

**Brian T. Murphy**  
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**J.R.R. Tolkien and *The Silmarillion*: Readings**

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## Ainulindalë: The Music of the Ainur

There was Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar; and he made first the Ainur, the Holy Ones, that were the offspring of his thought, and they were with him before aught else was made. And he spoke to them, propounding to them themes of music; and they sang before him, and he was glad. But for a long while they sang only each alone, or but few together, while the rest hearkened; for each comprehended only that part of the mind of Ilúvatar from which he came, and in the understanding of their brethren they grew but slowly. Yet ever as they listened they came to deeper understanding, and increased in unison and harmony.

And it came to pass that Ilúvatar called together all the Ainur and declared to them a mighty theme, unfolding to them things greater and more wonderful than he had yet revealed; and the glory of its beginning and the splendour of its end amazed the Ainur, so that they bowed before Ilúvatar and were silent.

Then Ilúvatar said to them: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I win sit and hearken, and be glad that through you great beauty has been awakened into song.'

Then the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words, began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar to a great music; and a sound arose of endless interchanging melodies woven in harmony that passed beyond hearing into the depths and into the heights, and the places of the dwelling of Ilúvatar were filled to overflowing, and the music and the echo of the music went out into the Void, and it was not void. Never since have the Ainur made any music like to this music, though it has been said that a greater still shall be made before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days. Then the themes of Ilúvatar shall be played aright, and take Being in the moment of their utterance, for all shall then understand fully his intent in their part, and each shall know the comprehension of each, and Ilúvatar shall give to their thoughts the secret fire, being well pleased.

But now Ilúvatar sat and hearkened, and for a great while it seemed good to him, for in the music there were no flaws. But as the theme progressed, it came into the heart of Melkor to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar, for he sought therein to increase the power and glory of the part assigned to himself. To Melkor among the Ainur had been given the greatest gifts of power and knowledge, and he had a share in all the gifts of his brethren. He had gone often alone into the void places seeking the Imperishable Flame; for desire grew hot within him to bring into Being things of his own, and it seemed to him that Ilúvatar took no thought for the Void, and he was impatient of its emptiness. Yet he found not the Fire, for it is

with Ilúvatar. But being alone he had begun to conceive thoughts of his own unlike those of his brethren.

Some of these thoughts he now wove into his music, and straightway discord arose about him, and many that sang nigh him grew despondent, and their thought was disturbed and their music faltered; but some began to attune their music to his rather than to the thought which they had at first. Then the discord of Melkor spread ever wider, and the melodies which had been heard before foundered in a sea of turbulent sound. But Ilúvatar sat and hearkened until it seemed that about his throne there was a raging storm, as of dark waters that made war one upon another in an endless wrath that would not be assuaged.

Then Ilúvatar arose, and the Ainur perceived that he smiled; and he lifted up his left hand, and a new theme began amid the storm, like and yet unlike to the former theme, and it gathered power and had new beauty. But the discord of Melkor rose in uproar and contended with it, and again there was a war of sound more violent than before, until many of the Ainur were dismayed and sang no longer, and Melkor had the mastery. Then again Ilúvatar arose, and the Ainur perceived that his countenance was stern; and he lifted up his right hand, and behold! a third theme grew amid the confusion, and it was unlike the others. For it seemed at first soft and sweet, a mere rippling of gentle sounds in delicate melodies; but it could not be quenched, and it took to itself power and profundity. And it seemed at last that there were two musics progressing at one time before the seat of Ilúvatar, and they were utterly at variance. The one was deep and wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with an immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came. The other had now achieved a unity of its own; but it was loud, and vain, and endlessly repeated; and it had little harmony, but rather a clamorous unison as of many trumpets braying upon a few notes. And it essayed to drown the other music by the violence of its voice, but it seemed that its most triumphant notes were taken by the other and woven into its own solemn pattern.

In the midst of this strife, whereat the halls of Ilúvatar shook and a tremor ran out into the silences yet unmoved, Ilúvatar arose a third time, and his face was terrible to behold. Then he raised up both his hands, and in one chord, deeper than the Abyss, higher than the Firmament, piercing as the light of the eye of Ilúvatar, the Music ceased.

Then Ilúvatar spoke, and he said: 'Mighty are the Ainur, and mightiest among them is Melkor; but that he may know, and all the Ainur, that I am Ilúvatar, those things that ye have sung, I will show them forth, that ye may see what ye have done. And thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined.'

Then the Ainur were afraid, and they did not yet comprehend the words that were said to them; and Melkor was filled with shame, of which came secret anger. But Ilúvatar arose in splendour, and he went forth from the fair regions that he had made for the Ainur; and the Ainur followed him.

But when they were come into the Void, Ilúvatar said to them: 'Behold your Music!' And he showed to them a vision, giving to them sight where before was only hearing; arid they saw a new World made visible before them, and it was globed amid the Void, and it was sustained therein, but was not of it. And as they looked and wondered this World began to unfold its history, and it seemed to them that it lived and grew. And when the Ainur had gazed for a while and were silent, Ilúvatar said again: 'Behold your Music! This is your minstrelsy; and each of you shall find contained herein, amid the design that I set before you, all those things which it may seem that he himself devised or added. And thou, Melkor, wilt discover all the secret thoughts of thy mind, and wilt perceive that they are but a part of the whole and tributary to its glory.'

And many other things Ilúvatar spoke to the Ainur at that time, and because of their memory of his words, and the knowledge that each has of the music that he himself made, the Ainur know much of what was, and is, and is to come, and few things are unseen by them. Yet some things there are that they cannot see, neither alone nor taking counsel together; for to none but himself has Ilúvatar revealed all that he has in store, and in every age there come forth things that are new and have no foretelling, for they do not proceed from the past. And so it was that as this vision of the World was played before them, the Ainur saw that it contained things which they had not thought. And they saw with amazement the coming of the Children of Ilúvatar, and the habitation that was prepared for them; and they perceived that they themselves in the labour of their music had been busy with the preparation of this dwelling, and yet knew not that it had any purpose beyond its own beauty. For the Children of Ilúvatar were conceived by him alone; and they came with the third theme, and were not in the theme which Ilúvatar propounded at the beginning, and none of the Ainur had part in their making. Therefore when they beheld them, the more did they love them, being things other than themselves, strange and free, wherein they saw the mind of Ilúvatar reflected anew, and learned yet a little more of his wisdom, which otherwise had been hidden even from the Ainur.

Now the Children of Ilúvatar are Elves and Men, the Firstborn and the Followers. And amid all the splendours of the World, its vast halls and spaces, and its wheeling fires, Ilúvatar chose a place for their habitation in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the innumerable stars. And this habitation might seem a little thing to those who consider only the majesty of the Ainur, and not their terrible sharpness; as who should take the whole field of Arda for the foundation of a pillar and so raise it until the cone of its summit were more bitter than a needle; or who consider only the immeasurable vastness of the World, which still the Ainur are shaping, and not the minute precision to which they shape all things therein. But when the Ainur had beheld this habitation in a vision and had seen the Children of Ilúvatar arise therein, then many of the most mighty among them bent all their thought and their desire towards that place.

And of these Melkor was the chief, even as he was in the beginning the greatest of the Ainur who took part in the Music. And he feigned, even to himself at first, that he desired to go thither and order all things for the good of the Children of Ilúvatar, controlling the turmoils of the heat and the cold that had come to pass through him. But he desired rather to subdue to his will both Elves and Men, envying the gifts with which Ilúvatar promised to endow them; and he wished himself to have subject and servants, and to be called Lord, and to be a master over other wills.

But the other Ainur looked upon this habitation set within the vast spaces of the World, which the Elves call Arda, the Earth; and their hearts rejoiced in light, and their eyes beholding many colours were filled with gladness; but because of the roaring of the sea they felt a great unquiet. And they observed the winds and the air, and the matters of which Arda was made, of iron and stone and silver and gold and many substances: but of all these water they most greatly praised. And it is said by the Eldar that in water there lives yet the echo of the Music of the Ainur more than in any substance else that is in this Earth; and many of the Children of Ilúvatar hearken still unsated to the voices of the Sea, and yet know not for what they listen.

Now to water had that Ainu whom the Elves call Ulmo turned his thought, and of all most deeply was he instructed by Ilúvatar in music. But of the airs and winds Manwë most had pondered, who is the noblest of the Ainur. Of the fabric of Earth had Aulë thought, to whom Ilúvatar had given skin and knowledge scarce less than to Melkor; but the delight and pride of Aulë is in the deed of making, and in the thing made, and neither in possession nor in his own mastery; wherefore he gives and hoards not, and is free from care, passing ever on to some new work.

And Ilúvatar spoke to Ulmo, and said: 'Seest thou not how here in this little realm in the Deeps of Time Melkor hath made war upon thy province? He hath bethought him of bitter cold immoderate, and yet hath not destroyed the beauty of thy fountains, nor of my clear pools. Behold the snow, and the cunning work of frost! Melkor hath devised heats and fire without restraint, and hath not dried up thy desire nor utterly quelled the music of the sea. Behold rather the height and glory of the clouds, and the everchanging mists; and listen to the fall of rain upon the Earth! And in these clouds thou art drawn nearer to Manwë, thy friend, whom thou lovest.'

Then Ulmo answered: 'Truly, Water is become now fairer than my heart imagined, neither had my secret thought conceived the snowflake, nor in all my music was contained the falling of the rain. I will seek Manwë, that he and I may make melodies for ever to my delight!' And Manwë and Ulmo have from the beginning been allied, and in all things have served most faithfully the purpose of Ilúvatar.

But even as Ulmo spoke, and while the Ainur were yet gazing upon this vision, it was taken away and hidden from their sight; and it seemed to them that in that moment they perceived a new thing, Darkness, which they had not known before except in thought. But they had become enamoured of the beauty of the vision and engrossed in the unfolding of the

World which came there to being, and their minds were filled with it; for the history was incomplete and the circles of time not full-wrought when the vision was taken away. And some have said that the vision ceased ere the fulfilment of the Dominion of Men and the fading of the Firstborn; wherefore, though the Music is over all, the Valar have not seen as with sight the Later Ages or the ending of the World.

Then there was unrest among the Ainur; but Ilúvatar called to them, and said: 'I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be, not only in your thought, but even as ye yourselves are, and yet other. Therefore I say: *Eä!* Let these things Be! And I will send forth into the Void the Flame Imperishable, and it shall be at the heart of the World, and the World shall Be; and those of you that will may go down into it. And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing: *Eä*, the World that Is.

Thus it came to pass that of the Ainur some abode still with Ilúvatar beyond the confines of the World; but others, and among them many of the greatest and most fair, took the leave of Ilúvatar and descended into it. But this condition Ilúvatar made, or it is the necessity of their love, that their power should thenceforward be contained and bounded in the World, to be within it for ever, until it is complete, so that they are its life and it is theirs. And therefore they are named the Valar, the Powers of the World.

But when the Valar entered into *Eä* they were at first astounded and at a loss, for it was as if naught was yet made which they had seen in vision, and all was but on point to begin and yet unshaped, and it was dark. For the Great Music had been but the growth and flowering of thought in the Tuneless Halls, and the Vision only a foreshowing; but now they had entered in at the beginning of Time, and the Valar perceived that the World had been but foreshadowed and foresung, and they must achieve it. So began their great labours in wastes unmeasured and unexplored, and in ages uncounted and forgotten, until in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the vast halls of *Eä* there came to be that hour and that place where was made the habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar. And in this work the chief part was taken by Manwë and Aulë and Ulmo; but Melkor too was there from the first, and he meddled in all that was done, turning it if he might to his own desires and purposes; and he kindled great fires. When therefore Earth was yet young and full of flame Melkor coveted it, and he said to the other Valar: 'This shall be my own kingdom; and I name it unto myself!'

But Manwë was the brother of Melkor in the mind of Ilúvatar, and he was the chief instrument of the second theme that Ilúvatar had raised up against the discord of Melkor; and he called unto himself many spirits both greater and less, and they came down into the fields of Arda and aided Manwë, lest Melkor should hinder the fulfilment of their labour for ever, and Earth should wither ere it flowered. And Manwë said unto Melkor: 'This kingdom thou shalt not take for thine own, wrongfully, for many others have laboured here do less than thou.' And there was strife between Melkor and the other Valar; and for that time Melkor withdrew and departed to

other regions and did there what he would; but he did not put the desire of the Kingdom of Arda from his heart.

Now the Valar took to themselves shape and hue; and because they were drawn into the World by love of the Children of Ilúvatar, for whom they hoped, they took shape after that manner which they had beheld in the Vision of Ilúvatar, save only in majesty and splendour. Moreover their shape comes of their knowledge of the visible World, rather than of the World itself; and they need it not, save only as we use raiment, and yet we may be naked and suffer no loss of our being. Therefore the Valar may walk, if they will, unclad, and then even the Eldar cannot clearly perceive them, though they be present. But when they desire to clothe themselves the Valar take upon them forms some as of male and some as of female; for that difference of temper they had even from their beginning, and it is but bodied forth in the choice of each, not made by the choice, even as with us male and female may be shown by the raiment but is not made thereby. But the shapes wherein the Great Ones array themselves are not at all times like to the shapes of the kings and queens of the Children of Ilúvatar; for at times they may clothe themselves in their own thought, made visible in forms of majesty and dread.

And the Valar drew unto them many companions, some less, some well nigh as great as themselves, and they laboured together in the ordering of the Earth and the curbing of its tumults. Then Melkor saw what was done, and that the Valar walked on Earth as powers visible, clad in the raiment of the World, and were lovely and glorious to see, and blissful, and that the Earth was becoming as a garden for their delight, for its turmoils were subdued. His envy grew then the greater within him; and he also took visible form, but because of his mood and the malice that burned in him that form was dark and terrible. And he descended upon Arda in power and majesty greater than any other of the Valar, as a mountain that wades in the sea and has its head above the clouds and is clad in ice and crowned with smoke and fire; and the light of the eyes of Melkor was like a flame that withers with heat and pierces with a deadly cold.

Thus began the first battle of the Valar with Melkor for the dominion of Arda; and of those tumults the Elves know but little. For what has here been declared is come from the Valar themselves, with whom the Eldalië spoke in the land of Valinor, and by whom they were instructed; but little would the Valar ever tell of the wars before the coming of the Elves. Yet it is told among the Eldar that the Valar endeavoured ever, in despite of Melkor, to rule the Earth and to prepare it for the coming of the Firstborn; and they built lands and Melkor destroyed them; valleys they delved and Melkor raised them up; mountains they carved and Melkor threw them down; seas they hollowed and Melkor spilled them; and naught might have peace or come to lasting growth, for as surely as the Valar began a labour so would Melkor undo it or corrupt it. And yet their labour was not all in vain; and though nowhere and in no work was their will and purpose wholly fulfilled, and all things were in hue and shape other than the Valar had at first intended, slowly nonetheless the Earth was fashioned and made firm. And thus was the habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar established at the last in the Deeps of Time and amidst the innumerable stars.

