Chapter XII - Thuvia- Maid of Mars Trashed

Chapter XII opens with Thuvia standing in the heart of danger, facing the terrifying banth-god, Komal. Jav, her only companion and protector, bravely confronts the beast but is quickly overpowered and killed. Thuvia, using a commanding presence few would expect, calms the savage creature and leads it away, her composure both startling and powerful. Though she has narrowly survived, her journey through the perilous Martian wilds has just begun. Each step she takes is shadowed by uncertainty—not just of her destination, but of her heart. She continues her trek toward Ptarth, unaware that Carthoris, separated by fate, searches desperately for her on another path. Her thoughts flicker with memories of him, but pride and duty suppress what she will not admit.

Thuvia’s struggle is not just external but deeply personal. Bound to Kulan Tith by royal obligation, she fights the pull of her heart every time Carthoris enters her thoughts. Her bond with Komal, now a strange guardian, provides a sense of security amid the vast dangers of Barsoom. Yet, no matter how strong her resolve, moments of quiet force her to confront the feelings she denies. Every glance at the stars above reminds her of Carthoris’s loyalty, the risks he has likely taken, and the impossibility of their connection under current political constraints. Still, she marches forward, guided by purpose and guarded by a creature that once symbolized death but now serves as an unlikely ally. Her strength, tested at every turn, grows not through battle but endurance.

Elsewhere, Carthoris’s journey is interrupted by betrayal. Ambushed and struck down, he is left unconscious and vulnerable. Before he can reach Thuvia, fate intervenes again. Thuvia, now alone, is captured by warriors loyal to Dusar, falling once more into

the hands of her enemies. This time, she faces not only the threat of imprisonment but a political trap from which she might not escape. Back in Dusar, the walls close in as the truth behind her abduction becomes too dangerous to contain. Astok, who engineered the kidnapping in a desperate attempt to possess her, now finds himself ensnared in consequences far greater than his original scheme.

Astok's father, Nutus, sees the crisis clearly. The potential exposure of their involvement in Thuvia's disappearance could unravel fragile alliances and ignite war between the strongest city-states of Barsoom. Astok is urged to abandon his fantasy of winning Thuvia's affection and to consider the damage already done. Nutus proposes a brutal solution: eliminate Thuvia and all evidence of the plot. For the Dusarians, her life has become a liability—a symbol of miscalculation that must be erased to protect their standing. Astok, though ruthless in many ways, hesitates. In her presence, his aggression falters, met by her fearless defiance. Thuvia's refusal remains steady. She will not be a pawn. She will not yield.

Astok's inner turmoil becomes visible. On one side, he is pressured by his father's demand to secure Dusar's future through silence. On the other, he faces a woman whose dignity refuses to be broken. Each time he attempts to assert control, her strength mirrors back his cowardice. Though he threatens, delays, and reconsiders, his will falters. In Thuvia, he sees something greater than beauty—something incorruptible. It is a force he cannot tame or threaten into submission. The choice before him is no longer just political. It has become deeply personal, driven by a recognition that what he wants cannot be taken, only given freely.

Meanwhile, the larger web of Martian politics tightens. The disappearance of Thuvia has sent ripples across the cities. If Helium or Kaol learns the truth, retaliation will follow swiftly and without mercy. The leadership of Dusar teeters on the edge of conflict, gambling its survival on secrecy. Thuvia, though bound by chains, remains at the center of the storm. Her silence, her strength, and her presence command attention. She is no longer simply a princess or a prize. She is the pivot around which war and peace might turn.

This chapter paints a world where emotional restraint carries the same weight as military might. It explores the chaos that ensues when selfish desires override reason, and the quiet power that comes from knowing one’s worth. Thuvia, caught between nations and suitors, does not beg for freedom. She demands it with silence and presence. Her influence grows not through command, but through clarity—proving that even in captivity, control is not entirely lost. With conflict looming and loyalties fracturing, the chapter leaves us waiting. Not just for rescue, but for resolution. And Thuvia, in her resilience, promises she will not break before it comes.

