

Return of the King Book Notes

Return of the King by J. R. R. Tolkien

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Author/Context

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born in South Africa on January 3rd 1892. With the next few years his family moved back to England and his father died in South Africa. Eight years later his mother died and he and his brother became the charges of a Catholic priest. He won an academic scholarship and earned a degree in Classics before he enlisted in World War I. He married his childhood sweetheart and lost many friends in the war. He eventually became a professor of Philology and English, focusing on the language and literature of Northern Europe in the early Middle Ages. During his tenure at Oxford University, he belonged to a group called the Inklings, which also included the author C.S. Lewis. His first fantasy novel, *The Hobbit*, was published in 1937 and his trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings* wasn't published for another twenty years. Tolkien had three sons with his wife Edith who died in 1971. Two years later, Tolkien died in Oxford.

Tolkien still maintains a shaky place in literature. Fantasy had little readership in the first half of the twentieth century. While he also published occasionally as a scholar (his edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is still in use), he was not as active or prolific as his colleague C. S. Lewis. Both were deeply religious men who created their visions of other fantastic worlds.

Tolkien's first book, *The Hobbit*, was published in 1937. It was originally dismissed as juvenile by many of his friends. It had evolved from stories he told his children into a full-length tale he shared with his discussion group. Former Oxford students, however, encouraged the professor to complete his work with his own illustrations. As shown years later, Tolkien felt a certain kinship with his characters: "I am in fact a *Hobbit* (in all but size). I like gardens, trees and unmechanized farmlands; I smoke a pipe, and like good plain food (unrefrigerated)..." *The Hobbit* was a financial success, although many critics panned it.

Almost twenty years after the publishing of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* was published in the form of a hardback trilogy. It was well received but not as financially successful as the initial sales of *The Hobbit*. Ten years later, however, an unauthorized edition was printed in paperback in the U.S. Within six months, Tolkien issued an authorized edition. Tolkien mania had hit the States. Tolkien fan clubs sprouted up all over. His books had become a phenomenon. Before Tolkien died, his son promised that he would finish editing Tolkien's longest labored-over work *The Silmarillion*. In 1977, this collection of histories and legends became an international best seller.

The Lord of the Rings represented something completely different from *The Hobbit*. It was not exactly children's literature, but no critic deemed it exclusively for the adult. After World War II, many readers found significant parallels in its stories. The Lord of the Dark, Sauron, could be seen as an allusion to the dictators of the War. The ultimate power of the Ring represented atomic weapons to some. *The Return of the King* continues the story begun in *The Two Towers* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*. It chronicles the separate experiences of the Company of the Ring as two of them push



on towards the Ring's final destruction and the others prepare the world to withstand the terrible attacks of the Dark Lord Sauron. This is the book of battles and destruction. When the Ring has finally been destroyed, the men of the earth must look to rebuilding their world. It is truly the tale of the passing of one age and the beginning of another.

The effects of the Tolkien phenomenon are still felt in the modern era. The fantasy genre has grown exponentially since the publishing of *The Hobbit*, an occurrence that may have been all but impossible without Tolkien's work. While Tolkien's standing in the ranks of literature continues to be debated, his books continue to sell every year. As William Dowie said "Other writers achieve popularity and admiration as well as critical acclaim; but the Tolkien books breed a kind of fierce discipleship that seeks to proselytize the unenlightened."

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Plot Summary

Gandalf and Pippin ride away from Merry and Aragorn and go to Minas Tirith. Here they share their tale with the Steward of the city, Denethor, and they speak of his two sons Boromir and Faramir. Pippin pledges himself to the Steward and offers his services. Aragorn's kin join him and tell him that he should follow the paths of the dead. Aragorn leaves with Legolas and Gimli and refuses to take Merry or Eowyn with him. Theoden rallies the men of Rohan to go to war. He tells Merry that he cannot come with him. Merry is very upset, but a quiet rider tells him that he will secretly bear him to war.

Pippin speaks to Denethor again and then begins his duty as a guard of the city. With another guard, they watch bands of warriors file into the city from every region of Gondor. The number is too small. Faramir returns but is sent by his father to defend another part of Gondor. The enemy comes and besieges the city. Faramir is badly wounded and Denethor retires to a chamber of the dead to end the lives of his son and himself. Pippin gets Gandalf to stop him. Just as the attacking army breaches the door of the city, the riders of Rohan appear and attack with voracity. The Lord of the Nazgul kills Theoden. Merry wounds the Lord and Eowyn kills him. Both fall terribly ill because of this attack. Aragorn arrives from the south with reinforcements and the armies of Mordor are repelled. He heals Faramir, Merry and Eowyn and then makes plans to leave for Mordor with an attacking force. They march to the gates of Mordor and demand Sauron's surrender, but the Lord of the Dark refuses. He unleashes his trap and they are embroiled in a giant battle.

Sam is tempted by the ring but he resists it and returns to Minas Ithil. He finds Frodo and he frees his friend from the torture of the orcs. They begin to make their way slowly into Mordor. The land is desolate. There is no water to be found. With each step it becomes more hopeless. They are mistaken as orcs and forced to march. When they slip away they come to the edge of the mountain. Sam carries Frodo part of the way up. They encounter Gollum again and Sam tries to contain him as Frodo goes on the last step of the journey. Frodo is taken over by the power of the ring and it is destroyed only because Gollum bites it off his finger and falls into the pit of doom. When the ring is destroyed Sauron dies and the armies of Mordor fall apart. Gondor is triumphant. Gandalf takes three great eagles and flies to Mount Doom. There he finds Frodo and Sam awaiting their deaths. He rescues them and takes them to Ithilien where Aragorn and the armies honor them as heroes.

They return to Minas Tirith and Aragorn is crowned king. They linger here until he is wed to his love Arwen. They all travel to Rohan and have a funeral feast for Theoden. The marriage of Faramir and Eowyn is announced. They head towards Rivendell. Frodo is reunited with his uncle Bilbo. From here they travel back toward the Shire, and Gandalf leaves them. Merry, Pippin, Frodo and Sam, the four original companions, return to find their home overrun by large men led by a man named Sharkey. They raise the hobbits around them and defeat the men in a battle. When they find Sharkey, they find the fallen wizard Saruman who gets killed by his own servant. Sam gets married and they rebuild the Shire. Frodo gets increasingly weaker as the years pass. Eventually he decides to

leave and meets Bilbo and some elves on the road. They take him with them across the sea where elves go when they tire of the earth. Sam returns home to his wife and children.



Major Characters

Pippin (Peregrin) Took: One of Frodo's nephews. He begins this book in Minas Tirith. He swears himself to the service of Denethor, the steward of Gondor. He fights in the battles and makes quite a name for himself. If it were not for his intervention, Faramir would have been slain by his father. He almost dies before the gates of Mordor, but weathers the battle wounded underneath an orc corpse. When he returns to the Shire, he is braver and stronger than before. With Merry, he leads the small army that frees his home.

Gandalf the White, Stormcrow, Greyhame, the Grey Wanderer: The wizard, the main force of wisdom and good in the tale. Gandalf has the burden of knowing what must be done to save the world. This knowledge comes with a price: he must trust others to carry out his plans and convince all the other 'wise men' of the world that he is right. He fights in battle and is ready to die, but eventually turns to healing. With the death of Sauron, Gandalf's own time comes to an end and he must pass over the sea with the elves.