## Valaquenta: Account of the Valar and Maiar, according to the lore of the Eldar

In the beginning Eru, the One, who in the Elvish tongue is named Ilúvatar, made the Ainur of his thought; and they made a great Music before him. In this Music the World was begun; for Ilúvatar made visible the song of the Ainur, and they beheld it as a light in the darkness. And many among them became enamoured of its beauty, and of its history which they saw beginning and unfolding as in a vision. Therefore Ilúvatar gave to their vision Being, and set it amid the Void, and the Secret Fire was sent to burn at the heart of the World; and it was called Eä.

Then those of the Ainur who desired it arose and entered into the World at the beginning of Time; and it was their task to achieve it, and by their labours to fulfil the vision which they had seen. Long they laboured in the regions of Eä, which are vast beyond the thought of Elves and Men, until in the time appointed was made Arda, the Kingdom of Earth. Then they put on the raiment of Earth and descended into it, and dwelt therein.

### *Of the Valar*

The Great among these spirits the Elves name the Valar, the Powers of Arda, and Men have often called them gods. The Lords of the Valar are seven; and the Valier, the Queens of the Valar, are seven also. These were their names in the Elvish tongue as it was spoken in Valinor, though they have other names in the speech of the Elves in Middle-earth, and their names among Men are manifold. The names of the Lords in due order are: Manwë, Ulmo, Aulë, Oromë, Mandos, Lórien, and Tulkas; and the names of the Queens are: Varda, Yavanna, Nienna, Estë, Vairë, Vána, and Nessa. Melkor is counted no longer among the Valar, and his name is not spoken upon Earth.

Manwë and Melkor were brethren in the thought of Ilúvatar. The mightiest of those Ainur who came into the World was in his beginning Melkor; but Manwë is dearest to Ilúvatar and understands most clearly his purposes. He was appointed to be, in the fullness of time, the first of all Kings: lord of the realm of Arda and ruler of all that dwell therein. In Arda his delight is in the winds and the clouds, and in all the regions of the air, from the heights to the depths, from the utmost borders of the Veil of Arda to the breezes that blow in the grass. Súlimo he is surnamed, Lord of the Breath of Arda. All swift birds, strong of wing, he loves, and they come and go at his bidding.

With Manwë dwells Varda, Lady of the Stars, who knows all the regions of Eä. Too great is her beauty to be declared in the words of Men or of Elves; for the light of Ilúvatar lives still in her face. In light is her power and her joy. Out of the deeps of Eä she came to the aid of Manwë; for Melkor she knew from before the making of the Music and rejected him, and he hated her, and feared her more than all others whom Eru made. Manwë and Varda are seldom parted, and they remain in Valinor. Their halls are above the everlasting snow, upon

Oiolossë, the uttermost tower of Taniquetil, tallest of all the mountains upon Earth. When Manwë there ascends his throne and looks forth, if Varda is beside him, he sees further than all other eyes, through mist, and through darkness, and over the leagues of the sea. And if Manwë is with her, Varda hears more clearly than all other ears the sound of voices that cry from east to west, from the hills and the valleys, and from the dark places that Melkor has made upon Earth. Of all the Great Ones who dwell in this world the Elves hold Varda most in reverence and love. Elbereth they name her, and they call upon her name out of the shadows of Middle-earth, and uplift it in song at the rising of the stars.

Ulmo is the Lord of Waters. He is alone. He dwells nowhere long, but moves as he will in all the deep waters about the Earth or under the Earth. He is next in might to Manwë, and before Valinor was made he was closest to him in friendship; but thereafter he went seldom to the councils of the Valar, unless great matters were in debate. For he kept all Arda in thought, and he has no need of any resting-place. Moreover he does not love to walk upon land, and will seldom clothe himself in a body after the manner of his peers. If the Children of Eru beheld him they were filled with a great dread; for the arising of the King of the Sea was terrible, as a mounting wave that strides to the land, with dark helm foam-crested and raiment of mail shimmering from silver down into shadows of green. The trumpets of Manwë are loud, but Ulmo's voice is deep as the deeps of the ocean which he only has seen.

Nonetheless Ulmo loves both Elves and Men, and never abandoned them, not even when they lay under the wrath of the Valar. At times he will come unseen to the shores of Middle-earth, or pass far inland up firths of the sea, and there make music upon his great horns, the Ulumúri, that are wrought of white shell; and those to whom that music comes hear it ever after in their hearts, and longing for the sea never leaves them again. But mostly Ulmo speaks to those who dwell in Middle-earth with voices that are heard only as the music of water. For all seas, lakes, rivers, fountains and springs are in his government; so that the Elves say that the spirit of Ulmo runs in all the veins of the world. Thus news comes to Ulmo, even in the deeps, of all the needs and griefs of Arda, which otherwise would be hidden from Manwë.

Aulë has might little less than Ulmo. His lordship is over all the substances of which Arda is made. In the beginning he wrought much in fellowship with Manwë and Ulmo; and the fashioning of all lands was his labour. He is a smith and a master of all crafts, and he delights in works of skill, however small, as much as in the mighty building of old. His are the gems that lie deep in the Earth and the gold that is fair in the hand, no less than the walls of the mountains and the basins of the sea. The Noldor learned most of him, and he was ever their friend. Melkor was jealous of him, for Aulë was most like himself in thought and in powers; and there was long strife between them, in which Melkor ever marred or undid the

works of Aulë, and Aulë grew weary in repairing the tumults and disorders of Melkor. Both, also, desired to make things of their own that should be new and unthought of by others, and delighted in the praise of their skill. But Aulë remained faithful to Eru and submitted all that he did to his will; and he did not envy the works of others, but sought and gave counsel. Whereas Melkor spent his spirit in envy and hate, until at last he could make nothing save in mockery of the thought of others, and all their works he destroyed if he could.

The spouse of Aulë is Yavanna, the Giver of Fruits. She is the lover of all things that grow in the earth, and all their countless forms she holds in her mind, from the trees like towers in forests long ago to the moss upon stones or the small and secret things in the mould. In reverence Yavanna is next to Varda among the Queens of the Valar. In the form of a woman she is tall, and robed in green; but at times she takes other shapes. Some there are who have seen her standing like a tree under heaven, crowned with the Sun; and from all its branches there spilled a golden dew upon the barren earth, and it grew green with corn; but the roots of the tree were in the waters of Ulmo, and the winds of Manwë spoke in its leaves. Kementári, Queen of the Earth, she is surnamed in the Eldarin tongue.

The Fëanturi, masters of spirits, are brethren, and they are called most often Mandos and Lórien. Yet these are rightly the names of the places of their dwelling, and their true names are Námo and Irmo.

Námo the elder dwells in Mandos, which is westward in Valinor. He is the keeper of the Houses of the Dead, and the summoner of the spirits of the slain. He forgets nothing; and he knows all things that shall be, save only those that lie still in the freedom of Ilúvatar. He is the Doomsman of the Valar; but he pronounces his dooms and his Judgements only at the bidding of Manwë. Vairë the Weaver is his spouse, who weaves all things that have ever been in Time into her storied webs, and the halls of Mandos that ever widen as the ages pass are clothed with them.

Irmo the younger is the master of visions and dreams. In Lórien are his gardens in the land of the Valar, and they are the fairest of all places in the world, filled with many spirits. Estë the gentle, healer of hurts and of weariness, is his spouse. Grey is her raiment; and rest is her gift. She walks not by day, but sleeps upon an island in the tree-shadowed lake of Lórellin. From the fountains of Irmo and Estë all those who dwell in Valinor draw refreshment; and often the Valar come themselves to Lórien and there find repose and easing of the burden of Arda.

Mightier than Estë is Nienna, sister of the Fëanturi; she dwells alone. She is acquainted with grief, and mourns for every wound that Arda has suffered in the marring of Melkor. So great was her sorrow, as the Music unfolded, that her song turned to lamentation long before its end, and the sound of mourning was woven into the themes of the World before it began. But she does not weep for herself; and those who hearken to her learn pity, and endurance in hope. Her halls are west of West, upon the borders of the world; and she comes seldom to the city of Valimar where all is glad. She goes rather to the halls of Mandos, which are near to her own; and

all those who wait in Mandos cry to her, for she brings strength to the spirit and turns sorrow to wisdom. The windows of her house look outward from the walls of the world.

Greatest in strength and deeds of prowess is Tulkas, who is surnamed Astaldo, the Valiant. He came last to Arda, to aid the Valar in the first battles with Melkor. He delights in wrestling and in contests of strength; and he rides no steed, for he can outrun all things that go on feet, and he is tireless. His hair and beard are golden, and his flesh ruddy; his weapons are his hands. He has little heed for either the past or the future, and is of no avail as a counsellor, but is a hardy friend. His spouse is Nessa, the sister of Oromë, and she also is lithe and fleetfooted. Deer she loves, and they follow her train whenever she goes in the wild; but she can outrun them, swift as an arrow with the wind in her hair. In dancing she delights, and she dances in Valimar on lawns of never-fading green.

Oromë is a mighty lord. If he is less strong than Tulkas, he is more dreadful in anger; whereas Tulkas laughs ever, in sport or in war, and even in the face of Melkor he laughed in battles before the Elves were born. Oromë loved the lands of Middle-earth, and he left them unwillingly and came last to Valinor; and often of old he passed back east over the mountains and returned with his host to the hills and the plains. He is a hunter of monsters and fell beasts, and he delights in horses and in hounds; and all trees he loves, for which reason he is called Aldaron, and by the Sindar Tauron, the Lord of Forests. Nahar is the name of his horse, white in the sun, and shining silver at night. The Valaróma is the name of his great horn, the sound of which is like the upgoing of the Sun in scarlet, or the sheer lightning cleaving the clouds. Above all the horns of his host it was heard in the woods that Yavanna brought forth in Valinor; for there Oromë would train his folk and his beasts for the pursuit of the evil creatures of Melkor. The spouse of Oromë is Vána, the Ever-young; she is the younger sister of Yavanna. All flowers spring as she passes and open if she glances upon them; and all birds sing at her coming.

These are the names of the Valar and the Valier, and here is told in brief their likenesses, such as the Eldar beheld them in Aman. But fair and noble as were the forms in which they were manifest to the Children of Ilúvatar, they were but a veil upon their beauty and their power. And if little is here said of all that the Eldar once knew, that is as nothing compared with their true being, which goes back into regions and ages far beyond our thought. Among them Nine were of chief power and reverence; but one is removed from their number, and Eight remain, the Aratar, the High Ones of Arda: Manwë and Varda, Ulmo, Yavanna and Aulë, Mandos, Nienna, and Oromë. Though Manwë is their King and holds their allegiance under Eru, in majesty they are peers, surpassing beyond compare all others, whether of the Valar and the Maiar, or of any other order that Ilúvatar has sent into Eä.

### *Of the Maiar*

With the Valar came other spirits whose being also began before the World, of the same order as the Valar but of less degree. These are the Maiar, the people of the Valar, and their servants and helpers. Their number is not known to the Elves,

and few have names in any of the tongues of the Children of Ilúvatar; for though it is otherwise in Aman, in Middle-earth the Maiar have seldom appeared in form visible to Elves and Men.

Chief among the Maiar of Valinor whose names are remembered in the histories of the Elder Days are Ilmarë, the handmaid of Varda, and Eönwë, the banner-bearer and herald of Manwë, whose might in arms is surpassed by none in Arda. But of all the Maiar Ossë and Uinen are best known to the Children of Ilúvatar.

Ossë is a vassal of Ulmo, and he is master of the seas that wash the shores of Middle-earth. He does not go in the deeps, but loves the coasts and the isles, and rejoices in the winds of Manwë; for in storm he delights, and laughs amid the roaring of the waves. His spouse is Uinen, the Lady of the Seas, whose hair lies spread through all waters under sky. All creatures she loves that live in the salt streams, and all weeds that grow there; to her mariners cry, for she can lay calm upon the waves, restraining the wildness of Ossë. The Númenóreans lived long in her protection, and held her in reverence equal to the Valar.

Melkor hated the Sea, for he could not subdue it. It is said that in the making of Arda he endeavoured to draw Ossë to his allegiance, promising to him all the realm and power of Ulmo, if he would serve him. So it was that long ago there arose great tumults in the sea that wrought ruin to the lands. But Uinen, at the prayer of Aulë, restrained Ossë and brought him before Ulmo; and he was pardoned and returned to his allegiance, to which he has remained faithful. For the most part; for the delight in violence has never wholly departed from him, and at times he will rage in his wilfulness without any command from Ulmo his lord. Therefore those who dwell by the sea or go up in ships may love him, but they do not trust him.

Melian was the name of a Maia who served both Vána and Estë; she dwelt long in Lórien, tending the trees that flower in the gardens of Irmo, ere she came to Middle-earth. Nightingales sang about her wherever she went.

Wisest of the Maiar was Olórin. He too dwelt in Lórien, but his ways took him often to the house of Nienna, and of her he learned pity and patience.

Of Melian much is told in the *Quenta Silmarillion*. But of Olórin that tale does not speak; for though he loved the Elves, he walked among them unseen, or in form as one of them, and they did not know whence came the fair visions or the

promptings of wisdom that he put into their hearts. In later days he was the friend of all the Children of Ilúvatar, and took pity on their sorrows; and those who listened to him awoke from despair and put away the imaginations of darkness.

### *Of the Enemies*

Last of all is set the name of Melkor, He who arises in Might. But that name he has forfeited; and the Noldor, who among the Elves suffered most from his malice, will not utter it, and they name him Morgoth, the Dark Enemy of the World. Great might was given to him by Ilúvatar, and he was coeval with Manwë. In the powers and knowledge of all the other Valar he had part, but he turned them to evil purposes, and squandered his strength in violence and tyranny. For he coveted Arda and all that was in it, desiring the kingship of Manwë and dominion over the realms of his peers.

From splendour he fell through arrogance to contempt for all things save himself, a spirit wasteful and pitiless. Understanding he turned to subtlety in perverting to his own will all that he would use, until he became a liar without shame. He began with the desire of Light, but when he could not possess it for himself alone, he descended through fire and wrath into a great burning, down into Darkness. And darkness he used most in his evil works upon Arda, and filled it with fear for all living things.

Yet so great was the power of his uprising that in ages forgotten he contended with Manwë and all the Valar, and through long years in Arda held dominion over most of the lands of the Earth. But he was not alone. For of the Maiar many were drawn to his splendour in the days of his greatness, and remained in that allegiance down into his darkness; and others he corrupted afterwards to his service with lies and treacherous gifts. Dreadful among these spirits were the Valaraukar, the scourges of fire that in Middle-earth were called the Balrogs, demons of terror.

Among those of his servants that have names the greatest was that spirit whom the Eldar called Sauron, or Gorthaur the Cruel. In his beginning he was of the Maiar of Aulë, and he remained mighty in the lore of that people. In all the deeds of Melkor the Morgoth upon Arda, in his vast works and in the deceits of his cunning, Sauron had a part, and was only less evil than his master in that for long he served another and not himself. But in after years he rose like a shadow of Morgoth and a ghost of his malice, and walked behind him on the same ruinous path down into the Void.

