



ADOR

Editorial

And Minas Ithil they built, Tower of the rising Moon, eastward upon the shoulder of the Mountains of Shadow; and westward at the feet of the White Mountains Minas Anor they made, Tower of the Setting Sun...

Greetings all, and welcome to Anor 31!

It probably hasn't escaped your notice that we have a new, dazzling, exciting, fantastic, beautiful (I'm running out of suitable adjectives!) front-cover this time; all thanks to *Kirstin Armstrong* of Wolfson College for the absolutely mammoth effort that has gone into her drawing. I think I speak for many when I say that its presence is a grace of an elven kind to Anor; it shall be an heirloom if ever we find gold suitable enough to house it. Thank you, Kirstin!

It's been a good year for the CTS so far; as you'll see in *Gaffer's Tales*, preparations for our charity reading are well-underway, the AGM and Annual Dinner are just around the corner, and, most importantly of course, Taruithorn were defeated at the infamous Varsity Quiz on February 29th. A write-up of this should be with you next issue!

In the pages that follow there's a good deal of silliness, to help you combat those looming-exam blues; or, for those of you no longer student-ing, to simply pass the vacation while the student population (that provides you with such entertainment during term), panics uncontrollably. Laughter in a tight spot lessens the power of the enemy, be he Dark Lord or, more fearsome still, small pile of paper that will take no more than three hours of your time before leaving you to your own devices, and plunging you into eternal darkness.

On such (cheerful!) notes; despite the exams I am still hoping to get an Anor out next term; so those of you feeling bored, inspired, or looking for a reason to procrastinate over the coming weeks, don't hesitate to scribble!

Huge thanks go once again to all those who have contributed; it's you folks that make Anor what it is. That, in case you hadn't noticed, is a case of me passing the buck and partitioning blame...

Enough from me; enjoy!

Anna Slack, Editor

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Gaffer's Tales

News from the Sub-Committee



Cast Your Mind Back...

To the last issue of Anor, all of a term ago, where you may remember reading about a tom-fool-of-a-Took-ish plan to perform a reading of the BBC Radio Adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* for charity. Remember that?

Have We Got News For You

We're going to do it. All 13 hours of it. In one go. Permission to wince at our prevailing folly granted.

On Saturday the 19th of June, 2004, come along to Borders Cambridge to watch your friends and fellow Tolkienites making fools of themselves, and support a good cause while you're at it. Every penny we manage to raise will be going to The National Trust, and one of its appeals for things like preserving Snowdonia or pieces of coastline. We think that Tolkien would have approved.

With any luck, we may even be graced by the presence of one Mr. Brian Sibley, who has said he will come along and support us in a variety of ways. As well as this, we may also be joined by Michael Bakewell – in case any of you are wondering, these are the two that wrote the radio adaptation in the first place.

You Need People of Intelligence On Such Missions... Who Shall be the Fellowship of the Ring?

Knowing that readers like to know as much about such things as possible, here for your general amusement (and for the sake of posterity), is a cast list.

Aragorn
Arwen
Beregond
Bilbo

Tim Kelby
Philippa Steele
Richard Smith
Alex Crockford

Radagast
Rumil
Sam
Servant

Richard Kettlewell
Sarah Arnold
Anna Slack
Sarah Arnold

Boromir	Nick Taylor
Celeborn	Matthew Woodcraft
Deagol	Claire Pike
Denethor	Alex Crockford
Elf 1	Sarah Arnold
Elf 2	Helen Cousins
Elrond	Richard Kettlewell
Eomer	Colin Watson
Eothain	Richard Kettlewell
Eowyn	Clare Judkins
Faramir	Nick Price
Frodo	Esther Miller
Gaffer Gamgee	Alex Crockford
Gandalf	Matthew Woodcraft
Glorfindel	Claire Pike
Gollum	Matthew Vernon
Gorbag	Sharmaine Seneviratne
Grima Wormtongue	Sharmaine Seneviratne
Grishnakh	Nick Taylor
Gwaihir	Richard Smith
Halbarad	Richard Kettlewell
Haldir	Helen Cousins
King of the Dead	Matthew Vernon
Legolas	Richard Smith
Lobelia Sackville-Baggins	Claire Pike
Lord of the Nazgul	Matthew Reid
Lugdurf	Sarah Arnold
Mablung	Philippa Steele
Meny	Caroline Baker
Mugwort	Becky Corlett
Narrator	Becky Corlett
Narrator the Second	Philippa Steele
Nob	Sarah Arnold
Orc Captain	Thea Wilson
Pippin	Thea Wilson

Snaga	Richard Smith
Theoden	Nick Price
Thistlewool	Alex Crockford
Tom/Farmer Cotton	Colin Watson
Treebeard	Matthew Vernon
Ugluk	Matthew Reid
Understudy Gollum	Claire Pike
Anborn	Jack Vickeridge
Barliman Butterbur	Jack Vickeridge
Ceorl	Dominic Wilson
Daddy Twofoot	Paul Smith
Damrod	Giulia Slack
Farmer Maggot	Lawrence Davies
Female Singer	Helen Cousins
Galadriel	Helen Lambert
Gamling	Lawrence Davies
Gimli	Paul Smith
Hama	Lawrence Davies
Heathertoes	Tom Balrogh
Ioreth	Helen Lambert
Lugdush	Dominic Wilson
Male Singer	Paul Smith
Mouth of Sauron	Jonathan Woollgar
Nazgul 1	Jonathan Woollgar
Orc 2	Jonathan Woollgar
Otho Sackville-Baggins	Paul Smith
Radbug	Helen Cousins
Robin Smallburrow	Paul Smith
Rosie	Giulia Slack
Ruffian Leader	Matthew Reid
Saruman	Tom Balrogh
Sentinel	Helen Cousins
Shelob	Lindsay Wilson
Ted Sandyman	Tom Balrogh
Tunnely	Paul Smith

Shelob's Lair

Where can you find information that you can laugh more at, I hear you cry? Why, the *website*, of course! Details to follow soon...

With any luck, a couple of Anors down the line will give you a write-up of this insan-a-thon. Until then, wish us luck!

Anna Slack
Keeper of the Book of Westmarch
On Behalf of the Events Committee

The Fellowship Rides to (South) Kensington



From left to right; back; Tim Kelby, Giulia Slack, Kirstin Armstrong, Nick Taylor, Aragorn son of Arathorn, Richard Smith, front; Anna Slack, Esther Miller, Sarah Arnold, Thea Wilson

On the morning of Tuesday 9th December, I woke up feeling rather irritable. I had, just two days previously, promised to join a contingent of CTS members on this particular day, as they bravely ventured into the ruins of the Science Museum to seek memorabilia from Peter Jackson's film trilogy, which needs no name nor introduction by now. But I had managed to acquire neither a ticket, nor a lift to the nearest railway station. I was convinced that this would be a day of great sadness and mourning (and jealousy). But to my surprise, at 10:20 that morning, my infernal wireless communication device started its feeble rendition of the theme to 'Mission: Impossible', signifying that someone, somewhere, wished to speak with me. Having

dutifully pressed the green button, I was informed that there was a spare place in the CTS group and would I like to come?

I was torn between having a good day's sulking (which can be surprisingly satisfying) and a day spent in the company of friends in perhaps the most exciting city in the world (London, officially – I'm not sure where that verdict came from, though). After about 30 seconds' deliberation, I chose the latter.

Cue a mad rush, trying to convince my father to drive me to the station, printing off maps of Kensington and the Tube, being told I must leave at least 2 hours for the journey (so I should have left half an hour ago...) and eventually boarding the 12:06pm train to Charing Cross (the railway enthusiasts among you probably now have all the information you require to guess which station I left from; answers on a postcard, please). When I finally met up with the rest of the group (we did, in fact, arrive an hour early at South Kensington), we were all assigned Fellowship names – well, there were nine of us, and I didn't particularly relish the prospect of being named after one of the Nazgûl (or at least, one of the Nine Kings of Men). For those who take pleasure in such things: -

Gandalf was played by Giulia Teresa Slack.
Aragorn was played by Timothy Simon Kelby.
Boromir was played by Nicholas Everard Taylor.
Legolas was played by Kirstin Anne Armstrong.
Gimli was played by Richard Trevor Smith.
Frodo was played by Esther Christine Miller
Samwise was played by Anna Elisabetta Slack (who else?).
Merry was played by Sarah Arnold.
Pippin was played by Thea Wilson.

Apologies for the lack of a complete of middle names, this is due to a) the caffeine-filled atmosphere in which they were revealed (it had affected my mind adversely), and b) the fact that we don't all have middle names.

What can one say about the exhibition itself? It was everything that one would expect it to be – an amazing testimony to the commitment of Jackson and his minions (read: producers and co-workers) to re-creating Middle Earth for the films. There were the predictable crowd-pullers – Aragorn's costume, for instance, in which Viggo Mortensen apparently lived during the filming, just to give it a bit of wear and tear, the wax-work Boromir, the sword of Théoden (buckled on the right side; we noted that therefore Bernard Hill is left handed). Perhaps more interesting for the male members of the fellowship were the videos – probably hundreds of sort clips (an average of three per exhibit), mainly exploring the technical side of things, but occasionally giving an interesting insight into character as well. Ian McKellen's contribution was particularly interesting – he 'cannot be everybody's Gandalf'. He can only be one interpretation of Gandalf – if that happens to tie in with your idea of Gandalf's appearance, that's great. At least, that is the only video that I can remember vividly.