Merry (Meriadoc): Merry is another nephew of Frodo. He begins this tale in the ranks of the Rohirrim. Theoden forbids him to go to war with them, but a sympathetic soldier who turns out to be Eowyn, the niece of the king who was also left behind, takes him in. Once in battle, he heroically attacks the Captain of the Nazgul and saves Eowyn's life. This attack, however, results in a dire wound that only Aragorn could heal. Merry misses the attack on Mordor but is very valiant when he finally return to the Shire.

Sam (Samwise) Gamgee: Frodo's gardener in the Shire. Sam follows Frodo to the end of the earth and is equally responsible for the success of his master's mission. Sam is tempted by the power of the ring more than once, but he fights it off and rescues Frodo from almost certain death. He supports his companion all the way into Mordor and then literally carries him up Mount Doom. Sam is honored equally and returns to great repute in the Shire. He must stay behind for the first time when Frodo decides it is his time to travel across the sea. Sam returns to a normal life. He has a wife and children and becomes well liked in the Shire.

Frodo Baggins : Frodo bears the immense weight of the ring for three books. It is a weight of evil and temptation that is constant. His love for Sam and sense of duty keep his body going. His immense mercy for Gollum reveals how deeply he understands his own pain and empathizes with a creature that bore the ring much longer than he did. He cannot bear to have Gollum killed even on the steps of Mt. Doom. Frodo never recovers from his final failure in the cracks of Doom. Only Gollum's intervention actually brought about the destruction of the ring. This darkness lingers in him causing him pain until the day he decides to leave and go across the sea.

Aragorn, son of Arathorn: Heir to a great and ancient line of kings, Aragorn makes the difficult decision to lead the armies of the dead out of their dark mountains. He stops the southern armies from proceeding up the Anduin to Gondor and leads his own armies.



Without his help, Gondor would have fallen. He carefully reclaims his crown after the war has ended. He is solely responsible for the healing of Eowyn, Merry and Faramir. He weds his life-long love Arwen at the end of the book and ushers in a new age of prosperity.

Minor Characters

Sauron: The Dark Lord of Mordor, he has existed for many many generations. He created the Ring of Power to rule over the 9 rings of men, 7 of dwarves and 3 of elves. Aragorn's ancestor, Isildur, took the ring from him but lost it. Sauron's life is connected to the ring. All the armies in the world can neither help nor hinder him if he has it. If it is destroyed, he dies with it.

Boromir: The son of Denethor who dies in the beginning of The Two Towers. He had tried to force Frodo to give him the ring in a fit of madness. He died trying to save Merry and Pippin from Orcs.

Denethor: The steward of Mordor. He was enchanted by the evil sights within his palantir and turned to darker ways. He gave up after his son Boromir died. He sends his other son Faramir, to the perilous defense of Osgillath. In the end, he commits suicide and would have killed his son too if not for the bravery of Pippin and Beregond.

Beregond: A guard of Minas Tirith, father of Bergil. He stops Denethor and his servants from killing Faramir.

Faramir: The son of Denethor who leads the defense at Osgillath and is wounded. He falls in love with Eowyn and marries her. After he gives Gondor to Aragorn, he is made the Prince of Ithilien and marries Eowyn.

Bergil: Beregond's son. He helps Merry to the Houses of Healing.

Prince Imrahil: A prince of outer lands who leads 700 men to defend Gondor. He becomes one of the chief leaders in the attack on Mordor.

Legolas: The elf from Mirkwood who was a member of the original nine companions of the Ring. He fosters a close friendship with Gimli and fights valiantly in every battle.

Gimli: A dwarf from the Lonely Mountain on the far side of Mirkwood. He was a member of the original nine companions of the ring. He grows to love and trust Legolas and fights with ferocity in every battle.

Theoden: The King of Rohan. Even though he is rather old, he leads his army to Minas Tirith and fights bravely falling in battle. In his last moments, he names Eomer as his heir.



Eomer: The nephew of Theoden and brother of Eowyn. He fights bravely after the fall of Theoden and leads his men with Aragorn to the walls of Mordor. He gladly has his sister marry Faramir.

Halbarad: The leader of the group of Dunedain that comes to join Aragorn in Rohan.

Elrond: An aged elf who presides over Rivendell. He is the father of Arwen and one over the original advisers to the companions of the ring. He heads with Bilbo, Frodo, Celeborn, Galadriel and Gandalf over the sea from the Grey Havens.

Arwen: Elrond's daughter. She gives up the promise of immortality so that she may have a short, but blissful, life with Aragorn.

Eowyn (Dernhelm): Theoden's niece and Eomer's brother. She falls in love with Aragorn and recklessly throws herself into battle because she cannot have him. She sneaks off to the war dressed as a man called Dernhelm and fights the Captain of the Nazgul, killing him with Merry's help. When she heals from her wounds, she falls in love with Faramir and eventually marries him.

Gollum: The pathetic creature that originally found the ring of power many years before. He lost it to Bilbo in the Misty Mountains and has been searching for it for over eighty years. In *The Two Towers*, Gollum leads Sam and Frodo all the way to Minas Ithil only to leave them in the trap of Shelob, the great spider. He appears at the end of this book and finally regains the ring only to lose his life and complete the hobbits' quest as he plunged into the center of Mount Doom.

Captain of the Nazgul: The hideous lord of the nine Nazgul. He was once a sorcerer but became a permanent servant of Sauron. He falls to a combined effort of Merry and Eowyn. Only with his death do the armies of Gondor begin to overcome their enemies.

Ghan-Buri-Ghan: The leader of the wild men who helps Theoden and the Riders of Rohan through his forest.

Shagrat: The lead orc in Minas Ithil.

Galadriel: The elf enchantress of Lothlorien. She is the most beautiful woman in the world and loved by many.

Bilbo: Frodo's uncle and original bearer of the ring. He found it when he went on an expedition for treasure with 13 dwarves in *The Hobbit*. Since his 111th birthday, he has lived in Rivendell.

Treebeard: The oldest Ent and father of the forest. In *The Two Towers* he led the ents to overcome Isengard.

Saruman (Sharkey): Once Saruman the White, he was a member of the council of wizards. His obsession with the ring and his plans to supplant Sauron and rule in his



place resulted in his downfall. In *The Two Towers*, Gandalf broke his staff and cast him out of the council of wizards.

Grima: The servant of Saruman. In *The Two Towers*, Grima made Theoden of Rohan betray his own people. Grima follows Saruman to the bitter end.

Barliman : The innkeeper in Bree who helped the four hobbits when they began their journey in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. He is delighted to have them return.

Farmer Cotton: A sturdy farmer who helps Merry, Pippin, Frodo and Sam raise the Shire and fight off the men.

Rose Cotton: Farmer Cotton's daughter who marries Sam.



Objects/Places

Edoras: The capitol of Rohan.

Rohan/Rohirrim: A kingdom to the north of Gondor ruled by Theoden. The men of Rohan are known as the Rohirrim or men of the Mark. They are famous for their equestrian abilities.

Gondor: The last great kingdom of men, which Aragorn is destined to rule.

Minas Tirith: The capitol of Gondor where the good men of the earth must make a stand against the forces of Mordor.

Mordor: The land of evil and seat of Sauron's power. It is to Mordor that Frodo must go to destroy the ring.

Ring of power: The most important item in The Lord of the Rings. This ring was crafted by the evil lord Sauron and can overpower all of the other rings of Middle Earth: The nine of men, three of elves and three of dwarves. Bilbo found it by accident in the deep caverns of the Misty Mountains in The Hobbit. It makes normal mortals invisible, but can give great power to those who know how to use it. Sauron, risen again, desires the ring so he can overcome the forces of good. The ring must be destroyed so that no one can wield it.

Shadowfax: Gandalf's horse. Shadowfax is a king of horses. Theoden gave him to Gandalf in thanks for ridding him of Grima Wormtongue and the threat of Saruman.