### **Here ends the valaquenta**

## **Akallabêth: The Downfall of Númenor**

It is said by the Eldar that Men came into the world in the time of the Shadow of Morgoth, and they fell swiftly under his dominion; for he sent his emissaries among them, and they listened to his evil and cunning words, and they worshipped the Darkness and yet feared it. But there were some that turned from evil and left the lands of their kindred, and wandered ever westward; for they had heard a rumour that in

the West there was a light which the Shadow could not dim. The servants of Morgoth pursued them with hatred, and their ways were long and hard; yet they came at last to the lands that look upon the Sea, and they entered Beleriand in the days of the War of the Jewels. The Edain these were named in the Sindarin tongue; and they became friends and allies of the

Eldar, and did deeds of great valour in the war against Morgoth.

Of them was sprung, upon the side of his fathers, Bright Eärendil; and in the *Lay of Eärendil* it is told how at the last, when the victory of Morgoth was almost complete, he built his ship Vingilot, that Men called Rothinzil, and voyaged upon the unsailed seas, seeking ever for Valinor; for he desired to speak before the Powers on behalf of the Two Kindreds, that the Valar might have pity on them and send them help in their uttermost need. Therefore by Elves and Men he is called Eärendil the Blessed, for he achieved his quest after long labours and many perils, and from Valinor there came the host of the Lords of the West. But Eärendil came never back to the lands that he had loved.

In the Great Battle when at last Morgoth was overthrown and Thangorodrim was broken, the Edain alone of the kindreds of Men fought for the Valar, whereas many others fought for Morgoth. And after the victory of the Lords of the West those of the evil Men who were not destroyed fled back into the east, where many of their race were still wandering in the unharvested lands, wild and lawless, refusing alike the summons of the Valar and of Morgoth. And the evil Men came among them, and cast over them a shadow of fear, and they took them for kings. Then the Valar forsook for a time the Men of Middle-earth who had refused their summons and had taken the friends of Morgoth to be their masters; and Men dwelt in darkness and were troubled by many evil things that Morgoth had devised in the days of his dominion: demons, and dragons, and misshapen beasts, and the unclean Orcs that are mockeries of the Children of Ilúvatar. And the lot of Men was unhappy.

But Manwë put forth Morgoth and shut him beyond the World in the Void that is without; and he cannot himself return again into the World, present and visible, while the Lords of the West are still enthroned. Yet the seeds that he had planted still grew and sprouted, bearing evil fruit, if any would tend them. For his will remained and guided his servants, moving them ever to thwart the will of the Valar and to destroy those that obeyed them. This the Lords of the West knew full well. When therefore Morgoth had been thrust forth, they held council concerning the ages that should come after. The Eldar they summoned to return into the West, and those that hearkened to the summons dwelt in the Isle of Eressëa; and there is in that land a haven that is named Avallónë, for it is of all cities the nearest to Valinor, and the tower of Avallónë is the first sight that the mariner beholds when at last he draws nigh to the Undying Lands over the leagues of the Sea. To the Fathers of Men of the three faithful houses rich reward also was given. Eönwë came among them and taught them; and they were given wisdom and power and life more enduring than any others of mortal race have possessed. A land was made for the Edain to dwell in, neither part of Middle-earth nor of Valinor, for it was sundered from either by a wide sea; yet it was nearer to Valinor. It was raised by Ossë out of the depths of the Great Water, and it was established by Aulë and enriched by Yavanna; and the Eldar brought thither flowers and fountains out of Tol Eressëa. That land the Valar called Andor, the Land of Gift; and the Star of Eärendil shone bright in the West as a token that all was made ready, and as a guide

over the sea; and Men marvelled to see that silver flame in the paths of the Sun.

Then the Edain set sail upon the deep waters, following the Star; and the Valar laid a peace upon the sea for many days, and sent sunlight and a sailing wind, so that the waters glittered before the eyes of the Edain like rippling glass, and the foam flew like snow before the stems of their ships. But so bright was Rothinzil that even at morning Men could see it glimmering in the West, and in the cloudless night it shone alone, for no other star could stand beside it. And setting their course towards it the Edain came at last over leagues of sea and saw afar the land that was prepared for them, Andor, the Land of Gift, shimmering in a golden haze. Then they went up out of the sea and found a country fair and fruitful, and they were glad. And they called that land Elessa, which is Starwards; but also Anadûnë, which is Westernesse, Númenórë in the High Eldarin tongue.

This was the beginning of that people that in the Grey-elven speech are called the Dúnedain: the Númenóreans, Kings among Men. But they did not thus escape from the doom of death that Ilúvatar had set upon all Mankind, and they were mortal still, though their years were long, and they knew no sickness, ere the shadow fell upon them. Therefore they grew wise and glorious, and in all things more like to the Firstborn than any other of the kindreds of Men; and they were tall, taller than the tallest of the sons of Middle-earth; and the light of their eyes was like the bright stars. But their numbers increased only slowly in the land, for though daughters and sons were born to them, fairer than their fathers, yet their children were few.

Of old the chief city and haven of Númenor was in the midst of its western coasts, and it was called Andúnië because it faced the sunset. But in the midst of the land was a mountain tall and steep, and it was named the Meneltarma, the Pillar of Heaven, and upon it was a high place that was hallowed to Eru Ilúvatar, and it was open and unroofed, and no other temple or fane was there in the land of the Númenóreans. At the feet of the mountain were built the tombs of the Kings, and hard by upon a hill was Armenelos, fairest of cities, and there stood the tower and the citadel that was raised by Elros son of Eärendil, whom the Valar appointed to be the first King of the Dúnedain.

Now Elros and Elrond his brother were descended from the Three Houses of the Edain, but in part also both from the Eldar and the Maiar; for Idril of Gondolin and Lúthien daughter of Melian were their fore-mothers. The Valar indeed may not withdraw the gift of death, which comes to Men from Ilúvatar, but in the matter of the Half-elven Ilúvatar gave to them the judgement; and they judged that to the sons of Eärendil should be given choice of their own destiny. And Elrond chose to remain with the Firstborn, and to him the life of the Firstborn was granted. But to Elros, who chose to be a king of Men, still a great span of years was allotted, many times that of the Men of Middle-earth; and all his line, the kings and lords of the royal house, had long life even according to the measure of the Númenóreans. But Elros lived five hundred years, and ruled the Númenóreans four hundred years and ten.

Thus the years passed, and while Middle-earth went backward and light and wisdom faded, the Dúnedain dwelt under the protection of the Valar and in the friendship of the Eldar, and they increased in stature both of mind and body. For though this people used still their own speech, their kings and lords knew and spoke also the Elven tongue, which they had learned in the days of their alliance, and thus they held converse still with the Eldar, whether of Eressëa or of the west-lands of Middle-earth. And the loremasters among them learned also the High Eldarin tongue of the Blessed Realm, in which much story and song was preserved from the beginning of the world; and they made letters and scrolls and books, and wrote in them many things of wisdom and wonder in the high tide of their realm, of which all is now forgot. So it came to pass that, beside their own names, all the lords of the Númenóreans had also Eldarin names; and the like with the cities and fair places that they founded in Númenor and on the shores of the Hither Lands.

For the Dúnedain became mighty in crafts, so that if they had had the mind they could easily have surpassed the evil kings of Middle-earth in the making of war and the forging of weapons; but they were become men of peace. Above all arts they nourished shipbuilding and sea-craft, and they became mariners whose like shall never be again since the world was diminished; and voyaging upon the wide seas was the chief feat and adventure of their hardy men in the gallant days of their youth.

But the Lords of Valinor forbade them to sail so far westward that the coasts of Númenor could no longer be seen; and for long the Dúnedain were content, though they did not fully understand the purpose of this ban. But the design of Manwë was that the Númenóreans should not be tempted to seek for the Blessed Realm, nor desire to overpass the limits set to their bliss, becoming enamoured of the immortality of the Valar and the Eldar and the lands where all things endure.

For in those days Valinor still remained in the world visible, and there Ilúvatar permitted the Valar to maintain upon Earth an abiding place, a memorial of that which might have been if Morgoth had not cast his shadow on the world. This the Númenóreans knew full well; and at times, when all the air was clear and the sun was in the east, they would look out and descry far off in the west a city white-shining on a distant shore, and a great harbour and a tower. For in those days the Númenóreans were far-sighted; yet even so it was only the keenest eyes among them that could see this vision, from the Meneltarma, maybe, or from some tall ship that lay off their western coast as far as it was lawful for them to go. For they did not dare to break the Ban of the Lords of the West. But the wise among them knew that this distant land was not indeed the Blessed Realm of Valinor, but was Avallónë, the haven of the Eldar upon Eressëa, easternmost of the Undying Lands. And thence at times the Firstborn still would come sailing to Númenor in oarless boats, as white birds flying from the sunset. And they brought to Númenor many gifts: birds of song, and fragrant flowers, and herbs of great virtue. And a seedling they brought of Celeborn, the White Tree that grew in the midst of Eressëa; and that was in its turn a seedling of Galathilion the Tree of Túna, the image of Telperion that Yavanna gave to the Eldar in the Blessed Realm. And the tree

grew and blossomed in the courts of the King in Armenelos; Nimloth it was named, and flowered in the evening, and the shadows of night it filled with its fragrance.

Thus it was that because of the Ban of the Valar the voyages of the Dúnedain in those days went ever eastward and not westward, from the darkness of the North to the heats of the South, and beyond the South to the Nether Darkness; and they came even into the inner seas, and sailed about Middle-earth and glimpsed from their high prows the Gates of Morning in the East. And the Dúnedain came at times to the shores of the Great Lands, and they took pity on the forsaken world of Middle-earth; and the Lords of Númenor set foot again upon the western shores in the Dark Years of Men, and none yet dared to withstand them. For most of the Men of that age that sat under the Shadow were now grown weak and fearful. And coming among them the Númenóreans taught them many things. Corn and wine they brought, and they instructed Men in the sowing of seed and the grinding of grain, in the hewing of wood and the shaping of stone, and in the ordering of their life, such as it might be in the lands of swift death and little bliss.

Then the Men of Middle-earth were comforted, and here and there upon the western shores the houseless woods drew back, and Men shook off the yoke of the offspring of Morgoth, and unlearned their terror of the dark. And they revered the memory of the tall Sea-kings, and when they had departed they called them gods, hoping for their return; for at that time the Númenóreans dwelt never long in Middle-earth, nor made there as yet any habitation of their own. Eastward they must sail, but ever west their hearts returned.

Now this yearning grew ever greater with the years; and the Númenóreans began to hunger for the undying city that they saw from afar, and the desire of everlasting life, to escape from death and the ending of delight, grew strong upon them; and ever as their power and glory grew greater their unquiet increased. For though the Valar had rewarded the Dúnedain with long life, they could not take from them the weariness of the world that comes at last, and they died, even their kings of the seed of Eärendil; and the span of their lives was brief in the eyes of the Eldar. Thus it was that a shadow fell upon them: in which maybe the will of Morgoth was at work that still moved in the world. And the Númenóreans began to murmur, at first in their hearts, and then in open words, against the doom of Men, and most of all against the Ban which forbade them to sail into the West.

And they said among themselves: 'Why do the Lords of the West sit there in peace unending, while we must die and go we know not whither, leaving our home and all that we have made? And the Eldar die not, even those that rebelled against the Lords. And since we have mastered all seas, and no water is so wild or so wide that our ships cannot overcome it, why should we not go to Avallónë and greet there our friends?'

And some there were who said: 'Why should we not go even to Aman, and taste there, were it but for a day, the bliss of the Powers? Have we not become mighty among the people of Arda?'

The Eldar reported these words to the Valar, and Manwë was grieved, seeing a cloud gather on the noontide of Númenor. And he sent messengers to the Dúnedain, who spoke earnestly to the King, and to all who would listen, concerning the fate and fashion of the world.

'The Doom of the World,' they said, 'One alone can change who made it. And were you so to voyage that escaping all deceits and snares you came indeed to Aman, the Blessed Realm, little would it profit you. For it is not the land of Manwë that makes its people deathless, but the Deathless that dwell therein have hallowed the land; and there you would but wither and grow weary the sooner, as moths in a light too strong and steadfast.'

But the King said: 'And does not Eärendil, my forefather, live? Or is he not in the land of Aman?'

To which they answered: 'You know that he has a fate apart, and was adjudged to the Firstborn who die not; yet this also is his doom that he can never return again to mortal lands. Whereas you and your people are not of the Firstborn, but are mortal Men as Ilúvatar made you. Yet it seems that you desire now to have the good of both kindreds, to sail to Valinor when you will, and to return when you please to your homes. That cannot be. Nor can the Valar take away the gifts of Ilúvatar. The Eldar, you say, are unpunished, and even those who rebelled do not die. Yet that is to them neither reward nor punishment, but the fulfilment of their being. They cannot escape, and are bound to this world, never to leave it so long as it lasts, for its life is theirs. And you are punished for the rebellion of Men, you say, in which you had small part, and so it is that you die. But that was not at first appointed for a punishment. Thus you escape, and leave the world, and are not bound to it, in hope or in weariness. Which of us therefore should envy the others?'

And the Númenóreans answered: 'Why should we not envy the Valar, or even the least of the Deathless? For of us is required a blind trust, and a hope without assurance, knowing not what lies before us in a little while. And yet we also love the Earth and would not lose it.'

Then the Messengers said: 'Indeed the mind of Ilúvatar concerning you is not known to the Valar, and he has not revealed all things that are to come. But this we hold to be true, that your home is not here, neither in the Land of Aman nor anywhere within the Circles of the World. And the Doom of Men, that they should depart, was at first a gift of Ilúvatar. It became a grief to them only because coming under the shadow of Morgoth it seemed to them that they were surrounded by a great darkness, of which they were afraid; and some grew wilful and proud and would not yield, until life was reft from them. We who bear the ever-mounting burden of the years do not clearly understand this; but if that grief has returned to trouble you, as you say, then we fear that the Shadow arises once more and grows again in your hearts. Therefore, though you be the Dúnedain, fairest of Men, who escaped from the Shadow of old and fought valiantly against it, we say to you: Beware! The will of Eru may not be gainsaid; and the Valar bid you earnestly not to withhold the trust to which you are called, lest soon it become again a bond

by which you are constrained. Hope rather that in the end even the least of your desires shall have fruit. The love of Arda was set in your hearts by Ilúvatar, and he does not plant to no purpose. Nonetheless, many ages of Men unborn may pass ere that purpose is made known; and to you it will be revealed and not to the Valar.'

These things took place in the days of Tar-Ciryatan the Shipbuilder, and of Tar-Atanamir his son; and they were proud men, eager for wealth, and they laid the men of Middle-earth under tribute, taking now rather than giving. It was to Tar-Atanamir that the Messengers came; and he was the thirteenth King, and in his day the Realm of Númenor had endured for more than two thousand years, and was come to the zenith of its bliss, if not yet of its power. But Atanamir was ill pleased with the counsel of the Messengers and gave little heed to it, and the greater part of his people followed him; for they wished still to escape death in their own day, not waiting upon hope. And Atanamir lived to a great age, clinging to his life beyond the end of all joy; and he was the first of the Númenóreans to do this, refusing to depart until he was witless and unmanned, and denying to his son the kingship at the height of his days. For the Lords of Númenor had been wont to wed late in their long lives and to depart and leave the mastery to their sons when these were come to full stature of body and mind.

