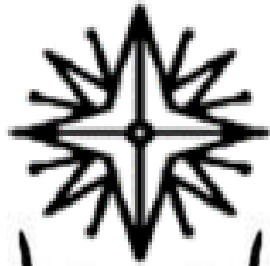


ANOR



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EDITORIAL

Mae govannen! Welcome and well met! Gather round the fire (or the electric lamp, that'll do in a pinch) and listen to songs of the Ages before our own.

This is dedicated to the newest members of our fellowship, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, resplendent in their multiplicity. I hope you enjoy this publication as much as I have done over the years.

This term's issue is quite short, but it does have our usual range of tone, from the most estimable of literary analysis to the spectacularly silly, and on various subjects. You will see the impermanence of memory and myth sitting in the same room as a clarification of the cult of Caradhras, like an eclectic but amiable family gathering.

Especial thanks to Ar-Pharazôn the Golden, also known as Bill the Pony and (to the uninitiated) as Samuel Cook, and to our dear Brigid, who has sailed away into the uttermost West but remains forever in our hearts. Without them this issue would not have been possible.

And—now that I am no longer forbidden by ~~the Valar~~ the Committee from making the slightest mention of it, for fear of driving you off—I do encourage you to send things to me, if any idea strikes your fancy.

May our society enliven your time among the spires of Hwarinyanta!

With warmest regards,

Daeron
alias Samuel M. Karlin, Editor of *Anor*

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NOBODY EXPECTS SURPRISING POTENTIAL LINKS TO TOLKIEN

Samuel Cook

As some of the readers of this august publication will know, I recently spent five weeks in Greenland in the interests of science¹. Being almost totally disconnected from civilisation for the whole time meant I got an awful lot of reading done, and, doing so, I discovered an influence on Tolkien that I hadn't previously come across. Now, I don't claim to be the first person to notice this. Indeed, on my return, a quick bit of searching showed that Tolkien himself acknowledged this particular influence and that plenty has been written about it already². However, given that I hadn't come across it before, I thought I'd bring it to the attention of the venerable members of the CTS.

The influence in question is H. Rider Haggard; the specific book is *She*. Haggard was one of the foremost late Victorian writers of adventure fiction, with his books largely revolving around some sort of big imperial adventure in darkest Africa where true-hearted Englishmen would defeat some sort of mysterious malign power, which some sort of equally mysterious clue or enigma would have led them towards. Exactly the kind of thing a boy leaning towards fantasy growing up in the 1890s and later would have read, and which the young Tolkien did indeed read.

There were four particular connections I noticed between *She* and Tolkien's work. To deal with each in turn:

She

The titular *She* is Ayesha, a seemingly-immortal beautiful woman of high race from far away who lives cut off from the outside world, ruling over the more rustic locals. She also has a magic jug of water that shows things in the mind of the viewer and it is not entirely clear whether she's good or bad. Hang on, this sounds rather like Galadriel, doesn't it? The parallel is far from perfect – Ayesha is definitely human; the Celeborn-equivalent is very different³; the gap between Ayesha and her subjects is far greater than that between the Noldorin Galadriel and her Silvan subjects;

¹ Though not in the interests of my back, sanity or comfort.

² At least this means this is a genuine influence, rather than the endless attempts to justify almost everything as a potential influence on Tolkien, in the literary equivalent of seeing Jesus in a potato.

³ To explain why would be massive spoilers, from which I shall refrain.

Ayesha is rather more Chaotic Neutral than Galadriel¹; and Ayesha lives in caves, not a forest. Among other things. The magic jug, for instance only shows things that have happened or are happening. It has no predictive powers, unlike the Mirror of Galadriel.

That said, there are undeniably several striking similarities between the two characters—enough to feel that Tolkien was, consciously or not, drawing some sort of inspiration from Ayesha when he was working on the character of Galadriel.

Kôr

The place where Ayesha lives is called Kôr. In the early versions of the legendarium in *The Book Of Lost Tales*, the home of the Elves (well, the Gnomes) is also Kôr, complete with circumflex. Tolkien's Kôr is a round hill, upon which a city, Kortirion, is built. Later these become, respectively, the hill of Túna and the city of Tirion, as described in the published *Silmarillion*. Ayesha's Kôr, however, is a giant old volcanic caldera, with fertile plains inside, on which livestock are pastured, and caves bored into the rim, in which she and some of her subjects live. Apart from the name and the fact they're both orographic features, there's not a lot of similarity. The way Ayesha's Kôr is described does bring to mind both Isengard and Gondolin, but tracing a direct connection here seems tenuous; arguably all three are drawing from the common motif of the hidden valley, rather than there being a direct influence. It's entirely possible Tolkien lifted the name from Haggard's work, but he seems to have disassociated it from its environment.

The Shard of Amyntas

The whole starting point of *She* is a mysterious pottery sherd, inscribed with ancient characters that require special knowledge to translate. To some extent, this recalls the Ring, though the sherd is in no way inherently evil and the language on it is (primarily) Ancient Greek, which is somewhat less niche than Black Speech. But, there's arguably an influence in the idea of having some engraved trinket as the root of the whole narrative.

¹ Who would probably, by the time of *The Lord of the Rings*, be Lawful Good, certainly once she rejects the Ring. Ayesha is, in some sense, the Big Bad of *She*, but Haggard is at pains to paint a very nuanced portrait of her and makes clear that, from her point of view, Ayesha is, if anything, morally virtuous and penitent. The problems arise because her point of view is so divorced from that of normal humans... The idea of a perilous sorceress, which Ayesha very much is, is also reflected in Galadriel—think of how Boromir initially perceives her—though, later on, her goody credentials are more firmly established, which is never the case with Ayesha.

Death

Obviously, death and (im)mortality is one of the big themes of Tolkien's work. All of it. Some of my favourite bits of the books are to do with it¹. It's also very much the main theme of *She*—the whole book is, essentially, a reflection on (im)mortality and its (dis)advantages. So much so that some of the passages in *She* read almost as if they were lifted word-for-word from Tolkien. Or, to be chronologically accurate, some of Tolkien's passages read as direct copies of *She*. Now, evidently, that's not the case—it's simply a case of both authors dealing with similar subject matter—but it's more than that. The phrasing, the way the arguments are presented, even the conclusions arrived at, are all very similar. Perhaps Tolkien was influenced quite heavily here by Haggard, but as with all such posited links, it's rather difficult to be sure. Even in your own mind, how clearly can you say where the influences on your ideas come from?

To conclude, it certainly seems to me that Haggard's influence on Tolkien is undeniable!