Hobbit: Creatures half the size of men with round faces and bellies and hairy toes. They tend to live in homes that are partially underground and they very rarely go on adventures.

Steward of Gondor: Denethor is the current steward of Gondor. He is the last in a long line of lordly men who ruled the Kingdom and waited for the return of the heir of Isildur.

Isengard: The citadel of Saruman, which was destroyed in The Two Towers. It has now been converted to an orchard.

Moria : Mines below tall mountains where dwarves once mined for Mithril. A group of dwarves tried to return there and died. The Company gets trapped in the mines for some time and this is where Gandalf falls with the Balrog.

Osgillath: The ruins of the old capitol city of Gondor. It is maintained as a fort against the approach of Mordor. Faramir makes a futile stand here to delay the passing of Sauron's armies.



Black Riders, Ringwraiths, Nazgul: The bearers of the nine human rings. They can sense the Ring of Power and search over the Earth for it in the shape of the Black riders. After their horses were destroyed, they were given winged creatures to ride.

Anduin: Anduin is a river of strategic importance. A great black fleet sails up this river and is destroyed by the protectors of Gondor.

Shire: A land far in the North West inhabited primarily by the Hobbits. Few people in other parts of the world know anything of it and the Hobbits know little of the rest of the world.

Elves: Graceful and thin people who live for an indefinite amount of time. Elves are associated with the forest and nature as well as magic. In these books there are the high elves and the wood elves.

Dwarves: Short stocky people who have beards. They are usually associated with mountains, mining, and metalworking. For some past transgression they are sworn enemies with Elves.

Dunedain: The rangers, also called the Dunedain, are descendants of the men of the Westemnet of the kingdom of Numenor who fought Sauron alongside the elves and men led by Isildur, the ancestor of Aragorn. There are very few of them left but they live on their own fighting evil throughout the north-west of Middle-earth.

Helm's Deep: The site of a large battle between the men of Rohan and orcs in The Two Towers. It is a strong fortress standing in a canyon.

Paths of the Dead: A passage through a mountain inhabited by a dead army that broke a pledge to Aragorn's ancestor. They are doomed to lurk in the shadows until they fulfill their pledge to an heir of Aragorn.

Ithilien: The land outside of Minas Ithil. It was once a beautiful plain but now it darkens with the shadow of Mordor. Men of Gondor still patrol it. After the fall of Sauron, it again becomes a beautiful place to be ruled by Faramir.

Cirith Ungol, Minas Ithil, Morgul : A fortress on the far side of Mordor where there are fewer guards and more secret passages. Sauron calls it Minas Morgul. It was once a place of good built by Aragorn's ancestor, Isildur, to watch over Mordor. This is where Frodo is imprisoned at the beginning of the tale.

Wild Men: Men who live in the forest near the edge of Gondor. They help Theoden and the Rohirrim make their way to Minas Tirith without being intercepted by orcs.

Haradrim: Southern men who fight for Sauron.

palantir: A stone that allows one to communicate over long distances. There were originally seven. Gandalf takes one from Orthanc and Pippin looks into it. It is through



this stone that Sauron gained control of Saruman. Denethor also has one in his tower that causes him to go mad.

Orodruin: Mount Doom. This is where the Ring of Power was forged and is, therefore, the only place where it can be destroyed.

phial of Galadriel: A magical vial of light given to Frodo by Galadriel. It gives them light in the darkness and helps Frodo and Sam pass in and out of Minas Ithil.

Lembas: The wafer food that was giving to the company by the elves. It is sort of magical and has the power to sustain a traveler for many days on very little.

Eagles: Giant intelligent eagles. One of these rescued Gandalf after he fought with the evil creature in Moria. Eagles also made the decisive attack to win the battle of five armies in The Hobbit. Without the intervention of the eagles, Sam and Frodo surely would have died.

Rivendell: An elvish settlement where the Company of the ring originally met and set out for their long journey. Bilbo has been staying here for many years.

Ents: Giant creatures that look like trees. They live an indefinite amount of time and possess great strength and wisdom.

Orthanc: The tower in the middle of Isengard. It was made before the wizards came and is very powerful.

Bree: The town near the old forest where the north-south and east-west roads intersect. Here hobbits and men live together.

Buckland: A land inhabited by hobbits right over the river to the East.



Quotes

Quote 1: "I will vouch for him before the seat of Denethor.... And as for valor, that cannot be computed by stature. He has passed through more battles and perils than you have, Ingold, though you be twice his height; and he comes now from the storming of Isengard, of which we bear tidings ... His name is Peregrin, a very valiant man." Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 21

Quote 2: "Indeed you did your best...I hope that it may be long before you find yourself in such a tight corner again between two such terrible old men." Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 33

Quote 3: "Behind him march proudly a dusty line of men, well-armed and bearing great battle-axes; grim-faced they were, and shorter and somewhat swarthier than any men that Pippin had yet seen in Gondor." Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 46

Quote 4: "Remember the Paths of the Dead" Book 5, Chapter 2, pg. 51

Quote 5: "All your words are but to say: you're a woman and your part is in the house." Book 5, Chapter 2, pg. 62

Quote 6: "He is lost, we must ride without him, and our hope dwindles." Book 5, Chapter 3, pg. 75

Quote 7: "Well Master Peregrin, I hope that you used yesterday to your profit, and to your liking? Though I fear that the board is barer in this city than you could wish." Book 5, Chapter 4, pg. 86

Quote 8: "Farewell, Peregrin son of Paladin! Your service has been short, and now it is drawing to an end. I release you from the little that remains. Go now, and die in what way seems best to you. And with whom you will, even that friend whose folly brought you to this death. Send for servants and then go. Farewell!" Book 5, Chapter 4, pg. 108

Quote 9: "Wild men have already seen all that can be seen in the bad air." Book 5, Chapter 5, pg. 119

Quote 10: "And still Meriadoc the hobbit stood there blinking through his tears, and no one spoke to him, indeed none seemed to heed him. He brushed away the tears, and stooped to pick up the green shield that Eowyn had given him, and he slung it at his back. Then he looked for his sword that he had let fall; for even as he struck his blow his arm was numbed, and now he could only use his left hand." Book 5, Chapter 6, pg. 131

Quote 11: "last of a ragged house long bereft of lordship and dignity." Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 142

Quote 12: "Yes...but not enough, I reckon, for all that will need them." Book 5, Chapter 8, pg. 151



Quote 13: "'That is a fair lord and a great captain of men.'" Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 164

Quote 14: "'if this be jest, then it is too bitter for laughter.'" Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 175

Quote 15: "For one moment more Pippin's thought hovered. 'Bilbo!' it said. 'But no! That came in his tale, long long ago. This is my tale, and it is ended now. Good-bye!' And his thought fled far away and his eyes saw no more." Book 5, Chapter 10, pg. 187

Quote 16: "He felt that he was on the right road, and his spirits had risen a good deal." Book 6, Chapter 1, pg. 199

Quote 17: " There were long hairy breeches of some unclean beast-fell, and a tunic of dirty leather. He drew them on. Over the tunic went a coat of stout ring-mail, short for a full-sized orc, too long for Frodo and heavy. About it he clasped a belt, at which there hung a short sheath holding a broad-bladed stabbing sword." Book 6, Chapter 1, pg. 209

Quote 18: "Still far away, forty miles at least, they saw Mount Doom...." Book 6, Chapter 2, pg. 221