A few other things stand out in my memory about the exhibition – the fiery chamber housing the One Ring (the question is, *which* One Ring?) being one of them. This chamber was fascinating, as it had the feel of a very small disco – the inscription from the One Ring was projected into the floor, rotating and slowly making its way around the room, and some evil-sounding music was being played along with the immortal lines '*Ash nazg durbatuluk, ash nazg gimbatul, ash nazg thrakatuluk, ash burzumishi krimpatul*', spoken rather menacingly. What is the logical reaction to this devilry? To dance around in the centre of the inscription, of course. Gandalf and your intrepid reporter had great fun boogying on down to the tune of the Cracks of Doom music (which is well known for its grooves and vibes, most conducive to dancing).

Possibly the most satisfying 'exhibit' was the opportunity to have one's photo taken in forced perspective (à la Gandalf and Frodo sitting on a horse-cart in FOTR), so that Pippin and Merry towered over Gimli in one photo, then a brief swap allowed the proud dwarf to get his revenge. No doubt at some point in this issue of Anor we shall see the (often amusing, sometime terrifying) results of this abuse of technology.

One item in the exhibition held the ladies spellbound for reasons that I could not divine until it was explained to me in rather plain terms. At the very back of the exhibition, tucked away inconspicuously in a dark corner of a display case, the Fellowship discovered an orc whip.

I have only read Lord of the Rings once. I am male. I am heterosexual. I feel it appropriate to mention these things before I proceed, otherwise one could be forgiven for thinking me a witless worm. The spell which held the female members of the Fellowship captive was the memory of Frodo (the *real* Frodo, not our Frodo, thank God), naked, being tortured by orcs. A perfect literary juxtaposition of beauty and cruelty, apparently. Here we had the evidence that this passage from the book was also going to be in the film. So the image of a nude Elijah Wood flitting through the girls' minds (I imagine) as we left the exhibition.

Of course, no trip to the Museum is complete without the spending of an exorbitant amount of money in the Gift Shop. Gimli purchased the One Ring (£7.99, available at all good One Ring retailers), and thus gained the potential to rule Middle-Earth. Unfortunately it did not come complete with instructions, so he shall have to be content with its novelty value as a magic invisibility ring.

To round off the day in a festive fashion, we stood in a circle at South Kensington Tube Station, singing carols while waiting for the rush hour to end. Some people tapped Pippin on the shoulder to ask if we were Jehovah's Witnesses (just as we were launching into 'O Come All Ye Faithful', if I remember rightly); I'm not sure how Pippin responded. The Fellowship broke shortly after 7pm, with Gandalf and the Dwarf heading towards Embankment, and the remainder going to hurl themselves at Platform 9 ¾.¹ Many tears were shed, and Pippin tried to teach us the farewell which the Eagles are accustomed to use (we couldn't remember it, though). And so we parted company for a short time, until Cambridge summoned us in January.

Many thanks to Frodo and Samwise for the offer of a ticket on such short notice.

Many thanks to my companions for making the day so much fun.

Many thanks to the film-makers who made it possible.

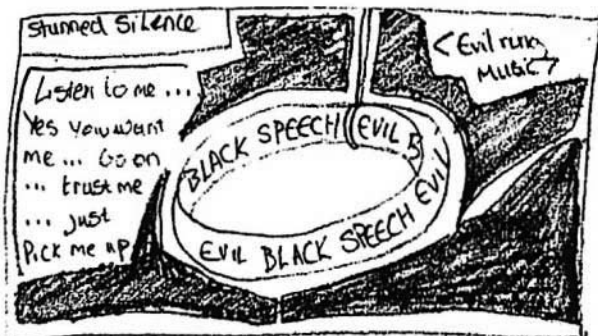
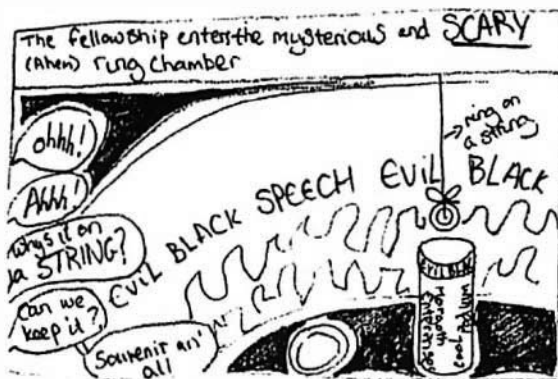
Oh dear. I'm turning into a luvvie.

¹ Editor's Note: Those of us that went to King's Cross spent much of the rush-hour Tube journey back quoting the scripts to the silly sketches from end to end (sketches of which there will eventually be a write up, *won't* there, Aragorn?), and variously amusing (or down-right aggravating) all our fellow passengers... Then singing in a sardine-can-like carriage back to Cambridge and being thought of as dreadful Americans...

Appendix A: The Author in a Compromising Photographic Situation



Appendix B: Further Snap Shots from the Fellowship's Ride to the Exhibition



Richard Smith, Appendix B by Giulia Slack

Evil, or just misunderstood? The arguments needed to be good; Outer darkness is a pesky place to spend the rest of eternity...

The Outer Darkness Debate

It finally happened; the Valar called up all our favourite villains and insisted that they give an account of their general devilishness. Called to the dock this time around were Sauron, Shelob, Féanor, Professor Von Glauron, Denethor, Morgoth, Ar Pharazon, the Ring, Saruman and the most villainous of them all... Peter Jackson.

Sends shivers down your spine, doesn't it?

Round 1

Denethor: I'm not that bad really. The influences on how I live my life are somewhat questionable, but that isn't my fault. Neither is the fact that my personal relationship skills need some honing.

Saruman: You don't want to cast me into Outer Darkness because I'm just so damned persuasive – it's canonical.

Sauron: You know, I'm not that bad once you get to know me. Contrary to popular belief.

Féanor: I am the greatest elf that ever lived, and I created the Silmarils. These are both indisputably just pastimes.

Shelob: I am not affiliated with Sauron in any way, and while I am a guard on the stairs I am also a creature that he is afraid of – I stop the rabble getting in, and I stop him getting out.

Peter Jackson: I would just like to argue that I have opened the work of Tolkien out to dozens of folk who would never otherwise have touched that tome of a book. And think of the huge benefit that New Zealand is reaping even now from my exploits!

The Ring: I am pretty, you want me! Plus, as an inanimate object it's not really my fault what people do with me. I am the stuff of evil!

Prof. Von Glauron: I feel that I should begin with a recap of my arguments last year; in short (for the full details I urge you to read my paper on the subject), I am a master geneticist who performed fit services by pruning the less adept members of the population. This work is worthy of a Nobel Prize. As I shall go on to argue, my chief concerns are also to matters of ecology and conservation.

Ar-Pharazon: As we all know, history is written by the victors... *(The honourable Mr Pharazon proceeded to make a most noble speech, doubtless emphasising matters of freedom, but your humble scribe's attention wandered at this crucial point...)*

Melkor: I find all these imputations that I am strictly evil extremely hurtful – accusations such as that of creating bad creatures by twisting and corrupting elves. Who is it, I ask, that cares for all the little orcs in the world? I am working stalwartly against a universal prejudice, for the little, spat-upon orc in the street.

Most Dastardly Villain: Saruman

Famous Last Words: It was deemed wisest not to let him speak, lest he cast a spell.

Round 2

Sauron: Face it, none of you would know about any of this without me – no books, no films (throw off PJ!), no history, no Middle-Earth... There is nothing without the Lord of the Rings, so there!

Feanor: I invented elvish and tengwar – beautiful, heart-felt scripts, unlike those boring dwarvish runes. My languages are attractive – useful for decorating posters. If you lose me, you lose language!

Shelob: As the last child of Ungoliant, I feel that I must argue for the keeping of diversity in Middle-Earth. Without the giant spiders, there'd be no-one to keep the Mirkwood elves in check, or to test Bilbo's courage so that he could earn respect, or enable Sam to be so heroic. I make the hobbits interesting.

Peter Jackson: I would just like to highlight the huge service I have done to society by making the short, slightly overweight person (i.e., hobbit), a heroic figure in the modern eye, thus eradicating some prejudices of our world.

The Ring: I am not the instrument of evil. I merely enhance the natural abilities of the wearer. I've never done anything to hurt a fly – you might as well blame a sword for killing as hold me accountable! I've never made it past the first round – I wasn't expecting this (snivel).

Prof. Von Glauron: Now, I believe that I mentioned ecology and conservation: first, to ecology. What are dragons good at? Setting fire to things, of course. So, I am imperative to the biodiversity of Middle-Earth: if a forest is burnt down, stuff flourishes in the aftermath – very controlled burning. I hasten to add. By destroying all the grasses, we make way for such things as flowers.

Ar-Pharazon: I was badly advised. A monarch depends upon the quality of his counsel: it is obvious who is to blame.

Melkor: Now, about that incident involving the reduction of Gondolin – it was clear that the dictator Turgon was harbouring the known terrorist Tuor, and his jewels of mass destruction. Admittedly we haven't yet found any, but we are confident that evidence of a deadly jewel programme will come to light soon...

Denethor: The blood of Numenor runs through my veins. I am noble of birth and mind. The shiny ball kept showing me bad things, and bad things upset me!

Most Dastardly Villain: The Ring

Famous Last Words: You wants me, my preciousssssssssss!

Round 3

Feanor: I am required to fulfil the prophetic words of the Valar. Without me, their credibility will crumble. I must return and fulfil my duty.