¹ Because I'm sometimes a bit morbid. I still think the bit of *Akallabêth* where the messengers of the Valar come to Tar-Ancalimon is up there for my favourite single passage of Tolkien.

INCONCLUSIVE CONCLUSIONS: LÚTHIEN, MORTALITY AND THE LIMITS OF POETIC FAME

Brigid Ehrmantraut

Song quite literally forms the world of J. R. R. Tolkien's legendarium. Song shapes and influences the world, and song perpetuates characters' legacies in the world. Just as Homer invokes his muse, the first verb of Vergil's *Aeneid* is *cano*, and—a little closer to home, but certainly no more familiar for our favourite Anglo-Saxon philologist—"Cædmon's Hymn," credited as the first piece of vernacular (Old) English literature, is a praise of the Lord's Creation,¹ so Tolkien begins his cosmology in song. Tolkien's most famous heroine, Lúthien Tinúviel, whose tale is "most fair still in the ears of the Elves... the Lay of Leithian, Release from Bondage, which is the longest save one of the songs concerning the world of old", is herself a master of song and often uses it to further her own goals, be they escape from her father's tower, beguilement of Morgoth, or desperate plea before Mandos (*Silmarillion* 162).² With more than seven recensions of the tale to consider, we might suppose that in relinquishing her immortality to be with Beren, Lúthien gains a sort of eternal fame through story. However, by removing herself from the circles of the world, Lúthien loses more than her life; her tale may be told and retold (internally by generations of Elves and Men, externally in Tolkien's many re-workings) but its famous ending is always inconclusive and veiled by narrative doubt.

Arguably the oldest version of Beren and Lúthien's story appears as *The Tale of Tinúviel*. Here, the song Lúthien sings to Melko consciously belongs to the Undying Lands and the nightingales associated with her mother, "nor has any voice or sight of such beauty ever again been seen there, and Ainu Melko for all his power and majesty succumbed to the magic of that Elf-maid" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 75-6). In *The Silmarillion*, Tinúviel's vocal prowess, instead of sourcing from Valinor, is now emulated there where, "[t]he song of Lúthien before Mandos was the song most fair that ever in words was woven, and the song most sorrowful that ever the world shall hear. Unchanged, imperishable, it is sung still in Valinor beyond the hearing of the world" (186-7). Only West of West can it remain utterly unchanged, however.

¹ Cf. beginning of *Beowulf* when the *scop*'s Genesis-themed song first disturbs Grendel.

² The complete extent of which could easily form another article.

Those of us in contact with earthly realms are presented with three versions of *The Tale of Tinúviel* lovers' fate, as narrated to the English mariner Ælfwine by Vëannë in Tol Eressëa: first, Vëannë claims not to know the ending past Beren's death and indicates Tinúviel's may have miraculously healed him; second, one of Vëannë's companions to chime in, apropos of such miraculous healing, "many songs and stories are there of the prayer of Tinúviel before the throne of Mandos that I remember not right well;" finally, Vëannë admits, "their deeds afterward were very great, and many tales are there thereof.... I fashioned it not with words of myself; but... I have learned it by heart, reading it in the great books, and I do not comprehend all that is set therein" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 87-8). Thus, even in its inchoate form, the price of Tinúviel's prayer to Mandos is not only mortality, but an inability to connect fully with the audience of future songs, who cannot remember/"comprehend" the correct version of the story. What's more, the element of creativity has gone out of the telling, and what has been obscurely committed to old codices can only be parroted without confidence.

In an unnamed early sketch of the story, we are told, "[s]ome songs say that Lúthien went even over the Grinding Ice, aided by the power of her divine mother, Melian, to Mandos' halls and won him back; others that Mandos hearing his tale released him. Certain it is that he alone of mortals came back from Mandos and dwelt with Lúthien and never spoke to Men again" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 91). Equivocal as it may be, this version offers Beren the most autonomy in his resurrection, yet even here, where Beren is undeniably Man and not Elf, his brief gift of speech—usually reserved for Lúthien—is, for all intents and narrative purposes, his last. As Beren cannot or will not speak to mortals again, they are thus precluded from ever knowing the details of his fate.

In the *Quenta Noldorinwa*, Lúthien's beguilement of Morgoth takes on very literary proportions, couched in reference to the larger legendarium and other acts of speech and song:

"Then Lúthien dared the most dreadful and most valiant deed that any of the Elves have ever dared; no less than the challenge of Fingolfin is it accounted, and may be greater, save that she was half-divine. She cast off her disguise and named her own name.... And she beguiled Morgoth... and she sang to him... and she set a binding dream upon him—what song can sing the marvel of that deed, or the wrath and humiliation of Morgoth, for even the Orcs laugh in secret when they remember it."

(*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 137)

While Lúthien's greatest act in Middle-earth is here clearly delineated and takes the place of honour among the deeds of Elves, uncertainty remains as the account asks, partly rhetorically, partly undoubtedly in reference to the still unfinished *Lay of Leithian*, "what song can sing the marvel...."

The *Quenta Noldorinwa* account also obfuscates and we are told, "it has long been said that Lúthien failed and faded swiftly and vanished from the earth, though some songs say that Melian summoned Thorondor, and he bore her living unto Valinor. And she came to the halls of Mandos" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 141). Clearly it is the latter song that Tolkien wishes to emphasise and the *Noldorinwa* variation gives Mandos's verdict, "that Lúthien should become mortal even as her lover, and should leave the earth once more in the manner of mortal women, and her beauty become **but a memory of song**" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 141; emphasis mine). It is important to our thesis that Mandos states "a memory of song," rather than merely "a song," and that *The Silmarillion* echoes the *Noldorinwa* wording, though in language suffused with a characteristic sense of doom (187). Here too, we hear that, "no mortal Man thereafter spoke to Beren or his spouse" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 141), yet are supplied with the epilogue Vëannë could not give. After Beren recaptures the Silmaril from dwarves, Melian warns that its beauty is cursed and Tolkien returns to the idea of 'fading': "For Lúthien faded as Mandos had spoken, even as the Elves of later days faded and she vanished from the world; and Beren died, and none know where their meeting shall be again;" against this Tolkien has marked: "Yet it hath been sung that Lúthien alone of Elves hath been numbered among our race, and goeth whither we go to a fate beyond the world" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 236). Uncertainty in this instance extends not only to what ultimately happened to the lovers, but even to whether the two will meet again; the indication that Lúthien shares the fate of Men is marginalia, and then, as in most versions of the end of the tale, reported *sung* discourse.