Quote 19: "'So that was the job I felt I had to do when I started...to help Mr. Frodo to the last step and then die with him? Well, if that is the job then I must do it. But I would dearly like to see Bywater again, and Rosie Cotton and her brothers, and the Gaffer and Marigold and all. I can't think somehow that Gandalf would have sent Mr. Frodo on this errand, if there hadn't a'been any hope of coming back at all.'" Book 6, Chapter 3, pg. 234

Quote 20: "'Wicked masster cheats us; cheats Smeagol!'" Book 6, Chapter 3, pg. 245

Quote 21: "When Sam awoke, he found that he was lying on some soft bed, but over him gently swayed wide beechen boughs, and through their young leaves sunlight glimmered, green and gold. All the air was full of a sweet mingled scent." Book 6, Chapter 4, pg. 255

Quote 22: "'Eowyn of Rohan, I say to you that you are beautiful.'" Book 6, Chapter 5, pg. 266

Quote 23: "'At last all such things must end...but I would have you wait a little while longer: for the end of the deeds that you have shared in has not yet come. A day draws near that I have looked for in all the years of my manhood, and when it comes I would have my friends beside me.'" Book 6, Chapter 5, pg. 277

Quote 24: "Soon the dwindling company, following the Isen, turned west and rode through the Gap into the waste lands beyond, and then they turned northwards, and passed over the borders of Dunland." Book 6, Chapter 6, pg. 291

Quote 25: "'They've come back!'" Book 6, Chapter 7, pg. 301



Quote 26: "taking in folk off-hand like, and eating extra food, and all that...." Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 311

Quote 27: "That's hard to tell....They moves about and comes and goes. There's sometimes fifty of them in their sheds up Hobbiton way; but they go out from there roving round, thieving or "gathering" as they call it. Still there's seldom less than a score round the Boss, as they names him." Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 321

Quote 28: "Yes, this is Mordor....Just one of its works." Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 332

Quote 29: "On September the twenty-first they set out together, Frodo on the pony that had borne him all the way from Minas Tirith, and was now called Strider; and Sam on his beloved Bill. It was a fair golden morning, and Sam did not ask where they were going: he thought he could guess." Book 6, Chapter 9, pg. 343



Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty

Book 5, Chapter 1

Love and Loyalty 1: Pippin's thoughts turn constantly to his friends wherever they may be. He is always worried about their trials. Denethor had an immense love for his son Boromir and does not seem to want to live on without him. His son Faramir is not enough for him and he does not think that he is loyal enough to him.

Book 5, Chapter 2

Love and Loyalty 2: Aragorn's kindred ride many days and many miles to be with him at this last battle. They are prepared to follow him wherever he goes. Gimli and Legolas have this same sort of love, a fact that Eowyn points out. Her love for Aragorn is so strong that she wants to follow him into the paths of the dead and meet whatever end will come to her. When she cannot follow him, she is grief-stricken.

Book 5, Chapter 3

Love and Loyalty 3: Theoden makes his niece and Merry remain at Edoras to care for the people while he and Eomer go out to honor their alliance with Gondor. Rohan's people are immensely loyal and they raise one of the largest armies to be seen

Book 5, Chapter 5

Love and Loyalty 4: Faramir returns to his father and immediately seeks his advice and affection even though he knows that he was not his father's favorite. Because his son is interested in Gondor over his family, Denethor doubts his loyalty and accuses him of being more loyal to Gandalf.

Book 5, Chapter 7

Love and Loyalty 5: Theoden fights and dies for his allies. Eowyn gives her life for two reasons: she wants to avenge her uncle and she feels life is meaningless because Aragorn does not love her. Merry is moved by the sacrifices of those around him and he fights to protect Eowyn.

Book 5, Chapter 8

Love and Loyalty 6: Beregon's loyalty undergoes the ultimate test. He must decide whether to follow the direct order of his master and allow him to kill himself and his son or to disobey and challenge the other servants. Beregon's compassion and rationale overcome his sense of duty and he stops Denethor from killing his only surviving son.

Book 6, Chapter 1



Love and Loyalty 7: Sam's love for Frodo is one of the most powerful forces of loyalty in the book. For Sam, it is so potent that it overcomes the intoxicating strength of the ring and gives him the strength and courage to enter Minas Ithil and face the terrible orcs to save his companion. When they are reunited they think only of each other. Sam wants to keep Frodo warm and Frodo wants Sam to eat.

Book 6, Chapter 2

Love and Loyalty 8: Their affection for each other keeps them moving through the darkest of lands. Sam is always willing to stay awake and search for water while Frodo sleeps because he is aware of how great a burden his companion carries.

Book 6, Chapter 4

Love and Loyalty 9: Frodo and Sam were ready to die in each other's arms, but Gandalf saves them. He returns them to their companions and they all eagerly share their stories with one another. The entire army honors them.

Book 6, Chapter 5

Love and Loyalty 10: Aragorn fell in love with Arwen at a very early age. He was eager to find out all he could about her and spent all his time with her. After many adventures and being proclaimed king, Aragorn is finally wed to his life-long love, Arwen.

Book 6, Chapter 8

Love and Loyalty 11: The hobbits are intensely loyal to one another and they immediately trust the scores of hobbits arriving to help them. For years, Saruman has mistreated Grima, despite his persisting loyalty. At the last moment, when Saruman has fallen as low as Grima, Grima kills him after such great frustration.

Book 6, Chapter 9

Love and Loyalty 12: Frodo is a respected member of the community when he returns, but as he drops out of the public life, Sam, Merry and Pippin become great figures. Sam falls in love with Rose and marries her. When he leaves Frodo, he feels an irreparable loss. It is not until he gets home that he finds that Frodo did not leave him alone: he has his children and his wife. This alone is what he could not give or get from Frodo.



Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses

Book 5, Chapter 1

Metamorphoses 1: Pippin undergoes a drastic change from the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings* to the end. He goes from being an adventure-seeking boy to being a war-tested adult. He looks into the palantir and is frightened. He is so moved by duty that he pledges his service to Denethor in guilt for the death of his son Boromir. A young Hobbit from the shire somehow becomes a guard in the chief city of Gondor.

Book 5, Chapter 2

Metamorphoses 2: Merry develops in parallel to Pippin. He pledges his service to Theoden and becomes very fond of the king. Aragorn slowly become more regal. His men follow as his power and prestige increases with each day. Eowyn wants to follow him, but cannot. This causes her heart to become dark and forlorn.

Book 5, Chapter 4

Metamorphoses 3: By excluding his niece and Merry from the war, he forces them both to change. Their outward loyalty and intense sense of duty must search for new ways to satisfy itself. Merry is taken up by a rider who is willing to bear the Hobbit all the way to Minas Tirith. Merry blindly goes to war, with no clue of how he will carry himself and without questioning the motivation of the rider.

Book 5, Chapter 5

Metamorphoses 4: Denethor gets steadily more unstable as Gondor falls around him. He risks his son's life without hesitating, against the good advice of the city council members. When his son is badly wounded, instead of sending for healers, he enters the family tombs and prepares for both of them to be burned alive on pyres.

Book 5, Chapter 7

Metamorphoses 5: Eowyn and Merry each attain a true moment of glory. Merry wounds the leader of the armies of Mordor and Eowyn strikes him down. Both become heroes in this desperate moment. Aragorn returns not as a ranger, but as a powerful king leading the army that delivers the decisive blow to the enemy forces.

Book 5, Chapter 8

Metamorphoses 6: Aragorn fulfills yet another position in the world. He goes from being warrior to king to healer. He is the only one who can help heal the dark wounds received by Faramir, Merry and Eowyn. He raises each one of them from their considerable sacrifice and then leaves the city to sleep.

