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Introduction



When it comes to chain mail and wirework, we're both teachers, and our students have provided a few hints as to what they would like to see in a book. We took their suggestions to heart. Hopefully these designs and techniques will be "just what you wanted."

MAKE A GOOD REFERENCE SOURCE

We are teachers to the core, plain and

simple. An idea doesn't even have to have all the bugs worked out of it before we need to show someone where it is at and where it is going. Once the technique is refined and the directions make sense: class is in session! That is where you come in. These designs and techniques are ready for you. If you like to see everything step by step, it's here in text and pictures. The directions should help you

make exactly what you see in the book. When you are ready to stretch what you see into the direction of your personal vision and designs, we have added some variations, concepts, and techniques to give you ideas.

SHOW TECHNIQUES, NOT JUST PROJECTS

Perhaps you have had a lot of experience and were looking for a more challenging technique or two. Maybe bending your first piece of wire is ahead of you. Possibly the lines and designs of the jewelry in this book have caught your attention and you wish to make and wear them or give them as gifts. Or

maybe you are able to peek a little into the future and can envision using the techniques and ideas to springboard your own work. Whatever paths led you here, we want to help provide opportunities, experiences, and creative directions that help you enjoy the processes and the results of playing with wire and jump rings.

MAKE THE JEWELRY WEARABLE

Wire can tell a story, paint a picture, capture space, or make a connection. In many ways, the jump rings in chain mail are just fine wires with well-rounded personalities. Wire and chain mail also have some very different characteristics in drape, and density, and dimension. They are worn differently. They are shaped differently for functionality and comfort. The designs in this book came first. There was no way to make them with just wire or just chain mail. The combination is simply...magical.

MAKE IT EASY AT FIRST-AND THEN MORE COMPLEX

The layout of this book follows the evolving designs made with wire. First, there is a single wire used in a simple formation. Then there are more wires and more complex formations. Each project includes the specific directions and materials for the variation of the basic chain mail pattern that will be required to make the piece shown. A technique reference in the back of the book will guide you through various techniques as needed; flip to this section for more detailed instructions for making wire shapes and chain mail weaves. You can pick out an easier project near the beginning of the book and beginning of each chapter, or you can just dive in and select your favorite.

MAKE IT LOOK AMAZING

The designs in this book are meant to have the look of classic upscale jewelry. When you wear these pieces (and your personal variations) we want people to ask, "Where did you get that?" instead of "Did you make that?" Everyone deserves a little awe and amazement from their friends and fans.

The pieces are shown in a narrow color palette to emphasize the "look." The pieces are shown in enamel-coated copper wire or sterling for affordable style—but by all means, move up to silver and gold when you are comfortable with the techniques and have picked a favorite piece. The

pieces are all shown in bold and prominent size, which is also great for showing techniques and directions. Not everyone wears statement pieces, though, so we include some directions for going from delectable to delicate, as well as smaller design alternates if you don't feel like tackling a large necklace or bracelet.

KEEP THE TOOLS AND MATERIALS BASIC

Considering that this book starts you on a journey toward fashion jewelry, you might expect special tools and devices. The truth is that sometimes a special pair of pliers or cutters will help you make the finished product more easily. So, when a specialty tool can make the job a bit easier, we will tell you about it. But remember, we were thinking about you—so every design in this book can be made with the most basic pliers, a cutter, a measuring device, and a few dowels.