Then Tar-Ancalimon, son of Atanamir, became King, and he was of like mind; and in his day the people of Númenor became divided. On the one hand was the greater party, and they were called the King's Men, and they grew proud and were estranged from the Eldar and the Valar. And on the other hand was the lesser party, and they were called the Elendili, the Elf-friends; for though they remained loyal indeed to the King and the House of Elros, they wished to keep the friendship of the Eldar, and they hearkened to the counsel of the Lords of the West. Nonetheless even they, who named themselves the Faithful, did not wholly escape from the affliction of their people, and they were troubled by the thought of death.

Thus the bliss of Westernesse became diminished; but still its might and splendour increased. For the kings and their people had not yet abandoned wisdom, and if they loved the Valar no longer at least they still feared them. They did not dare openly to break the Ban or to sail beyond the limits that had been appointed. Eastwards still they steered their tall ships. But the fear of death grew ever darker upon them, and they delayed it by all means that they could; and they began to build great houses for their dead, while their wise men laboured unceasingly to discover if they might the secret of recalling life, or at the least of the prolonging of Men's days. Yet they achieved only the art of preserving incorrupt the dead flesh of Men, and they filled all the land with silent tombs in which the thought of death was enshrined in the darkness. But those that lived turned the more eagerly to pleasure and revelry, desiring ever more goods and more riches; and after the days of Tar-Ancalimon the offering of the first fruits to Eru was neglected, and men went seldom any more to the Hallow upon the heights of Meneltarma in the midst of the land.

Thus it came to pass in that time that the Númenóreans first made great settlements upon the west shores of the ancient lands; for their own land seemed to them shrunken, and they had no rest or content therein, and they desired now wealth and dominion in Middle-earth, since the West was denied. Great harbours and strong towers they made, and there many of them took up their abode; but they appeared now rather as lords and masters and gatherers of tribute than as helpers and teachers. And the great ships of the Númenóreans were borne east on the winds and returned ever laden, and the power and majesty of their kings were increased; and they drank and they feasted and they clad themselves in silver and gold.

In all this the Elf-friends had small part. They alone came now ever to the north and the land of Gil-galad, keeping their friendship with the Elves and lending them aid against Sauron; and their haven was Pelargir above the mouths of Anduin the Great. But the King's Men sailed far away to the south; and the lordships and strongholds that they made have left many rumours in the legends of Men.

In this Age, as is elsewhere told, Sauron arose again in Middle-earth, and grew, and turned back to the evil in which he was nurtured by Morgoth, becoming mighty in his service. Already in the days of Tar-Minastir, the eleventh King of Númenor, he had fortified the land of Mordor and had built there the Tower of Barad-dûr, and thereafter he strove ever for the dominion of Middle-earth, to become a king over all kings and as a god unto Men. And Sauron hated the Númenóreans, because of the deeds of their fathers and their ancient alliance with the Elves and allegiance to the Valar; nor did he forget the aid that Tar-Minastir had rendered to Gil-galad of old, in that time when the One Ring was forged and there was war between Sauron and the Elves in Eriador. Now he learned that the kings of Númenor had increased in power and splendour, and he hated them the more; and he feared them, lest they should invade his lands and wrest from him the dominion of the East. But for a long time he did not dare to challenge the Lords of the Sea, and he withdrew from the coasts.

Yet Sauron was ever guileful, and it is said that among those whom he ensnared with the Nine Rings three were great lords of Númenórean race. And when the Úlairi arose that were the Ring-wraiths, his servants, and the strength of his terror and mastery over Men had grown exceedingly great, he began to assail the strong places of the Númenóreans upon the shores of the sea.

In those days the Shadow grew deeper upon Númenor; and the lives of the Kings of the House of Elros waned because of their rebellion, but they hardened their hearts the more against the Valar. And the nineteenth king took the sceptre of his fathers, and he ascended the throne in the name of Adûnakhôr, Lord of the West, forsaking the Elven-tongues and forbidding their use in his hearing. Yet in the Scroll of Kings the name Herunúmen was inscribed in the High-elven speech, because of ancient custom, which the kings feared to break utterly, lest evil befall. Now this title seemed to the Faithful over-proud, being the title of the Valar; and their hearts were sorely tried between their loyalty to the House of Elros and their reverence of the appointed Powers. But worse was yet to come. For Ar-Gimilzôr the twenty-second king was the greatest enemy of

the Faithful. In his day the White Tree was untended and began to decline; and he forbade utterly the use of the Elven-tongues, and punished those that welcomed the ships of Eressëa, that still came secretly to the west-shores of the land.

Now the Elendili dwelt mostly in the western regions of Númenor; but Ar-Gimilzôr commanded all that he could discover to be of this party to remove from the west and dwell in the east of the land; and there they were watched. And the chief dwelling of the Faithful in the later days was thus nigh to the harbour of Rómenna; thence many set sail to Middle-earth, seeking the northern coasts where they might speak still with the Eldar in the kingdom of Gil-galad. This was known to the kings, but they hindered it not, so long as the Elendili departed from their land and did not return; for they desired to end all friendship between them: people and the Eldar of Eressëa, whom they named the Spies of the Valar, hoping to keep their deeds and their counsels hidden from the Lords of the West. But all that they did was known to Manwë, and the Valar were wroth with the Kings of Númenor, and gave them counsel and protection no more; and the ships of Eressëa came never again out of the sunset, and the havens of Andúnië were forlorn.

Highest in honour after the house of the kings were the Lords of Andúnië; for they were of the line of Elros, being descended from Silmarien, daughter of Tar-Elendil the fourth king of Númenor. And these lords were loyal to the kings, and revered them; and the Lord of Andúnië was ever among the chief councillors of the Sceptre. Yet also from the beginning they bore especial love to the Eldar and reverence for the Valar; and as the Shadow grew they aided the Faithful as they could. But for long they did not declare themselves openly, and sought rather to amend the hearts of the lords of the Sceptre with wiser counsels.

There was a lady Inzilbêth, renowned for her beauty, and her mother was Lindórië, sister of Eärendur, the Lord of Andúnië in the days of Ar-Sakalthôr father of Ar-Gimilzôr. Gimilzôr took her to wife, though this was little to her liking, for she was in heart one of the Faithful, being taught by her mother; but the kings and their sons were grown proud and not to be gainsaid in their wishes. No love was there between Ar-Gimilzôr and his queen, or between their sons. Inzilahûn, the elder, was like his mother in mind as in body; but Gimilkhâd, the younger, went with his father, unless he were yet prouder and more wilful. To him Ar-Gimilzôr would have yielded the sceptre rather than to the elder son, if the laws had allowed.

But when Inzilahûn acceded to the sceptre, he took again a title in the Elven-tongue as of old, calling himself Tar-Palantir, for he was far-sighted both in eye and in mind, and even those that hated him feared his words as those of a true-seer. He gave peace for a while to the Faithful; and he went once more at due seasons to the Hallow of Eru upon the Meneltarma, which Ar-Gimilzôr had forsaken. The White Tree he tended again with honour; and he prophesied, saying that when the Tree perished, then also would the line of the Kings come to its end. But his repentance was too late to appease the anger of the Valar with the insolence of his fathers, of which the greater part of his people did not repent. And Gimilkhâd was strong and ungentle, and he took the leadership of those that had been called the King's Men and opposed the will of his

brother as openly as he dared, and yet more in secret. Thus the days of Tar-Palantir became darkened with grief; and he would spend much of his time in the west, and there ascended often the ancient tower of King Minastir upon the hill of Oromet nigh to Andúnië, whence he gazed westward in yearning, hoping to see, maybe, some sail upon the sea. But no ship came ever again from the West to Númenor, and Avallónë was veiled in cloud.

Now Gimilkhâd died two years before his two hundredth year (which was accounted an early death for one of Elros' line even in its waning), but this brought no peace to the King. For Pharazôn son of Gimilkhâd had become a man yet more restless and eager for wealth and power than his father. He had fared often abroad, as a leader in the wars that the Númenóreans made then in the coastlands of Middle-earth, seeking to extend their dominion over Men; and thus he had won great renown as a captain both by land and by sea. Therefore when he came back to Númenor, hearing of his father's death, the hearts of the people were turned to him; for he brought with him great wealth, and was for the time free in his giving.

And it came to pass that Tar-Palantir grew weary of grief and died. He had no son, but a daughter only, whom he named Míriel in the Elven-tongue; and to her now by right and the laws of the Númenóreans came the sceptre. But Pharazôn took her to wife against her will, doing evil in this and evil also in that the laws of Númenor did not permit the marriage, even in the royal house, of those more nearly akin than cousins in the second degree. And when they were wedded, he seized the sceptre into his own hand, taking the title of Ar-Pharazôn (Tar-Calion in the Elven-tongue); and the name of his queen he changed to Ar-Zimraphel.

The mightiest and proudest was Ar-Pharazôn the Golden of all those that had wielded the Sceptre of the Sea-Kings since the foundation of Númenor; and three and twenty Kings and Queens had ruled the Númenóreans before, and slept now in their deep tombs under the mount of Meneltarma, lying upon beds of gold.

And sitting upon his carven throne in the city of Armenelos in the glory of his power, he brooded darkly, thinking of war. For he had learned in Middle-earth of the strength of the realm of Sauron, and of his hatred of Westernesse. And now there came to him the masters of ships and captains returning out of the East, and they reported that Sauron was putting forth his might, since Ar-Pharazôn had gone back from Middle-earth, and he was pressing down upon the cities by the coasts; and he had taken now the title of King of Men, and declared his purpose to drive the Númenóreans into the sea, and destroy even Númenor, if that might be.

Great was the anger of Ar-Pharazôn at these tidings, and as he pondered long in secret, his heart was filled with the desire of power unbounded and the sole dominion of his will. And he determined without counsel of the Valar, or the aid of any wisdom but his own, that the title of King of Men he would himself claim, and would compel Sauron to become his vassal and his servant; for in his pride he deemed that no king should ever arise so mighty as to vie with the Heir of Eärendil.

Therefore he began in that time to smithy great hoard of weapons, and many ships of war he built and stored them with his arms; and when all was made ready he himself set sail with his host into the East.

And men saw his sails coming up out of the sunset, dyed as with scarlet and gleaming with red and gold, and fear fell upon the dwellers by the coasts, and they fled far away. But the fleet came at last to that place that was called Umbar, where was the mighty haven of the Númenóreans that no hand had wrought. Empty and silent were all the lands about when the King of the Sea marched upon Middle-earth. For seven days he journeyed with banner and trumpet, and he came to a hill, and he went up, and he set there his pavilion and his throne; and he sat him down in the midst of the land, and the tents of his host were ranged all about him, blue, golden, and white, as a field of tall flowers. Then he sent forth heralds, and he commanded Sauron to come before him and swear to him fealty.

And Sauron came. Even from his mighty tower of Barad-dûr he came, and made no offer of battle. For he perceived that the power and majesty of the Kings of the Sea surpassed all rumour of them, so that he could not trust even the greatest of his servants to withstand them; and he saw not his time yet to work his will with the Dúnedain. And he was crafty, well skilled to gain what he would by subtlety when force might not avail. Therefore he humbled himself before Ar-Pharazôn and smoothed his tongue; and men wondered, for all that he said seemed fair and wise.

But Ar-Pharazôn was not yet deceived, and it came into his mind that, for the better keeping of Sauron and of his oaths of fealty, he should be brought to Númenor, there to dwell as a hostage for himself and all his servants in Middle-earth. To this Sauron assented as one constrained, yet in his secret thought he received it gladly, for it chimed indeed with his desire. And Sauron passed over the sea and looked upon the land of Númenor, and on the city of Armenelos in the days of its glory, and he was astounded; but his heart within was filled the more with envy and hate.

Yet such was the cunning of his mind and mouth, and the strength of his hidden will, that ere three years had passed he had become closest to the secret counsels of the King; for flattery sweet as honey was ever on his tongue, and knowledge he had of many things yet unrevealed to Men. And seeing the favour that he had of their lord all the councillors began to fawn upon him, save one alone, Amandil lord of Andúnië. Then slowly a change came over the land, and the hearts of the Elf-friends were sorely troubled, and many fell away out of fear; and although those that remained still called themselves the Faithful, their enemies named them rebels. For now, having the ears of men, Sauron with many arguments gainsaid all that the Valar had taught; and he bade men think that in the world, in the east and even hi the west, there lay yet many seas and many lands for their winning, wherein was wealth uncounted. And still, if they should at the last come to the end of those lands and seas, beyond all lay the Ancient Darkness. 'And out of it the world was made. For Darkness alone is worshipful, and the Lord thereof may yet make other worlds to

be gifts to those that serve him, so that the increase of their power shall find no end.'

And Ar-Pharazôn said: 'Who is the Lord of the Darkness?'

Then behind locked doors Sauron spoke to the King, and he lied, saying: 'It is he whose name is not now spoken; for the Valar have deceived you concerning him, putting forward the name of Eru, a phantom devised in the folly of their hearts, seeking to enchain Men in servitude to themselves. For they are the oracle of this Eru, which speaks only what they will. But he that is their master shall yet prevail, and he will deliver you from this phantom; and his name is Melkor, Lord of All, Giver of Freedom, and he shall make you stronger than they.'

Then Ar-Pharazôn the King turned back to the worship of the Dark, and of Melkor the Lord thereof, at first in secret, but ere long openly and in the face of his people; and they for the most part followed him. Yet there dwelt still a remnant of the Faithful, as has been told, at Rómenna and in the country near, and other few there were here and there in the land. The chief among them, to whom they looked for leading and courage in evil days, was Amandil, councillor of the King, and his son Elendil, whose sons were Isildur and Anárion, then young men by the reckoning of Númenor. Amandil and Elendil were great ship-captains; and they were of the line of Elros Tar-Minyatur, though not of the ruling house to whom belonged the crown and the throne in the city of Armenelos. In the days of their youth together Amandil had been dear to Pharazôn, and though he was of the Elf-friends he remained in his council until the coming of Sauron. Now he was dismissed, for Sauron hated him above all others in Númenor. But he was so noble, and had been so mighty a captain of the sea, that he was still held in honour by many of the people, and neither the King nor Sauron dared to lay hands on him as yet.

Therefore Amandil withdrew to Rómenna, and all that he trusted still to be faithful he summoned to come thither in secret; for he feared that evil would now grow apace, and all the Elf-friends were in peril. And so it soon came to pass. For the Meneltarma was utterly deserted in those days; and though not even Sauron dared to defile the high place, yet the King would let no man, upon pain of death, ascend to it, not even those of the Faithful who kept Ilúvatar in their hearts. And Sauron urged the King to cut down the White Tree, Nimloth the Fair, that grew in his courts, for it was a memorial of the Eldar and of the light of Valinor.

