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THE SONGS OF SUMMER

An Off-Trail Story

by **ROBERT SILVERBERG**

(author of "The Lonely One")

illustrated by **KELLY FREAS**

1. *Kennon*

I WAS on my way to take part in the Singing, and to claim Corilann's promise. I was crossing the great open field when suddenly the man appeared, the man named

Chester Dugan. He seemed to drop out of the sky.

I watched him stagger for a moment or two. I did not know where he had come from so suddenly, or why he was here. He was short—shorter than any of us—fat in

an unpleasant way, with wrinkles on his face and an unshaven growth of beard. I was anxious to get on to the Singing, and so I allowed him to fall to the ground and kept moving. But he called to me, in a barbarous and corrupt tongue which I could recognize as our language only with difficulty.

"Hey, you," he called to me; "Give me a hand, will you?"

He seemed to be in difficulties, so I walked over to him and helped him to his feet. He was panting, and appeared almost in a state of shock. Once I saw he was steady on his feet, and seemed to have no further need of me, I began to walk away from him, since I was anxious to get on to the Singing and did not wish to meddle with this man's affairs. Last year was the first time I attended the Singing at Dandrin's, and I enjoyed it very much. It was then that Corilann had promised herself. I was anxious to get on.

But he called to me. "Don't leave me here!" he shouted. "Hey, you can't just walk away like that! Help me!"

I TURNED and went back. He was dressed strangely, in ugly ill-arranged tight clothes, and he was walking

in little circles, trying to adjust his equilibrium. "Where am I?" he asked me.

"Earth, of course," I told him.

"No," he said, harshly. "I don't mean that, idiot. Where, on Earth?"

The concept had no meaning for me. Where, on Earth, indeed? Here, was all I knew: The great plain between my home and Dandrin's, where the Singing is held. I began to feel uneasy. This man seemed badly sick, and I did not know how to handle him. I felt thankful that I was going to the Singing; had I been alone, I never would have been able to deal with him. I realized I was not as self-sufficient as I thought I was.

"I am going to the Singing," I told him. "Are you?"

"I'm not going anywhere till you tell me where I am and how I got here. What's your name?"

"My name is Kennon. You are crossing the great plain on your way to the home of Dandrin, where we are going to have the Singing, for it is summer. Come; I'm anxious to get there. Walk with me, if you wish."

I started to walk away a second time, and this time he began to follow me. We walked along silently for a while.

"Answer me, Kennon," he said after a hundred paces or so. "Ten seconds ago I was in New York; now I'm here. How far am I from New York?"

"What is New York?" I asked. At this he showed great signs of anger and impatience, and I began to feel quite worried.

"Where'd you escape from?" he shouted. "You never heard of New York? You never heard of *New York*? New York," he said, "is a city of some eight million people, located on the Atlantic Ocean, on the east coast of the United States of America. Now tell me you haven't heard of that!"

"What is a city?" I asked, very much confused. At this he grew very angry. He threw his arms in the air wildly.

"Let us walk more quickly," I said. I saw now that I was obviously incapable of dealing with this man, and I was anxious to get on to the Singing—where perhaps Dandrin, or the other old ones, would be able to understand him. He continued to ask me questions as we walked, but I'm afraid I was not very helpful.

2. *Chester Dugan*

I DON'T know what happened or how; all I know is I got here. There doesn't

seem to be any way back, either, but I don't care; I've got a good thing here and I'm going to show these nitwits who's boss.

Last thing I knew, I was getting into a subway; there was an explosion and a blinding flash of light, and before I could see what was happening I blanked out and somehow got here. I landed in a big open field with absolutely nothing around. It took a few minutes to get over the shock. I think I fell down; I'm not sure. It's not like me, but this was something out of the ordinary and I might have lost my balance.

Anyway, I recovered almost immediately and looked around, and saw this kid in loose flowing robes walking quickly across the field not too far away. I yelled to him when I saw he didn't intend to come over to me. He came over and gave me a hand, and then started to walk away again, calm as you please. I had to call him back. He seemed a little reluctant. The bustard.

I tried to get him to tell me where we were, but he played dumb. Didn't know where we were, didn't know where New York was, didn't even know what a city was—or so he said. I would have thought he was crazy, except that I didn't

know what had happened to me; for that matter, I might have been the crazy one and not him.

