

A Preview ...

Some thoughts on reading *The Lord of the Rings* aloud

Michael D. C. Drout
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My first introduction to Tolkien was my father reading *The Lord of the Rings* aloud to me when, family lore says, I was four. I believe this is exaggerated and that I was at least five when we first moved up from *The Hobbit* to *LotR*, but regardless of when it started, my father would read *LotR* to me every night that he was not working, and when we got to the end, we would start at the beginning the next night. This went on until several years after I was able to read the books for myself.

I have now continued the tradition. ...

Firelace

N. C. Graham

Kora's spinning wheel whirled.

She had learned to spin when she was very young, but only during the last year had she begun doing so in earnest. Not because she wanted to, but because she had to. When their father's madness prevented him from milling, her brother Richard began to avoid both labor and the sight of his crazed father. Thus, the role of provider fell to Kora, unless she married well—and there was little chance of that. She knew only one man who might propose to her. Kenyon, the blacksmith's son, paid her numerous attentions, but nothing had yet come of it, and if his meddlesome, domineering mother had anything to say about the matter, Kora supposed nothing ever would.

A commotion cut her thoughts—and her spinning—short.

"What was that?"

"Nothing!" Richard shouted from behind the partition that sheltered their sleeping quarters. "I'm just putting my hunting things away."

"Then *finish* putting them away," she retorted. "You've been at it for at least fifteen minutes, and the hired hands already asked for you twice this afternoon." Though he could not see her, she pointed anyway, toward the part of the building set aside for milling. "You don't think we can survive on spinning alone, do you?"

Richard came out from around the corner, laughing. "Silly girl, don't you understand? You will never have to spin again. Look."

A Friendship Remembered (a tribute to Daniel Timmons)

By Ted Nasmith

I hadn't known Dan very long. We met in August 2001, when he was told by a mutual acquaintance that I lived near Toronto. He was making a documentary video as a project on the importance of *The Lord of the Rings* to its many loyal readers, he and contacted me about being interviewed, as well as loaning him the use of several illustrations as stills for various scenes. The video, *The Legacy of The Lord of the Rings*, is still being broadcast on cable channels and helped satisfy interest in the novel, newly generated as it was by the release of Peter Jackson's film version of the trilogy. Dan was a big fan of my Tolkien art, and although at that time I tended to be very uncomfortable with interviewers' microphones, Dan's knowledge of Tolkien and his friendly, disarming manner soon had me relaxed and able to express my thoughts fairly articulately. ...

A Note on Turin and Oedipus

Dr. Dimitra Fimi
Cardiff University

The reference to Oedipus as a source for Túrin is remarkable, especially if one bears in mind Tolkien's preference for Northern European myths and legends "in reaction against the 'Classics'" (Carpenter, *Letters* 55). However, the parallels between Túrin and Oedipus are immediately apparent to those who are familiar with both stories: the main thread that seems to connect Oedipus and Túrin (and Kullervo as well) is not just the plot element of their unwitting incest, but their manipulation by Fate or the Gods. During the international event *Tolkien 2005: The Ring Goes Ever On* (a congress to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* organised by the Tolkien Society and held between 11-15 August 2005 at Aston University, Birmingham), one of the most memorable events for me was a performance of extracts from Sophocle's *Oedipus the King* and parallel parts of the story of Túrin Turambar, dramatised and presented by the Greek Tolkien Society (*Doom and Fate: Where Myths Meet*, on the Friday evening). The ingenious idea that the Greek Tolkien Society had was to use the same actor (all roles were performed by surprisingly talented members of the Society) to play both roles of Oedipus and Túrin, which presented the audience with the overwhelming experience of hearing two powerful and effective monologues from two very similar characters with the same voice. Especially the parts of the two characters' lament, the cursing of their fate, and their self-destructive actions made the parallels of the two stories particularly poignant. ...

Echoes of Middleearth: Tolkien Connections

Tom Shippey

I think I can best express my relationship with Tolkien's works as a series of moments – though some of them were pretty long moments. The first was borrowing *The Hobbit* from David Powis at King Edward's School. It must have been when I was 13 or 14 because Powis did not join the school at 11 like most of us, but came in during year 3. Anyway, he lent me the book; I opened it at the map page and misread the bit at the very top as "East lie the Iron Hills where is Pain." Oh, I thought, *this is an allegory*, and very nearly didn't read it. However, I persevered and, of course, liked it. ...

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