Book 6, Chapter 1



Metamorphoses 7: The ring has immense powers of manipulation and change. Despite these powers, Sam resists the temptation of evil and returns to rescue his friend. Sam, however, does not remain unchanged. He develops from servant to strong companion. As Frodo gets weaker, Sam must get stronger with each day. As Frodo falls to the darkness of the ring, Sam must resist it.

Book 6, Chapter 3

Metamorphoses 8: In the final moments of the quest, the ring shows its true power. Frodo fails at the last step when he gives in to the temptation of the ring. He becomes proto-Gollum and is released from this torture only when the real Gollum appears and robs him of the ring. Gollum changes from villain to savior of the world as he plunges accidentally to his death.

Book 6, Chapter 4

Metamorphoses 9: Within a very short amount of time, Frodo and Sam go from doomed on the edge of a crumbling mountain to exulted in front of an assembled army. They are honored as they should be for such momentous risks and triumphs. They transform from wayward travelers into heroes.

Book 6, Chapter 5

Metamorphoses 10: The machines of war slowly change into armies of builders and engineers as the world recovers from the scourge of Mordor. Warriors become peacemakers. The companions, who traveled and fought for months on end, find some final moments of peace as they linger together in a single place.

Book 6, Chapter 6

Metamorphoses 11: As the group dwindles from its greatest number to its original few they come upon Saruman. Saruman changed from a good wizard into a very powerful servant of evil and now he travels the world as a beggar.

Book 6, Chapter 8

Metamorphoses 12: The Shire, a peaceful and loosely organized place, swiftly turns into an entity of force and action with the leadership of the four companions. They lead the Shire to overcome its worst adversary ever. This change, however, is only temporary, for the Shire reverts quickly to its slow and peaceful pace.

Book 6, Chapter 9

Metamorphoses 13: Through his long quest and journey home, Frodo has changed more than anybody else. The Hobbit who was once adventurous and cheery has become quiet and tired no matter what the occasion. He has bouts with illness that come from his dark wound from the Nazgul and the destruction of the ring. Because of

his fundamental change, Frodo will never be happy. The elves take him with them across the sea as a reward for such a personal sacrifice.



Topic Tracking: Sacrifice

Book 5, Chapter 5

Sacrifice 1: Denethor sends his son to defend Osgillath not because there is a hope that Faramir might hold the city, but because there needs to be a valiant, if not suicidal stand to delay the armies that will surely outnumber the small force there. The city council advises against this because they know that Faramir will be able to defend the city better than anyone else. Denethor, however, has already decided that the city is going to fall. Faramir goes to Osgillath well aware of the fact that he might die.

Book 5, Chapter 6

Sacrifice 2: The army of Rohan rides tirelessly day and night knowing that Gondor is in serious peril. They trust the wild men and finally make it within sight of the city. Theoden fears that it may be too late, but he decides at the last minute to fight to the death and he rides off with no concern for his own life as his men speed behind him.

Book 5, Chapter 7

Sacrifice 3: Theoden, an old but brave king, uses his final strength to strike down one of the leaders of the enemy. This bravery was paid for with his life. Eowyn sacrifices herself to kill the Captain of the Nazgul. When she faces him she is ready to die. Merry distracts the beast with his own brave risk and together they bring him down. Both heroes suffer terribly for their acts of daring.

Book 5, Chapter 8

Sacrifice 4: Denethor is sure that the end is coming. He has been blinded by his stares into the palantir. He is willing to sacrifice his son and himself so they will not have to suffer the horror of a world ruled by Mordor. Gandalf is not willing to allow Denethor to make this decision for his son but he does allow Denethor to take his own life.

Book 5, Chapter 9

Sacrifice 5: If the ring is not destroyed by the time they attack the gates of Mordor, the men of Gondor will have no chance of defeating the hosts of the enemy. Aragorn and Gandalf are aware of this but they know that it is just as important to risk all of the men to distract Sauron and perhaps give Frodo some extra time to carry out his quest.

Book 5, Chapter 10

Sacrifice 6: In the face of the gates of Mordor, Pippin knows how real is the threat of death. He does not flinch, but instead he strengthens his conviction and willfully faces his death. Every man in the army of Gondor does the same thing as the hosts of Mordor swarm upon them from every side.



Book 6, Chapter 2

Sacrifice 7: The quest to destroy the ring is a quintessential sacrifice from its inception. With every step, Sam and Frodo sacrifice more of their life and energy. At the last moment, when Sam thinks they are about to be recognized by the orcs, he prepares himself to die fighting to protect Frodo.

Book 6, Chapter 3

Sacrifice 8: Sam is well aware that they will not survive before the mission is complete; there is not enough food to get them to the mountain and back. They will either be caught and killed immediately or they will starve to death on the side of the mountain. At the end, Gollum dies to destroy the ring, and Frodo loses his finger. Sam and Frodo huddle together to wait for the end of their lives.

Book 6, Chapter 5

Sacrifice 9: One of the most profound sacrifices in *The Lord of the Rings* is understated as it happens. Arwen, an elf, is immortal, but this immortality means that she must leave the lands of men and go over the sea. Instead of choosing everlasting life, she chooses a remarkably shorter life to be with Aragorn.

Book 6, Chapter 8

Sacrifice 10: The hobbits are willing to sacrifice their lives to get the menace of Sharkey out of the Shire. Saruman was planning on killing Frodo but this revenge is foiled. Instead, Saruman ends up sacrificing his own life because of his cruelty to Grima.



Book 5, Chapter 1

Pippin and Gandalf are riding away from Edoras the capitol of Rohan towards Gondor and the strongholds of Minas Tirith. Pippin had looked into the palantir against Gandalf's advice, and saw the dark lord Sauron gazing out from Mordor looking for the ring of power. Gandalf's horse, Shadowfax pauses but then rushes on again. Pippin thinks of his hobbit companions Merry, Sam and Frodo and wonders how they are doing. They come to the great outer gates of Minas Tirith and the guards ask Gandalf who or what Pippin is. Gandalf replies:

"I will vouch for him before the seat of Denethor.... And as for valor, that cannot be computed by stature. He has passed through more battles and perils than you have, Ingold, though you be twice his height; and he comes now from the storming of Isengard, of which we bear tidings His name is Peregrin, a very valiant man." Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 21

Pippin tells them that he is a Hobbit and Gandalf clarifies that he is a halfling. Pippin speaks of Boromir the son of Denethor the steward of Gondor. Gandalf tells them to sharpen their swords and when they ask if Rohan is coming he says that they will be here as quickly as they can. Between the outer wall and the city are four leagues of land filled with farms, orchards and houses. Minas Tirith is built into the side of a mountain. It has seven levels with seven curving walls separating them. The massive doors to enter each section are staggered. They enter through each level and come to the tower in the middle. This is the citadel of the steward and the hall of the missing king. Gandalf warns Pippin to be wary of his words before Denethor and not to speak of Aragorn. Pippin wants to ask more questions, but Gandalf tells him that there is not time to answer all of his questions.

