Chapter X - Thuvia- Maid of Mars

Chapter X begins with the quiet companionship of Carthoris and Thuvia moving steadily through the Martian landscape. Words are few, yet each step affirms the trust forming between them. Their silence speaks volumes, filled with glances that reveal more than conversation ever could. But this fragile peace shatters when Carthoris suddenly discovers Thuvia has disappeared. Panic replaces calm, and he realizes she was never there—only a mirage shaped by Jav's powers. The betrayal slices deep, not just for the deception, but for his failure to sense it sooner. Carthoris immediately turns back to Lothar, his thoughts consumed by a burning resolve to make things right.

On his journey back, Carthoris stumbles upon Jav, gravely injured and nearing death. The dying man confesses his manipulation and explains Thuvia’s escape with Komal, the fierce banth once thought untamable. Carthoris listens, but there is no space for bitterness—only urgency. With Jav’s last breath, a trail is given, and Carthoris begins a new pursuit. The cliffs where Thuvia fled are hostile, treacherous, and filled with uncertainty. But there is no hesitation in Carthoris. His mind, though aware of brewing political chaos between Helium and its allies, narrows on one objective—bringing Thuvia back from danger. In a world of schemes and shifting loyalties, his aim remains personal and pure.

As he races through the tunnel beyond the valley, Carthoris thinks briefly on the greater game unfolding. Lies have been spread to fracture the alliance between Helium, Ptarth, and Kaol—deceptions likely planted by agents of Dusar. Though the damage could be irreversible, he cannot focus on that now. His heart leads him toward Thuvia, and his hope rests on her survival. Emerging from the tunnel, he is greeted not by solitude, but by an unexpected figure—Kar Komak, the archer of Lothar, no longer an illusion but now a warrior of flesh and blood. Carthoris is surprised, but not ungrateful. Kar Komak’s presence signals strength and unity. The warrior, animated by

Tario’s delusions and now free, seeks a life rooted in action, not fantasy.

Kar Komak expresses disdain for his old life in Lothar, where illusions shaped existence and truth was secondary. He sees this journey as a chance to live fully, to fight for something real. The bond between the two warriors strengthens with each step forward. Carthoris shares his plan, and together, they move through dangerous terrain, evading green Martian patrols and Torquasian scouts. Their path is lined with threats, but their goal pulls them forward. It is not just about Thuvia anymore—it is about redemption, defiance, and the assertion of truth in a world blurred by falsehood. As they reach the outskirts of Aaanthor, a chilling scene unfolds ahead.

Thuvia and Komal are visible from a distance, surrounded by the growing presence of green warriors. Dusarian ships hover above, closing the circle. Carthoris takes in the situation quickly. They are outnumbered, outarmed, and almost out of time. Yet, retreat does not enter his mind. He grips his sword, Kar Komak readies his bow, and together they charge—not with any promise of survival, but with the certainty that courage matters. The terrain offers no cover, only exposure, yet they press forward. To save Thuvia is to reject surrender. In their charge, they show that purpose can overpower numbers.

Kar Komak’s arrows fly with unmatched precision, each strike deliberate. Carthoris cuts through the line of green warriors, each motion filled with clarity. In the chaos, Komal—a creature feared by all—protects Thuvia with a surprising loyalty. The once-beast has become a guardian, proving that bonds can form in even the unlikeliest hearts. This triangle of man, woman, and beast now fights as one against looming oppression. What unfolds is more than a skirmish—it is a declaration. That devotion is stronger than power, and unity forged in adversity is unbreakable.

This chapter balances illusion with reality, showing how perception can shape destiny. Carthoris’s journey through betrayal, fear, and resolve reflects the inner battles we often face when trust is broken. But the presence of Kar Komak reminds us that even illusions can birth something real if belief is strong enough. His transformation into

flesh parallels Carthoris’s evolution from a prince reacting to threats to a man pursuing truth and love without pause. The obstacles they face are many, but their intent is unwavering.

As dusk settles over Aaanthor, their fate remains uncertain, but their conviction is complete. What began as a pursuit becomes a stand—not just for Thuvia, but for what she represents: choice, dignity, and truth in a world too quick to deceive. Through fire and sword, Carthoris proves that hope, when held tightly enough, becomes an unshakable force. In this chapter, love is no longer silent—it moves with them, breathes beside them, and fights at their side.