The Lay of Leithian, while it never reaches the end of Beren and Lúthien's narrative, frames even its poetic medium with allusions to other songs. When Beren and Lúthien first reunite in the wild, before wresting the Silmaril from Morgoth's crown, the verse tells how, "[s]ongs have recalled the Elves have sung/in old forgotten elven tongue/how Lúthien and Beren strayed/by the banks of Sirion.... The birds are unafraid to dwell/and sing beneath the peaks of snow/where Beren and where Lúthien go." (ll. 2856-67). In a poem that is itself the descendent of such a tradition of songs, the "elven tongue" is already long forgotten, and chunks of the narrative are gone with it, forever the province of other accounts, now lost. For all that *The Lay* is

fragmentary as it stands in our world, it is the fragment of a fragment within the legendarium itself, albeit highly esteemed. In fact, the verses Aragorn sings to the hobbits in *Fellowship of the Ring* are different from those that appear in the poem as we know it from other sources (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien*, *Lays of Beleriand*, *Silmarillion*), and do not obey the same rhyme scheme, indicating just how far the tradition has ranged from any single, authoritative recension.

Within the world of the story, the lovers also phrase their fate in terms of song. Beren, with no Silmaril, thinks he and Lúthien must part and laments, “[a]las, Tinúviel, here we part/and out brief song together ends,/and sundered ways each lonely wends!” (*The Lay of Leithian* 2931-3). To this, the ever-more practical Lúthien responds, “[w]hy there alone forsaking song/by endless waters rolling past/must I then hopeless sit at last/and gaze at waters pitiless/in heart and in loneliness?” (*The Lay of Leithian* 2949-53). For the pair, song represents their intertwined destiny, oblivious to its aspect as enduring fame. Lúthien again treats song as the equivalent of fate or assembled deeds when she offers to sing for Morgoth, arguing, “[f]or every minstrel hath his tune;/and some are strong and some are soft,/and each would bear his song aloft,/and each a little while be heard,/though rude the note, and light the word” (*The Lay of Leithian* 4049-53). Lúthien’s own tune is surely stronger than most and—if beautifully woven—heavier in its import, but implicit in her statement is the sense of an ending, though for “a little while” she may be heard. This may be read as a triple ending: the ending of a quite literal song, the ending of mortal life, and ending of time in Arda before facing the proverbial undiscovered country beyond death. An unfinished poem probably meant to complete *The Lay* concludes, “the Land of the Lost is further yet,/where the Dead wait, while ye forget. No moon is there, no voice, no sound/of beating heart; a sigh profound/once in each age as each age dies/alone is heard” (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 217). Not only are the Halls of Mandos silent, their silence extends to the memory of the living world. Here, no enduring fame can hold a candle to what is lost beyond death, be it the quiet repose of Elves or the inscrutable death of Men. Ages die as well as individuals and with their passing goes their remembrance.

Another abortive attempt to render Beren and Lúthien in prose, *The Tale of Nauglafring*, presents two alternatives for the lovers’ fate, which are notable as neither faithfully echoes established tradition or shapes the orthodox version given in *The Silmarillion* or *The Lord of the Rings*. In the first postulated conclusion, Lúthien fades while wearing the Silmaril and Beren searches for her only to fade himself; their destination is never given, nor have we the satisfaction of seeming them die

together—having once cheated death, the lovers are now separated by it. In the other variant, again relayed through reported, albeit more universally repeated, discourse, “[m]ayhap what all Elves say is true, that those twain hunt now in the forest of Oromë in Valinor, and Tinúviel dances on the green swards of Nessa and Vána daughters of the Gods for ever more” (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 245). This option borders upon trite; why, of all the beings in Middle-earth, should Beren and Lúthien receive an unambiguously happy ending? The Elves may find it pretty to think so, but it is their loss of Lúthien beyond the borders of the world that seals the story’s poignance. We are informed that, shortly before their son Dior’s downfall, “the tales of Beren and Lúthien grew dim in his heart,” but this level of uncertainty or inability to learn from the mistakes of others, while consistent with the greater mythos and other recensions of the tale, does not mesh with the paradisiacal afterlife apparently favoured by Elvish story-tellers (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 245).

The Silmarillion heightens the sense of doom inherent in the story so that there is never any doubt that Lúthien is trapped by Beren’s fate. The Valar nominally offer Lúthien a choice, to stay in Valinor and forget her suffering, or “that she might return to Middle-earth, and take with her Beren, there to dwell again, but without certitude of life or joy. Then she would become mortal, and subject to a second death, even as he; and ere long she would leave the world forever, and her beauty become only a memory in song” (the wording here is almost identical to *Quenta Noldorinwa’s*) (187). However, this result is never disputed, as we hear some twenty pages earlier that as soon as the two profess their love, “[t]hus [Beren] began the payment of anguish for the fate that was laid on him; and in his fate Lúthien was caught, and being immortal she shared in his mortality, and being free received his chain; and her anguish was greater than any other of the Eldalië has known” (165-6). As if this were not enough to foreshadow the inevitable, Lúthien affirms even before the Silmaril is captured that their “doom shall be alike” (177), and Huan tells Beren that by her love, Lúthien has bound herself to his death (179).

While the narrative never conceals Lúthien’s ultimate choice from its vantage point outside the immediate events of the story, it still presents it *as a choice* and not blind predestination: “This doom she chose, forsaking the Blessed Realm, and putting aside all claim to kinship with those that dwell there; that thus whatever grief might lie in wait, the fates of Beren and Lúthien might be joined, and their paths lead together beyond the confines of the world. So it was that alone of the Eldalië she has died indeed, and left the world long ago” (187). Many that come after may see, “though all the world is changed, the likeness of Lúthien the beloved, whom they

have lost" (187), but still she is lost to what her mother Melian recognises must be "a parting beyond the end of the world" (188). We are not surprised that Lúthien will break the spatial and temporal confines of the world if we recall that initially Luthien's song is described as, "[k]een, heart-piercing... as the song of the lark that rises from the gates of night and pours its voice amongst the dying stars, seeing the sun **behind the walls of the world** (165, my emphasis). The walls of the world are already subliminally shattered.

As in the unnamed sketch (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 91), "[n]o mortal spoke ever again with Beren son of Barahir," though now it is added, "and none saw Beren or Lúthien leave the world, or marked where at last their bodies lay" (188). Instead of forgetting his parents' fate for greed (though such greed does follow), "Dior looking upon [the Silmaril] knew it for a sign that Beren Erchamion and Lúthien Tinúviel had died indeed, and gone where go the race of Men to a fate beyond the world" (236). Additionally it is given, as in *Quenta Nodorinwa*, that while none dared touch Lúthien when she wore the jewel, "the wise have said that the Silmaril hastened their end; for the flame of the beauty of Lúthien as she wore it was too bright for mortal lands" (236). Here we are reminded that the ending of the tale is in doubt; no more is it disputed *where* Beren and Lúthien go (though no one can qualify the fate of Men), or that they go together, but their mortal remains remain at unknown, as does the extent of the Silmaril's role in their passing. The surety that has always characterised *The Silmarillion's* account—so blatant from the beginning as to the doom awaiting the lovers—breaks down when that doom actually falls. Mortality cannot permit certainty as we are reduced to speculation over what "the wise have said."