The hall is extravagant with large marble monoliths and a great throne at one end. Below the throne is a smaller seat where they find Denethor. Gandalf hails him and the steward asks of his son Boromir. He laments his son and asks how a Hobbit managed to escape when Boromir fell. Pippin offers his sword at Denethor's feet and the steward is amazed by this gesture. He swears the Hobbit into his service and then tells him to tell his whole tale. Gandalf asks if he has heard of the fall of Isengard and he says that he has. Denethor bids for food and chairs to be brought out. Pippin weaves his long tale, but mentions nothing of Aragorn. Denethor commands for lodgings to be prepared for the pair and speaks with Gandalf. The wizard knows that the old steward had more interest in the tale than to simply hear tidings of his dead son. The steward speaks of the king returning and Gandalf tells him that he should pay more attention to maintaining a kingdom for him to return to. He leaves silently with the hobbit and Pippin remains quiet. Once they get back to their lodging Pippin asks if the wizard is mad at him. Gandalf laughs and says *"Indeed you did your best...I hope that it may be long before you find yourself in such a tight corner again between two such terrible old men."* Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 33. From his stories, Denethor learned that someone else besides Boromir led the group from Moria after Gandalf's fall. Denethor loved Boromir more than his son Faramir. Gandalf tells Pippin to be wary of his new post. He wishes



he could find Faramir and tells Pippin that he plans to go to a committee of lords. He asks the hobbit to look after his horse, Shadowfax.

Pippin is thinking of breakfast when a man named Beregond arrives to teach him the gate passwords and details of his duty. He asks Pippin about Gandalf and Rohan. Pippin asks about the mealtimes. Beregond laughs and tells him that they will be able to eat soon. They go out and find that Shadowfax has been well taken care of. Beregond is amazed that Shadowfax has neither bit nor harness. Pippin and Beregond go through the city finding food. The guard admits that he at first took Pippin for a child. They ascend the walls and Pippin looks over the landscape to the ruins of Osgillath and the mountains of Mordor. They speak briefly of the Black Riders. Pippin asks when they expect the onslaught but they do not know.

Denethor sits in his tower most of the time and the people of Gondor think that he has some farseeing ability. He has told the guards that there is a great black fleet sailing up the Anduin. He asks Pippin if he feels hope and the hobbit says that he has faith in his companions abroad. Beregond's conviction is strengthened but Pippin wishes the whole affair were already over. Beregond says that the city will seem happier once Faramir returns. They talk long into the day and then eat in the mess hall. Pippin's coming is welcomed. Men of Gondor think that he is a halfling prince and some rumor that an army of fierce halflings is coming to help them.

Beregond departs for his watch duty and others follow. Later Pippin walks out into the city and is an object of interest to many of its inhabitants. He comes to a group of children playing around pillars and they ask where he is from. He tells them that he is from the Shire but this means nothing to them. One of the boys says that he could overcome Pippin in strength and Pippin laughs. He tells the boy that if he tried that he would kill him. The boy is scared for a moment but then puts up his fists. Pippin laughs again and tells the boy, whose name is Bergil, that he knows his father, Beregond. They go to see his father and Bergil is allowed to pass the gate because he is with Pippin. They see the dust of the lord of the outer lands approaching.

"Behind him march proudly a dusty line of men, well-armed and bearing great battle-axes; grim-faced they were, and shorter and somewhat swarthier than any men that Pippin had yet seen in Gondor." Book 5, Chapter 1, pg. 46

Only 200 men march into the city; they had hoped for ten times this number. For the rest of the day, bands of men enter the city. The largest band numbers at 700 and is led by Prince Imrahil. At the end of the day there are 3000 armed men in the city. The captains of Gondor had hoped for many more than this. Bergil and Pippin watch every band enter the walls and then go back into the city. Pippin meets Beregond at dinner and then decides that he wants to see Gandalf. Beregond tells him that he has been summoned to Denethor's tower the following day. When Pippin finally finds Gandalf, he is wondering how long it will be until Faramir returns. He tells Pippin that there will be no dawn.



Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 1
Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 1



Book 5, Chapter 2

After Gandalf leaves with Pippin, Merry speaks privately with Aragorn. Aragorn remarks that their company has dwindled to four. Legolas, the elf and Gimli the Dwarf still remain with them. At Edoras, Theoden plans to muster his army and then ride off toward Gondor. Aragorn knows that he must go to Minas Tirith, but he does not yet know if it is time. Merry asks only that he not be left behind like baggage but Aragorn admits that he thinks Merry's real place will be with Theoden. They ride swiftly to Edoras but soon find out that they are being followed by a group of horsemen. They turn to face them and Eomer calls for them to halt. The leader of the group is Halbarad. They are a group of the Dunedain and are searching for their kin Aragorn at the advice of Elrond. Aragorn is elated to be reunited with his people. Only thirty of them could come so quickly, but more will be coming. A son of Elrond tells Aragorn to "Remember the Paths of the Dead" Book 5, Chapter 2, pg. 51. Halbarad is carrying a tall staff with black cloth wrapped at the top. It is a standard for Aragorn that was woven by Arwen.

They ride into Helm's Deep and make camp for the night. Legolas and Gimli tell Merry a little about their journeys without him. Before long, Merry is worn out and he misses Pippin. Aragorn is in a tower speaking with the Dunedain. Legolas thinks that the Rangers are like Elven lords. Both Gimli and Legolas wish that their kindred would come with armies to help them, but they know that their own homelands are troubled by Sauron's growing shadow. They walk over the battle ground from a few days before. They reenter the hall of Helm's Deep and Theoden tells Merry that he is to come with him to Edoras. Merry is to become his esquire. The king accepts the hobbit's oath.

Eomer says that they should leave soon, but Aragorn is not to be seen. Word is sent, and all the soldiers remaining at Helm's Deep are prepared to ride. The Dunedain brought Aragorn his own horse. They gather together and Aragorn says that he wishes that Rohan could muster faster. He tells Theoden that he and his kindred must pass through the Paths of the Dead. Eomer is amazed that he is going to try such a journey but Aragorn assures them that they will meet again. Theoden is troubled but knows that Aragorn must do this. Aragorn watches the army pull away. He tells Legolas and Gimli that they are free to come with him if they desire. Both elect to follow him.

Aragorn tells them that he looked into the palantir and had barely enough strength to survive. He revealed himself to Sauron. This caused Sauron to doubt himself and feel fear. Aragorn hopes that Sauron's fear will cause him to make a mistake. He knows that Gondor will fall if they do not stop the armies coming up the Anduin River. To get there fast enough to stop them, they have to navigate the Paths of the Dead. An old seer foretold that Aragorn's family would go through here and rouse a dead army. The army of dead made an oath to help Aragorn's ancestor fight Sauron but they broke it and paid tribute to the dark lord. Because of this betrayal, they were cursed to linger in the dark tunnels of a mountain until another of the same family came to lead them out.

They ride away and come to Dunharrow where Eowyn waits to meet Eomer and Theoden. She is happy to see Aragorn but gets upset when he says that he will only



stay until dawn. She was hoping that he came to see her. He tells her that he must travel the Paths of the Dead and she begs him to remain in Rohan. When he refuses, she asks to accompany him. Aragorn tells her that she is needed by her people and cannot go off to war. She replies "'All your words are but to say: you're a woman and your part is in the house.'" Book 5, Chapter 2, pg. 62. She says that she is capable of fighting in war. She tells him that the others ride into such a perilous place out of love not duty. She would follow for the same reason.

The next day Eowyn comes to them to say farewell, but she is dressed as a soldier. Aragorn again refuses her pleas to accompany him and she falls to his knees. He denies her and she watches them leave. It is early dawn as they ride to the face of the haunted mountain and even Gimli is nervous. They halt before the door, but then enter with Aragorn in the lead and Gimli last. Some of the Dunedain bear torches. Gimli is amazed by Aragorn's lack of fear and his own desire to run. He bends down and sees a skeleton in full armor on the ground. He yells into the darkness and tells the dead to follow him out the other side of the mountain. They hear nothing but later Legolas tells Gimli that he can feel the dead following them. They ride out of the caverns into the daylight. Aragorn yells that they must ride to a certain spot as quickly as possible. They make it to the stone where the King of the Dead pledged to Aragorn's ancestor. Aragorn yells for the oath breakers to approach. He tells their leaders that they may depart to peace once the war is over. Halbarad unfurls the standard and they ride towards the Anduin with the great army behind.

