

trees until the sun is well down, and then go into the palace and show thyself to my father. And when thou tellest him of what befell thee and them that were with thee at the ford, see that thou speak wisely, lest my father die of his sorrow for Zillah and for me. Tell him how thou camest to me with all speed, and that I have gone forth to overtake Hanac and his men. Tell him that I will surely deliver the captives and the treasure out of his hand; and that I will purge the world of Hanac before I return.

When we came to the encampment I called Gomer the captain, and told him of all that Hanac had done. Then I sent him out to gather together a score of men that had been tried in battle. These I armed each with a sword and shield, and a bow of steel and a full quiver of arrows. Also I gave to each man a horse, strong and fleet; albeit I purposed that when it came to the battle, they should fight on foot. Moreover, I made the men prepare food for themselves and for the horses, to take with them, lest they should be faint with hunger.

When all was made ready we rode forth a half day's journey, to a point at the foot of the mountains where I knew a path by which I could get before Hanac on the way to his stronghold; for he was cumbered with the spoil he had taken at the