Shelob: I am a protected species. Lose me and you damage Middle Earth's cultural heritage (last child of Ungoliant remember), and you damage Middle Earth's bio-diversity (Glauron – exactly, we're on the same side)! If you lose me you will lose many, many memories of the elder days from someone with a perspective different to yours.

Peter Jackson: Hello everybody! (long pause). Come on, my children are soooo cute. From a cultural standpoint, think of the fantastic way in which I have represented each and every one of you, and the cultures that you created and hail from. The visuals are darn impressive!

Prof. Von Glauron: Nitrogen after burning is good for the environment. Kill the dragon, what do you get? A rotting giant dragon corpse – *also* good for the environment! Don't cast me into Outer Darkness, let me die and give back to Middle-Earth. It's a Circle of Life thing.

Ar-Pharazon: On the subject of Numenorean blood – I think it important that we not cast out the carrier of the most Numenorean blood. Think of freedom, think of what Numenor has done for the world, think of all that culture we left everywhere. We're like fore-runners to the UN.

Melkor: O ye who seek to judge me! You do not and cannot know the depth of the relationship between myself and the author. I am a faithful servant to the One. Just as he broke Frodo on the wheel of fire, so my moral mistakes... Do not interfere between me and God! The manner of my redemption is unknown.

Denethor: In these, the last days of the Third Age, the orcs have been causing a lot of grief. You have been living in peace, kept safe by the blood of my people. We've lost out! And I'm not mad. Sauron: I've been disembodied and turned into a giant flaming eye! All these misconceptions are all P.J.'s fault. I'm a nice bad guy, and a bit like Chuthulu, really... I maintain linguistic diversity in Middle-Earth with the Black Speech, and I look after the Orcs after Melkor upped and went; he's a delinquent parent! All the orcs would disappear in my absence.

Most Dastardly Villain: Peter Jackson

Famous Last Words: I'll make you all suffer! I will make you watch my very cool films again, and again, and AGAIN. And I'll be back... For *The Hobbit*! Mwa hahahahah...

Round 4: In twenty words...

Shelob: You may have noted that my vomit is described as darkness; I know that many people are afraid of the dark, but have you seen the film *Insomnia*? Perpetual light is a really bad thing!

Prof. Von Glauron: Like Shelob, I am an excellent example of an extremely rare species and as such am vital to the work of evolutionary biologists.

Ar-Pharazon: Think of freedom, think of romance, and of the ships...

Melkor: Pity me, for I am wounded in the heart, for Iluvatar chose for me no wife.

Denethor: I loved both my sons, I was just hard on Faramir for a while... But I remembered that I loved him!

Sauron: That Ring, if I may be permitted, really was more to do with people's own hearts... It ain't my fault!

Feanor: I am your last hope as my Silmarils are the only way to save the Two Trees.

Most Dastardly Villain(ess): Shelob

Famous Last Words: Now you've lost all the suspense at the end of *The Two Towers*!

Round 5: Question time

Prof. Von Glauron: (*Where's your treasure? Can we have a grid-reference?*) I have a plan for my treasure: you see, it's all to do with economics: by removing all these items, the value of everything else goes up, and I shall release these funds when the world is able to handle them. Imagine if everyone had a Sting?

Ar-Pharazon: (*Can you explain the whole sinking-of-Numenor business?*) We are not responsible for the violence: why should an arbitrary line be drawn beyond which we cannot pass?

Melkor: (*Isn't the master to blame for the ways of the pupil?*) If I can be permitted to answer your *real* question, which would be why is *Sauron* to blame... I mean, he smells, he snores, he has bad breath... You'd just be far better off without him.

Denethor: (*What's with that eating thing you do in the film?*) Why don't you go to Outer Darkness and enquire that of Mr Jackson? It was meant to look like blood and all... I was nervous!

Sauron: (*Isn't the pupil to blame, and not the master?*) Surely you see the 'chicken and egg' scenario inherent here? And I never snored!

Feanor: (*Aren't you just jealous of Galadriel?*) I'm far prettier than she is! Besides, I'm just a victim at the end of her scheming!

Most Dastardly Villain: Feanor

Famous Last Words: I can't believe that you could be so cruel as to discount my sorry, sorry childhood! (*weeps*).

Round 6

Ar-Pharazon: Ah. Numenorean blood. As the last of that royal line. I am representative of all. I shall draw on the mantle of Numenor.

Melkor: I see that it is time, even though you may not be ready, to burden you all with the hidden truth. The One that you've been calling God is a demiurge – he is not good, he is evil. Only the Secret Fire is worthy of worship, a secret fire that Iluvatar has entrapped, thus preventing all from becoming one with the godhead. It is only through suffering and pain that we can pierce this veil of deception...

Denethor: The palantiri – modes of communication with Sauron and Saruman. They are both evil, and I was constantly being shown images of destruction. It's not my fault!

Sauron: Yes, exactly: a communications device. If someone chooses to look, then that is their problem. I'm sorry, Denethor. I got the wrong number. Oh, and I would just like to apologise to you all, and say that I am ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ sorry for that whole comment about the chicken and egg thing. I did not mean to impugn your intelligences.

Prof. Von Glauron: That mist was an anti-fire precaution. May I remind you again about the economics of treasure hoarding? And of nutrients for the soil.

Most Dastardly Villain: Denethor

Famous Last Words: None - too much fire about.

Round 7: Again, in twenty words...

Melkor: If my blood stains Newnham College, then it will wither and never be restored!

Sauron: I am very very very very very very very very extremely incredibly, unbelievably useful for twentieth-century literature, so there!

Prof. Von Glauron: The academic elite of Middle-Earth would sorely miss my valuable contribution to the fields of economics, genetics, ecology, conservation and bio-diversity.

Ar-Pharazon: No, *really*, think of the ships and the temples and the glory and the freedom and the heroism.

Most Dastardly Villain: Sauron

Famous Last Words: Well, basically, bang goes the society, the film, and the book, and all of you. Go home!

Round 8: Defend one of the other villains...

Prof. Von Glanron: Melkor has generally done a bad job. Ar-Pharazon has brought culture, class, cities, fine academic institutes... all these good things. Orcs can't build stuff!

Ar-Pharazon: As leader of the most advanced scientific research, we cherish scientists in Numenor, and so, we cherish Glaucor. And we cherish freedom as well. And I did I mention the glory and the heroism?...

Melkor: I feel that I must defend Ar-Pharazon: he led an army against the gods – he is a noble man.

Most Dastardly Villain: Ar-Pharazon

Famous Last Words: Oooh, you'll regret this...

Round 9: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be, who with, and what book would you read?

Melkor: I would go to the fair gardens, with my beautiful children the Orcs, and read the gospel of St. Thomas.

Prof. Von Glauron: I would go to great gardens with Yavanna, and appreciate nature, getting along nicely with Sam (*this flattery earning him the vote of the Sam supporters*). I would take a guide to Middle-Earth flora and fauna.

Most Dastardly Villain: Professor Von Glauron (soon to be knighted)

Famous Last Words: Can you be awarded a Nobel Prize posthumously?

And so it was that Melkor wormed his way free of Outer Darkness, and the universe burst forth into song with him...

Oh dear. It's back to square one, chaps...

The Players:

Denethor: *Philippa Steele*

Saruman: *Jack Vickeridge*

Sauron: *Richard Smith*

Feanor: *Sarah Arnold*

Shelob: *Thea Wilson*

Peter Jackson: *Anna Slack*

The Ring: *Naath*

Prof. Von Glauron: *Peter Hurrell*

Ar-Pharazon: *Ben Colburn*

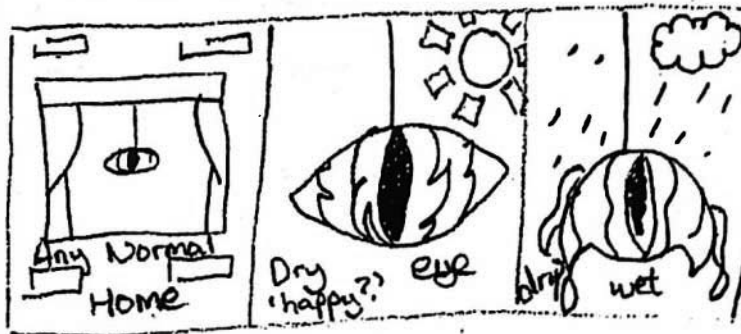
Melkor: *Matthew Woodcraft*

Anna Slack

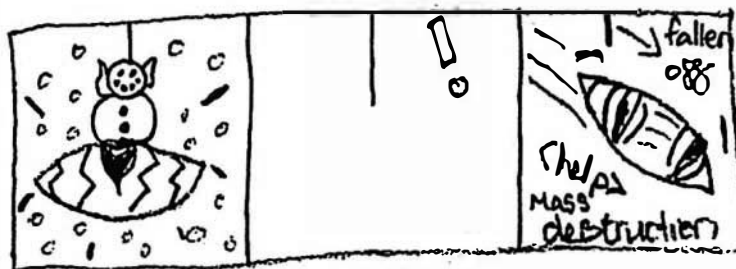
Sauron

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Giulia Slack

¹ Not Hobbit-proof

On the 10th of February in the year 2004 (Shire-Reckoning), the council of Minas Tirith met to discuss an urgent message that the Steward had received. Sauron was able to take physical form!

It was for the council to judge what impact this would make on the world of men. A long discussion ensued largely based around how this occurred (Sauron showed his plan for world domination to a small child who pointed out the flaw in the idea of tying one's essence to a piece of costume jewellery). Things were just getting finicky when suddenly a dissenting voice was raised:

"But it's all a metaphor!"

