see the stars a bright woven web,
The fountains flowing, the tangled trees.
Such beauty beholding, why must I wander?
Why must I grieve?
-- This land I love --
-- so why must I leave? --

Fithurin

Come with me, love! The Western sky
Is brighter far than stars on high!
The grass is green, the flowers fair
In lands the Valar comfort and care!

Marwen

But their light is locked in a little land:

Their wisdom withdrawn and their homeland hidden
Beyond the bounds of the world we know.
Why have these Valar no comfort and care
-- for the land I love --
-- that I must go there? --

Fithurin

Trust me, my love, and let us depart
Together is home and comfort of heart!
The Hunter's horse will lead us together
Past plains and mountain, forest and heather!

Marwen

Yes, shadows are swift! And terrors have tracked us
Lurking and laughing with evil eyes.
We wavered not, nor hid in holes
Nor faltered in fear nor let liars lure us!
So why should I heed
-- that terrible rider --
-- On his terrible steed? --

Fithurin

I beg you my bride: my family, my friends
Pack, prepare like buzzing bees.
Guilin gathers, Rumil wraps,
They laugh, they sing:
-- I stand, a bird --
-- with broken wing. --

Marwen

Stay here my love! There is life in the East --
Children, laughter, song and feast.
Stay with me, love! I could not bear
To live here alone, if you were not there.

Fithurin

When dreams have died past loss to live
Is hard, for hunger hews the heart.
When love's a lock and beauty binds,
The heart's a trammeled thing:

-- a captive that sorrows –
-- and seldom can sing. --

Marwen

Never, my love! I cannot savor
A captive's love, or grudging favor.
Go if you must, then I must go too,
Torn from this land because I love you.

Fithurin

My bride, beware - I know your nature:
You seek out safety, haven, and home.
To wander wild is care not comfort,
In lands foreign and strange:
-- where your heart must delight –
-- in disturbance and change. --

Marwen

My love, I release the nets of my heart:
Our home is together, do not stand apart!
I can learn to live in alien lands
And hold my safety in open hands.

Fithurin

Forget such words, let us sing together!
Of beauty in star, and tree, and heather!
If you love this land, this land's my heart,
More precious than gems cut by cunning art!

Together

I'll stay, my darling, and never roam;
Love's my adventure, your eyes my home.
There's wonder enough in your sidelong glance
To shatter the world and make mountains dance.