At the first the King would not assent to this, since he believed that the fortunes of his house were bound up with the Tree, as was forespoken by Tar-Palantir. Thus in his folly he who now hated the Eldar and the Valar vainly clung to the shadow of the old allegiance of Númenor. But when Amandil heard rumour of the evil purpose of Sauron he was grieved to the heart, knowing that in the end Sauron would surely have his will. Then he spoke to Elendil and the sons of Elendil, recalling the tale of the Trees of Valinor; and Isildur said no word, but went out by night and did a deed for which he was afterwards renowned. For he passed alone in disguise to Armenelos and to the courts of the King, which were now forbidden to the Faithful; and he came to the place of the Tree, which was forbidden to all by the orders of Sauron, and the

Tree was watched day and night by guards in his service. At that time Nimloth was dark and bore no bloom, for it was late in the autumn, and its winter was nigh; and Isildur passed through the guards and took from the Tree a fruit that hung upon it, and turned to go. But the guard was aroused, and he was assailed, and fought his way out, receiving many wounds; and he escaped, and because he was disguised it was not discovered who had laid hands on the Tree. But Isildur came at last hardly back to Rómenna and delivered the fruit to the hands of Amandil, ere his strength failed him. Then the fruit was planted in secret, and it was blessed by Amandil; and a shoot arose from it and sprouted in the spring. But when its first leaf opened then Isildur, who had lain long and come near to death, arose and was troubled no more by his wounds.

None too soon was this done; for after the assault the King yielded to Sauron and felled the White Tree, and turned then wholly away from the allegiance of his fathers. But Sauron caused to be built upon the hill in the midst of the city of the Númenóreans, Armenelos the Golden, a mighty temple; and it was in the form of a circle at the base, and there the walls were fifty feet in thickness, and the width of the base was five hundred feet across the centre, and the walls rose from the ground five hundred feet, and they were crowned with a mighty dome. And that dome was roofed all with silver, and rose glittering in the sun, so that the light of it could be seen afar off; but soon the light was darkened, and the silver became black. For there was an altar of fire in the midst of the temple, and in the topmost of the dome there was a louver, whence there issued a great smoke. And the first fire upon the altar Sauron kindled with the hewn wood of Nimloth, and it crackled and was consumed; but men marvelled at the reek that went up from it, so that the land lay under a cloud for seven days, until slowly it passed into the west.

Thereafter the fire and smoke went up without ceasing; for the power of Sauron daily increased, and in that temple, with spilling of blood and torment and great wickedness, men made sacrifice to Melkor that he should release them from Death. And most often from among the Faithful they chose their victims; yet never openly on the charge that they would not worship Melkor, the Giver of Freedom, rather was cause sought against them that they hated the King and were his rebels, or that they plotted against their kin, devising lies and poisons. These charges were for the most part false; yet those were bitter days, and hate brings forth hate.

But for all this Death did not depart from the land, rather it came sooner and more often, and in many dreadful guises. For whereas aforetime men had grown slowly old, and had laid them down in the end to sleep, when they were weary at last of the world, now madness and sickness assailed them; and yet they were afraid to die and go out into the dark, the realm of the lord that they had taken; and they cursed themselves in their agony. And men took weapons in those days and slew one another for little cause; for they were become quick to anger, and Sauron, or those whom he had bound to himself, went about the land setting man against man, so that the people murmured against the King and the lords, or against any that had aught that they had not; and the men of power took cruel revenge.

Nonetheless for long it seemed to the Númenóreans that they prospered, and if they were not increased in happiness, yet they grew more strong, and their rich men ever richer. For with the aid and counsel of Sauron they multiplied their possessions, and they devised engines, and they built ever greater ships. And they sailed now with power and armoury to Middle-earth, and they came no longer as bringers of gifts, nor even as rulers, but as fierce men of war. And they hunted the men of Middle-earth and took their goods and enslaved them, and many they slew cruelly upon their altars. For they built in their fortresses temples and great tombs in those days; and men feared them, and the memory of the kindly kings of the ancient days faded from the world and was darkened by many a tale of dread.

Thus Ar-Pharazôn, King of the Land of the Star, grew to the mightiest tyrant that had yet been in the world since the reign of Morgoth, though in truth Sauron ruled all from behind the throne. But the years passed, and the King felt the shadow of death approach, as his days lengthened; and he was filled with fear and wrath. Now came the hour that Sauron had prepared and long had awaited. And Sauron spoke to the King, saying that his strength was now so great that he might think to have his will in all things, and be subject to no command or ban.

And he said: 'The Valar have possessed themselves of the land where there is no death; and they lie to you concerning it, hiding it as best they may, because of their avarice, and their fear lest the Kings of Men should wrest from them the deathless realm and rule the world in their stead. And though, doubtless, the gift of life unending is not for all, but only for such as are worthy, being men of might and pride and great lineage, yet against all Justice is it done that this gift, which is his due, should be withheld from the King of Bangs, Ar-Pharazôn, mightiest of the sons of Earth, to whom Manwë alone can be compared, if even he. But great kings do not brook denials, and take what is their due.'

Then Ar-Pharazôn, being besotted, and walking under the shadow of death, for his span was drawing towards its end, hearkened to Sauron; and he began to ponder in his heart how he might make war upon the Valar. He was long preparing this design, and he spoke not openly of it, yet it could not be hidden from all. And Amandil, becoming aware of the purposes of the King, was dismayed and filled with a great dread, for he knew that Men could not vanquish the Valar in war, and that ruin must come upon the world, if this war were not stayed. Therefore he called his son, Elendil, and he said to him:

'The days are dark, and there is no hope for Men, for the Faithful are few. Therefore I am minded to try that counsel which our forefather Eärendil took of old, to sail into the West, be there ban or no, and to speak to the Valar, even to Manwë himself, if may be, and beseech his aid ere all is lost.'

'Would you then betray the King?' said Elendil. 'For you know well the charge that they make against us, that we are traitors and spies, and that until this day it has been false.'

'If I thought that Manwë needed such a messenger,' said Amandil, 'I would betray the King. For there is but one loyalty

from which no man can be absolved in heart for any cause. But it is for mercy upon Men and their deliverance from Sauron the Deceiver that I would plead, since some at least have remained faithful. And as for the Ban, I will suffer in myself the penalty, lest all my people should become guilty.'

'But what think you, my father, is like to befall those of your house whom you leave behind, when your deed becomes known?'

'It must not become known,' said Amandil. 'I will prepare my going in secret, and I will set sail into the east, whither daily the ships depart from our havens; and thereafter, as wind and chance may allow, I will go about, through south or north, back into the west, and seek what I may find. But for you and your folk, my son, I counsel that you should prepare yourselves other ships, and put aboard all such things as your hearts cannot bear to part with; and when the ships are ready, you should lie in the haven of Rómenna, and give out among men that you purpose, when you see your time, to follow me into the east. Amandil is no longer so dear to our kinsman upon the throne that he will grieve over much, if we seek to depart, for a season or for good. But let it not be seen that you intend to take many men, or he will be troubled, because of the war that he now plots, for which he will need all the force that he may gather. Seek out the Faithful that are known still to be true, and let them join you in secret, if they are willing to go with you, and share in your design.'

'And what shall that design be?' said Elendil.

'To meddle not in the war, and to watch,' answered Amandil. 'Until I return I can say no more. But it is most like that you shall fly from the Land of the Star with no star to guide you; for that land is defiled. Then you shall lose all that you have loved, foretasting death in life, seeking a land of exile elsewhere. But east or west the Valar alone can say.'

Then Amandil said farewell to all his household, as one that is about to die. 'For,' said he, 'it may well prove that you will see me never again; and that I shall show you no such sign as Eärendil showed long ago. But hold you ever in readiness, for the end of the world that we have known is now at hand.'

It is said that Amandil set sail in a small ship at night, and steered first eastward, and then went about and passed into the west. And he took with him three servants, dear to his heart, and never again were they heard of by word or sign in this world, nor is there any tale or guess of their fate. Men could not a second time be saved by any such embassy, and for the treason of Númenor there was no easy absolving.

But Elendil did all that his father had bidden, and his ships lay off the east coast of the land; and the Faithful put aboard their wives and their children, and their heirlooms, and great store of goods. Many things there were of beauty and power, such as the Númenóreans had contrived in the days of their wisdom, vessels and jewels, and scrolls of lore written in scarlet and black. And Seven Stones they had, the gift of the Eldar; but in the ship of Isildur was guarded the young tree, the scion of Nimloth the Fair. Thus Elendil held himself in readiness, and did not meddle in the evil deeds of those days;

and ever he looked for a sign that did not come. Then he journeyed in secret to the western shores and gazed out over the sea, for sorrow and yearning were upon him, and he greatly loved his father. But naught could he descry save the fleets of Ar-Pharazôn gathering in the havens of the west.

Now aforetime in the isle of Númenor the weather was ever apt to the needs and liking of Men: rain in due season and ever in measure; and sunshine, now warmer, now cooler, and winds from the sea. And when the wind was in the west, it seemed to many that it was filled with a fragrance, fleeting but sweet, heart-stirring, as of flowers that bloom for ever in undying meads and have no names on mortal shores. But all this was now changed; for the sky itself was darkened, and there were storms of rain and hail in those days, and violent winds; and ever and anon a great ship of the Númenóreans would founder and return not to haven, though such a grief had not till then befallen them since the rising of the Star. And out of the west there would come at times a great cloud in the evening, shaped as it were an eagle, with pinions spread to the north and the south; and slowly it would loom up, blotting out the sunset, and then uttermost night would fall upon Númenor. And some of the eagles bore lightning beneath their wings, and thunder echoed between sea and cloud.

Then men grew afraid. 'Behold the Eagles of the Lords of the West!' they cried. 'The Eagles of Manwë are come upon Númenor!' And they fell upon their faces.

Then some few would repent for a season, but others hardened their hearts, and they shook their fists at heaven, saying: 'The Lords of the West have plotted against us. They strike first. The next blow shall be ours!' These words the King himself spoke, but they were devised by Sauron.

Now the lightnings increased and slew men upon the hills, and in the fields, and in the streets of the city; and a fiery bolt smote the dome of the Temple and shore it asunder, and it was wreathed in flame. But the Temple itself was unshaken, and Sauron stood there upon the pinnacle and defied the lightning and was unharmed; and in that hour men called him a god and did all that he would. When therefore the last portent came they heeded it little. For the land shook under them, and a groaning as of thunder underground was mingled with the roaring of the sea, and smoke issued from the peak of the Meneltarma. But all the more did Ar-Pharazôn press on with his armament.

In that time the fleets of the Númenóreans darkened the sea upon the west of the land, and they were like an archipelago of a thousand isles; their masts were as a forest upon the mountains, and their sails like a brooding cloud; and their banners were golden and black. And all things waited upon the word of Ar-Pharazôn; and Sauron withdrew into the inmost circle of the Temple, and men brought him victims to be burned.

Then the Eagles of the Lords of the West came up out of the dayfall, and they were arrayed as for battle, advancing in a line the end of which diminished beyond sight; and as they came their wings spread ever wider, grasping the sky. But the West burned red behind them, and they glowed beneath, as though

they were lit with a flame of great anger, so that all Númenor was illumined as with a smouldering fire; and men looked upon the faces of their fellows, and it seemed to them that they were red with wrath.

Then Ar-Pharazôn hardened his heart, and he went aboard his mighty ship, Alcarondas, Castle of the Sea. Many-oared it was and many-masted, golden and sable; and upon it the throne of Ar-Pharazôn was set. Then he did on his panoply and his crown, and let raise his standard, and he gave the signal for the raising of the anchors; and in that hour the trumpets of Númenor outrang the thunder.

Thus the fleets of the Númenóreans moved against the menace of the West; and there was little wind, but they had many oars and many strong slaves to row beneath the lash. The sun went down, and there came a great silence. Darkness fell upon the land, and the sea was still, while the world waited for what should betide. Slowly the fleets passed out of the sight of the watchers in the havens, and their lights faded, and night took them; and in the morning they were gone. For a wind arose in the east and it wafted them away; and they broke the Ban of the Valar, and sailed into forbidden seas, going up with war against the Deathless, to wrest from them everlasting life within the Circles of the World.

But the fleets of Ar-Pharazôn came up out of the deeps of the sea and encompassed Avallónë and all the isle of Eressëa, and the Eldar mourned, for the light of the setting sun was cut off by the cloud of the Númenóreans. And at last Ar-Pharazôn came even to Aman, the Blessed Realm, and the coasts of Valinor; and still all was silent, and doom hung by a thread. For Ar-Pharazôn wavered at the end, and almost he turned back. His heart misgave him when he looked upon the soundless shores and saw Taniquetil shining, whiter than snow, colder than death, silent, immutable, terrible as the shadow of the light of Ilúvatar. But pride was now his master, and at last he left his ship and strode upon the shore, claiming the land for his own, if none should do battle for it. And a host of the Númenóreans encamped in might about Túna, whence all the Eldar had fled.

Then Manwë upon the Mountain called upon Ilúvatar, and for that time the Valar laid down their government of Arda. But Ilúvatar showed forth his power, and he changed the fashion of the world; and a great chasm opened in the sea between Númenor and the Deathless Lands, and the waters flowed down into it, and the noise and smoke of the cataracts went up to heaven, and the world was shaken. And all the fleets of the Númenóreans were drawn down into the abyss, and they were drowned and swallowed up for ever. But Ar-Pharazôn the King and the mortal warriors that had set foot upon the land of Aman were buried under falling hills: there it is said that they lie imprisoned in the Caves of the Forgotten, until the Last Battle and the Day of Doom.

But the land of Aman and Eressëa of the Eldar were taken away and removed beyond the reach of Men for ever. And Andor, the Land of Gift, Númenor of the Kings, Elessa of the Star of Eärendil, was utterly destroyed. For it was nigh to the east of the great rift, and its foundations were overturned, and it fell and went down into darkness, and is no more. And there

is not now upon Earth any place abiding where the memory of a time without evil is preserved. For Ilúvatar cast back the Great Seas west of Middle-earth, and the Empty Lands east of it, and new lands and new seas were made; and the world was diminished, for Valinor and Eressëa were taken from it into the realm of hidden things.

In an hour unlocked for by Men this doom befell, on the nine and thirtieth day since the passing of the fleets. Then suddenly fire burst from the Meneltarma, and there came a mighty wind and a tumult of the earth, and the sky reeled, and the hills slid, and Númenor went down into the sea, with all its children and its wives and its maidens and its ladies proud; and all its gardens and its halls and its towers, its tombs and its riches, and its jewels and its webs and its things painted and carven, and its lore: they vanished for ever. And last of all the mounting wave, green and cold and plumed with foam, climbing over the land, took to its bosom Tar-Míriel the Queen, fairer than silver or ivory or pearls. Too late she strove to ascend the steep ways of the Meneltarma to the holy place; for the waters overtook her, and her cry was lost in the roaring of the wind.

But whether or no it were that Amandil came indeed to Valinor and Manwë hearkened to his prayer, by grace of the Valar Elendil and his sons and their people were spared from the ruin of that day. For Elendil had remained in Romenna, refusing the summons of the King when he set forth to war; and avoiding the soldiers of Sauron that came to seize him and drag him to the fires of the Temple, he went aboard his ship and stood off from the shore, waiting on the time. There he was protected by the land from the great draught of the sea that drew all towards the abyss, and afterwards he was sheltered from the first fury of the storm. But when the devouring wave rolled over the land and Númenor toppled to its fall, then he would have been overwhelmed and would have deemed it the lesser grief to perish, for no wretch of death could be more bitter than the loss and agony of that day; but the great wind took him, wilder than any wind that Men had known, roaring from the west, and it swept his ships far away; and it rent their sails and snapped their masts, hunting the unhappy men like straws upon the water.