HELP ME WITH MY DESIGNS

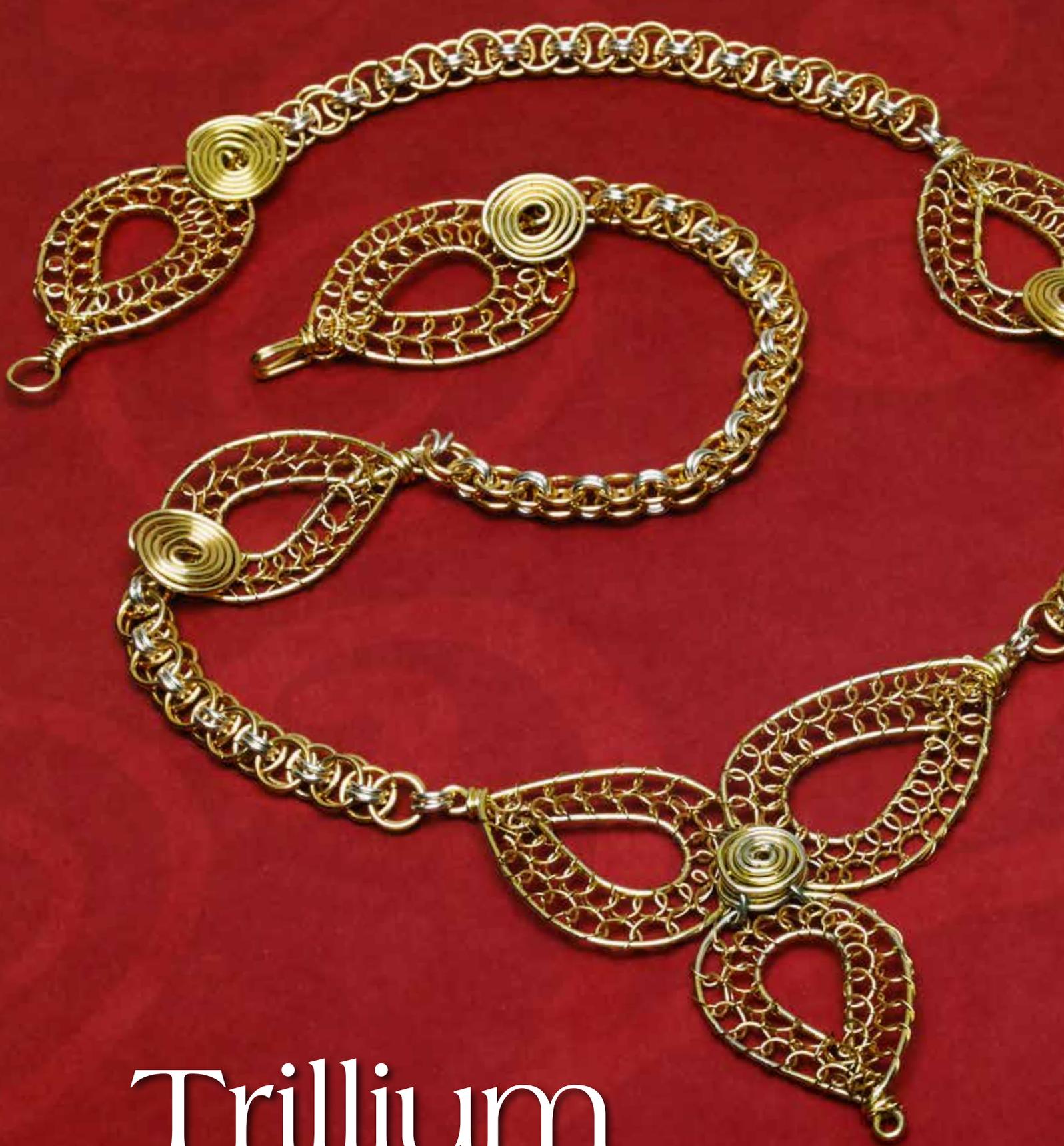
Creativity comes with "stretch." After a technique is learned and mastered, and long after the favored pieces are made and being worn, we hope that the book will continue to offer you opportunities and ideas. Wirework and chain mail can continue to be a timeless springboard for your own designs and creative process.

Enjoy creating and playing with wire!