Nor does Lúthien's newfound mortality doom only her. The clearest indication that mortality has irrevocably impacted her song is the fate of Dairon/Daeron, the greatest bard of Middle-earth, who entangled as he is in the fate assigned to Lúthien can never memorialise her tale in music. As early as *The Tale of Tinúviel*, Tinúviel takes her name from her (then-brother) Dairon instead of Beren, long before "Lúthien" entered the written record (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 43-4). *The Lay of Leithian* tells us that after Beren's initial departure from Doriath, "[a]ll looked away,/and later remembered the sad day/ whereafter Lúthien no more sang" (ll.1186-8), but the *Quenta Noldorinwa* extends this silence to Dairon: "in searching [for Lúthien] Dairon the piper of Doriath was lost, who loved Lúthien before Beren came to Doriath. He was the greatest of the musicians of the Elves, save Maglor son

of Fëanor, and Tinfang Warble.¹ But he came never back to Doriath and strayed into the East of the world" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 138). We do not know Dairon's fate thereafter, though *The Silmarillion* provides slightly more enlightenment:

"...Daeron the minstrel of Thingol strayed from the land, and was seen no more. He it was that made music for the dance and song of Lúthien, before Beren came to Doriath; and he had loved her, and set all his thought of her in his music. He became the greatest of all the minstrels of the Elves east of the Seat, named even before Maglor son of Fëanor. But seeking for Lúthien in despair he wandered upon strange paths, and passing over the mountains he came into the East of Middle-earth, where for many ages he made lament beside the dark waters for Lúthien, daughter of Thingol, most beautiful of all living things." (183)

Lúthien provided the muse for Daeron's poetic prowess and silences him in equal measure. The heroine's impending mortality dooms both her and the greatest of Elvish singers' songs to dissipation and uncertain endings. Even as *The Silmarillion* assures that "for many ages he made lament," there is no-one to hear that lament and his musical career is effectively muted. In choosing mortality, Lúthien also chooses a forever incomplete legacy.

We know this legacy is incomplete in-universe because Aragorn tells us so. While it is the tale Strider can tell the hobbits in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, even when he is unwilling to speak of Gil-galad "with the servants of the Enemy at hand", the end is unknown and the proper form unremembered: " 'I will tell you the tale of Tinúviel,' said Strider, 'in brief—for it is a long tale of which the end is not known; and there are none now, except Elrond, that remember it aright as it was told of old' " (252). The ending, when it comes, is again presented through a veil of hearsay and impersonal song (whose song, we never learn): "But she chose mortality, and to die from the world, so that she might follow him; and it is sung that they met again beyond the Sundering Seas, and after a brief time walking alive once more in the green woods, together they passed, long ago, beyond the confines of this world. So it is that Lúthien Tinúviel alone of the Elf-kindred has died indeed and left the world, and they have lost her whom they most loved" (255).

At the very end of *The Return of the King*, we realise that the end of Lúthien's song is also essentially the end of the Red Book of Westmarch, and thus our narrative view into the world of Arda. Lúthien's line may never be broken (175), and Arwen may

¹ *The Tale of Tinúviel* and *The Lay of Leithian* account him the greatest.

remake her choice: "...mine is the choice of Lúthien, and as she so have I chosen, both the sweet and the bitter" (304). Again it is couched in oblivion and the frailty of human memory. On his deathbed, Aragorn tells Arwen, "[i]n sorrow we must go, but not in despair. Behold! we are not bound for ever to the circles of the world, and beyond them is more than memory". However, that memory cannot linger forever in Middle-earth (422). Their tale—the echo of Beren and Lúthien's own tale—ends thus:

"There at last when the mallorn-leaves were falling, but spring had not yet come, [Arwen] laid herself to rest upon Cerin Amroth; and there is her green grave, until the world is changed, and all the days of her life are utterly forgotten by men that come after, and elanor and niphredil bloom no more east of the Sea.

Here ends this tale, as it has come to us from the South; and with the passing of the Evenstar no more is said in this book of the days of old." (423)

We may know the location of her (and Aragorn's) grave, where Beren and Lúthien's were a mystery, but we are simultaneously assured that this knowledge will not persist. The book itself ends its account of "the days of old" and the history of Middle-earth not, as one might expect, with the departure of the last Ringbearer (Sam) or Legolas and Gimli, nor the death of Aragorn or Merry and Pippin, but with the reverberation of Lúthien's choice, and through it the understanding that with mortality all fame fades.

Tolkien himself is quoted as stating after his wife Edith's death, "[b]ut **the story has gone crooked**, and I am left, and *I* cannot plead before the inexorable Mandos" (*The Tale of Beren and Lúthien* 17, emphasis mine). Even at the end of his life, Tolkien was concerned with narrative—not only its contents but its means of telling. And even at the end of his life, Tolkien recognised that death curtails even the best story, leaving only its "crooked" remnants. Thus, in Middle-earth, just as on our earth, the price of mortality is narrative uncertainty. To be released from the circles of the world means to ultimately escape that world's stories.

Interestingly, even as Lúthien's early song invokes the lark's melody ascending from "the gates of night" (*Silmarillion* 165), the narrative later recounts that Lúthien "set upon [Morgoth] a dream, dark as the Outer Void where once he walked alone"—and, of course, where he will be locked again, beyond the Walls of the Night (*Silmarillion* 181). For the same episode, *The Lay of Leithian* gives: "then softly she began to sing/a theme of sleep and slumbering,/wandering, woven with deeper spell/than songs wherewith in ancient dell/Melian did once the twilight

fill,/profound, and fathomless, and still" (*The Lay of Leithian* 3978-83), further confirming that Lúthien's song is somehow deeper and more fathomless than any sung in Middle-earth or sourced in Valinor. It is the darker counterpart to the Music of the Ainur, which ultimately, by trapping Lúthien in human death, provides the heroine with an escape from the world produced by the Ainur's melody.