Nine ships there were: four for Elendil, and for Isildur three, and for Anárion two; and they fled before the black gale out of the twilight of doom into the darkness of the world. And the deeps rose beneath them in towering anger, and waves like unto mountains moving with great caps of writhen snow bore them up amid the wreckage of the clouds, and after many days cast them away upon the shores of Middle-earth. And all the coasts and seaward regions of the western world suffered great change and ruin in that time; for the seas invaded the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled and rivers were turned into strange courses.

Elendil and his sons after founded kingdoms in Middle-earth; and though their lore and craft was but an echo of that which had been ere Sauron came to Númenor, yet very great it seemed to the wild men of the world. And much is said in other lore of the deeds of the heirs of Elendil in the age that

came after, and of their strife with Sauron that not yet was ended.

For Sauron himself was filled with great fear at the wrath of the Valar, and the doom that Eru laid upon sea and land. It was greater far than aught he had looked for, hoping only for the death of the Númenóreans and the defeat of their proud king. And Sauron, sitting in his black seat in the midst of the Temple, had laughed when he heard the trumpets of Ar-Pharazôn sounding for battle; and again he had laughed when he heard the thunder of the storm; and a third time, even as he laughed at his own thought, thinking what he would do now in the world, being rid of the Edain for ever, he was taken in the midst of his mirth, and his seat and his temple fell into the abyss. But Sauron was not of mortal flesh, and though he was robbed now of that shape in which he had wrought so great an evil, so that he could never again appear fair to the eyes of Men, yet his spirit arose out of the deep and passed as a shadow and a black wind over the sea, and came back to Middle-earth and to Mordor that was his home. There he took up again his great Ring in Barad-dûr, and dwelt there, dark and silent, until he wrought himself a new guise, an image of malice and hatred made visible; and the Eye of Sauron the Terrible few could endure.

But these things come not into the tale of the Drowning of Númenor, of which now all is told. And even the name of that land perished, and Men spoke thereafter not of Elenna, nor of Andor the Gift that was taken away, nor of Númenóre on the confines of the world; but the exiles on the shores of the sea, if they turned towards the West in the desire of their hearts, spoke of Mar-nu-Falmar that was whelmed in the waves, Akallabêth the Downfallen, Atalantë in the Eldarin tongue.

\* \* \*

Among the Exiles many believed that the summit of the Meneltarma, the Pillar of Heaven, was not drowned for ever, but rose again above the waves, a lonely island lost in the great waters; for it had been a hallowed place, and even in the days of Sauron none had defiled it. And some there were of the seed of Eärendil that afterwards sought for it, because it was said among loremasters that the far-sighted men of old could see from the Meneltarma a glimmer of the Deathless Land. For even after the ruin the hearts of the Dúnedain were still set westwards; and though they knew indeed that the world was changed, they said: 'Avallónë is vanished from the Earth and the Land of Aman is taken away, and in the world of this present darkness they cannot be found. Yet once they were, and therefore they still are, in true being and in the whole shape of the world as at first it was devised.'

For the Dúnedain held that even mortal Men, if so blessed, might look upon other times than those of their bodies' life; and they longed ever to escape from the shadows of their exile and to see in some fashion fee light that dies not; for the sorrow of the thought of death had pursued them over the deeps of the sea. Thus it was that great mariners among them would still search the empty seas, hoping to come upon the Isle of Meneltarma, and there to see a vision of things that were. But they found it not. And those that sailed far came only to the new lands, and found them like to the old lands,

and subject to death. And those that sailed furthest set but a girdle about the Earth and returned weary at last to the place of their beginning; and they said:

'All roads are now bent.'

Thus in after days, what by the voyages of ships, what by lore and star-craft, the kings of Men knew that the world was indeed made round, and yet the Eldar were permitted still to depart and to come to the Ancient West and to Avallónë, if they would. Therefore the loremasters of Men said that a Straight Road must still be, for those that were permitted to find it. And they taught that, while the new world fell away, the old road and the path of the memory of the West still went

on, as it were a mighty bridge invisible that passed through the air of breath and of flight (which were bent now as the world was bent), and traversed Ilmen which flesh unaided cannot endure, until it came to Tol Eressëa, the Lonely Isle, and maybe even beyond, to Valinor, where the Valar still dwell and watch the unfolding of the story of the world. And tales and rumours arose along the shores of the sea concerning mariners and men forlorn upon the water who, by some fate or grace or favour of the Valar, had entered in upon the Straight Way and seen the face of the world sink below them, and so had come to the lamplit quays of Avallónë, or verily to the last beaches on the margin of Aman, and there had looked upon the White Mountain, dreadful and beautiful, before they died.

### On Fairy Stories

I PROPOSE to speak about fairy-stories, though I am aware that this is a rash adventure. Faerie is a perilous land, and in it are pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold. And overbold I may be accounted, for though I have been a lover of fairy-stories since I learned to read, and have at times thought about them, I have not studied them professionally. I have been hardly more than a wandering explorer (or trespasser) in the land, full of wonder but not of information.

The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. In that realm a man may, perhaps, count himself fortunate to have wandered, but its very richness and strangeness tie the tongue of a traveller who would report them. And while he is there it is dangerous for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates should be shut and the keys be lost.

There are, however, some questions that one who is to speak about fairy-stories must expect to answer, or attempt to answer, whatever the folk of Faërie may think of his impertinence. For instance: What are fairy-stories? What is their origin? What is the use of them? I will try to give answers to these questions, or such hints of answers to them as I have gleaned— primarily from the stories themselves, the few of all their multitude that I know.

#### *Fairy-story*

What is a fairy-story? In this case you will turn to the Oxford English Dictionary in vain. It contains no reference to the combination fairy-story, and is unhelpful on the subject of fairies generally. In the Supplement, fairy-tale is recorded since the year 1750, and its leading sense is said to be (a) a tale about fairies, or generally a fairy legend; with developed senses, (b) an unreal or incredible story, and (c) a falsehood.

The last two senses would obviously make my topic hopelessly vast. But the first sense is too narrow. Not too narrow for an essay; it is wide enough for many books, but too narrow to cover actual usage. Especially so, if we accept the lexicographer's definition of fairies: "supernatural beings of diminutive size, in popular belief supposed to possess magical

powers and to have great influence for good or evil over the affairs of man."

Supernatural is a dangerous and difficult word in any of its senses, looser or stricter. But to fairies it can hardly be applied, unless super is taken merely as a superlative prefix. For it is man who is, in contrast to fairies, supernatural (and often of diminutive stature); whereas they are natural, far more natural than he. Such is their doom. The road to fairyland is not the road to Heaven; nor even to Hell, I believe, though some have held that it may lead thither indirectly by the Devil's tithe.

O see ye not yon narrow road  
So thick beset wi' thorns and briers?  
That is the path of Righteousness,  
Though after it but few inquire.  
And see ye not yon braid, braid road  
That lies across the lily leven?  
That is the path of Wickedness,  
Though some call it the Road to Heaven.  
And see ye not yon bonny road  
That winds about yon fernie brae?  
That is the road to fair Elfland,  
Where thou and I this nightmare gave.

As for diminutive size: I do not deny that the notion is a leading one in modern use. I have often thought that it would be interesting to try to find out how that has come to be so; but my knowledge is not sufficient for a certain answer. Of old there were indeed some inhabitants of Faerie that were small (though hardly diminutive), but smallness was not characteristic of that people as a whole. The diminutive being, elf or fairy, is (I guess) in England largely a sophisticated product of literary fancy. It is perhaps not unnatural that in England, the land where the love of the delicate and fine has often reappeared in art, fancy should in this matter turn towards the dainty and diminutive, as in France it went to court and put on powder and diamonds. Yet I suspect that this flower-and-butterfly minuteness was also a product of "rationalization," which transformed the glamour of Elfland into mere finesse, and invisibility into a fragility that could hide in a cowslip or shrink behind a blade of grass. It seems to become fashionable soon after the great voyages had begun to make the world seem too narrow to hold both men and elves...

I said the sense “stories about fairies” was too narrow. It is too narrow, even if we reject the diminutive size, for fairy-stories are not in normal English usage stories about fairies or elves, but stories about Fairy, that is Faerie, the realm or state in which fairies have their being. Faerie contains many things besides elves and fays, and besides dwarfs, witches, trolls, giants, or dragons: it holds the seas, the sun, the moon, the sky; and the earth, and all things that are in it:

tree and bird, water and stone, wine and bread, and ourselves, mortal men, when we are enchanted.

Stories that are actually concerned primarily with “fairies,” that is with creatures that might also in modern English be called “elves,” are relatively rare, and as a rule not very interesting. Most good “fairy-stories” are about the adventures of men in the Perilous Realm or upon its shadowy marches. Naturally so; for if elves are true, and really exist independently of our tales about them, then this also is certainly true: elves are not primarily concerned with us, nor we with them. Our fates are sundered, and our paths seldom meet. Even upon the borders of Faërie we encounter them only at some chance crossing of the ways.

The definition of a fairy-story—what it is, or what it should be—does not, then, depend on any definition or historical account of elf or fairy, but upon the nature of Faërie: the Perilous Realm itself, and the air that blows in that country. I will not attempt to define that, nor to describe it directly. It cannot be done. Faërie cannot be caught in a net of words; for it is one of its qualities to be indescribable, though not imperceptible. It has many ingredients, but analysis will not necessarily discover the secret of the whole. Yet I hope that what I have later to say about the other questions will give some glimpses of my own imperfect vision of it. For the moment I will say only this: a “fairy-story” is one which touches on or uses Faerie, whatever its own main purpose may be: satire, adventure, morality, fantasy. Faerie itself may perhaps most nearly be translated by Magic—but it is magic of a peculiar mood and power, at the furthest pole from the vulgar devices of the laborious, scientific, magician. There is one proviso: if there is any satire present in the tale, one thing must not be made fun of, the magic itself. That must in that story be taken seriously, neither laughed at nor explained away.

### *Origins*

What are the origins of “fairy-stories”? I am too unlearned to deal with [this question] in any other way [than with] a few remarks that will [hopefully suffice]. It is plain enough that fairystories (in wider or in narrower sense) are very ancient indeed. Related things appear in very early records; and they are found universally, wherever there is language. We are therefore obviously confronted with a variant of the problem that the archaeologist encounters, or the comparative philologist: with the debate between independent evolution (or rather invention) of the similar; inheritance from a common ancestry; and diffusion at various times from one or more centres. Most debates depend on an attempt (by one or both sides) at over-simplification; and I do not suppose that this debate is an exception. The history of fairy-stories is probably

more complex than the physical history of the human race, and as complex as the history of human language. All three things: independent invention, inheritance, and diffusion, have evidently played their part in producing the intricate web of Story. It is now beyond all skill but that of the elves to unravel it. Of these three invention is the most important and fundamental, and so (not surprisingly) also the most mysterious. To an inventor, that is to a storymaker, the other two must in the end lead back. Diffusion (borrowing in space) whether of an artefact or a story, only refers the problem of origin elsewhere. At the centre of the supposed diffusion there is a place where once an inventor lived. Similarly with inheritance (borrowing in time): in this way we arrive at last only at an ancestral inventor. While if we believe that sometimes there occurred the independent striking out of similar ideas and themes or devices, we simply multiply the ancestral inventor but do not in that way the more clearly understand his gift.

Philology has been dethroned from the high place it once had in this court of inquiry. Max Müller's view of mythology as a “disease of language” can be abandoned without regret. Mythology is not a disease at all, though it may like all human things become diseased. You might as well say that thinking is a disease of the mind. It would be more near the truth to say that languages, especially modern European languages, are a disease of mythology. But Language cannot, all the same, be dismissed. The incarnate mind, the tongue, and the tale are in our world coeval. The human mind, endowed with the powers of generalization and abstraction, sees not only green-grass, discriminating it from other things (and finding it fair to look upon), but sees that it is green as well as being grass. But how powerful, how stimulating to the very faculty that produced it, was the invention of the adjective: no spell or incantation in Faerie is more potent. And that is not surprising: such incantations might indeed be said to be only another view of adjectives, a part of speech in a mythical grammar. The mind that thought of light, heavy, grey, yellow, still, swift, also conceived of magic that would make heavy things light and able to fly, turn grey lead into yellow gold, and the still rock into a swift water. If it could do the one, it could do the other; it inevitably did both. When we can take green from grass, blue from heaven, and red from blood, we have already an enchanter's power—upon one plane; and the desire to wield that power in the world external to our minds awakes. It does not follow that we shall use that power well upon any plane. We may put a deadly green upon a man's face and produce a horror; we may make the rare and terrible blue moon to shine; or we may cause woods to spring with silver leaves and rams to wear fleeces of gold, and put hot fire into the belly of the cold worm. But in such “fantasy,” as it is called, new form is made; Faerie begins; Man becomes a sub-creator.

An essential power of Faerie is thus the power of making immediately effective by the will the visions of “fantasy.” Not all are beautiful or even wholesome, not at any rate the fantasies of fallen Man. And he has stained the elves who have this power (in verity or fable) with his own stain. This aspect of “mythology”—sub-creation, rather than either representation or symbolic interpretation of the beauties and terrors of the world—is, I think, too little considered.

## *Children*

I will now turn to children, and so come to the last and most important of the three questions: what, if any, are the values and functions of fairy-stories now? It is usually assumed that children are the natural or the specially appropriate audience for fairy-stories. In describing a fairy-story which they think adults might possibly read for their own entertainment, reviewers frequently indulge in such waggeries as: "this book is for children from the ages of six to sixty." But I have never yet seen the puff of a new motor-model that began thus: "this toy will amuse infants from seventeen to seventy"; though that to my mind would be much more appropriate. Is there any essential connexion between children and fairy-stories? Is there any call for comment, if an adult reads them for himself? Reads them as tales, that is, not studies them as curios. Adults are allowed to collect and study anything, even old theatre programmes or paper bags.

Among those who still have enough wisdom not to think fairy-stories pernicious, the common opinion seems to be that there is a natural connexion between the minds of children and fairystories, of the same order as the connexion between children's bodies and milk. I think this is an error; at best an error of false sentiment, and one that is therefore most often made by those who, for whatever private reason (such as childlessness), tend to think of children as a special kind of creature, almost a different race, rather than as normal, if immature, members of a particular family, and of the human family at large.

Actually, the association of children and fairy-stories is an accident of our domestic history. Fairy-stories have in the modern lettered world been relegated to the "nursery," as shabby or oldfashioned furniture is relegated to the play-room, primarily because the adults do not want it, and do not mind if it is misused. It is not the choice of the children which decides this. Children as a class—except in a common lack of experience they are not one—neither like fairy-stories more, nor understand them better than adults do; and no more than they like many other things. They are young and growing, and normally have keen appetites, so the fairy-stories as a rule go down well enough. But in fact only some children, and some adults, have any special taste for them; and when they have it, it is not exclusive, nor even necessarily dominant. It is a taste, too, that would not appear, I think, very early in childhood without artificial stimulus; it is certainly one that does not decrease but increases with age, if it is innate.

