

CHAPTER X -Thuvia, Maid of Mars

CHAPTER X - Thuvia, Maid of Mars begins with Carthoris and Thuvia walking side by side through the shadowed forest, their silence unbroken but filled with unspoken trust. Yet, when Carthoris finally attempts to speak, he discovers Thuvia has vanished. The unsettling truth soon reveals itself—he has been the victim of illusion. Jav, the manipulative Lotharian, had used mental projection to make Carthoris believe Thuvia walked with him, while in reality, she was never released. Racing back in fury, Carthoris finds Jav mortally wounded. In his final moments, Jav confesses his trick and directs Carthoris toward Thuvia's true path.

Pushed by urgency, Carthoris continues across the bleak Martian landscape until he encounters Kar Komak, a phantom bowman made real by thought. Once a product of Lotharian imagination, Kar Komak now exists as flesh and blood, abandoned by his people but filled with a fierce sense of purpose. Carthoris, though cautious, recognizes the value of an ally—especially one born from Lothar's illusions yet loyal enough to fight alongside him. Together, they set their sights on Aanthor, determined to intercept Thuvia and her fierce guardian banth, Komal, before enemies do.

As the two travel, their path becomes increasingly perilous. Dusarian ships and green Martian warriors are converging, all seeking the same prize—Thuvia. High on a ridge, Carthoris glimpses her form beside Komal, surrounded by danger and unaware of her fast-approaching enemies. There is no time to plan. With Kar Komak weaponless but unshaken, the two men launch themselves toward the coming battle. The loyalty shown by Kar Komak, though newly allied, is immediate and selfless, adding depth to their alliance. The green Martians descend, armed and brutal, forcing Carthoris and his companion to act swiftly and with resolve.

Amid the chaos, Thuvia's presence anchors Carthoris. Though she has faced deception and isolation, she places her faith in his approach. His courage emboldens her, quieting her fear even as warbands close in. She senses that Carthoris's arrival is more than chance—it is fate in motion. As Komal growls beside her, ready to defend, Thuvia prepares to stand her ground. Though no words are exchanged, the silent understanding between Carthoris and Thuvia speaks volumes about their connection.

Kar Komak, despite lacking a weapon, charges into the fray with Carthoris, embodying the spirit of a true warrior. His bravery cements their bond and illustrates the depth of Martian honor, even from one created through thought. Together, the two press forward toward the ridge, even as the odds stack against them. Their mission is not simply about survival; it is driven by loyalty, love, and the refusal to surrender Thuvia to treachery.

This chapter not only introduces a powerful new ally in Kar Komak but also expands the world of Barsoom, blending mystical Lotharian invention with raw Martian valor. Carthoris, always driven by duty and heart, emerges as a leader whose instincts never waver, even when betrayed or outnumbered. His ability to inspire loyalty in others and act decisively in the face of danger is a reflection of his lineage, yet it is his personal courage and compassion that set him apart.

Thuvia's trust, Komal's protection, and Kar Komak's fierce loyalty converge in this moment, forging a triad of courage against the chaos closing in. This chapter blends high-stakes pursuit with introspective loyalty, and as Carthoris and his allies race toward the ruins of Aanthor, the reader is left with a sense of mounting tension. The outcome remains uncertain, but the conviction of those willing to risk everything for one another shines through. Against the political deception and looming war, this chapter underscores what remains constant: valor, faith, and the unyielding pursuit of justice.