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approximately 185,000 words

THE LAW OF SEVEN
BOOK I: BLOOD WALKER
ALNORN'S LAMENT EXCERPT

By

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This day of mine sees falling night,
lo, darkness rots away my heart!
For though I knew death's final toll,
could it not come for someone old?
—where winter's grey his mane unmade?
—where golden locks won't tempt me splayed,
calling to my hands:
lose yourselves within?

Oh thee, fair leader, Mantle'd soul,
stole me, scion, thy destined foe,
in mercy spent to spare me; vile
intended ploy to tempt you while
a trust for me, my wicked lies,
was leveraged toward the final prize:
sink my poison deep:
bring eternal slumber.

I stalled my plans—I made excuse—
to slay thee, love, and hang thy noose.
For thou—O boy, thy fearless soul—
thou stole me with thy heart—behold:
the spy enthralled by darkness sent
to bastion forged of light and meant
to strike the very thing...
to mend her tattered heart?

Thou spoke thy mind, all secrets free—
escaped thy guards, to dance with me.
And every single time I'd say,
'I shall take him one coming day.'
For though my mission still did bind
my heart, my spirit, and my mind,
I saw something in thee
I could not be without.

Foolish boy, thou brought me laughter,
joy and mirth and long talks after
both En and Eyn had left for night,
bare skin warmed in fire's light.
Oh, how could I resist this man
who offered up his ear and then
let me speak my soul...
endured my woes and pain?

With passing months, my heart did open—

indeed a wall in me had broken.
A man whose gaze confirmed my dreams
—who turned my fire to moaning screams
—ignited by his thrusts within
the woman I had never been
—I cried into the night:

Yet word soon reached my father's ear
and fury turned his mind to ire.
Ample chances had come and gone
for me to slay the Mantle'd son.
My secret he betrayed to all—
he'd let me die to watch you fall—
I, to break your heart,
one you'd come to love.

I bore myself—my goal and ploy—
I begged your ear amidst the noise
of screams and yells for my demise...
you sat, endured, to all's surprise.
When the stillness finally came,
you left thy throne and spoke my name:
“Ahlnorn... is this true?”
“Yes, my love, it is.”

A din arose, a storm of rage,
to sweep me up and off the stage,
but, Denae'enth, thou stood and stilled
the crowd with simple, whispered words.
“Lo, this ploy aimed to deceive
has torn my heart and left me grieved...
Yet I judge thy love as true.
I bind myself to thee.”

The court did weep and peoples cry
for Denae'enth, would surely die:
thou placed thy soul within my hands—
bound it to my heart's commands
and trusted I'd be genuine.
I stood and took thy hands in mine:
“Denae'enth, my love,
I return thy fate to thee.”

What could be said? What could be done?
The darkest daughter's heart was won!
She turned against her nature's call—

stood by thee for one and all!
If even me thy deeds could claim
who could stand against thy name?
Plaguing darkness flee!
The King of Love doth ride!

To war thou rode, to set to tomb,
the Mantle'd plague, the fury whom
countless learned to loathe for years
the Cursed One—Envoy of Tears.
And love, thou fought, that spirit's bane,
and rallied men around thy reign:
thou set that fiend to rest,
it buried with its kin.

But though it fell before thy light,
It did not kneel without a fight,
its deadly blade, though not sunk deep
beckons thee to thine own sleep.
Poisoned was this weapon wielded!
A coward's tool of the defeated.
A mortal wound it gave.
Death, it stalks thee now.

I watch the color drain from thee,
my once and only ever king—
who stole my laughs... who draws my tears;
who kept me safe... who's ending nears.
Amidst a frame too weak to stir,
stares eyes that blaze to shame the stars.
Is this how it ends?
Is this... how thee dies?

The day arrives, thou'st grown still—
I weep until I too grow ill—
thou left a gaunt and vacant frame—
this corpse cannot reflect thy name!
I hear the voice—it whispers now:
“It has not ended; take this vow:
He'll return to thee;
this, The Watcher says.”