It is true that in recent times fairy-stories have usually been written or "adapted" for children. But so may music be, or verse, or novels, or history, or scientific manuals. It is a dangerous process, even when it is necessary. It is indeed only saved from disaster by the fact that the arts and sciences are not as a whole relegated to the nursery; the nursery and schoolroom are merely given such tastes and glimpses of the adult thing as seem fit for them in adult opinion (often much mistaken). Any one of these things would, if left altogether in the nursery, become gravely impaired. So would a beautiful table, a good picture, or a useful machine (such as a microscope), be defaced or broken, if it were left long unregarded in a schoolroom. Fairy-stories banished in this

way, cut off from a full adult art, would in the end be ruined; indeed in so far as they have been so banished, they have been ruined.

The value of fairy-stories is thus not, in my opinion, to be found by considering children in particular. Collections of fairy-stories are, in fact, by nature attics and lumber-rooms, only by temporary and local custom play-rooms. Their contents are disordered, and often battered, a jumble of different dates, purposes, and tastes; but among them may occasionally be found a thing of permanent virtue: an old work of art, not too much damaged, that only stupidity would ever have stuffed away.

I have said, perhaps, more than enough on this point. At least it will be plain that in my opinion fairy-stories should not be specially associated with children. They are associated with them: naturally, because children are human and fairy-stories are a natural human taste (though not necessarily a universal one); accidentally, because fairy-stories are a large part of the literary lumber that in latter-day Europe has been stuffed away in attics; unnaturally, because of erroneous sentiment about children, a sentiment that seems to increase with the decline in children.

## *Fantasy*

The human mind is capable of forming mental images of things not actually present. The faculty of conceiving the images is (or was) naturally called Imagination. But in recent times, in technical not normal language, Imagination has often been held to be something higher than the mere image-making, ascribed to the operations of Fancy (a reduced and depreciatory form of the older word Fantasy); an attempt is thus made to restrict, I should say misapply, Imagination to "the power of giving to ideal creations the inner consistency of reality."

Ridiculous though it may be for one so ill-instructed to have an opinion on this critical matter, I venture to think the verbal distinction philologically inappropriate, and the analysis inaccurate. The mental power of image-making is one thing, or aspect; and it should appropriately be called Imagination. The perception of the image, the grasp of its implications, and the control, which are necessary to a successful expression, may vary in vividness and strength: but this is a difference of degree in Imagination, not a difference in kind. The achievement of the expression, which gives (or seems to give) "the inner consistency of reality," is indeed another thing, or aspect, needing another name: Art, the operative link between Imagination and the final result, Sub-creation. For my present purpose I require a word which shall embrace both the Subcreative Art in itself and a quality of strangeness and wonder in the Expression, derived from the Image: a quality essential to fairy-story. I propose, therefore, to arrogate to myself the powers of Humpty-Dumpty, and to use Fantasy for this purpose: in a sense, that is, which combines with its older and higher use as an equivalent of Imagination the derived notions of "unreality" (that is, of unlikeness to the Primary World), of freedom from the domination of observed "fact," in short of the fantastic. I am thus not only aware but glad of the etymological and semantic connexions of fantasy with

fantastic: with images of things that are not only “not actually present,” but which are indeed not to be found in our primary world at all, or are generally believed not to be found there. But while admitting that, I do not assent to the depreciative tone. That the images are of things not in the primary world (if that indeed is possible) is a virtue, not a vice. Fantasy (in this sense) is, I think, not a lower but a higher form of Art, indeed the most nearly pure form, and so (when achieved) the most potent.

Fantasy, of course, starts out with an advantage: arresting strangeness. But that advantage has been turned against it, and has contributed to its disrepute. Many people dislike being “arrested.” They dislike any meddling with the Primary World, or such small glimpses of it as are familiar to them. They, therefore, stupidly and even maliciously confound Fantasy with Dreaming, in which there is no Art; and with mental disorders, in which there is not even control: with delusion and hallucination.

But the error or malice, engendered by disquiet and consequent dislike, is not the only cause of this confusion. Fantasy has also an essential drawback: it is difficult to achieve. Fantasy may be, as I think, not less but more sub-creative; but at any rate it is found in practice that “the inner consistency of reality” is more difficult to produce, the more unlike are the images and the rearrangements of primary material to the actual arrangements of the Primary World. It is easier to produce this kind of “reality” with more “sober” material. Fantasy thus, too often, remains undeveloped; it is and has been used frivolously, or only half-seriously, or merely for decoration: it remains merely “fanciful.” Anyone inheriting the fantastic device of human language can say the green sun. Many can then imagine or picture it. But that is not enough—though it may already be a more potent thing than many a “thumbnail sketch” or “transcript of life” that receives literary praise.

To make a Secondary World inside which the green sun will be credible, commanding Secondary Belief, will probably require labour and thought, and will certainly demand a special skill, a kind of elvish craft. Few attempt such difficult tasks. But when they are attempted and in any degree accomplished then we have a rare achievement of Art: indeed narrative art, storymaking in its primary and most potent mode.

In human art Fantasy is a thing best left to words, to true literature. In painting, for instance, the visible presentation of the fantastic image is technically too easy; the hand tends to outrun the mind, even to overthrow it. Silliness or morbidity are frequent results. It is a misfortune that Drama, an art fundamentally distinct from Literature, should so commonly be considered together with it, or as a branch of it. Among these misfortunes we may reckon the depreciation of Fantasy. For in part at least this depreciation is due to the natural desire of critics to cry up the forms of literature or “imagination” that they themselves, innately or by training, prefer. And criticism in a country that has produced so great a Drama, and possesses the works of William Shakespeare, tends to be far too dramatic. But Drama is naturally hostile to Fantasy. Fantasy, even of the simplest kind, hardly ever succeeds in Drama,

when that is presented as it should be, visibly and audibly acted. Fantastic forms are not to be counterfeited. Men dressed up as talking animals may achieve buffoonery or mimicry, but they do not achieve Fantasy. This is, I think, well illustrated by the failure of the bastard form, pantomime. The nearer it is to “dramatized fairy-story” the worse it is. It is only tolerable when the plot and its fantasy are reduced to a mere vestigiary framework for farce, and no “belief” of any kind in any part of the performance is required or expected of anybody. This is, of course, partly due to the fact that the producers of drama have to, or try to, work with mechanism to represent either Fantasy or Magic. I once saw a so-called “children's pantomime,” the straight story of Puss-in-Boots, with even the metamorphosis of the ogre into a mouse. Had this been mechanically successful it would either have terrified the spectators or else have been just a turn of high-class conjuring. As it was, though done with some ingenuity of lighting, disbelief had not so much to be suspended as hanged, drawn, and quartered.

In *Macbeth*, when it is read, I find the witches tolerable: they have a narrative function and some hint of dark significance; though they are vulgarized, poor things of their kind. They are almost intolerable in the play. They would be quite intolerable, if I were not fortified by some memory of them as they are in the story as read. I am told that I should feel differently if I had the mind of the period, with its witch-hunts and witch-trials. But that is to say: if I regarded the witches as possible, indeed likely, in the Primary World; in other words, if they ceased to be “Fantasy.” That argument concedes the point. To be dissolved, or to be degraded, is the likely fate of Fantasy when a dramatist tries to use it, even such a dramatist as Shakespeare. *Macbeth* is indeed a work by a playwright who ought, at least on this occasion, to have written a story, if he had the skill or patience for that art.

A reason, more important, I think, than the inadequacy of stage-effects, is this: Drama has, of its very nature, already attempted a kind of bogus, or shall I say at least substitute, magic: the visible and audible presentation of imaginary men in a story. That is in itself an attempt to counterfeit the magician's wand. To introduce, even with mechanical success, into this quasimagical secondary world a further fantasy or magic is to demand, as it were, an inner or tertiary world. It is a world too much. To make such a thing may not be impossible. I have never seen it done with success. But at least it cannot be claimed as the proper mode of Drama, in which walking and talking people have been found to be the natural instruments of Art and illusion.

For this precise reason—that the characters, and even the scenes, are in Drama not imagined but actually beheld—Drama is, even though it uses a similar material (words, verse, plot), an art fundamentally different from narrative art. Thus, if you prefer Drama to Literature (as many literary critics plainly do), or form your critical theories primarily from dramatic critics, or even from Drama, you are apt to misunderstand pure story-making, and to constrain it to the limitations of stage-plays. You are, for instance, likely to prefer characters, even the basest and dullest, to things. Very little about trees as trees can be got into a play.

Now “Faërian Drama”—those plays which according to abundant records the elves have often presented to men—can produce Fantasy with a realism and immediacy beyond the compass of any human mechanism. As a result their usual effect (upon a man) is to go beyond Secondary Belief. If you are present at a Faërian drama you yourself are, or think that you are, bodily inside its Secondary World. The experience may be very similar to Dreaming and has (it would seem) sometimes (by men) been confounded with it. But in Faërian drama you are in a dream that some other mind is weaving, and the knowledge of that alarming fact may slip from your grasp. To experience directly a Secondary World: the potion is too strong, and you give to it Primary Belief, however marvellous the events. You are deluded—whether that is the intention of the elves (always or at any time) is another question. They at any rate are not themselves deluded. This is for them a form of Art, and distinct from Wizardry or Magic, properly so called. They do not live in it, though they can, perhaps, afford to spend more time at it than human artists can. The Primary World, Reality, of elves and men is the same, if differently valued and perceived.

We need a word for this elvish craft, but all the words that have been applied to it have been blurred and confused with other things. Magic is ready to hand, and I have used it above (p. 39), but I should not have done so: Magic should be reserved for the operations of the Magician. Art is the human process that produces by the way (it is not its only or ultimate object) Secondary Belief. Art of the same sort, if more skilled and effortless, the elves can also use, or so the reports seem to show; but the more potent and specially elvish craft I will, for lack of a less debatable word, call Enchantment. Enchantment produces a Secondary World into which both designer and spectator can enter, to the satisfaction of their senses while they are inside; but in its purity it is artistic in desire and purpose. Magic produces, or pretends to produce, an alteration in the Primary World. It does not matter by whom it is said to be practised, fay or mortal, it remains distinct from the other two; it is not an art but a technique; its desire is power in this world, domination of things and wills.

To the elvish craft, Enchantment, Fantasy aspires, and when it is successful of all forms of human art most nearly approaches. At the heart of many man-made stories of the elves lies, open or concealed, pure or alloyed, the desire for a living, realized sub-creative art, which (however much it may outwardly resemble it) is inwardly wholly different from the greed for self-centred power which is the mark of the mere Magician. Of this desire the elves, in their better (but still perilous) part, are largely made; and it is from them that we may learn what is the central desire and aspiration of human Fantasy—even if the elves are, all the more in so far as they are, only a product of Fantasy itself. That creative desire is only cheated by counterfeits, whether the innocent but clumsy devices of the human dramatist, or the malevolent frauds of the magicians. In this world it is for men unsatisfiable, and so imperishable. Uncorrupted, it does not seek delusion nor bewitchment and domination; it seeks shared enrichment, partners in making and delight, not slaves.

To many, Fantasy, this sub-creative art which plays strange tricks with the world and all that is in it, combining nouns and

redistributing adjectives, has seemed suspect, if not illegitimate. To some it has seemed at least a childish folly, a thing only for peoples or for persons in their youth. As for its legitimacy I will say no more than to quote a brief passage from a letter I once wrote to a man who described myth and fairy-story as “lies”; though to do him justice he was kind enough and confused enough to call fairy-story-making “Breathing a lie through Silver.”

“Dear Sir,” I said—Although now long estranged,

Man is not wholly lost nor wholly changed. Disgraced he may be, yet is not de-throned, and keeps the rags of lordship once he owned: Man, Sub-creator, the refracted Light through whom is splintered from a single White to many hues, and endlessly combined in living shapes that move from mind to mind. Though all the crannies of the world we filled with Elves and Goblins, though we dared to build Gods and their houses out of dark and light, and sowed the seed of dragons—’twas our right (used or misused). That right has not decayed: we make still by the law in which we’re made.”

Fantasy is a natural human activity. It certainly does not destroy or even insult Reason; and it does not either blunt the appetite for, nor obscure the perception of, scientific verity. On the contrary. The keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make. If men were ever in a state in which they did not want to know or could not perceive truth (facts or evidence), then Fantasy would languish until they were cured. If they ever get into that state (it would not seem at all impossible), Fantasy will perish, and become Morbid Delusion.

For creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it. So upon logic was founded the nonsense that displays itself in the tales and rhymes of Lewis Carroll. If men really could not distinguish between frogs and men, fairy-stories about frog-kings would not have arisen.

Fantasy can, of course, be carried to excess. It can be ill done. It can be put to evil uses. It may even delude the minds out of which it came. But of what human thing in this fallen world is that not true? Men have conceived not only of elves, but they have imagined gods, and worshipped them, even worshipped those most deformed by their authors' own evil. But they have made false gods out of other materials: their notions, their banners, their monies; even their sciences and their social and economic theories have demanded human sacrifice. *Abusus non tollit usum*. Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker.

### *Recovery, Escape, Consolation*

Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a regaining—regaining of a clear view. I do not say “seeing things as they are” and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say “seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them”—as things apart from ourselves. We need,

in any case, to clean our windows; so that the things seen clearly may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity—from possessiveness. Of all faces those of our familiars are the ones both most difficult to play fantastic tricks with, and most difficult really to see with fresh attention, perceiving their likeness and unlikeness: that they are faces, and yet unique faces. This triteness is really the penalty of “appropriation”: the things that are trite, or (in a bad sense) familiar, are the things that we have appropriated, legally or mentally. We say we know them. They have become like the things which once attracted us by their glitter, or their colour, or their shape, and we laid hands on them, and then locked them in our hoard, acquired them, and acquiring ceased to look at them.

Of course, fairy-stories are not the only means of recovery, or prophylactic against loss. Humility is enough. And there is (especially for the humble) Mooreeffoc, or Chestertonian Fantasy. Mooreeffoc is a fantastic word, but it could be seen written up in every town in this land. It is

Coffee-room, viewed from the inside through a glass door, as it was seen by Dickens on a dark London day; and it was used by Chesterton to denote the queerness of things that have become trite, when they are seen suddenly from a new angle. That kind of “fantasy” most people would allow to be wholesome enough; and it can never lack for material. But it has, I think, only a limited power; for the reason that recovery of freshness of vision is its only virtue. The word Mooreeffoc may cause you suddenly to realize that England is an utterly alien land, lost either in some remote past age glimpsed by history, or in some strange dim future to be reached only by a time-machine; to see the amazing oddity and interest of its inhabitants and their customs and feeding-habits; but it cannot do more than that: act as a time-telescope focused on one spot. Creative fantasy, because it is mainly trying to do something else (make something new), may open your hoard and let all the locked things fly away like cage-birds. The gems all turn into flowers or flames, and you will be warned that all you had (or knew) was dangerous and potent, not really effectively chained, free and wild; no more yours than they were you.

The “fantastic” elements in verse and prose of other kinds, even when only decorative or occasional, help in this release. But not so thoroughly as a fairy-story, a thing built on or about Fantasy, of which Fantasy is the core. Fantasy is made out of the Primary World, but a good craftsman loves his material, and has a knowledge and feeling for clay, stone and wood which only the art of making can give. By the forging of Gram cold iron was revealed; by the making of Pegasus horses were ennobled; in the Trees of the Sun and Moon root and stock, flower and fruit are manifested in glory.