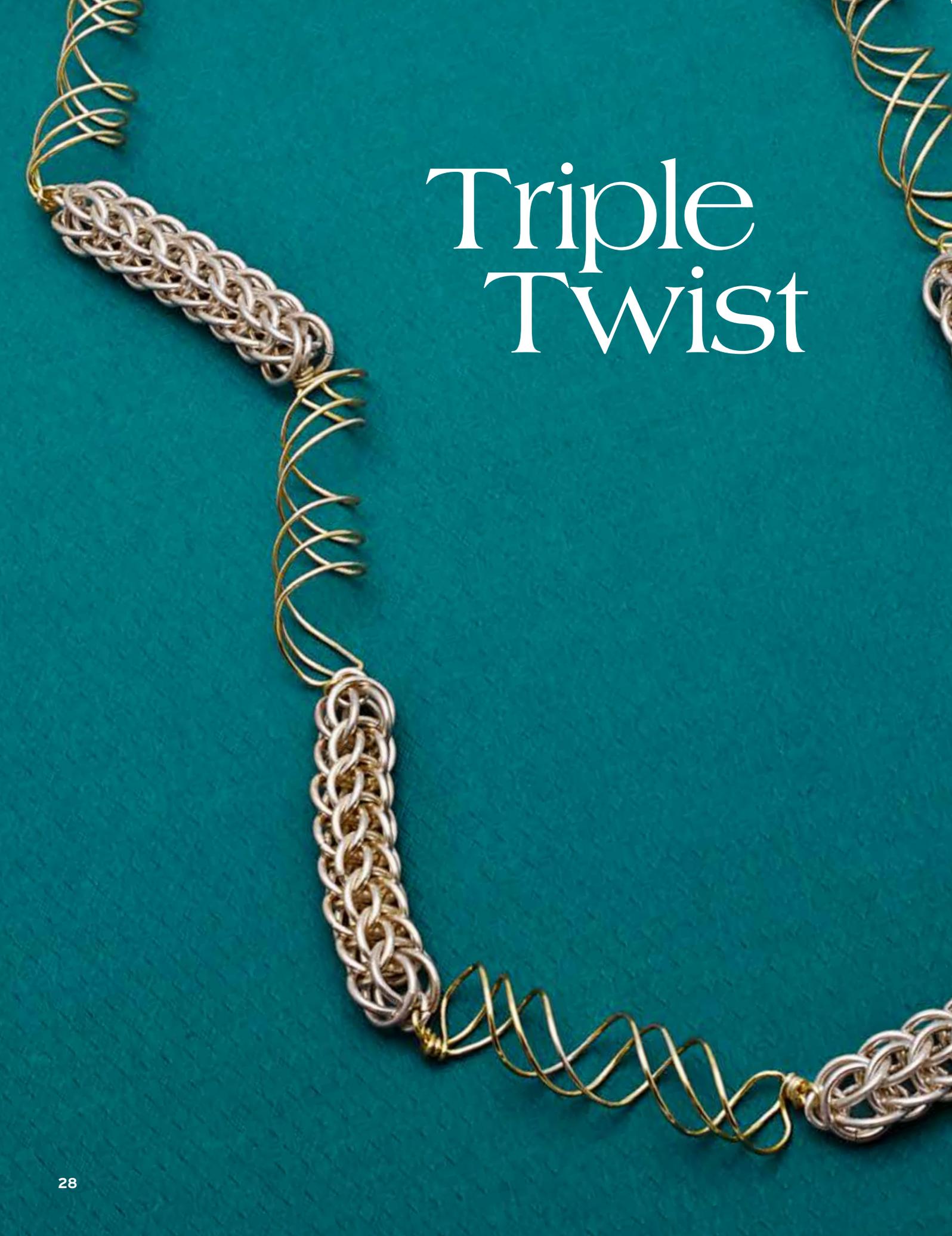
– Karen and Barbara



When you wear these pieces, we want people to ask, "Where did you get that?"



Trillium Flower



Triple Twist



This stylish two-tone rope necklace is made of alternating twisted links of gold wire and silver chain mail. Both strong and lightweight, the necklace uses six twisted wire links connected to segments of chain mail. The pattern has no clasp, creating a fun-to-wear statement piece.

MAKE FULL PERSIAN CHAIN MAIL SEGMENTS

1 Make six 2" (5cm) pieces of **full Persian** chain mail (p. 102) using 7.5mm jump rings.

Pre-forming the wire helps to ensure that the wire strands for the twisted link will be spaced evenly and that the wires will stay parallel to each other as the link is formed. The finished bends will appear to be the shoulders, neck, and head of a person.