"What?"

"Tolkien wrote in a letter that Sauron is able to take physical form. The whole 'eye' thing is just to make it seem more scary."

At this point, it was agreed that the messenger was mistaken. The true question to be discussed was;

What If... Sauron had been able to take fair form?

Discussion produced the following retelling of an oft-blasphemed tale....

When defeated, Sauron creeps away and takes refuge in Mirkwood. Slowly regaining his faculties, he sets himself up as the Guardian of South Mirkwood; a fair country which nobody in Middle Earth suspects.

Meeting the Wood-elves, he becomes Thranduil's chief councillor and advisor. The Elves introduce Sauron to the Lakemen, and he becomes their councillor as well.

In the Shire, Gandalf introduces the dwarves to Bilbo; the events of the following journey are recounted in *The Hobbit*, and remain unchanged. During the journey, Gandalf is called to a meeting of the White Council. They, as usual, agree that the Ring is still lost in the river Anduin or under the Sea. There being no other issues in Middle Earth to discuss, Gandalf returns to the dwarves.

Before Gandalf returns, the dwarves wake Smaug, who is then killed by the men of the Lake. Sauron, learning of the dwarves' gold, advises the elves and the men to capture the Lonely Mountain. They kill the dwarves just as the orcs of the Misty Mountains attack. In a devastating battle, the orcs capture the Lonely Mountain. Bilbo only survives because Gandalf arrives on an eagle and takes him off to Rivendell. The elves blame the dwarves' death on the orcs (the other dwarves don't believe them, becoming more and more resentful of the race of elves).

Sauron moves back to Mordor, forming an alliance of all on the Eastern side of the River Anduin. In response, Gondor, Rohan, Rivendell and Isengard form a closer alliance.

When Bilbo leaves the Shire, his reluctance to part with the Ring shocks Gandalf. He goes on a research trip to Gondor. After 17 years, he discovers that Frodo's ring is the One Ring. He travels to Saruman who tells him that he has been looking in the palantir and that Annatar told him that everything in Middle Earth is fine, and that everyone was going to live in peace forever. When Gandalf tells him that he's found the Ring, Saruman is shocked. He realises that Annatar has been lying to him. Gandalf travels to the Shire to collect Frodo. Saruman then sends messages to Gondor and Rohan, summoning them to a council.

The elves of Mirkwood capture Gollum. After receiving the advice of Sauron, they kill him. He learns of the council at Rivendell and instructs Thranduil to send Legolas to undermine the Fellowship.

Gimli, whose father was killed by the elves, announces that if Legolas is going to be part of the Fellowship, he won't be. He gathers a band of dwarves to recapture Moria.

Deciding to move into a more modern, decimalised system, Elrond announces that the tale of the Ring shall be 10:

Frodo, Sam, Pippin, Merry, Gandalf, Saruman, Radagast, Legolas, Boromir, Éomer
The company journey towards the gap of Rohan. They are attacked by Wargs but destroy the pack. Elated by their victory, the wizards celebrate...

Interlude One: Three Istari and a Balrog not-named Gorlab

Night-time at the Fellowship's camp, in the vicinity of the Misty Mountains. Gandalf, Saruman and Radagast are enjoying a well-earned few pints of mead. Gandalf, for reasons probably best kept to himself, is attempting to get Saruman totally drunk by magicking his mug so that it does not, in fact, empty. He fails to realise that Saruman has worked the same Elvish spell on his drink. Radagast is so lightweight that by the time he has finished his second (un-magicked) mug of the stuff, he is virtually blind drunk. With much slurring and hesitation, a conversation (if, indeed, it is worthy of such a title) ensues:

Saruman: I, *hic*, I say, old chaps, what with our being, you know, *Wizards* and all, and there being five of us...

Radagast: Ahm... three, surely?

Saruman: *Three* of us... oh, blast, forgot what I was saying... *hic*... ah, yes, there's that Balrog thing over in those mountains, isn't there? (*Aside*) Used to know a balrog once, we took fire-summoning lessons together... of course he cheated by breathing it through his nostrils...

Gandalf: (*slurring is particularly pronounced in this Wizard*) Saruman, old boy, if you've got something to say, bally well GERR-ON WIRR-IT! (= 'get on with it' [*drunken Engl.*]).

Saruman: Alrigh', alrigh', was just saying... why not go and defeat that foul servant of Sauron? That way, we *hic*, we... ahm... we, ah yes, we get brownie points from the E ves, 'cos we can pretend we're doing something USEFUL...

Radagast: Sure, why on earth shouldn't we? Damn sight more exciting than baby-sitting these wretched Halfings...

Gandalf: Radagast, my man, they're NOT babies, there are a great many things YOU (*beating him warmly by the chest with his staff*) could learn from them... such as the best way to make tea, the right way to smoke dried leaves, the biggest...

Saruman: Oh, for Manwë's sake, let's get going before he starts...

The three Wizards thus traversed in the general direction of Moria, and indeed 'twas a wonder that any of them entered, since there was no useful hobbit to point out the clever lateral-thinking exercise hidden within the door's cryptic message. The story goes that Radagast, being quite possibly the most inebriated of the lot, managed to get it during one of those moments of hallucinogenic clarity that alcohol affords. Having gained entrance to the mine, they continued to wend their way through, occasionally conversing in a manner similar to the following:

Saruman: Where does the wretched creature keep himself these days? (*clearing his throat, calling as if he expects the Balrog to answer politely*) Balrog? Um... BALROG? (*Now mumbling to self in despair*) Always thought they were bloody difficult creatures... (*calling again*) Balrog! We just want to say hello!!! (*To his compatriots*) Hehehe, of course, very dumb creatures, he won't see through that one...

At this point, the three notice a deep rumbling sound, coupled with a brief orange glowing emanating from the opposite end of the chamber they are currently exploring.

Radagast: That's the feller! Come, friends, let us rid the mine of this intolerable evil, and enjoy the experience immensely!

Gandalf: YEEEEAAAAHHH! Less' duff 'im up good and proper!

Saruman: *(drunkenness starts to produce a violent temperament)* Oh! You two! This was my idea! I'll lead the way, for I am Saruman the White. Even when we're all blotto, I wear the robes. *(Chases them, trying desperately to cling to his authority – and the hem of his robe).*

As they approach the point of the glow's origin, they meet...

The Balrog: ARGH!!!! Wizards! Istari! Maiar (like myself), and able to cause me – quite possibly – a great deal of physical pain! NOOOOOOOO!!!! *(Retreats in all its fiery, horned glory. The Wizards give chase).*

Wizards: *(variously)* COME BACK!!!! YELLER-BELLIED MORON!!!!!! HAVE AT YOU!!! WHERE'S MY STAFF? *(Presumably the latter was pronounced by Radagast, since he was later found using Gandalf's old staff after his eventual reincarnation).*

After a long chase, which, let's admit, is pretty difficult to do when you're a bunch of immortal spirits trapped in the bodies of old, tired, drunken men chasing an immortal spirit trapped in the body of something resembling a scary fruit-bat with horns and multiple wings, not to mention a whip – after ten minutes of this long chase, the Balrog cried:-

Balrog: STOP! I-I-I-I can s-s-s-see you're v-v-very, um, very, um, exhausted, and, um, really I'd rather not, um, wear you out, um, any m-m-more.

Wizards: *(in perfect unison)* WHAT???

Balrog: W-w-w-well, it – it's like his, you see. I'm not actually a bad person. I...I...I'm just... *(hanging his head in shame. whispers)* misunderstood. I don't like b-b-b-beating people up, even Wizards, and, well, there's three of you, and – and – and only one of me, and you'd... you'd KILL me, wouldn't you?

Saruman: Oh, rather! Wouldn't you all agree, lads, eh? *(Notices other wizards are touched by the Balrog's apparent plight)* Um, lads?

Balrog: It all st-st-started when I was at school. There was this, this nasty, horrible wizard there who, who used to, well... mock me. I had to take fire-summoning lessons. I know I'm a, a Balrog, so I tried to skip them – fire being in my very nature, and all that. But Professor von Glauron, he – he said I still had to, and anyway, HE was a dragon and HE'd learned how to do it...

Saruman: Ah yes, good old Glaurons. He always was a good sport, wasn't he? *(aside)* Except for that one time he got indigestion and accidentally burned down the college with one belch... Refused to accept culpability...

Balrog: Yes, well, ANYWAY, this one nasty wizard accused me, one day, of cheating... *(sniffs, large, orange tears well up inside his flame-like eyes)* He told Professor von Glauron I'd... breathed the fire through my nostrils instead of summoning it up properly... *(at this juncture, the Balrog breaks down into sobs, sobs which shake the very foundations of Moria – the whole mountain is resonating with his grief)*

Saruman: Ah, so it really IS you? My word, I heard the stories but never... I mean... YOU'RE old Giant Flamy Flappyhorns?

Balrog: *(wails in anguish – the name clearly holds deep-seated significance for him)* I WASN'T a giant, and I DIDN'T have flappy horns! They were wisdom wings, they sprouted when I was still 1,653...

Gandalf: *(to Saruman)* Old chap, I really do believe you've rather hurt the poor fellow somewhat. What say we abandon the murdering plan and simply help the miserable blighter?

Saruman: *(begrudgingly)* Well, I suppose an apology probably wouldn't go amiss... from us, I mean. Mr Balrog, I... I apologise profusely for what I have said...