I saw I wasn't making much headway with him, so I gave up. All he would tell me was that he was on his way to the Singing, and the way he said it there was no doubt about the capital S. He said there would be men there who could help me. To this day I don't know how I got here. Even after I spoke and asked around, no one could tell me how I could step into a subway train in 1956 and come out in an open field somewhere around the 35th century. The crazy bastards have even lost count.

But I'm here, that's all that matters. And whatever went before is down the drain now. Whatever deals I was working on back in 1956 are dead and buried now; that is where I'm stuck, for reasons I don't get, and here's where I'll have to make my pile. All over again—me, Dugan, starting from scratch. But I'll do it. I'm doing it.

AFTER THIS kid Kennon and I had plodded across the fields for a while, I heard the sound of voices. By now it was getting towards nightfall. I forgot to mention that it was getting along toward the

end of November back in 1956, but the weather here was nice and summery. There was a pleasant tang of something in the air that I had never noticed in New York's air, or the soup they called air back then.

The sound of the singing grew louder as we approached, but as soon as we got within sight they all stopped immediately.

They were sitting in a big circle, twenty or thirty of them, dressed in light, airy clothing. They all turned to look at me as we got near.

I got the feeling they were all looking into my mind.

The silence lasted a few minutes, and then they began to sing again. A tall, thin kid was leading them, and they were responding to what he sang. They ignored me. I let them continue until I formed a plan; I don't believe in rushing into things without knowing exactly what I'm doing.

I waited till the singing quieted down a bit, and then I yelled "Stop!" I stepped forward into the middle of the ring.

"My name is Dugan," I said, loud, clear, and slow. "Chester Dugan. I don't know how I got here, and I don't know where I am, but I mean to stay here a while. Who's the chief around here?"

THEY LOOKED at each other in a puzzled fashion and finally an old thin-faced man stepped out of the circle. "My name is Dandrin," he said, in a thin dried little voice. "As the oldest here, I will speak for the people. Where do you come from?"

"That's just it," I said. "I came from New York City, United States of America, Planet Earth, the Universe. Don't any of those things mean anything to you?"

"They are names, of course," Dandrin said. "But I do not know what they are names of. New York City? United States of America? We have no such terms."

"Never heard of New York?" This was the same treatment I had gotten from that dumb kid Kennon, and I didn't like it. "New York is the biggest city in the world, and the United States is the richest country."

I heard hushed mumbles go around the circle. Dandrin smiled.

"I think I see now," he said. "Cities, countries." He looked at me in a strange way. "Tell me," he said. "Just *when* are you from?"

That shook me. "1956," I said. And here, I'll admit, I began to get worried.

"This is the 35th century," he said calmly. "At least, so

we think. We lost count during the Bombing Years. But come, Chester Dugan; we are interrupting the Singing with our talk. Let us go aside and talk, while the others can sing."

HE LED me off to one side and explained things to me. Civilization had broken up during a tremendous atomic war. These people were the survivors, the dregs. There were no cities and not even small towns. People lived in groups of twos and threes here and there, and didn't come together very often. They didn't even *like* to get together, except during the summer. Then they would gather at the home of some old man—usually Dandrin; everyone would meet, and sing for a while, and then go home.

Apparently there were only a few thousand people in all of America. They lived widely scattered, and there was no business, or trade, or culture, or anything else. Just little clumps of people living by themselves, farming a little and singing, and not doing much else. As the old man talked I began to rub my hands together—mentally, of course. All sorts of plans were forming in my head.

He didn't have any idea how

I had gotten here, and neither did I; I still don't. I think it just must have been a one-in-a-trillion fluke, a flaw in space or something. I just stepped through at the precise instant and wound up at that open field. But Chester Dugan can't worry about things he doesn't understand. I just accept them.

I saw a big future for myself here, with my knowledge of 20th Century business methods. The first thing, obviously, was to reestablish villages. The way they had things arranged now, there really wasn't any civilization. Once I had things started, I could begin reviving other things that these decadent people had lost: money, entertainment, sports, business. Once we got machinery going, we'd be set. We'd start working on a city, and begin expanding. I thanked whoever it was had dropped me here. This was a golden opportunity for me. These people would be putty in my hands.

3. *Corilann*

IT WAS with Kennon's approval that I did it. Right after the Singing ended for that evening, Dugan came over to me and I could tell from the tone of his conversation that he wanted me for

the night. I had already promised myself to Kennon, but Dugan seemed so insistent that I asked Kennon to release me for this one evening, and he did. He didn't mind.