If the lark's song delineates the confines of existence as contained by the Music of the Ainur, Lúthien's song bursts the barriers of Arda, allowing her to pass where none of the Eldar have gone before. In this she proves a foil for Morgoth, whose inability to create independent of Eru's Music is mirrored by his ultimate separation from Eru's creation. Lúthien's separation from that creation, beyond the circles of the world, instead offers her the possibility of a new beginning, in whatever greater plan Eru has for Men. Stagnation and imprisonment on the one hand faces unknowable (and thus conceivably eternal) potential on the other. And in this, we might understand why Beren and Lúthien's tale numbers "[a]mong the tales of sorrow and of ruin that come down to us from the darkness of those days [among which] there are yet some in which amid weeping there is joy and under shadow of death light that endures" (*Silmarillion* 162). The enduring light is, in addition to the couple's heroism or their descendents' unbroken line, the *potential* inherent in the doom of Men. Lúthien's greatest tragedy, and indeed her triumph, is inconclusiveness.

THE MARY CELESTE OF MIDDLE-EARTH

“Where are Gondor’s navies?”

Samuel Cook

Much is made of Gondor’s military prowess in *The Lord of the Rings*. Its fighting men are valiant beyond compare, its fortifications are insurmountable, its leaders are incorruptible¹, and so on. What are not mentioned so much are Gondor’s fleets. Why? Where are they? And why aren’t they doing something? This was something I touched on in an earlier article², but I’ll aim to go into more detail here.

This is perhaps odder than it might at first appear. Rohan doesn’t have a navy either, for instance. However, Gondor, unlike Rohan, is far from landlocked. It includes the entire lower course of the Anduin, as well as having an extensive coastline from Harondor to Ras Morthil. There are clearly economic grounds for shipbuilding: given the prevalent medieval technological state of Middle-earth, transporting goods long-distance would be far cheaper by sea than by land³, and one would expect an extensive fishing fleet at least. Indeed, the population of the Ethir and Anfalas are described as ‘fisher-folk’, so they presumably know the basics of shipbuilding at the very least.

Another pressing reason for Gondor to have a navy is that one of its primary enemies is the Corsairs of Umbar. A group of pirates. And it’s a lot more effective to fight pirates at sea or assault their bases than it is to sit and wait for them to raid your coastline, because that means you have to somehow defend your whole coastline all the time⁴, which is just silly and wasteful of manpower and resources. Yet, at the time of the War of the Ring, there is no indication that Gondor has any sort of naval force with which it can intercept the Corsair fleet before it reaches the Anduin.

To make this even more inexplicable, there’s the cultural factor too: much of the Gondorian population, particularly the elite governing classes, is wholly or partly

¹ Denethor II aside. And he wasn’t so much corrupted as deluded. And Boromir. He was corrupted. To be honest, ‘incorruptible’ was more of an aspiration than literally true.

² *Anor* 47, ‘Crisis of the Third Age? Comparisons between the Third Age and the Third Century A.D.’

³ Boats carry more things than a horse, require less food, and go faster if the horse doesn’t have decent roads.

⁴ After all, Frederick the Great did say: ‘He who defends everywhere defends nowhere’. I disagree — my entire *Medieval II: Total War* strategy was based on defence-in-depth everywhere and it worked — but he did have a point about the impossibility of trying to defend everything all of the time.

descended from the Númenóreans, and if there's one thing we know about the Númenóreans, it's that they were quite big on building boats. Like, mad keen. (Literally, in the case of Ar-Pharazôn.) The Númenóreans' big thing was that they were really good at sailing, being stuck on an island in the middle of nowhere. Whilst much was lost in the Downfall and the subsequent slow decay of Gondor, surely their descendants didn't forget how boats worked?

What really takes the ship's biscuit is Gondor's history. At various points in its three-thousand-odd years of existence, Gondor is known to have had strong naval forces available. Four of its kings¹ were known as the 'Ship-Kings', who are specifically stated to have built navies (*The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix A, p.1020). Eärnil I, the second Ship-King, was drowned when most of his navy was destroyed by a storm off Umbar in T.A. 936. Later on, around T.A. 1430-1440, Castamir the Usurper was Captain of the Ships, which implies there was still a strong naval force extant. Indeed, Castamir is reported to have 'thought only of the fleets' (*The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix A, p. 1022), so there was clearly still a navy in the mid-Third Age². Even later, in T.A. 1810, Telumehtar Umbardacil led a force that successfully retook Umbar, an endeavour which must have involved a large naval element for transport and to blockade the harbour³. At the very end of the line of the kings, Eärnur, as crown prince, still managed to sail a large force to Mithlond to aid Arnor against the Witch-king in T.A. 1975. Though they arrived too late to actually save the kingdom, they did manage to chase the Witch-king away and destroy the power of Angmar. This force is described thus:

"So great in draught and so many were his [Eärnur's] ships that they could scarcely find harbourage, though both the Harlond and the Forlond also were filled" (*The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix A, p.1026).

So it is clear that, at the start of the third millennium of the Third Age, Gondor still had substantial naval forces available.

¹ Tarannon Falastur ('Noble Gate Lord of Coasts'. Hint), Eärnil I ('Sea Lover'), Ciryandil ('Ship Lover') and Hyarmendacil I (Ciryaher) ('Lord of Ships' – Hyarmendacil was an honorific because he smashed the Haradrim).

² Though, after the defeat of Castamir, his sons and followers, who held out at Pelargir, sailed off to Umbar to set up their own lordship, removing it from the control of Gondor. This exodus presumably led to the loss of most, if not all, of the mid-Third Age navy.

³ It's difficult to imagine that Telumehtar could have taken the city with only land forces. The Corsairs would have just sailed away and landed troops behind his lines or raided the undefended coastlines of Gondor whilst the army was tied up.

After the death of Eärnur and the beginning of the rule of the Stewards, we hear nothing of any further naval force¹, but it is stated that Aragorn, masquerading as Thorongil, was able to gather a small fleet, launch a surprise naval assault on Umbar, burn the Corsairs' fleet, and escape, only fifty-odd years before the War of the Ring². Evidently there was still some sort of navy in existence, still within living memory by the time of the War of the Ring. Gondor clearly has a history of building ships and equipping fleets, such that it is difficult to believe that they were seemingly completely unprovisioned in this department in the reign of Denethor II.