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 2

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 2



Book 5, Chapter 3

Theoden follows a stream with his riders trailing behind him. The beauty of Rohan's fields amazes Merry with its sweeping plains and towering mountains. He is beginning to tire of the constant travel. He rides with Theoden and tells him all about the Shire and his people. The men of Rohan begin to sing their enchanting songs. Merry feels lonely and misses the other hobbits. He thinks of Sam and Frodo and how much rides on their shoulders. Eomer calls the company to halt and Theoden is happy for the moment's rest. He worries about the coming ride into Gondor, but he refuses to let anyone else lead his army. They begin to ride again and as they pass through towns, men cry out in happiness to see their king. Gandalf rode through the town and told them to prepare for war. A Nazgul flew over them in the night.

Theoden follows the road across the valley and Merry wonders at the great number of men preparing for war and joining them. Where the road curves, great carved stones of portly men sit. They were placed there by an ancient race of men. Soon they come to Dunharrow. The standing stones are weather-beaten and cracked, but they remain nevertheless. Eowyn comes out to meet them and Merry notices that she seems upset. She tells them that Aragorn has already come and gone. Theoden senses that she is hurt as she tells them that Aragorn did in fact ride into the Paths of the Dead. Eomer responds: "He is lost, we must ride without him, and our hope dwindles." Book 5, Chapter 3, pg. 75. Theoden enters a tent where he is to meet with his captains. Merry looks over the men raising their own tents and mutters about Aragorn. He cannot believe that he has come this far in the world to be alone.

Theoden sits at a table with his nephew and niece and asks for Merry to give him a tale to lighten his heart. Merry asks about the Paths of the Dead and Theoden tells him that no one dares to venture into the tunnels. Once a man entered and never returned. The dead army lingers within and suffers no one to pass. Merry asks why Aragorn would choose to go into it knowing this but Eomer does not know. Theoden says that his heart tells him that he will never lay eyes on Aragorn again. He tells Merry that long ago a ghostly figure told their ancestors never to enter. The figure told them that it was not the time for the dead to rise. Theoden suspects that it may be time for Aragorn to raise them.

There is a noise outside and a stranger enters the tent, clad as Boromir had been. In his hand he holds a single arrow with a red tip. The messenger says that the steward of Gondor requests the help of Rohan. The red arrow is an ancient treaty between Gondor and Rohan. Whoever would send the arrow to the other would be able to expect help as quickly as possible. The messenger tells him that he should ride for Minas Tirith as soon as possible because their armies will be better used within the walls than without. Theoden says that his men fight on horseback, not on walls, but they will make haste. Still, the messenger thinks it may be too late if they cannot arrive in seven days. He warns them that armies are gathering in the south and the east. Theoden says he will bring as great an army as possible but since he has lost men and must provide for the defenses of his city, the number will only be around six thousand.



They split up to their separate tents to go to sleep. Merry is woken before dawn because the king calls for him. The sun begins to rise as he makes his way through the waking men. There is a shadow coming from the east and the messenger from Gondor tells Theoden that the shadow began to rise in Mordor the day before. Theoden says he will ride faster and he tells Eomer to send heralds and gather all the riders at Edoras. Eomer sounds the trumpets. Theoden turns to Merry and tells him that he is going to war but he will not require him to follow. Merry protests. Theoden tells him that he cannot ride or fight from a horse. Merry protests and tells him that he will run all the way to Gondor if necessary. Theoden tells him that he may ride on his horse with him all the way to Edoras. Eowyn presents him with a shield and helmet decorated with the standards of Rohan.

Merry readies as if he were, in fact, going to war. They prepare for two hours until there is a trumpet blast and the procession begins to gather in ranks. Eomer and Theoden look over the arrayed army with Merry at their side. Merry notices a man who looks smaller and thinner than all the others but nonetheless he looks hard and cruel. They pass down the road raising cries as they ride. It gets darker as they come to Edoras. Merry begs Theoden to let him come but the king tells him that he must stay and help Eowyn. He puts him down and begins to ride off. A quiet rider comes by and whispers that he will bear Merry on his horse underneath his cloak if he wishes to go to war so badly. The riders tells him to call him Dernhelm. The horse can bear the weight of both of them because Dernhelm is unusually thin for a man. They ride quickly with the large host behind and in front of them.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 3

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 3



Book 5, Chapter 4

Pippin is roused by Gandalf to go to see Denethor who says "'Well Master Peregrin, I hope that you used yesterday to your profit, and to your liking? Though I fear that the board is barer in this city than you could wish.'" Book 5, Chapter 4, pg. 86. Pippin feels uncomfortable when he is asked to be Denethor's errand runner and singer, but he does not feel like he can say no to the steward. He is relieved when Denethor turns to speak with Gandalf. Later, he is ordered to go to be dressed in the silver and black of the tower guards. He feels odd in his new garb. The day is sunless with the great black shadow of Mordor spreading over them.

At lunch, Pippin again meets with Beregond and they stroll the walls of Minas Tirith gazing over the plain before them. He feels small in such surroundings. The dark feeling in the air is beginning to weigh on his heart. Beregond is worried about Faramir and Pippin tells him that Gandalf shares his concern. A sudden silence falls over the city. They look over the broad plain to see the Nazgul circling in the distance. They are flying around a small group of riders speeding as quickly as possible to the outer gates of Minas Tirith. Some of the men are thrown from their horses and then a flash comes from the direction of the city and Pippin sees Gandalf riding out to help them. The Nazgul are halted by a shaft of light that extends into the sky. They pause for a moment and the men ride into the gates with Gandalf. Pippin runs with all haste to the tower when he sees that Gandalf is entering the city with Faramir. Pippin is in awe of the man's noble look. Faramir looks down at him and is amazed to see a halfling in Gondor.

They enter Denethor's inner chamber and Faramir eats as he tells of his errand to Ithilien. He tells of his meeting with the other hobbits and Frodo. Gandalf seems to tremble with the telling. He asks how long ago this was and how far they were from Mordor. Faramir sent the rest of his company to reinforce the garrison at Osgillath. Denethor suddenly gets angry and accuses his son of having more loyalty to Gandalf because he let the ring be taken into Mordor instead of claiming it and bringing it back to his father for safekeeping. He laments the loss of his other son and says that Faramir made very poor decisions regarding Frodo. He accuses him of treachery and being a wizard's pupil, alleging that Boromir would have done otherwise. Faramir tells him that the whole outcome is his fault because he sent Boromir on the mission of the Ring. If he hadn't Frodo would still be with the companions. Gandalf says that Boromir would never have been able to bring the ring to the city and Denethor responds that his elder son was not a servant to wizards. He thinks that sending the ring in the hands of a halfling is witless. In his mind, the ring should have been brought to Minas Tirith to be guarded and used in desperate times. Gandalf reminds him that he is only the lord of Gondor and there are many other nations and peoples to be considered in such a decision. Denethor maintains that they would have been stronger if they had the ring but Gandalf says that he could not have trusted him to keep it and his tantrum is proving this. Denethor's eyes glow at Gandalf and Pippin feels the struggle of their wills. The steward suddenly gets calm again and says that all hope is lost. He asks about the garrison at Osgillath and tells his son to rest.



