
Character Biography Beregar of Númenor

By Oshun

Little is known of Beregar aside from the fact that he is the husband of Núneth and father of Erendis.¹ One is accustomed to read the histories of women who are only referenced in relation to the men in their lives: "Women are often mentioned only as the 'wife of' or 'mother of' some more historically significant figure."² Tolkien is no exception in this regard. However, Beregar is one of the few male characters who is significant largely in relation to the role his daughter and granddaughter play in the history of Númenor.³ Another claim to fame for Beregar is the fact that his only grandchild, Tar-Ancalimë, the daughter of Erendis and Tar-Aldarion, becomes the first Ruling Queen of Númenor in 1075 of the Second Age.⁴

Beregar's daughter Erendis is exceptional in her dismissive attitude toward men, an attitude that she passes on to her daughter Ancalimë. It seems unlikely from the narrative of *Aldarion and Erendis* that his daughter learned this attitude from Beregar or her mother Núneth. He may have hoped she would accept the suit of Aldarion, the heir to the throne, but he does not seem a particularly overbearing father in the context of the time and place. Erendis, however, colorfully expresses her opinion of the male sex.

Men in Númenor are half-Elves (said Erendis), especially the high men; they are neither the one nor the other. The long life that they were granted deceives them, and they dally in the world, children in mind, until age finds them – and then many only forsake play out of doors for play in their houses. They turn their play into great matters and great matters into play. They would be craftsmen and loremasters and heroes all at once; and women to them are but fires on the hearth – for others to tend, until they are tired of play in the evening.⁵

This appears to define more the royalty in Armenelos than it does her father. But one does not receive enough information to say for certain if she is reacting to what she sees in the courtly circles around the King and his family because she was raised differently, or if Beregar also fits this description.

Beregar was highly regarded by the Númenórean royalty. In the narrative of the deeds of his daughter and her royal spouse, we learn that Erendis does not consider her family to be a high-ranking one in Númenórean society. When Erendis notices that Aldarion is drawn to her, she considers her family to be unequal to his in stature.

In those days there was no need, by law or custom, that those of the royal house, not even the King's Heir, should wed only with descendants of Elros Tar-Minyatur; but Erendis deemed that Aldarion was too high.⁶

Aldarion does not hold this position, and Beregar indeed was high enough to have been invited to festivities hosted by Tar-Melentur in Armenelos, along with great dignitaries and royalty.

To the feasting in Armenelos came one Beregar from his dwelling in the west of the Isle, and with him came Erendis his daughter. There Almarian the Queen observed her beauty, of a kind seldom seen in Númenor; for Beregar came of the House of Bëor by ancient descent, though not of the royal line of Elros, and Erendis was dark-haired and of slender grace, with the clear grey eyes of her kin.⁷

Aldarion and Erendis discusses the economic differences between the trading centers and ship-building centered in Rómenna and "the wool production in the Emerië, where were rolling downs of grass, and it was the chief place of sheep pasturage."⁸ Perhaps it is not an unreasonable speculation to opine that the father of Erendis might become a wealthy man with his northern and western connection. This might have been his overture into the circles of governance centered in Armenelos and Rómenna. We are not told why he is welcome in the environs of the King's court with his small family or why the Queen takes Erendis under her wing. The north of the country was known for its wool and its timber, so the needs of a consumer society centered around the court in the south may have meant markets and money for citizens like Beregar, who had access to this potential wealth. This is, of course, purely hypothetical. In any case, the point is clearly made in *Aldarion and Erendis* that Beregar did not share the noble blood of Elros son of Eärendil. Still the King entertained him and his family, and Beregar's status was such that Aldarion courted Erendis, with the approval of his parents.

Beregar descended from the House of Bëor, which is certainly not without its heroes and heroines. Beren, the spouse of Lúthien, hails from the House of Bëor, as does Morwen Eledhwen. Erendis is said to resemble Morwen in her beauty: "[n]one were more fair than Erendis, and they said that her eyes were bright as were the eyes of Morwen Eledhwen of old."⁹ More than once, the point is made that Beregar's daughter resembles his antecedents of the House of Bëor.

The Men of that house were dark or brown of hair, with grey eyes; and of all Men they were most like to the Noldor and most loved by them; for they were eager of mind, cunning-handed, swift in understanding, long in memory, and they were moved sooner to pity than to laughter.¹⁰

These people of the House of Bëor settled in north of the star-shaped island, in the part bordering on the sea called the Westlands. The region of the country whence Belegar hailed held resources that were much in demand in the south.

The chief and most ancient road, suitable for wheels, ran from the greatest port, Rómenna in the east, to the royal city of Armenelos . . . and this road was early extended to Ondosto within the borders of the Forostar, and thence to Andúnië in the west. Along it passed wains bearing stone from the Northlands that was most esteemed for building, and timber in which the Westlands were rich.¹¹

Beregar's name is rooted in Sindarin, which also would have been his birth language in the Westlands.

Elsewhere, in a note on the languages of Númenor, it is said that the general use of Sindarin in the north-west of the Isle was due to the fact that those parts were largely settled by people of 'Bëorian' descent; and the People of Bëor had in Beleriand early abandoned their own speech and adopted Sindarin.¹²

Perhaps the single most interesting fact about Beregar's origins and what they foreshadow is that his roots are in the part of Númenor that gives rise in later years to the Faithful or Elendili (Quenya for "Elf-friends").¹³

On the one hand was the greater party, and they were called the King's Men, and they grew proud and were estranged from the Eldar and the Valar. And on the other hand was the lesser party, and they were called the Elendili, the Elf-friends; for though they remained loyal indeed to the King and the House of Elros, they wished to keep the friendship of the Eldar, and they hearkened to the counsel of the Lords of the West. Nonetheless even they, who named themselves the Faithful, did not wholly escape from the affliction of their people, and they were troubled by the thought of death.¹⁴

So, while in his lifetime, Beregar may have been considered, or even considered himself, less than the rulers in Armenelos, he hailed from that same part of the island that gave birth to the surviving loyalists to the Eldar, the Lords of Andúnië. His traditions and his heritage hold the roots of the Faithful.

Works Cited

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3. See [Erendis, the Mariner's Wife](#).
4. *The Lord of the Rings, The Return of the King*, Appendix A, "Annals of the Kings and Rulers, I – The Númenórean Kings, (i) Númenor.
5. *The Unfinished Tales, The Mariner's Wife, Aldarion and Erendis*, "The Further Course of the Narrative."
6. *The Unfinished Tales, The Mariner's Wife, Aldarion and Erendis.*
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. *The Silmarillion*, "Of the Coming of Men into the West."
11. *The Unfinished Tales*, "A Description of the Island of Númenor."
12. Ibid.
13. *The Silmarillion*, *Akallabêth*.
14. Ibid.

About the Author

Oshun's *Silmarillion*-based stories may be found on the [SWG archive](#).