Given there are strong economic, military, cultural and historical reasons for Gondor to have a navy at the time of the War of the Ring, how can we explain the apparent lack of one? Short of some sort of weird anti-navy bias on the part of Denethor II, or a conspiracy theory that he was in cahoots with the Corsairs, or the unlikely possibility that there was a massive navy but no-one talked about them and they did nothing, the three principal possibilities are lack of materials, lack of money and lack of men. To deal with these in turn:

Decent-sized military vessels need a lot of materials to build, principally wood³. Tar-Aldarion is recorded as having taken great pains to ensure a plentiful wood supply for the ever-growing Númenórean navy through careful management of the island's forests, which were being chopped down at an alarming rate. There is even a suggestion in *Unfinished Tales* (p.340-342), in a discussion of the name *Gwathló*⁴, that the Númenóreans' shipbuilding antics were responsible for deforesting the entire region. In the real world, the same is observed—a lot of British imperial policy was linked to ensuring a constant supply of good-quality wood for the navy. If Gondor had run out of wood, building a navy would have been difficult, especially given the desultory trade links in Middle-earth. However, there's no indication Gondor had run out of trees. The population had been declining for centuries, so there was

¹ Indeed, in the reign of Beren, the 19th Steward, around T.A. 2758, Gondor seems completely unable to contest the landing of the three great fleets of the Corsairs and Haradrim that assailed it. It might be that there was no navy; it might be that it was simply too small to effectively oppose such overwhelming force.

² We're not given an exact date, but this was probably around T.A. 2970, given Aragorn returned from his great journeys and errantry in T.A. 2980, and we know he left Gondor immediately after this raid and still had some amount of journeying to do – his 'face was towards the Mountains of Shadow' (*LOTR*, Appendix A, p.1030).

³ I think we're fairly safe in making the assumption that Gondor was not on to the ironclad stage of boatbuilding yet.

⁴ The Greyflood, which divides Minhiriath from Enedwaith, and lies about halfway between Arnor and Gondor.

presumably a lot of previously farmed or settled land that had returned to forest and was therefore available¹, as well as pre-existing forest. We know for a fact that there were large forested areas in Anorien, not at all far from Minas Tirith, for instance. The Rohirrim ride through them to relieve the city, after all². Besides, you would think that the government might prioritise wood for the navy over wood for, say, fences or housing, so it seems unlikely that Gondor's lack of a navy was due to insufficient raw materials.

Another thing you need a lot of to create a navy is money. Shipbuilding isn't cheap; you have to buy all the raw materials and then pay a lot of skilled workers to actually make the thing. And then, once you've got a boat, you need to pay a crew to sail it, pay for upkeep and provide all the necessary port facilities. Again, though, this seems unlikely to be a problem for Gondor. It certainly seems to have plenty of money to equip an army, repair the defences of Minas Tirith and so on, so diverting some of the army resources into a navy should have been possible. Besides, the port facilities, at the very least, already existed at Pelargir and the Harlond, and probably elsewhere along the coast and the Anduin³.

The final ingredient for a functional navy is men: you need people who know how to build boats, and you need people who know how to sail boats. Or, at the very least, row. This is perhaps the area where we are most likely to find an answer to our problem. It's difficult to believe that shipbuilding as a craft had died out in Gondor – after all, there had still been plenty of boats around for Aragorn to requisition fifty years earlier⁴—and the craft had a very long history among the Númenóreans and their descendants, as discussed above, so it would really seem to be a stretch for it to have coincidentally disappeared just when Gondor really needed some boats. It seems likelier that the problem lay in finding people to crew the boats: if all the able-bodied men⁵ are already in the army⁶, there's not going to be a huge labour pool left

¹ As can be observed in much of Eastern Europe currently.

² Now some of this was effectively protected by being filled with the Drúedain, or in the case of the Firienwood, by being sacred, but the point remains that there was clearly plenty of remaining forest cover even near major population centres.

³ Edhellond springs to mind as a potential site, though it's unclear how far the original Elvish port was still functional by the time of the War of the Ring. Dol Amroth, though, must have had some sort of port, being the second city of Gondor and on the coast.

⁴ It's possible all the shipwrights could have died in that time and failed to pass on their skills, but that would seem awfully convenient.

⁵ Remember: this is Middle-earth. The Gondorian women are very much going to be not fighting.

⁶ Whether this is the case is open to debate. Gondor, by this point, is clearly a heavily militarised society, but we have very little real idea of its population or demography. The hints in the text about the civilian exodus from Minas Tirith suggest that it was almost entirely composed of non-

to man the boats. Not unless you want to round up all the people who already aren't in the army because they're doing unimportant things such as growing food¹. That would probably be rather self-defeating in the longer-term. An alternative would be to use slaves, as was the case for rowing crews throughout much of real-world history. But Gondor (a) doesn't do slavery, as far as we know², and (b) doesn't have the means to acquire any slaves. You can't use Orcs—they're too evil and untrustworthy, even if you could somehow capture³ some—and the only accessible substantial human population is the Rohirrim, who are allies, so it would be something of a diplomatic faux-pas to start enslaving them. Gondor could, of course, raid Umbar for pirates, if it had a naval force. Which it doesn't, because it has no slaves to crew it. Bit chicken and egg there.

Of course, men could always have been reassigned from the army to the navy, but this might have been politically untenable, even if men could be found. The main threat was very clearly attacks from Mordor over the Anduin since the re-erection of the Barad-dûr 65 years beforehand⁴. There was a sodding visible load of shadow and flame just on the other side of the river, which, one imagines, rather fixated everyone's attention. Also, even this near-total mobilisation of Gondor's population seems to have been barely sufficient to hold the line of the river. At this point, if someone had suggested that the army, which is fighting and barely containing a danger so clear and present that it can blot out the Sun, be reduced in favour of an untried navy, which might be useful against a potential threat at some undefined point in the future, one feels the speaker would have been lucky to get out of the room unscathed. If the same argument were presented to the populace at large, you wouldn't need to be part of the Kaiser Chiefs to predict the ensuing riot. To put it another way, Gondor's military mindset had become trapped over several decades,

combatants—the old, the young, the women—but this was the city's final need. How many of those staying in the city were actually soldiers, rather than a hastily recruited militia, is unknown and unknowable. Bergil's words about Beregon, his father, hint that being a professional soldier retained a certain cachet, which, by implication, means there must still have been a reasonable number of men who weren't full-time soldiers. However, one imagines this was mainly because they were working in some sort of service industry that the military needed: farming, smithing, carpentry, etc. So, the assumption that there wasn't any surplus manpower for a navy seems reasonable.

¹ Someone had to. Even if the evidence for agriculture in Middle-earth is decidedly sparse.

² They're the Good Guys, remember? Tolkien is hardly going to make them slave-owners, because slavery is bad.

³ One feels Orcs would fight to the death against humans, rather than face capture, if they couldn't run away. And then trying to stop the guards killing any Orc prisoners out-of-hand would be even more difficult.