It was strange the way Dugan went about asking me. He never came right out and said anything. I didn't like anything he did that night; and he's ugly.

He kept telling me, "Stay with me, baby; we're going places together. I didn't know what he meant."

The other women were very curious about it the next day. There are so few of us, that it's a novelty to sleep with someone new. They wanted to know how it had been. I told them I enjoyed it.

It was a lie; he was disgusting. But I went back to him the next night, and the one after that, no matter what poor Kennon said. I couldn't help it, despite myself. There was just something about Dugan that drew me; I couldn't help it. But he was disgusting.

4. *Dandrin*

IT WAS strange to see them standing in neat, ordered, precise rows, they who had never known any order, any rules before, and Dugan was telling them what to do. The dawn of the day before, we

had been free and alone, but since then Dugan had come.

He lined everybody up, and, as I sat in the shade and watched, he began explaining his plans. We tried so hard to understand what he meant. I remembered stories I had heard of the old ones, but I had never believed them until I saw Dugan in action.

"I can't understand you people," he shouted at us. "This whole rich world is sitting here waiting for you to walk out and grab it, and you sit around singing instead. Singing! You people are decadent, that's what you are. You need a government—a good, sturdy government—and I'm here to give it to you."

Kennon and some of the others had come to me that morning to find out what was going to happen. I urged them not to do anything, to listen to Dugan and do what he says. That way, I felt, we could eventually learn to understand him and deal with him in the proper manner. I confess that I was curious to see how he would react among us.

I said nothing when he gave orders that no one was to return home after the Singing. We were to stay here, he told us, and build a city. He was going to bring us all the advantages of the 20th Century.

And we listened to him pa-

tiently, all but Kennon. It was Kennon who had brought him here, poor young Kennon who had come here for the Singing and for Corilann. And it was Corilann whom Dugan had singled out for his own private property. Kennon had given his approval, the first night, thinking she would come back to him the next day. But she hadn't; she stayed with Dugan.

In a couple of days he had his city all planned and everything apportioned. I think the thought uppermost in everyone's mind was *why*: why does he want us to do these things? Why? We would have to give him time to carry out his plans; provided he did no permanent harm, we would wait and see, and wonder why.

5. *Chester Dugan*

THIS CORILANN is really stacked. Things were never like this back when! After Dandrin had told me where the unattached women were sitting, I looked them over and picked her. They were all worth a second look, but she was something special. I didn't know at the time that she was promised to Kennon, or I might not have started fooling around with her; I don't want to antagonize these people too much.

I'm afraid Kennon may be down on me a bit. I've taken his girl away, and I don't think he goes for my methods. I'll have to try some psychology on him. Maybe I'll make him my second-in-command.

The city is moving along nicely. There were 120 people at the Singing, and my figures show that fifteen were old people and the rest divided up pretty evenly; everyone is coupled off, and I've arranged the housing to fit the coupling. These people don't have children very often, but I'll fix that; I'll figure out some way of making things better for those with the most children, some sort of incentive. The quicker we build up the population, the better things will be. I understand there's a wild tribe about five hundred miles to the north of here, maybe less (I still don't have any idea where *here* is) who still have some machines and things, and once we're all established I intend to send an expedition out to conquer the wild tribe and bring back the machines.

There's an idea; maybe I'll let Kennon lead the expedition. I'll be giving him a position of responsibility, and at the same time there's a chance he might get knocked off. That kid's going to cause

trouble; I wish I hadn't taken his girl.

But it's too late to go back on it. Besides, I need a son, and quickly. If Corilann's baby is a girl, I don't know what I'll do. I can't carry on my dynasty without an heir.

THERE'S another kid here that bothers me—Jubilain. He's not like the others; he's very frail and sensitive, and seems to get special treatment. He's the one who leads the singing. I haven't been able to get him to work on the construction yet, and I don't know if I'm going to be able to.

But otherwise everything is moving smoothly. I'm surprised that old Dandrin doesn't object to what I'm doing. It's long since past the time when the Singing should have broken up, and everyone scattered, but they're all staying right here and working as if I was paying them.

Which I am, in a way. I'm bringing them the benefits of a great lost civilization, which I represent. Chester Dugan, the man from the past. I'm taking a bunch of nomads and turning them into a powerful city. So actually, everyone's profiting—the people, because of what I'm doing for them, and me. Me especially, be-

cause here I'm absolute top dog.