But as he steps forward to offer his hand of friendship to the Balrog's prehensile claws, he trips on the hem of his garment and falls onto the Balrog's leg with a tremendous cry of 'Cripes! Bloody robes, can't walk anywhere in them...' Such is the force of this collision that the Balrog loses his balance, and, still with great wailing and lamenting, topples and falls over the conveniently-placed cliff-edge just behind him. As he falls, he is heard to say:-

Balrog: NOOOOOOO!!!! You KNOW I can't fly!!!! MUMMYYYYYYYYY!!!!!!!!!

Thus was the mighty Balrog of Morgoth vanquished. Accidentally. Painfully. Lamentingly. By three drunken Wizards who should have been watching over some hobbits. There's a moral there somewhere.

End of interlude the first

The dwarves now have full control over Moria, they get a mine up and running before the wizards leave.

With splitting headaches, the wizards rejoin the company, who are now passing through Rohan. In Rohan, Frodo wanders off from the rest of the company, Legolas meets him and tries to take the ring:

Interlude the Second: That Ring is so last season...

Legolas: I was afraid for you, Frodo.

Frodo: *[startled]* Legolas!

Legolas: I love that outfit on you!

Frodo: No you don't.

Legolas: No, I really don't, but I need a favour. Can we talk?

Frodo: Yes...

Legolas: Two together may perhaps find wisdom.

Frodo: We can trust Gandalf. He knows what I must do, we must follow him. I know this though it is true that I am afraid!

Legolas: Are you sure that you do not suffer needlessly? I wish to help you; will you take my council in this?

Frodo: *[more warily]* I think I know already what counsel you would give, Legolas: the Ring does not go with this outfit. But the world is changing. Some day, again, this look will be back in, and if I have abandoned it, what then?

Legolas: We shall fall in battle valiantly. Yet, there is still hope that that look will never come back.

Frodo: No hope while the Ring lasts.

Legolas: The Ring! Is it not a strange fate that we should suffer so much fear and doubt for so small a thing? So small a thing! And I have seen it only for an instant in the House of Elrond. Could I not have a sight of it again?

Frodo: *[warily]* It is best that it should lie hidden.

Legolas: As you wish! Though if I had such a nice piece of jewellery, I should not act in this way. Yet, I care not. But, may I not even speak of it? Why, if we used it could it not start a whole wave of new trends? Not only fashion, but also hair styling, even interior décor?

Frodo: Were you not at the Council, Legolas? Because we cannot use it, and what is done with it turns to evil.

Legolas: *[with growing intensity]* So they have told you: Gandalf, Elrond and the rest! But we of Mirkwood are not Men or Dwarves, we are Elves, and elves with more style than Rivendell! We do not desire the power of wizard-lords, are only desire is to strengthen our trend setting - a just cause! And now, in our need, chance brings to light the Ring of Power. It is mad not to use it, to use the power of the Enemy against him!

[Ring noise]

What could not a designer do in this hour, a great leader? The Ring would give me power of Command. How I would drive the hosts of Mordor, and all men would flock to my label! Surely you see it, my friend? You say that you are afraid. If it is so, the boldest should pardon you. But is it not really your good taste that revolts?

Frodo: *[much alarmed]* No, I am afraid, simply afraid. But I am glad to have heard you speak so fully, Legolas. My mind is clearer now.

Legolas: *[eagerly]* Then you'll come to Mirkwood?

Frodo: You misunderstand me!

Legolas: Will you not at least let me make trial of my plan?

Frodo: No!

Legolas: Lend me the Ring!

Frodo: No! The Council laid it upon me to bear it!

Legolas: *[getting angry now]* But it goes with my outfit! It could never work with that jacket. And don't even get me started on the Mithril Coat! Only an elf can carry off that gold look. It is not yours save by unhappy chance. It might have been mine. It should be mine. Give it to me!

Frodo: No, Legolas!

Legolas: Why not be free of it? You can lay the blame on me, if you will. You can say that I was too strong and took it by force. *[draws his sword, viciously]* For I am too strong for you, halfling!

["Ring" sound reaches a peak and then fades out rapidly - Frodo has disappeared]

Legolas: *[trembling, quiet]* Where are you? Where have you gone? *[roars]* Miserable trickster! Let me get my hands on you! Now I see your mind. You will take the Ring to Sauron and sell us all! Curse you and all halflings to leggings and spandex!

[long pause]

Legolas: *[himself again]* What have I said? What have I done? Frodo! A madness took me. But it has passed! Frodo! Frodo, come back! Come back! I'm sorry! Come back!

End of interlude the second

Meanwhile, the company are attacked by orcs, ever so many of them, and worse; they have a cave troll! They are almost defeated and Legolas is killed when they are saved by the Dwarves.

Gandalf, Frodo and Sam take off on Shadowfax. Spurred on by Sauron, the wood elves attack Rivendell.

In the nick of time, Aragorn (who has been waiting for Frodo in the Prancing Pony for the last 3 months) appears and saves everyone. The sword that was broken is reforged and Aragorn sets off for Rohan.

The remaining fellowship and countless dwarves meet in Edoras and discuss the situation. They decide to split their company. Saruman leads the dwarves in an attempt to recapture the Lonely Mountain (he's rather keen on the idea of an archenstone - it would go so well with his palantír). Radagast and Boromir lead a party to Minis Tirith. Théoden, Théodred and Éomer decide to bring the Rohirrim to Gondor's aid. Éowyn disguises herself as Dernhelm and joins the company.

Somehow, the hobbits end up in Fangorn. They bump into Treebeard and, after explaining a few home truths (molten lava isn't good for trees, Sauron has a pet volcano etc.) persuade him to take them to Minas Tirith.

In Ithilien, Gandalf bumps into Faramir, and warns him that the enemy is closing. Faramir heads for home.

Aragorn, arriving in Orthanc to find everyone gone, takes a look in the palantír, he sees trouble ahead and sets off for the paths of the dead.

An epic battle takes place on the fields of the Pelennor. Théoden is killed, Éowyn kills the Lord of the Nazgûl and is injured, Faramir is also hurt. Merry and Pippin arrive with the Ents, but manage to fall off and are taken to the houses of healing. Denethor is killed by falling masonry. When all seems lost, Aragorn arrives, having got rid of the pirates (of the Caribbean variety).

Meanwhile, Gandalf, Frodo, Sam and Shadowfax arrive at Cirith Ungol. Although Gandalf gets the hobbits past Shelob, Shadowfax (exhausted after his long climb) proves a choice feast for her ladyship. Sauron empties his land against the Grey Wizard. Frodo and Sam slip away and set off across Mordor. Gandalf defeats all the orcs, but has never felt so spent when Sauron reveals his most deadly weapon; himself. Sauron kills Gandalf when he senses the Ring is nearing the Cracks of Doom, he starts off across Mordor in pursuit of the hobbits.

Having achieved victory on the Pelennor, the host, lead by Aragorn arrives at the Black Gate, no one appears (Gandalf has killed all the orcs). Eventually, they discover that the Gates have been left unlocked and they enter Mordor.

Frodo and Sam arrive at the Cracks of Doom, where Frodo refuses to give up the Ring and puts it on. Sauron appears, bites Frodo's finger off and prances around:

"My precious, oh! My precious! Sauron's got the precious! Sauron's got precious!"

All seems lost when suddenly Gandalf the White appears in all his majesty, curses the ashes and smoke that besmirch his beautiful robes, and hurls himself at Sauron, knocking him and the Ring into the fire. Gandalf dies again, beating an all-time record. The final cries of "Sauron's got the pre... ahhhhhh!" are heard.

Mount Doom erupts and engulfs the land in lava. Radagast arrives on an eagle and saves the hobbits. Unfortunately, the rest of the host are killed.

Faramir recovers from his injuries, marries Éowyn (who also overs) and sets up a socialist utopia.

The Dwarves recover the Lonely Mountain and set up another mine, recapturing their glory days of old. Gimli is the new Durin.

The hobbits return to the Shire to find that Tom Bombadil (who is actually evil) has taken over. They remove him with the help of the entwives (who miraculously turn up). Unfortunately, now the whole of the north west of middle earth is covered in trees and flowers.

Taking matters into their own hands, the hobbits, en mass, decide to invade Valinor.

Thea Wilson
Interlude One by Richard Smith



Pippin looked behind. The number of Ents had grown – or what was happening? Where the dim bare slopes that they had crossed should lie, he thought he saw groves of trees. But they were moving! Could it be that the trees of Fangorn were awake, and the forest was rising, marching over the hills to war? He rubbed his eyes wondering if sleep and shadow had deceived him; but the great grey shapes moved steadily forwards...

'Treebeard', *The Two Towers*, J.R.R. Tolkien

Artwork by Giulia Slack

Elvish Page

A little something from our Elvish Officer to keep you wannabe-elven-scribes happy...

Ioreth's Saying

In-chaim-en-aran(nant) in-chaim-en-nestron ar be ven ben I-aran dir ~~istathar~~ ~~aan~~

'The hands of a king are the hands of a healer, and so shall the rightful king
be known'

ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ βασιλέως ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ ἰατροῦ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς

Ioreth's Rhyme

mas i-thûl vorn rîb
ar i-dhúath-e-gurth gala
ar celaid bain gwannar
tolo athelas, tolo athelas
cuil af firiel
ne cham-en-aran peliannen

'When the black breath flows
and death's shadow grows
and all lights pass,
come athelas! come athelas!
Life to the dying
In the king's hand lying!'

ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ βασιλέως ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ ἰατροῦ
ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς
ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ βασιλέως ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ ἰατροῦ
ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς
ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ βασιλέως ἡ γὰρ χεὶρ τοῦ ἰατροῦ
ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς

Philippa Steele

You've seen the movie ... Now take the bath!