⁴ Mount Doom bursts into flame once more in T.A. 2954 and the re-erection of the Barad-dûr is about the same time.

if not centuries, by short-term tactical considerations at the expense of longer-term strategic thinking. To some extent, by the time Denethor II became Steward, it was too late to reverse course and diversify the armed forces. Gondor had become a victim of its own increasingly reactionary role. As its power waned, it could only counter the most pressing threat, rather than taking a proactive role to strengthen its position. The lack of a significant naval threat since T.A. 2758, when the last major Corsair invasion occurred, meant any naval considerations were abandoned, as the land-based threat became ever stronger. Maybe Sauron's own strategic abilities were greater than he's often credited with...

In conclusion, Gondor had strong economic, cultural, military and historical reasons for having a navy at the time of the War of the Ring, yet did not appear to have one. This is best explained by a lack of available manpower due to the ever-growing dominance of the army in response to the land-based threat from Sauron in Mordor, exacerbated by Gondor's increasingly short-term and reactionary outlook as its power declined.

IN DEFENCE OF TUOR

Samuel Cook

Many¹ people have commented on the strangeness of my predilection for Tuor, who is one of my favourite *Silmarillion* characters. Apparently, he's a bit dull or something. Obviously, I disagree. I therefore intend to set out why I think Tuor is actually just as worthy of admiration as his more popular kinsmen, such as Beren or Túrin, and why he might even be better than them, in order to set the record straight.

His childhood was as hard as anyone's

Many of Tolkien's heroes have sub-optimal family situations *cough* Túrin *cough*. Tuor's, though, was as bad as anyone's—worse, even, in many ways. For a start, his dad² was killed in the Nirnaeth Arnoediad before Tuor was even born, and then his mum³ abandoned him and died of grief on the Haudh-en-Ndengin within the first few months of his life. By the time he was a year old, he had already been orphaned for a while. And he was being brought up in some caves⁴ in the wilds of Mithrim by some Sindar, so he wasn't even being raised by his own race, let alone anyone remotely related to him, or even in a building of any kind. Then, when he was 16 and nearing adulthood, he was captured by some Easterlings and enslaved. All-round, it's safe to say that Tuor had a pretty terrible childhood. Even Túrin knew both his parents, and Beren's life was a bed of roses until he was in his late teens, when the Dagor Bragollach happened. Aragorn lost his father early, but his mother was still around. Tuor's early years were seemingly more traumatic than anyone else's.

He's as hard as anyone

For some reason, Tuor doesn't seem to be considered as accomplished a fighter or as hardy an adventurer as many other heroes. But he's the only hero who survived enslavement by the Easterlings for three years, which he followed with a Beren-esque four years of outlawry, living on his own in the wilderness and running a one-man guerrilla campaign against said Easterlings⁵. He then became the only Man

¹ By which I mean at least two.

² Huor.

³ Rían.

⁴ Androth.

⁵ To the extent that Lorgan, the chief Easterling, put a price on his head. How much is not recorded.

specially chosen by a Vala as the instrument of their design¹, and, as a result, became the first Man to see the sea. He walks from Mithrim to Vinyamar, via the Annon-in-Gelydh and Cirith Ninniach, and then all the way across country to Gondolin² during the Fell Winter, the single nastiest bit of extreme seasonality recorded in Beleriand. He manages to persuade the Gondolindrim to *let him in*, becoming only the third Man to see the city³, and then they *let him stay*. Admittedly, he fails to persuade Turgon to listen to reason, but that's the Noldor for you. The only one of them who ever listened to sensible advice was Finarfin, and that's why he never left Valinor.

When the city is finally discovered and attacked, he also fights valiantly in its defence and is instrumental in securing the escape of a portion of the populace and ensuring they reach relative safety at the Mouths of Sirion. He was helped by Glorfindel and Idril, obviously, but he did his part, including defeating the traitorous Maeglin in single combat. Tuor was certainly no slouch when it came to fighting, trekking or general heroism. Whether you think his feats were more or less impressive than other heroes' is a matter of opinion, but they're undeniably up there and as worthy as anyone else's.

He's got a massive chopper

It's called Dramborleg. It's a big axe. No one else gets a big axe. They're all stuck with boring swords. Tuor is definitely cooler in the weapons department.

He marries an Elf

OK, so maybe not quite as good as Beren marrying a demigod, but still a decent achievement. After having been allowed to stay in Gondolin, he manages to capture Idril's heart and persuades her father, Turgon, to let him marry her. That's pretty good going. Turgon didn't make him get a Silmaril or reunite the moribund Kingdoms of Men, so Beren and Aragorn both had a harder time of it on the strop-py-father-in-law front. But being one of only three Men in history to 'officially' marry an Elf is still something to be proud of.

¹ In this case, by Ulmo.

² I don't know how far that is, there not being a handy scale bar on the map of Beleriand, but we're talking several hundred miles.

³ Húrin and Huor had visited for a year after the Dagor Bragollach, being rescued by the Eagles from the fighting and dropped off in the city.

His son saves the world

Tuor and Idril's son is Eärendil, who finally convinces the Valar to properly deal with Morgoth. It's fair to say Tuor must have been quite an effective parent; it's recorded that one of Eärendil's motivations in his various voyages was to see if he could find any trace of his parents, so he must have been pretty attached to them. Tuor is certainly a contender for Middle-earth Dad of the Year.

He becomes immortal

Well, maybe. When Tuor is getting old, he and Idril sail off from the settlement at the Mouths of Sirion into the wide blue yonder and vanish. *The Silmarillion* records that it was believed that Tuor, alone of all Men, was adjudged to the kindred of the Firstborn and, therefore, to all intents and purposes, became an Elf. If so, that definitely one-ups everyone else and must have really annoyed Beren, whose mortality Mandos categorically refused to modify. And that was with Lúthien's singing. Whether Tuor was actually numbered with the Noldor rather than Men is open to debate¹, but it's a pretty good legend to have concerning your eventual fate.

It's all Tolkien's fault

The real reason Tuor is under-appreciated, I feel, is that Tolkien never got around to writing a more detailed version of his story. We have reams on both Beren and Túrin², but, apart from the very early version in *The Book of Lost Tales*, Tuor's story never received the same treatment. We have the beginnings of an attempt to do so preserved in *Unfinished Tales*, but that breaks off with Tuor's arrival in Gondolin, so a lot of the more complex psychological and character development that other heroes show never gets worked out. Tolkien never got around to finishing it, despite Tuor's story being one of the foundational elements of the legendarium. Which is a great shame and one of the first things I would seek to rectify if I had a time machine³.

¹ Especially given Mandos and Manwë's refusals to countenance such a thing for Beren and their initial hesitation in even giving Eärendil and Elwing a choice, despite their clear mixed-race heritage.

² Witness the separate publication of both *The Children of Húrin* and *Beren and Lúthien*.