I'm worried about Corilann's baby, though. If it's a girl, that means a delay of a year or more before I can have my son, and even then it'll be at least ten years before he's of any use to me. I wonder what would happen if I took a second wife—Jarinne, for example. I watched her while she was stripped down for work yesterday and she looks even better than Corilann. These people don't seem to have any particular beliefs about marriage, anyway, and so I don't know if they'd mind. Then if Corilann had a girl, I might give her back to Kennon.

And that reminds me of another thing: There's no religion here. I'm not much of a Godman myself, but I realize religion's a good thing for keeping the people in line. I'll have to start thinking about getting a priesthood going, as soon as affairs are a little more settled here.

I didn't think it was so much work, organizing a civilization. But once I get it all set up, I can sit back and cool my heels for life. It's a pleasure working with these people. I just can't wait till everything is moving by itself. I've gotten further in two months here than I did in for-

ty years there. It just goes to show: You need a powerful man to keep civilization alive. And Chester Dugan is just the man these people needed.

6. Kennon

CORILANN has told me she will have a child by Dugan. This has made me sad, since it might have been my child she would be bearing instead. But I brought Dugan here myself, and so I suppose I am responsible. If I had not come to the Singing, he might have died in the great oven field. But now it is too late for such thoughts.

Dugan forbids us to go home, now that the Singing is over. My father is waiting for me at our home, and the hunting must be done before the winter comes, but Dugan forbids us to go home. Dandrin had to explain to me what "forbids" means; I still don't fully understand why or how one person can tell another person what to do. None of us really understands Dugan at all, not even Dandrin, I think. Dandrin is trying hardest to understand him, but Dugan is so completely alien to us that we do not see.

He has made us build what he calls a city—many houses close together. He says the advantage of this is that we

may protect each other. But from what? We have no enemies. I have the feeling that Dugan understands us even less than we understand him. And I am anxious to go home for the autumn hunting, now that summer is almost over and the Singing is ended. I had hoped to bring Corilann back with me, but it is my own fault, and I must not be bitter.

Dugan has been very cold toward me. This is surprising, since it was I who brought him to the Singing. I think he is afraid I will try to take Corilann back; in any event, he seems to fear me and show anger toward me.

If I only understood!

7. Kennon

DUGAN has certainly gone too far now. For the past week I have been trying to engage him in conversation, to find out what his motives are for doing all the things he is doing. Dandrin should be doing this, but Dandrin seems to have abdicated all responsibility in this matter and is content to sit idly by, watching all that happens. Dugan does not make him work because he is so old.

I do not understand Dugan at all. Yesterday he told me, "We will rule the world." What does he mean? *Rule?*

Does he actually want to tell everyone who lives what he can do and what he cannot do? If all of the people of Dugan's time were like this, it is small wonder they destroyed everything. What if two people told the same man to do different things? What if they told each other to do things? My head reels at the thought of Dugan's world. People living together in masses, and telling each other what to do; it seems insane. I long to be back with my father for the hunting. I had hoped to bring him a daughter as well, but it seems this is not to be.

Dugan has offered me Jarinne as my wife. Jarinne says she has been with Dugan, and that Corilann knows. Dandrin warns me not to accept Jarinne because it will anger Dugan. But if it will anger Dugan, why did he offer her to me? And—now it occurs to me—by what right does he offer me another person?

Jarinne is a fine woman. She could make me forget Corilann.

And then Dugan told me that soon there will be an expedition to the north; we will take weapons and conquer the wild men. Dugan has heard of the machines of the wild men, and he says he needs them for our city. I told him that I had to leave immediately to help

my father with the hunting, that I have stayed here long enough. Others are saying the same thing: This summer the Singing has lasted too long.

TODAY I tried to leave. I gathered my friends and told them I was anxious to go home, and I asked Jarinne to come with me. She accepted, though she reminded me that she had been with Dugan. I told her I might be able to forget that. She said she knew it wouldn't matter to me if it had been anyone else (of course not; why should it?) but that I might object because it had been Dugan. I said goodbye to Corilann, who now is swollen with Dugan's child; she cried a little.

And then I started to leave. I did not talk to Dandrin, for I was afraid he would persuade me not to go. I opened the gate that Dugan has just put up, and started to leave.

Suddenly Dugan appeared. "Where do you think you're going?" he asked, in his hard, cold rasp of a voice. "Pulling out?"

"I have told you," I said quietly, "it is time to help my father with the hunting. I cannot stay in your city any longer." I moved past him and Jarinne followed. But he ran around in front of me.