The Fellowship of the Ducks

The Bubbles Come to Life...



At baths everywhere NOW!

Coming Soon: 'The Two Showers' and 'The Shampooing of the King'

"I really enjoyed this movie... But 'last either way' indeed. I'll show Cousin Frodo..."
- Master Peregrin Took, Thane of Cawdor... Oops, wrong piece of Literature...

"Let's hunt some duck! What do you mean, 'have you learnt nothing from Elmer Fudd'?"
- Aragorn, Son of Arathorn, heir to Isildur, son of Elendil, Elessar, the Elfstone...

'What creatures! What horrible creatures! Just you get me out of here and I swear I shall never wet my toes in a puddle again, let alone a bath!'
- Sam Gamgee, Mayor of the Shire

*Anna and Giulia Slack (former culpable for text and photo, and the latter for the ducks;
enquiries to gts102@soton.ac.uk)*

Star Wargs!

Get in the mood; imagine the infamous John Williams-type fanfare; then think 'that is no orc horn!' No, you're right; it's your last warning of a reckless parody...

Episode IV: A New Hobbit

A long time ago in a world that was actually Europe but predates the modern land formation...

It is a period of guerrilla war. Rebel elves and men, striking out in the open, have won their first victory against Darth Sauron's Evil Empire. During the battle, Rebel leaders managed to steal the Empire's ultimate weapon, the Death Ring, a small shiny... well, ring. (Some time later) Pursued by the Empire's sinister agents (Naztroopers), Frodo Bagwalker races away from home, custodian of the Death Ring that can destroy his people and bring doom to the world...

Episode V: The Two Towers Strike in a Sort of Pincer Movement

A long time ago in a world that was actually Europe but predates the modern land formation...

It is a dark time for elves and men and all free folk. While Frodo Bagwalker is trying to destroy the Death Ring, Imperial orcs have driven the Rebel forces to engage in open war (whether they would risk it or not), and pursued them across Middle Earth. Evading the dreaded Imperial Orcfleet, a group of freedom fighters led by Aragorn has established a new secret alliance with the remote horse world of Rohan. The evil lord Darth Saruman, obsessed with finding the Death Ring, has despatched thousands of remote uruk-probes into the far reaches of Middle Earth...

Episode VI: The Return of the Jedi King

A long time ago in a world that was actually Europe but predates the modern land formation...

Aragorn has returned to his home city of Minas Tatoo in an attempt to rescue his people from the clutches of Sauron's armies. Little does he know that the Darth Lord has secretly begun deconstruction of the Steward's mind and is building an army under the command of his lieutenant Darth Ancy. When completed, this ultimate army will spell certain doom for the small band of Rebels struggling to restore freedom to Middle Earth...

Anyone wishing to see how the Star Wars films actually begin need only consult a video shelf in a galaxy not too far away...

Philippa Steele

Jackson's Eleven

(but casino robbings of \$160m seem pitiful compared with the profits of this epic film trilogy)

Picture it: March 2002 and Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* has been nominated for 14 Oscars. It looks good. But on the night, FOTR only gets four – and “none of them biggies” as it was said in one magazine I read.

Still, then came *The Two Towers* – and before I had seen it I heard of people saying it was twice the film *Fellowship* was. Tragically, I disagreed a little. *Fellowship* had swept me breathless in its opening and kept me rapt until the end. Still – *Towers* was nominated for five Oscars – though it only won two (one of them, naturally, being for special effects – i.e. Gollum). And then we started the nail-biting contests (or rather I did, with myself); would *Return of the King* be able to sweep the board?

I greatly desired that it would. I mean, only a few years ago there was that monstrous film *Titanic* (apologies to Leo fans), and it got eleven Oscars – equalling *Ben Hur's* record. I had really hoped that with *Fellowship* being nominated for 14, it might have come out with ten or so (especially Best Director). And, there is a fairly one-sided view amongst cinema-goers as to which is the superior film: *Titanic* or... You get the idea.

Anyway, the day finally came to see *Return of the King*, and, well, it didn't quite blow me away as *Fellowship* did. I loved it LOADS on the second viewing, but in my heart I think the beauty of the Shire and the beginnings of discoveries with the threats of Black Riders had captured me more. Why was this? Predominantly (as was rather vigorously uncovered in a long and arduous debate held at Bag End [mine and Anna's room]) at the beginning of this term, because of the stuff that was left out of ROTK and the alterations that were put in unnecessarily. There was so much that was *really* great. There was so much that was stunning. But there were things I loved that were lacking and a very silly sub-plot that didn't make sense (Arwen? Fate? Ring? WHAT!). Oh well. There are theories as to why this was necessary, and I'm sure Tolkien fans everywhere have screamed enough about their grievances (let me reference you to the aforementioned heated debate). But the question I kept asking myself again and again was this:

Will it cost ROTK the Best Picture Oscar?

And, sob, ROTK only got nominated for eleven Oscars (*none* for acting – but I guess that is understandable). If it was even to equal the triumph that that horror of a film *Titanic* (partially redeemed by having Bernard Hill (Théoden) play the captain of the ship), then ROTK would have to win them *all* – Best Score, Best Song, Best Sound, Best Special Effects, Best Make-Up, Best Costume, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Art Direction, Best Director and Best Film.

But you know what? *It did*. Huzzah!

Esther Miller

Because future CTS readers should know what this moment meant for us addicts.

Sarah Arnold takes to the pen again to track down another elusive female character in Tolkien...

Women in Tolkien Aren't All Boring!

Tolkien Post-Feminist icon of the issue: Idril

Idril, of course, was Turgon's daughter, princess of Gondolin and one of those strange Elves who fell in love with a Man for some obscure reason - in this case, one Tuor of the House of Hador. She was also a *fantastic* gal who, it must be said, is often sadly underrated.

Of course she was pretty; with her long golden hair and hippie-style barefoot fashion craze, but she was much more than just a dumb blonde.

She had the good sense not to let Maeglin have his evil way with her, despite his nasty plans to do so anyway. She sussed him out from the start, even when her rather less intuitive father was all but worshipping the ground he walked upon. Not only that, she was also 'wise and far-seeing', correctly predicting Morgoth's schemes and ordering the secret escape route from Gondolin to be built. Now where would we be without the secret escape? Well, for one thing, everyone in Gondolin would have been fried alive by the combined flaminess of Balrogs and Fire-drakes, and Eärendil would be nothing more than a grease spot on the street somewhere, because he *never* would have got out alive from the ruins of Gondolin otherwise. And with no Eärendil...well, here'd be no Elrond, no Elros, no Aragorn, no Arwen...you get the idea.

But she was brave as well as intelligent. When Gondolin was sacked and Maeglin decided to take advantage of the chaos to finally kidnap her for his own distasteful purposes, she was having none of it. Much like Eówyn, she dressed herself up in armour, found herself a sword and fought like a mad thing (a tigress, even), protecting herself and Eärendil long enough for reinforcements to arrive. Precious few of Tolkien's girls get a chance to fight, so Idril must have been something special. And when Tuor led the survivors of Gondolin to safety, she was right there with him.

She even stuck by him as the years went by, when he, being a Man, was getting old, and she, being an Elf, was not - now that's dedication! Then in a terribly weepy, romantic ending, they sailed off happily into the West. I hope they're enjoying their retirement; they certainly earned it!

Sarah Arnold

33 Alternative Uses for *The Lord of the Rings*

Tired of reading your battered copy of LOTR? Feel you need to punish it for its reckless devouring of your precious time? Here are a few ideas courtesy of some Winchester hobbits. Some are very strange indeed. Why, they're queer as news from Bree out that way, you know...

1. Pillow
2. Foot-rest
3. Rare good ballast for a ship
4. Posture improving instrument ie. Balance on head
5. Weights for a hot air balloon
6. Kindling for an entire city
7. Weight-lifting equipment
8. An aid for those studying beyond black-belt karate
9. To stand on in place of the Yellow Pages (we've all seen the ads!)
10. Catapultable weapon of mass destruction
11. A device for use in hand-to-hand combat where towels are lacking
12. A cure for insomnia – a hit on the head aids sleeping wonderfully...
13. Disguise as The Good Book and take to Church for the duration of less interesting sermons
14. To make your bookshelf look big and impressive
15. To accidentally break the toes of the people you don't like
16. A doorstep
17. For extremists – juggle with the trilogy
18. A year's supply of toilet paper
19. Emergency fibre supply for an empty stomach
20. Material for creating a paper-maché sculpture of inordinate proportions
21. Cut out middle and use as a cunningly disguised safe for stolen crown jewels
22. Slam for theatrical sound effects of mass murder and the like
23. A convenient map for when you figure that Gandalf didn't mean for you to come this way
24. Hamster bedding
25. Bleach the pages for a lifetime's diary
26. See-saw buddy
27. Window-breaking implement in case of fire
28. Weight in backpacks for army training exercises
29. Mosquito crusher
30. Use many to build an igloo-style apartment of the highest fashion
31. Flower-press
32. Quotable material to annoy all sane living beings around you
33. An alternative history of Britain to wow your friends and gullible younger relatives

Giulia Slack and Louise Skelly

The Nine (Horrible and Gruesome) Deaths of Master Samwise¹

An inspired compilation by the creative hand of Faramir

1) Psychadelic Mushrooms

During dinner with Farmer Maggot and his three adorable puppies, Samwise gets over his mistrust of the man who beat his master, and, indeed they get overly involved in a game of wager. At first it is merely a drinking contest, (a whole PINT!), but it soon progresses to something more when Maggot brings out his "special stock" of mushrooms. Three rounds later, Sam, believing he is being attacked by giant purple spiders, pulls a knife on Fang, and seconds later is ripped to shreds by three dogs who, having snaffled a few of the mushrooms believe *him* to be an oversized useless lump of meat (err...).