And actually fairy-stories deal largely, or (the better ones) mainly, with simple or fundamental things, untouched by Fantasy, but these simplicities are made all the more luminous by their setting. For the story-maker who allows himself to be “free with” Nature can be her lover not her slave. It was in fairy-stories that I first divined the potency of the words, and the wonder of the things, such as stone, and wood, and iron; tree and grass; house and fire; bread and wine.

I will now conclude by considering Escape and Consolation, which are naturally closely connected. Though fairy-stories are of course by no means the only medium of Escape, they are today one of the most obvious and (to some) outrageous forms of “escapist” literature; and it is thus reasonable to attach to a consideration of them some considerations of this term “escape” in criticism generally.

I have claimed that Escape is one of the main functions of fairy-stories, and since I do not disapprove of them, it is plain that I do not accept the tone of scorn or pity with which “Escape” is now so often used: a tone for which the uses of the word outside literary criticism give no warrant at all. In what the misusers are fond of calling Real Life, Escape is evidently as a rule very practical, and may even be heroic. In real life it is difficult to blame it, unless it fails; in criticism it would seem to be the worse the better it succeeds. Evidently we are faced by a misuse of words, and also by a confusion of thought. Why should a man be scorned if, finding himself in prison, he tries to get out and go home? Or if, when he cannot do so, he thinks and talks about other topics than jailers and prison-walls? The world outside has not become less real because the prisoner cannot see it. In using escape in this way the critics have chosen the wrong word, and, what is more, they are confusing, not always by sincere error, the Escape of the Prisoner with the Flight of the Deserter. Just so a Party-spokesman might have labelled departure from the misery of the Führer's or any other Reich and even criticism of it as treachery. In the same way these critics, to make confusion worse, and so to bring into contempt their opponents, stick their label of scorn not only on to Desertion, but on to real Escape, and what are often its companions, Disgust, Anger, Condemnation, and Revolt. Not only do they confound the escape of the prisoner with the flight of the deserter; but they would seem to prefer the acquiescence of the “quisling” to the resistance of the patriot. To such thinking you have only to say “the land you loved is doomed” to excuse any treachery, indeed to glorify it.

For a trifling instance: not to mention (indeed not to parade) electric street-lamps of massproduced pattern in your tale is Escape (in that sense). But it may, almost certainly does, proceed from a considered disgust for so typical a product of the Robot Age, that combines elaboration and ingenuity of means with ugliness, and (often) with inferiority of result. These lamps may be excluded from the tale simply because they are bad lamps; and it is possible that one of the lessons to be learnt from the story is the realization of this fact. But out comes the big stick: “Electric lamps have come to stay,” they say. Long ago Chesterton truly remarked that, as soon as he heard that anything “had come to stay,” he knew that it would be very soon replaced—indeed regarded as pitifully obsolete and shabby. “The march of Science, its tempo quickened by the needs of war, goes inexorably on ... making some things obsolete, and foreshadowing new developments in the utilization of electricity”: an advertisement. This says the same thing only more menacingly. The electric street-lamp may indeed be ignored, simply because it is so insignificant and transient. Fairy-stories, at any rate, have many more permanent and fundamental things to talk about. Lightning, for example. The escapist is not so subservient to the whims of

evanescent fashion as these opponents. He does not make things (which it may be quite rational to regard as bad) his masters or his gods by worshipping them as inevitable, even “inexorable.” And his opponents, so easily contemptuous, have no guarantee that he will stop there: he might rouse men to pull down the street-lamps. Escapism has another and even wickeder face: Reaction.

Not long ago—incredible though it may seem—I heard a clerk of Oxenford declare that he “welcomed” the proximity of mass-production robot factories, and the roar of self-obstructive mechanical traffic, because it brought his university into “contact with real life.” He may have meant that the way men were living and working in the twentieth century was increasing in barbarity at an alarming rate, and that the loud demonstration of this in the streets of Oxford might serve as a warning that it is not possible to preserve for long an oasis of sanity in a desert of unreason by mere fences, without actual offensive action (practical and intellectual). I fear he did not. In any case the expression “real life” in this context seems to fall short of academic standards. The notion that motor-cars are more “alive” than, say, centaurs or dragons is curious; that they are more “real” than, say, horses is pathetically absurd. How real, how startlingly alive is a factory chimney compared with an elm-tree: poor obsolete thing, insubstantial dream of an escapist!

“The rawness and ugliness of modern European life”—that real life whose contact we should welcome —“is the sign of a biological inferiority, of an insufficient or false reaction to environment.” The maddest castle that ever came out of a giant's bag in a wild Gaelic story is not only much less ugly than a robot-factory, it is also (to use a very modern phrase) “in a very real sense” a great deal more real. Why should we not escape from or condemn the “grim Assyrian” absurdity of top-hats, or the Morlockian horror of factories? They are condemned even by the writers of that most escapist form of all literature, stories of Science fiction. These prophets often foretell (and many seem to yearn for) a world like one big glass-roofed railway-station. But from them it is as a rule very hard to gather what men in such a world-town will do. They may abandon the “full Victorian panoply” for loose garments (with zip-fasteners), but will use this freedom mainly, it would appear, in order to play with mechanical toys in the soon-cloying game of moving at high speed. To judge by some of these tales they will still be as lustful, vengeful, and greedy as ever; and the ideals of their idealists hardly reach farther than the splendid notion of building more towns of the same sort on other planets. It is indeed an age of “improved means to deteriorated ends.” It is part of the essential malady of such days— producing the desire to escape, not indeed from life, but from our present time and self-made misery— that we are acutely conscious both of the ugliness of our works, and of their evil. So that to us evil and ugliness seem indissolubly allied. We find it difficult to conceive of evil and beauty together. The fear of the beautiful fay that ran through the elder ages almost eludes our grasp. Even more alarming: goodness is itself bereft of its proper beauty. In Faerie one can indeed conceive of an ogre who possesses a castle hideous as a nightmare (for the evil of the ogre wills it so), but one cannot conceive of a house built with a good purpose—an inn, a

hostel for travellers, the hall of a virtuous and noble king—that is yet sickeningly ugly. At the present day it would be rash to hope to see one that was not—unless it was built before our time.

This, however, is the modern and special (or accidental) “escapist” aspect of fairy-stories, which they share with romances, and other stories out of or about the past. Many stories out of the past have only become “escapist” in their appeal through surviving from a time when men were as a rule delighted with the work of their hands into our time, when many men feel disgust with manmade things.

But there are also other and more profound “escapisms” that have always appeared in fairytale and legend. There are other things more grim and terrible to fly from than the noise, stench, ruthlessness, and extravagance of the internal-combustion engine. There are hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death. And even when men are not facing hard things such as these, there are ancient limitations from which fairy-stories offer a sort of escape, and old ambitions and desires (touching the very roots of fantasy) to which they offer a kind of satisfaction and consolation. Some are pardonable weaknesses or curiosities: such as the desire to visit, free as a fish, the deep sea; or the longing for the noiseless, gracious, economical flight of a bird, that longing which the aeroplane cheats, except in rare moments, seen high and by wind and distance noiseless, turning in the sun: that is, precisely when imagined and not used. There are profounder wishes: such as the desire to converse with other living things. On this desire, as ancient as the Fall, is largely founded the talking of beasts and creatures in fairy-tales, and especially the magical understanding of their proper speech. This is the root, and not the “confusion” attributed to the minds of men of the unrecorded past, an alleged “absence of the sense of separation of ourselves from beasts.” A vivid sense of that separation is very ancient; but also a sense that it was a severance: a strange fate and a guilt lies on us. Other creatures are like other realms with which Man has broken off relations, and sees now only from the outside at a distance, being at war with them, or on the terms of an uneasy armistice. There are a few men who are privileged to travel abroad a little; others must be content with travellers' tales. Even about frogs. In speaking of that rather odd but widespread fairy-story *The Frog-King* Max Müller asked in his prim way: “How came such a story ever to be invented? Human beings were, we may hope, at all times sufficiently enlightened to know that a marriage between a frog and the daughter of a queen was absurd.” Indeed we may hope so! For if not, there would be no point in this story at all, depending as it does essentially on the sense of the absurdity. Folk-lore origins (or guesses about them) are here quite beside the point. It is of little avail to consider totemism. For certainly, whatever customs or beliefs about frogs and wells lie behind this story, the frogshape was and is preserved in the fairy-story precisely because it was so queer and the marriage absurd, indeed abominable. Though, of course, in the versions which concern us, Gaelic, German, English, there is in fact no wedding between a princess and a frog: the frog was an enchanted prince. And the point of the story lies not in thinking frogs possible mates, but in the necessity of keeping promises (even those with intolerable consequences) that,

together with observing prohibitions, runs through all Fairyland. This is one of the notes of the horns of Elfland, and not a dim note.

And lastly there is the oldest and deepest desire, the Great Escape: the Escape from Death. Fairystories provide many examples and modes of this—which might be called the genuine escapist, or (I would say) fugitive spirit. But so do other stories (notably those of scientific inspiration), and so do other studies. Fairy-stories are made by men not by fairies. The Human-stories of the elves are doubtless full of the Escape from Deathlessness. But our stories cannot be expected always to rise above our common level. They often do. Few lessons are taught more clearly in them than the burden of that kind of immortality, or rather endless serial living, to which the “fugitive” would fly. For the fairy-story is specially apt to teach such things, of old and still today.

But the “consolation” of fairy-tales has another aspect than the imaginative satisfaction of ancient desires. Far more important is the Consolation of the Happy Ending. Almost I would venture to assert that all complete fairy-stories must have it. At least I would say that Tragedy is the true form of Drama, its highest function; but the opposite is true of Fairystory. Since we do not appear to possess a word that expresses this opposite—I will call it Eucatastrophe. The eucatastrophic tale is the true form of fairy-tale, and its highest function.

The consolation of fairy-stories, the joy of the happy ending: or more correctly of the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous “turn” (for there is no true end to any fairy-tale): this joy, which is one of the things which fairy-stories can produce supremely well, is not essentially “escapist,” nor “fugitive.” In its fairy-tale—or otherworld—setting, it is a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of dyscatastrophe, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is evangelium, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief. \ It is the mark of a good fairy-story, of the higher or more complete kind, that however wild its events, however fantastic or terrible the adventures, it can give to child or man that hears it, when the “turn” comes, a catch of the breath, a beat and lifting of the heart, near to (or indeed accompanied by) tears, as keen as that given by any form of literary art, and having a peculiar quality.

Even modern fairy-stories can produce this effect sometimes. It is not an easy thing to do; it depends on the whole story which is the setting of the turn, and yet it reflects a glory backwards. A tale that in any measure succeeds in this point has not wholly failed, whatever flaws it may possess, and whatever mixture or confusion of purpose. It happens even in Andrew Lang's own fairy-story, Prince Prigio, unsatisfactory in many ways as that is. When “each knight came alive and lifted his sword and shouted ‘long live Prince Prigio,’ ” the joy has a little of that strange mythical fairy-story quality, greater than the event described. It would have none in Lang's tale, if the event described were not a piece of more serious fairystory “fantasy” than the main bulk of the story, which is in general more frivolous, having the half-mocking smile of the courtly,

sophisticated Conte. Far more powerful and poignant is the effect in a serious tale of Faërie. In such stories when the sudden “turn” comes we get a piercing glimpse of joy, and heart's desire, that for a moment passes outside the frame, rends indeed the very web of story, and lets a gleam come through.

“Seven long years I served for thee,  
The glassy hill I clamb for thee,  
The bluidy shirt I wrang for thee,  
And wilt thou not wauken and turn to me?”  
He heard and turned to her.

### *Epilogue*

This “joy” which I have selected as the mark of the true fairy-story (or romance), or as the seal upon it, merits more consideration.

Probably every writer making a secondary world, a fantasy, every sub-creator, wishes in some measure to be a real maker, or hopes that he is drawing on reality: hopes that the peculiar quality of this secondary world (if not all the details) are derived from Reality, or are flowing into it. If he indeed achieves a quality that can fairly be described by the dictionary definition: “inner consistency of reality,” it is difficult to conceive how this can be, if the work does not in some way partake of reality. The peculiar quality of the “joy” in successful Fantasy can thus be explained as a sudden glimpse of the underlying reality or truth. It is not only a “consolation” for the sorrow of this world, but a satisfaction, and an answer to that question, “Is it true?” The answer to this question that I gave at first was (quite rightly): “If you have built your little world well, yes: it is true in that world.” That is enough for the artist (or the artist part of the artist). But in the “eucatastrophe” we see in a brief vision that the answer may be greater—it may be a faroff gleam or echo of evangelium in the real world. The use of this word gives a hint of my epilogue. It is a serious and dangerous matter. It is presumptuous of me to touch upon such a theme; but if by grace what I say has in any respect any validity, it is, of course, only one facet of a truth incalculably rich: finite only because the capacity of Man for whom this was done is finite.

I would venture to say that approaching the Christian Story from this direction, it has long been my feeling (a joyous feeling) that God redeemed the corrupt making-creatures, men, in a way fitting to this aspect, as to others, of their strange nature. The Gospels contain a fairystory, or a story of a larger kind which embraces all the essence of fairy-stories. They contain many marvels—peculiarly artistic, beautiful, and moving: “mythical” in their perfect, self-contained significance; and among the marvels is the greatest and most complete conceivable

eucatastrophe. But this story has entered History and the primary world; the desire and aspiration of sub-creation has been raised to the fulfillment of Creation. The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of Man's history. The Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. This story begins and ends in joy. It has pre-eminently the “inner consistency of reality.” There is no tale ever told that men would rather find

was true, and none which so many sceptical men have accepted as true on its own merits. For the Art of it has the supremely convincing tone of Primary Art, that is, of Creation. To reject it leads either to sadness or to wrath.

It is not difficult to imagine the peculiar excitement and joy that one would feel, if any specially beautiful fairy-story were found to be “primarily” true, its narrative to be history, without thereby necessarily losing the mythical or allegorical significance that it had possessed. It is not difficult, for one is not called upon to try and conceive anything of a quality unknown. The joy would have exactly the same quality, if not the same degree, as the joy which the “turn” in a fairy-story gives: such joy has the very taste of primary truth. (Otherwise its name would not be joy.) It looks forward (or backward: the direction in this regard is unimportant) to the Great Eucatastrophe. The Christian joy, the Gloria, is of the same kind; but it is preeminently (infinitely, if our capacity were not finite) high and joyous. But this story is supreme; and it is true. Art has been verified. God is the Lord, of angels, and of men—and of elves. Legend and History have met and fused.

But in God's kingdom the presence of the greatest does not depress the small. Redeemed Man is still man. Story, fantasy, still go on, and should go on. The Evangelium has not abrogated legends; it has hallowed them, especially the “happy ending.” The Christian has still to work, with mind as well as body, to suffer, hope, and die; but he may now perceive that all his bents and faculties have a purpose, which can be redeemed. So great is the bounty with which he has been treated that he may now, perhaps, fairly dare to guess that in Fantasy he may actually assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation. All tales may come true; and yet, at the last, redeemed, they may be as like and as unlike the forms that we give them as Man, finally redeemed, will be like and unlike the fallen that we know.