"No one leaves here, under-

stand?" He waved his closed hand in front of me. "We can't build a city if you take off when you want to."

"But I must go," I said. "You have detained me here long enough." I started to walk on, and suddenly he hit me with his closed hand and knocked me down.

I went sprawling over the ground, and I felt blood on my face from where he had hurt my nose. People all around were watching. I got up slowly. I am bigger and much stronger than Dugan, but it had never occurred to me that one person might hit another person. But this is one of the many things that has come to our world.

I was not so unhappy for myself; pain soon ceases. But Jubilain the Singer was watching when he hit me, and such sights should be kept from Singers. They are not like the rest of us. I am afraid Jubilain has been seriously disturbed by the sight.

After he had knocked me down, Dugan walked away. I got up and went back inside the gate. I do not want to leave now. I must talk to Dandrin. Something must be done.

8. Jubilain

SUMMER to autumn to every old everyone, sing win-

ter to quiet to baby fall down. My head head hurts. My my hurts head. Bloody was Kennon.

Kennon was bloody and Dugan was angry and summer to autumn to.

Jubilain is very sad. My head hurts. Dugan hit Kennon in the face. With his hand, his hand hand hand rolled up in a ball Dugan hit Kennon. Outside the gates. Consider the gates. Consider.

They have spoiled the song. How can I sing when Dugan hits Kennon? My head hurts. Sing summer to autumn, sing every old everyone. It is good that the summer is ending, for the songs are over. How can I sing? Bloody was Kennon.

Jubilain's head hurts. It did not hurt before did not hurt. I could sing before. Summer to autumn to every old everyone. Corilann's belly is big with Dugan, and Jubilain's head hurts. Will there be more Dugans?

And more Kennons. No more Jubilains. No more songs. The songs of summer are silent and slippery. My head hurts. Hurts hurts hurts. I can sing no more. Nononononono

9. *Dandrin*

THIS IS tragic. I am an old fool.

I have been sitting in the shade, like the dried old man I am, while Dugan has destroyed us. Today he struck a man—Kennon. Kennon, whom he has mistreated from the start. Poor Kennon. Dugan has brought strife to us, now, along with his city and his gates.

But that is not the worst of it. Jubilain watched the whole thing, and we have lost our Singer. Jubilain simply was unable to assimilate the incident. A Singer's mind is not like our minds; it is a delicate, sensitive instrument. But it cannot comprehend violence. Our Singer has gone mad; there will be no more songs.

We must destroy Dugan. It is sad that we must come to his level and talk of destroying, but it is so. Now he is going to bring us warfare, and that is a gift we do not need. The fierce men of the north will prove strong adversaries for a people that has not fought for a thousand years. Why could we not have been left to ourselves? We were happy and peaceful people, and now we must talk of destroying.

I know the way to do it, too. If only my mind is strong enough, if only it has not dried in the sun during the years, I can lead the way. If



I can link with Kennon, and Kennon with Jarinne, and Jarinne with Corilann, and Corilann with—

If we can link, we can do it. Dugan must go. And this is the best way; this way we can dispose of him and still remain human beings.

I am an old fool. But perhaps this dried old brain still is good for something. If I can link with Kennon—

10. *Chester Dugan*

ALL RESISTANCE has crumbled now. I'm set up for life—Chester Dugan, ruler of the world. It's not much of a world, true enough, but what the hell. It's mine.

It's amazing how all the grumbling has stopped. Even

Kennon has given in—in fact, he's become my most valuable man, since that time I had to belt him. It was too bad, I guess, to ruin such a nice nose, but I couldn't have him walking off that way.

He's going to lead the expedition to the north tomorrow, and he's leaving Jarinne here. That's good. Corilann is busy with her baby, and I think I need a little variety anyway. Good-looking kid Corilann had; takes after his old man. It's amazing how everything is working out.

I hope to get electricity going soon, but I'm not too sure. The stream here is kind of weak, and maybe we'll have to throw up a dam first. In fact, I'm sure of it. I'll speak to Kennon about it before he leaves.

This business of rebuilding a civilization from scratch has its rewards. God, am I lean! I've lost all that roll of fat I was carrying around. I suppose part of the reason is that there's no beer here, yet—but I'll get to that soon enough. Everything in due time. First, I want to see what Kennon brings back from the north. I hope he doesn't ruin anything by ripping it out. Wouldn't it be nice to find a hydraulic press or a generator or stuff like that? And with my luck, we probably will.