MAKE TWISTED WIRE LINKS

2 Tape or mark one jaw of the roundnose pliers where the diameter is $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm). Use the small end of the pliers' tips to make the first and last bend. (All other curves will use the $\frac{1}{8}$ " mark.)

MATERIALS

wire

- 90" (2.29m) 20-gauge round, gold

jump rings

- **210** (2.5oz) 7.5mm 16-gauge, silver
- **20** 4.5mm 16-gauge, silver

tools

- pliers kit
- $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1cm) dowel, marked or cut at 2" (5cm) long
- twist tie or paper trim
- toothpick

This link design is made using a single piece of wire. Because of the openness of the finished twist, only 15" (38.1cm) of wire is needed to make a 2" (5cm) finished wire link.



Stars of the Sea

A double row of chain mail scallop shells supports an extraordinary starfish—with two dainty baby starfish alongside and a bonus starfish clasp. This eye-catching necklace is sure to turn heads!



DESIGN ALTERNATIVES»



Use colored rings to create a stunning scarf ring.

Capture a helm flower in a small wishbone loop for a pretty pendant.



A smaller version of this project makes a bangle bracelet.



MAKE TWO T-SHAPED HOOKS

20 Cut a 2½" piece of 20-gauge round wire, and make a small hook on one end. Face the hook to the back of the work. Mark a point ⅜" along the wire, and make a U bend.

21 Use roundnose pliers to make a small loop as close to the bend as possible. Make a second loop directly below the end of the hook. Make a third loop ¼" further down the wire.

22 Make a U-shaped bend as close to the last loop as possible. ⅜" from that bend, use flatnose pliers to make a sharp bend in the working wire away from the work. ¾" (1.9cm) from that bend, make a sharp U bend, bringing the working wire back toward the initial hook.

23 Trim the wire to ⅛", and make a hook on the end. Connect this hook with the initial hook. Close and compress both hooks. The piece will look like an open T frame (**photo h**).

24 Cut a 1½" piece of twisted square wire to make the hook insert. Bend the wire in half, and compress. Bend each wire end at a right angle ⅜" from the end (**photo i**).

25 Place the twisted square wire T into the open T frame. Bind the wire to the frame with three wraps on either side between the loops and on the long extension ¼" from the end (**photo j**). Place the T down, with the front side up. Use roundnose pliers to make a hook (make sure you include the square twisted wire in this bend). Repeat steps 20-25 to make a second hook.



ASSEMBLE THE NECKLACE

26 Connect a rhinestone to the center of each helm flower: String a 2" (5cm) piece of 24-gauge wire through one set of holes in the rhinestone. Go through a pair of back small rings on each side of the flower, twist both wire ends together on the back, and tuck them out of the way.

27 Connect the top of a wishbone to the left-end ring on the outside row of a piece of European 4-in-1 chain mail with a 4mm ring. Repeat with the center row and the right-end ring (**photo k**). Repeat on the other end of the necklace.

28 Attach the clasp hook: Slide the final end rings on the top back of the European 4-in-1 (left, right, and center) through the coil loops on the T-bar clasp (**photo l**). Repeat on the other end of the necklace with the other half of the clasp.

29 Connect a hook to the center double U. Close



the hook so it will not come off. Connect the second hook to the opposite side of the double U. Do not close this hook.

30 Attach the back top of a helm flower to the double U section of the clasp (**photo m**): Connect a small back double silver ring in the helm flower and the ring that the two U sections are attached to with a small ring. Repeat at the bottom.

31 Attach the remaining three helm flowers to the front of the necklace. Each flower is attached to the low curve of the compound wire at the center. Cut 3" (7.6cm) of half-round wire, and string one end of the wire

through a pair of small rings on the center back of a helm flower. String the other end of the wire through a pair of small rings on the opposite side of the flower. Carefully wrap the end of the wire around the wishbone compound wire set at the base of the curve three times to bind it. Compress, and trim the excess wire. Repeat for the other wire end. Attach the remaining two helm flowers in a similar fashion, binding them individually to each remaining wishbone (**photo n**).