2) Bill

In a cruel twist of fate, Bill Ferny has indoctrinated his pony to kill hobbits, and after three days in the wilderness bearing the weight of both Frodo *and* the Ring *and* all the baggage he turns on Sam and gores him to death.

3) The Watcher at the Gate

In his heroic attempt to save his master from the multi-tentacled beast (or were there many of them?) in the pool before Moria, Sam gets over-enthusiastic about his attack on the beast, and forgetting he cannot swim makes for deeper water to drive it off once and for all. In a truly epic battle, involving much use of dramatic sliding along tentacles and the use of hobbit swiftness, Sam manages to have the creature tie itself up in its own tentacles. Sadly, as the beast thrashes about it bats Sam into the lintel of the door, and it is, in fact, Sam's own body weight that causes the door to collapse.

4) Elves' Magic

On looking into the mirror of Galadriel, Sam is so shocked by the sight of his Gaffer being turned out of Bagshot Row that he immediately panics and, turning to leave, he falls from the pedestal and cracks his head against Galadriel's birdbath. Being far too obsessed with the beauty of the White Lady, Frodo negligently leaves his friend on the floor, and Sam haemorrhages.

5) Frodo Can't Be bothered

Despite Sam's selfless and honourable (or maybe just foolish), attempt to follow Frodo by swimming into the river Anduin, Frodo just ignores the fat hobbit following in his boat's wake and paddles onwards to Mordor alone, leaving his gardener to drown.

6) Elvish Rope

¹ The Editor feels morally obliged to point out that she is greatly grieved by this article, that Samwise lives, and that Faramir is the evil dictator behind a less than savoury socialist utopia of no fixed abode!

As Sam is climbing down the elvish rope ahead of his master his utter lack of co-ordination means that he accidentally wraps the strong cord about his neck; a slipped foot, a strangled yelp, and suddenly Frodo finds his provisions for the journey have doubled in number.

7) Does the *Nice* Hobbit Not Want the *Nice* Rabbits?

So eager is Mr Gamgee at seeing coneys to stew that he gets a bit over-excited. Firstly, he does not question the source of the rabbits (that wonderfully friendly and helpful creature Gollum), and consequently would have gone to a slow painful, but above all poisoned death. But secondly, the thing that was never actually made clear in the book is that whilst Gollum brought two rabbits, Mr Frodo REALLY only found out about ONE! That fat hobbit had wolfed down the first before his master as fully aware, getting a small rabbit bone lodged in his throat, and consequently choking to death.

8) Faramir¹

Having had his honour challenged one too many times Faramir, uncharacteristically, gets annoyed with this over-suspicious hobbit and in a fit of impatience pushes him². Sam, being as unco-ordinated and bumbling as he is, stumbles backwards and off the edge of the ledge behind the waterfall, tumbling a hundred feet to his death smack beside the place where Gollum is fishing...

9) Danse Macabre at the Crack of Doom

In an effort to save his master, rather than just sitting there whilst Gollum attempts to de-phalange Frodo, Sam attempts to attack Gollum. Gollum however still manages to bite off the Ring, and, in the ensuing delight at having his precious, begins to dance with Sam. In the brief waltz that ensues, Sam is too shocked to do anything but submit, and the pair dance off the edge together...

Nick Price
of Faramir Fame

The Sam-Obsessed-Editor makes no apology to him (being the above), for her reckless footnoting, and will take vengeance on Faramir next issue...

¹ Remember the evil socialist utopias! Down with Faramir! – Editor

² 'You don't have any friends! You're a thief, and a M-U-R-D-E-R-E-R!' – Editor

Upon the Wheel of Fire

A Defence of Peter Jackson's Frodo

I was recently surfing *theonering.net* when a link caught my eye; an article written about how Peter Jackson had downsized the actual hero of Tolkien's books, Frodo, giving centre stage instead to Sam¹. Now, as any of you who know me will know (indeed, I'll be surprised if it has escaped your attention), I am the staunchest and most belligerent of Sam supporters, and deeply enamoured of the books. So it may come as a surprise to you that I here intend to defend not only Frodo, but Jackson's Frodo at that.

Cambridge has finally got to her, I hear you cry. Playing Jackson at the Outer Darkness debate was symptomatic of a far deeper problem. Eighteenth Century Literature and Tennyson Dissertations have pushed her over the edge – grab her before she hurts herself. Not quite, although if having reached the end of this brief pondering you think thus, I will forgive you.

In fairness, the article that sufficiently caught my mind to make me write this made some fair points; that there were some serious delineations from the book in the films, particularly in *The Two Towers*. For example, Frodo should never have been in Osgiliath let alone offering the Ring to the Witch-King of Angmar as he sat on a Fell Beast (yay!); that following this the drawing of Sting on Sam could well be too much too soon; that in *Return of the King* the Frodo that Tolkien shows us would never, never, and thrice *never* have told Sam to *go home*. These plot decisions can be defended... but I'll save that for when I run out of stuff for Anor 32.

In seriousness, though; Frodo as we see him in Jackson's *Fellowship* stands in the indisputable position of the innocent about to be given a none-too-gentle kick out of the door. And innocent he is – you only need to think about that laugh he gives when meeting Gandalf, his sitting outside reading as we first see him, complete with piece of straw in his mouth. Yet from the word go, Jackson gives Frodo a kind of sensitivity that to me was lacking in the opening chapters of the book; the younger Baggins *does* suspect Bilbo, and is a thoughtful sort; 'Bilbo's been a bit odd lately. He's taken to locking himself in his study, pouring over old maps *when he thinks I'm not looking*', my emphasis. Frodo comes across as far more sensitive than Sam, to whom no reason is given for eavesdropping at Bag End in the first place. And Frodo instantly answers the call to adventure; upon reaching the conclusion, for the sake of the Shire and all that he loves, that the Ring cannot remain there, we see his hand tighten about the Ring and a determined grimace settle on his face as he asks 'What must I do?'. This is to be echoed at the Council of Elrond, where, despite having now faced the enemy and having been exposed to the power of the Ring, he answers the call again; 'I will take the Ring, though... I do not know the way'. Jackson's implication is that Frodo does this not because he feels as though it is his allotted task and that he is called by fate to do it; that assurance is only given to him *after his choice* by Elrond, Gandalf and Galadriel. Before Frodo stands up, Jackson gives us one of his most striking shots; the arguing council members reflected in the gold band of the Ring, while we hear its voice underlining the fighting. Frodo takes the Ring selflessly, to halt the discord, and to act where all others seem to have lost the ability to do so. The shot of the grief on Gandalf's face as Frodo's voice reaches his ears is heart-rending; he seems to know as well as any reader that the quest, taken up in innocence and love, 'will claim his life'. It is Frodo's heroic claiming of the quest that

¹ The internet essay that started all this can be found at www.julietwaldron.com/frodo

opens the way for all the others to answer the same call. How many times, when standing in a group asked to do something, do people lack the courage to volunteer; and yet as soon as one person does so, the rest follow? Frodo's choice here makes the others heroes, too.

Of course it can be argued that Jackson's Frodo spends his time from this point forward being led like a lamb to the slaughter, that Elijah Wood has had to act the toughest thing of all; the decharacterisation of his character. But Jackson and Wood made clear to me in *Fellowship* a deep thread in Frodo that I had missed. Cast your minds back to *Fellowship* again, where the company emerge from the darkness of Moria to the stark white landscape beyond. Wood's stricken scream of 'Gandalf!' and the choir-boy solo of the soundtrack are still ringing in our ears. The fellowship collapse in tears, and all need to be dragged to their feet. But Frodo stands apart; and as the camera moves onto him, we can see not only that he holds himself responsible for Gandalf's death, but that he now knows himself responsible for the lives of all the others. He bears this burden, unlike the Ring, in silence. When, after looking into the mirror, he tells Galadriel 'I know what I must do, it's just that I'm afraid to do it', he is referring to this; a responsibility for life. Unlike Aragorn he cannot simply bear it. He knows that he must go alone; yet he also sees how the fellowship are there for his sake – how can he simply tell them to go? Where Sam can be argued to exemplify love for one friend, Frodo loves *all* around him. The distress that characterises him in the second half of *Fellowship* shows the depth of his love, and the growing of his pity. So he takes the burden of the quest upon himself alone, not expecting nor wishing any of the others to follow him. Admittedly, in Jackson's rendition of the boat scene at the end of *Fellowship*, there is not the beautifully understated admission of this theme that we have in Tolkien 'It would be the death of you to come with me, Sam, and I could not have borne that', but it is there nonetheless, in the rawness of Frodo's reaction when Sam goes under the water. As *Fellowship* closes, it is Frodo that takes the first steps along the hills towards the mountains of shadow. He leads, and Sam follows. It is important too that as he stands on the bank, in the final deliberations of his hardest choice, he remembers Gandalf's words; 'But that is not for us to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that has been given to us.' Jackson has pulled out this quote and by dropping the more sinister second half of it ('And already, Frodo, our time is beginning to look black. The enemy is fast becoming very strong...'), 'The Shadow of the Past', *The Fellowship of the Ring*), Jackson has made it the defining quote of his Frodo's heroism.