MAYBE WE'LL do without religion a little while longer. I spoke to Dandrin about it, but he didn't seem to go for the idea of being priest. I might just take over that job myself, once things get straightened out. I'd like to work out some sort of heating system before the winter gets here. I've figured out that we're somewhere in New Jersey or Pennsylvania, and it'll get pretty cold here unless things have changed. (Could the barbarian city to the north be New York? Sounds reasonable.)

It's funny the way everyone lies down and says yes when I tell them to do something. These people have no guts, that's their trouble. One good thing about civilization—you have to have guts to last. I'll put guts in these people, all right. I'll probably be remembered for centuries and centuries. Maybe they'll think of me as a sort of messiah in the far future when everything's blurred. Why not? I came to them out of the clouds, didn't I? From heaven.

Messiah Dugan! Lawsy-me, if they could only see me now!

I still can't get over the way everything is moving. It's almost like a dream. By next spring we'll have a respectable little city here, practically

overnight. And we can hold a super-special Singing next summer and snaffle in the folks from all around.

Too bad about that kid Jubilain, by the way; he's really gone off his nut. But I always thought he was a little way there anyway. Maybe I'll teach them some of the old songs myself. It'll help to make me popular here. Although, come to think of it, I'm pretty popular now. They're all smiling at me all the time.

11.

"Kennon? Kennon? Hear me?"

"I hear you, Dandrin. I'll get Jarinne."

"Here I am. Corilann?"

"Here, Jarinne. And pulling hard. Let's try to get Onnar."

"Pull hard!"

"Onnar in." "And Iekka-man." "Hello, Dandrin."

"Hello."

"All here?"

"One hundred twenty."

"Tight now." "We're right tight."

"Let's get started, then. All together."

"Hello? Hello, Dugan. Listen to us, Dugan. Listen to us. Listen to us. Hold on tight! Listen to us, Dugan."

"Open up all the way, now."

"Are you listening, Dugan?"



12.

*Dandrin plus Kennon plus
Jarinne plus Corilann plus n*

I THINK we'll be able to hold together indefinitely, and so it can be said that the coming of Dugan was an incredible stroke of luck for us. This new blending is infinitely better than trying to make contact over thousands of miles!

Certainly we'll have to maintain this *gestalt* (useful word; I found it in Dugan's mind when I entered) until after Dugan's death. He's peacefully dreaming now, dreaming of who knows what conquests and battles and expansions, and I don't think he'll come out of it. He may live on in his dream for years, and I'll have to hold together and sustain the illusion until he dies. I hope we're making him happy at last. He seems

to have been a very unhappy man.

And just after I joined together, it occurred to me that we'd better stay this way indefinitely, just in case any more Dugans get thrown at us from the past. (Could it have been part of a Design? I wonder.) They must all have been like that back then. It's a fine thing that bomb was dropped.

We'll keep Dugan's city, of course. He did make some positive contributions to us—me. His biggest contribution was me; I never would have formed otherwise. I would have been scattered—Kennon on his farm, Dandrin here, Corilann there. I would have maintained some sort of contact among us, the way I always did even before Dugan came, but nothing like this! Nothing at all.

There's the question of what to do with Dugan's child. Kennon, Corilann, and Jarinne are all raising him. We don't need families now that we have me. I think we'll let Dugan's child in with us for a while; if he shows any signs of being like his father, we can always put him to sleep and let him share his father's dream.

I wonder what Dugan is thinking of. Now all his projects will be carried out; his city will grow and cover the

world; we will fight and kill and plunder, and he will be measurelessly happy—though all these things take place only within the boundaries of his fertile brain. We will never understand him. But I am happy that all these things will happen only within Dugan's mind so long as I am together and can maintain the illusion for him.

Our next project is to reclaim Jubilain. I am sad that he cannot be with us yet, for how rare and beautiful I would be if I had a Singer in me! That would surely be the most wonderful of blendings. But that will come. Patiently I will unravel the strands of

Jubilain's tangled mind, patiently I will bring the Singer back to us.

For in a few months it will be summer again, and time for the Singing. It will be different this year, for we will have been together in me all winter, and so the Singing will not be as unusual an event as it has been, when we have come to each other covered with a winter's strangeness. But this year I will be with us, and we will be I; and the songs of summer will be trebly beautiful in Dugan's city, while Dugan sleeps through the night and the day, for day and night on night and day.