³ Along with halting iconoclasm, persuading Henry VIII to take a less destructive attitude to monasteries and explaining elementary gunsmithing and vaccination to various 14th-century native peoples to make the Age of Imperialism more of a contest. It's probably a good thing I don't have a time machine.

So, there you have it: Tuor was just as great as, if not greater than, his more famous contemporaries, relations and descendants. If only Tolkien hadn't been so dilatory, I wouldn't have had to write this: it would have been self-evident!

CTS IN-JOKES EXPLAINED

Samuel Cook

It seemed a good idea to set down in writing the current multitude of CTS in-jokes, such that those with less exposure to the society might have some idea of what's going on. So here goes. I don't promise that any of these appear to make any sense, but they did at the time. Honestly.

Accents

CTS has devised all sorts of accents for various Tolkien characters. Some of the most popular include George W. Thorin, Australian Merry and Pippin, Scottish Aragorn, Valley Girl Galadriel, RP Orcs, Bilbo the non-specific yokel and Norfolk Elves. Of course, these are all highly dependent on CTS having members that can do accents, especially once the person who comes up with a particular voice has moved on.

Boromor

No, that's not a typo. Boromor was the winner of the Best Death eagle debate and is the soldier of Rohan killed in the movie version of Helm's Deep, by getting hit in the chest by one of the big Uruk-hai ballista grapnel things, complete with Wilhelm scream. The character isn't named, so CTS came up with one. Quite why we didn't pick a more obviously Rohirric name, I don't know.

The Clanger is in the Trifle

On the model of the Moomins and Tinky-Winky (see below), the society's warning phrase for when too much con-langing is going on.

Cult of Caradhras

Since time immemorial (i.e. 2011), much of the society have been practising members of the Cult of Caradhras /\ . Upon hearing or uttering the name of the holy mountain, all cult members must make the sign of the mountain (/ \) with their hands. The Cult's original objectives centred on overthrowing and killing (/dunking in the Cam) the Steward, but it now seems to have become less homicidal. The Cult's origins date back to a Most Effective Geographical Feature eagle debate where a strong case was made that Caradhras's foresight in siting itself, several millennia in advance, in such a strategic position clearly proved that it was a mountain to be reckoned with and revered. Most of the society saw this claim for the bunkum it

was, but the hardcore cultists ensured the Cult was propagated through the years. The Cult Leader/Head of the Mountain/Grand Dragon is usually Smaug.

Dain Ironfoot is a Communist

In one of James's stranger flights of fancy, Dain Ironfoot was decreed to be a Communist, bringing equality to the Dwarves of Middle-earth. It may have something to do with having 'iron' in his name. Dain also won the Most Underrated Character eagle debate because of the lack of appreciation of his progressive political ideals in the reactionary monarchist world of Middle-earth.

Fluffy the Fell Beast

The Witch-king's Fell Beast is called Fluffy. Because it's obviously so cute.

The King

After a wholesale subversion of the AGM's democratic process by the then-Keeper of the Red Book, Samuel ended up being created King Ar-Pharazôn, though managed to change his official title to Tar-Palantir. Most of the society (baselessly) continue to believe the first name was more accurate. They'll realise the error of their ways when they get burned at the altar of the Temple.

The Moomin is in the Crumble

A phrase to be used when there is an excessive amount of philosophy going on in a meeting. Coined when the society had an excessive number of philosophically-minded people who often went off on one.

Saruman the Fabulous

Because he claims to be Saruman of Many Colours, right? So he must be fabulous.

Steve the Ringwraith ("Goddammit, Steve!")

Steve is the most useless Ringwraith. He's the one that fails to apprehend the Hobbits in the Shire; the one who gets set on fire by Aragorn on Weathertop (in the film); the one on the Fell Beast who fails to spot Frodo, Sam and Gollum in the Dead Marshes; and, just generally, is largely more of a hindrance to his own side than a threat to the Fellowship and to blame for everything the evil side gets wrong. For this reason, Steve nearly won the Most Lethal Character eagle debate. Though his lethality was largely unintentional and to his own side, which is perhaps why the dice ruled against him and Túrin ended up winning.

Thranduil the Party King

We can't claim to have come up with that one, but we fully agree with the online consensus that Thranduil is the undisputed party animal of Middle-earth. UNTZ UNTZ UNTZ UNTZ.

Tinky-Winky is in the Spotted Dick

On the model of "The Moomin is in the Crumble", but for when there is too much maths happening. Many of the excessive philosophisers and maths-ers were the same people, so both sayings tend to be used together.

Tom Bombadil is the Witch-king

As vigorously promoted on the Internet and enthusiastically believed by CTS.

The Works of Isengard

Computers and all that pertains to them. As the most technologically advanced person in Middle-earth, Saruman is clearly the progenitor of all things digital, which can be seen in their infuriating tendency to not work.

CONSEQUENCES

Various members of the Society

Manwë met Tom Bombadil on the Sun.

Manwë said, "Could you pass me the spoon?"

Tom Bombadil replied: "As a child, I wanted to be a unicorn."

They went white-water rafting up the Anduin, 'cos YOLO.

As a result, the Shire entered late-stage capitalism.

Elrond met Haleth daughter of Haldad on Tom Bombadil.

Elrond said: "Ride the dragon, you idiot! Ride it!"

Haleth daughter of Haldad replied, "You really need to brush your hair."

They pretended to be married, in a cunning plot to win the political support of Elrond's father, the King of the Noldor.

As a result, they all lived happily ever after.

Barad-dûr's caretaker met the Witch-king of Angmar on the back of an Eagle.

Barad-dûr's caretaker said, "I find your proposal interesting. Extremely interesting."

The Witch-king of Angmar replied, "We've found our burglar."

They burst into the room hand in hand.

As a result, they realised they loved each other and they always had. Also, squirrels went extinct.

Belladonna Took met the Master of Laketown on the face of Thangorodrim.

Belladonna Took said, "Where are we?"

The Master of Laketown replied, "I didn't know you felt that way about me..."

Belladonna Took bowed while secretly taking out a knife.

As a result, Elrond sighed and turned away in quiet despair.

Sauron met Fatty Bolger in the queue for the bathroom at Valinor's trendiest club.

Sauron said, "Have you seen Bilbo? He's vanished!"

Fatty Bolger replied, "You disgust me."

Sauron pleaded guilty.

As a result, something awakened, gnawing in the nameless dark at the roots of the world.

Tolkien met Finrod in the Prancing Pony.

Tolkien said, "Want to grab coffee some time?"

Finrod replied, "That's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to me..."

They went for a lovely picnic in Ithilien.

As a result, Aragorn failed to save Gondor and everyone died.

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