In *The Two Towers* Frodo, despite being the hero of the tale, is cut off from the epic events going on in Rohan and at Helm's Deep. At times he struggles to keep the peace between Sam and Gollum, and he is naturally driven to hold the moral high ground; he must be a leader for two very different people. At the Morannon he respects Gollum enough to trust him and is wise enough to see that the course of action that Sam recommends is folly. The relationship between Frodo and Gollum is something that Jackson has done well by adding a few extra dimensions. An example of this is making it Gollum that draws Frodo out of the Dead Marshes, despite Frodo's hostility in earlier scenes and in spite of the expectation that it will be Sam we see pulling his master to safety. Jackson makes clear in his telling that it is Frodo's kindness that begins to bring Gollum out of his more sinister nature when Frodo addresses him as Sméagol, and that it is that same kindness and desire to pity that drives Gollum back to treachery. Whereas in the book Frodo's emphasis is very much on keeping faith with Gollum rather than on pitying him so much, in the film this is not so outspoken. It makes Frodo less harsh (compare Ian Holm's handling in places in the Radio Adaptation, for example!), but still keeps him on heroic lines. If he were to attain an epithet from the classics, it seems to me that Jackson's Frodo would take that of Aeneas; *pious*. Frodo even faces similar difficulties when it seems that all his hopes have failed, despite his will to complete his quest.

One such instance is at Osgiliath. We see Frodo as he stands and offers the Ring to the Witch-King. Given the action and speech that follows from Sam, it is easy to think that the heroic focus is being transferred to him. One of the beauties of the book, however, is that every character

has moments when they are heroic beyond all capability, and the films are no exception to this statement. This is one such moment. Frodo's spirit is restored by the comfort of his servant. He has endangered both himself and the quest, but his hopelessness is met with forgiveness and love. By having Sam react to Frodo in this way, it shows us that Frodo has not failed, he has merely stumbled, and his heroic progress can continue. For example, one cannot doubt Aragorn's heroic qualities, but he too stumbles as he goes along his path to becoming King. He is not made less heroic by the feats of heroism of those about him, Gandalf, Pippin or Faramir. Neither is Frodo; like Aragorn, his own moments of heroism are set into sharper contrast. Like Aragorn, he chooses to continue despite knowing that if he 'stray[s] but a little the quest will fail, to the ruin of all.'

Of course, no such argument would be complete without mention of the discussion on stories. Sam makes clear for Jackson as well as for Tolkien that Frodo, 'the famousest of hobbits' is still the central character; the burden of the quest still lies on him and him alone. While Frodo would not have got far without Sam, Sam is only heroic *in relation* to Frodo, and is only brave because of his love for his master. Frodo's heroism is greater than this; he goes on because he must. It is his good fortune that he is supported by a good friend.

To *The Return of the King*, then. While it is true that the third film is very much where Sam comes into his own, this is because Frodo's struggle becomes here its most bitter, and here he must be bolstered the most, just as Minas Tirith must be bolstered by Gandalf. Faced in Cirith Ungol with the thought that the quest is lost, Frodo despairs; physically wounded and emotionally drained, that he can find the energy to go on at all is to his credit. Although it is Sam that rescues him, Sam cannot help him where the true danger lies; the shots Jackson gives us of Frodo staggering along, fending off some unseen presence, shows that his struggle goes on at a level that none of the other characters can see. On the slopes of Mount Doom, despite the terrible weight that he bears, Frodo drags himself onto his hands and knees while Sam lies still by him, and begins to crawl, pace by agonising pace. He is still fighting something greater than anyone else, and Jackson doesn't allow us to forget it. Sam's heroism is on a physical and emotional scale, but Frodo's is also on a spiritual one. Frodo cannot recall anything of home; heroically, Sam lifts him and carries him. For the audience it is a hugely emotive moment; the image of Sam bearing Frodo up onto his shoulders will stay with me for a long time. But Frodo's unseen struggle, the will to continue fighting when no memory of good can reach him, is greater than his servant's sudden strength. Jackson could not have clearly shown us this struggle without departing greatly from the books (he could, for example, have taken us inside Frodo's mind). But staying in the external, physical and emotional realm, allowing us to savour events through Sam and not through Frodo, *is* true to the book and serves to remind us that Frodo's battle is one that we cannot understand. The ash and smoke we see all around them is likely in no way comparable to what Frodo must bear. It is pathetic fallacy of the highest order.

What of the chamber of fire itself? Jackson's handling of Frodo's claiming the Ring for his own is stunning. Frodo fails: but we see in his sinister smile an evil knowledge, a usurpation of Frodo's heroic will to the proverbial dark side. It seems clear that the Ring could wield a terrible power even through this hobbit. It is also a smile calculated to cut like knives into Sam; he, too, has failed, for his master has not the will to do what must be done. Both hobbits, both different kinds of heroes, face defeat in the same moment. It does not detract from the struggle of either, but heightens the pathos.

The long-awaited struggle for the Ring ensues, and we are presented with a departure from the book once again as Frodo and Gollum both topple over the side. With Frodo, maimed, bleeding, and clinging half-heartedly to the ledge, there is for a moment the genuine fear that he will fall; 'Don't you dare let go!' Sam yells at him. As Jackson shows it to us, this is Frodo's hardest choice. With the Ring still holding his mind (at this point it is not yet destroyed, but sitting on a conveniently placed solid lump of lava), and holding his mind so strongly that it made him claim it but moments before, Frodo must know that he will never be whole again, and feel that he will not live much longer anyway. But he masters his will, and reaches for Sam's hand.

My memory of the matter is a little foggy, but it seemed implied that this choice somehow causes the lava supporting the Ring to dissolve. Obviously, it is highly symbolic if this is the case (and I hope you'll forgive me if I'm gleefully twisting matters to my own ends, here). Frodo masters himself at the end; the choice to live and to face all that will follow is his own. His strength is returned to him.

Jackson's choice throughout has been to make Frodo more sensitive perhaps than he appears in the books, a sensitivity that can be construed as weakness. It is a directorial call that yields a fine crop at the end of all things; stranded with Sam on a mound of lava, it is Sam here who finally despairs, and weeps over what he has lost in choosing to come with Frodo; 'If ever I had married, it would have been her,' he says of Rosie. Not only does Jackson show that Sam too has suffered in all of this, giving him a kind of dignified sorrow in the face of death, but he opens up a beautiful piece of role reversal; Frodo gives comfort to Sam. The *gravitas* and deep appreciation with which he delivers 'I'm glad you're here with me; here, at the end of all things' elevates him to a huge stature; he truly is the dear, sweet master of the Shire, but he has grown. Despite all that he has just been through, he chooses here to honour Sam with his compassion. While not faithful to the book, it is typical of Jackson's Frodo, and it is, for me, a moment of unspeakable beauty.

Jackson holds the focus on Frodo for pretty much the rest of the film. When Minas Tirith bows to the hobbits, we see on Frodo's face a comprehension of his fate: Middle-Earth has been saved, but not for him. The voice-over that had been Galadriel's in the opening of *Fellowship* now becomes his as we are carried back over the map to Hobbiton. Jackson enforces Frodo's rôle as the chronicler, the character who has been critically changed, distanced enough from all he has seen to write it down – distanced by his deep sensitivity, and yet by the same token tied more tightly to it than any of the others. It is only 'the last pages' of the book that are for Sam; this hero sees that his time is coming to an end. We see Frodo alone in Bag End – a departure again from the books, which dictate that Sam should be living there with him. But this is a masterful stroke on Jackson's part; without the inclusion of the *Scouring of the Shire*, it allows us to see this distance of Frodo's.

To the Grey Havens then, at the last. In both book and film, it is our knowledge of all that Frodo has been through that brings forth the tears, the thought that the principle player cannot enjoy all that he fought for, and what he has essentially died for. If it were to be Sam that at this point was taking ship to the West, we would not feel the same. Both Tolkien and Jackson place us in Sam's shoes; we have been to Mordor with Frodo, have shared as much of his quest as we could, but not all of it – we have not struggled with the Eye. Frodo's farewells are as heartfelt for us as for him. It is only when Frodo boards the ship for Valinor that Jackson allows us to see the hero at rest; Frodo smiles, the same warm kind of smile that we first saw in the Shire – no such smile has been seen for a long time, and in this juxtaposition of the smile and the tears of the other hobbits, Jackson (and Howard Shore, whose score is superb) truly capture the essence of that realm where 'their tears were the very wine of blessedness', where joy and sorrow are one.

Jackson's Frodo is, to my mind, far from downsized; dependence upon others does not belittle his heroism. Frodo is bound on the proverbial wheel of fire; from the moment he takes the Ring he chooses to sacrifice himself. This is something that Jackson slowly builds through his three films as he shows us how Frodo's situation worsens and worsens, and yet always he makes the choice to go on. By emphasising the sensitivity of Frodo to the world around him, Jackson shows how agonising this choice can be. Only Frodo spends himself utterly in the quest. Although Jackson could be accused of making Frodo weak and weedy in the grand scheme of things, it is this aspect of the choice, and the heroism of the choice, that he is showing. By it he underlines a kind of steadfastness that most of us could only hope for, were we to come across the Ring of power.

Anna E. Slack

The Cambridge Tolkien Society and Anor

The Cambridge Tolkien Society (Minas Tirith) is a society registered with the University whose aim is to further interest in the life and works of the late Professor J.R.R. Tolkien CBE. Meetings are held weekly during Full Term. Its magazine *Anor* is published fitfully, often when a full moon assists with the madness.

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Anor 32

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