They all leave his chamber and when they are back behind closed doors, Pippin asks Gandalf if there is any hope left. Gandalf says "just a fool's hope" (Book 5, Chapter 4, pg. 96) but then rethinks his comments. He begins to realize that there is more hope because Sauron has rushed to action. He thinks of Aragorn and wonders what has become of him. Pippin asks Gandalf about Gollum and Cirith Ungol but Gandalf wants to sleep, not tell tales.

The next day is dark and Faramir is sent to lead the garrison at Osgillath. Denethor refuses to yield to the better advice of the council that thinks that Faramir would be of more use in the city than at a doomed outpost. Gandalf bids Faramir not to be rash as he leaves. Later, others ask Gandalf if Theoden will arrive soon and he says he doesn't know. A rider comes with news that there is a host coming from Mordor. It exited from the gates at Cirith Ungol. The Captain of the Nazgul leads them. The next day news arrives that Faramir is besieged in the fortress at Osgillath and is outnumbered ten to one. The messenger says that the Captain of the Nazgul spurs his men on with fear. On the following day, the outer walls are attacked and Gandalf returns with a handful of riders and wounded men. He tells Denethor that his son refused to leave until there was no more hope. Pippin asks if Sauron himself is in the field. Denethor laughs and stands to show that he wears armor. He says that wise leaders have others fight for them. Gandalf tells Pippin that the captain of the Nazgul was once a sorcerer himself. Denethor accuses Gandalf of running in fear of the Captain and Gandalf says it is not time for him to make his stand.

A sortie of riders is prepared to make an offensive and slow the onslaught of the Mordor hordes. Gandalf hears news of a second army issuing from the gates of Mordor. From the walls they see the enemy advancing within the outer walls. Any men left in the field are retreating toward Minas Tirith. The horsemen of the enemy leap forward and attack the retreating men. The sortie rides out of the main walls to break their assault. Gandalf rides in the forefront chasing away the Nazgul as the cavalry protects the retreating men. The trumpets sound to call the riders back and they enter the city walls. Faramir comes in wounded. Prince Imrahil takes him to the tower to leave him with his father. Denethor has a bed made for his son where he can watch over him.

The city is besieged completely. Many men believe that the riders of Rohan will never come. All night they watch the armies of men and orcs dig trenches and build campsites outside the reach of their arrows. Engines of bombardment are built but the men of Gondor are sure that the walls will hold against them. When the catapults are drawn they strike not the walls but over the walls into the heart of the city. When the shot lands it bursts into flames. Before long, the outer city, the first level, is burning. They cast the heads of the men of Gondor who died over the walls, too. The men of Minas Tirith curse their adversaries. Everyone begins to lose heart as the Nazgul circle high above. The Captain slowly approaches from the outer walls.

During all of this, Faramir lies on his bed and Pippin watches him carefully. Denethor weeps and tells him that his son will die and the kingdom will end. The steward refuses to see anyone and Gandalf assumes leadership of the defenses. He races from wall to wall encouraging the defenders. All day the army continues to pour around the walls like



so many swarming ants. In the darkness they roll siege towers forward. When told, Denethor cares about nothing. He does not want to hear that the first ring of the city is burning. He tells his messengers to go down and burn with it. Denethor speaks to Pippin:

"Farewell, Peregrin son of Paladin! Your service has been short, and now it is drawing to an end. I release you from the little that remains. Go now, and die in what way seems best to you. And with whom you will, even that friend whose folly brought you to this death. Send for servants and then go. Farewell!" Book 5, Chapter 4, pg. 108

Pippin will not give up hope and says that he will stand against the enemy until he has no strength remaining. He watches servants bear Faramir out of the chamber into a courtyard. There they go into the highest level of the city to the death house of the stewards. Denethor asks for wood and oil to be brought so that he and his son can be burned before the enemy takes them. Pippin tries to get the servants to stop and listen to sense. He decides that he must go find Gandalf and he asks Beregond to try to do something to keep Denethor from killing his son. Beregond must choose between following his orders and saving the life of his lord. Pippin runs through the city but cannot find Gandalf. When he finally sees him, he cannot approach him. All night the army rushes the gate with its siege engines. They wield a great ram with the head of a wolf. With great effort they ram the gate three times and crack the doors. The Captain of the Nazgul walks forward first. Only Gandalf remains to face him. Pippin watches as the wizard tells the Lord of the Nazgul that he is not allowed to enter Mordor. The wizard stands firm and suddenly the cock crows. The valley rings with the sound of the horns of Rohan.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 4

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 4

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 1



Book 5, Chapter 5

Merry can see nothing in the dark as he huddles wrapped in a blanket. The host of Rohan has stopped to rest in the woods. It is stretched underneath trees. They had ridden for four days and Merry tries to remember why he was so eager to come in the first place. The marshal of his battalion ignores him and seems to have some sort of understanding with Dernhelm. They are a day away from Minas Tirith and they know that when they arrive they will ride right into the middle of battle. The marshal stumbles over him and tells him that they are going to get ready to leave soon. There are drums in the wood because the Wild Men have decided to put themselves at the service of Theoden. The marshal is glad of this because he fears that they would use their poisoned arrows against them otherwise.

Merry gets up and walks around. He wanders near a pool of light in a clearing. He finds Eomer and Theoden speaking with Ghan-Buri-Ghan of the wild men. Ghan tells them that they will not go with them to war, but they will kill all the orcs that come into the woods, bring them news of the battle, and show them paths. He tells Theoden to make haste because they are so much outnumbered. If they are not careful, the new army coming from Mordor will cut them off before they even reach the walls of Minas Tirith. Theoden is worried that they will not be able to take the main road and will be delayed by any other path. Ghan assures them that there are forgotten roads that will take them more quickly to their destination. Theoden promises a lasting friendship and Ghan vows to lead them himself. If he takes them into a trap, they should immediately kill him. He tells them that it is a 7-10 hour march and they should leave immediately.

Merry leaves the clearing and sees that Ghan has already sent out a screen of Wild Men to make sure that there are no orc spies in the area. They march into the day and come to a great thicket where they are to rest for a moment. Eomer wants to send out spies but Ghan says, "Wild men have already seen all that can be seen in the bad air." Book 5, Chapter 5, pg. 119 . His people tell him that the walls of Gondor are failing but the enemy does not worry too much about reinforcements. They do not watch the roads. Theoden thanks Ghan, and the Wild Man tells him to kill all the orcs. Ghan bows to the ground to say goodbye and then sniffs the air. The Wild Men sound their drums again and the marshal says it is seven leagues to Minas Tirith. Scouts find the dead body of the messenger who brought Theoden the red arrow. Theoden realizes that the people of Minas Tirith have no idea that they are coming.

As they ride through the night, Dernhelm rides forward to listen to the words of the king and his nephew. Minas Tirith is on fire in the distance. Ghan told them that the dawn would bring favor. Theoden speaks loudly and says that they should split the army into two forces and strike in tandem at two sections of the attacking army. They begin to ride with new fury. As Merry clutches to Dernhelm, he loosens his sword and wonders what he will do. They encounter some small groups of orcs away from the great army and they slay them quickly. The host rides silently through the ruins of the outer walls. Burning Minas Tirith gets closer and closer. Theoden halts before they are noticed and fears that they are too late to save their allies. Merry feels the wind in his face and sees



a flash from the city. Theoden sits straight up and gives a rallying cry to his men. He lifts his horn and they all begin to thunder across the plain sounding their calls. They enter the battle without mercy. No one can rival Theoden in speed as the morning rises and the wind carries scents from the sea.

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 2



Book 5, Chapter 6

The Lord of the Nazgul leaves the gates of Minas Tirith and returns to command his army against the new onslaught. Theoden is joined by his knights and Dernhelm. The Rohirrim slice into the massive battalions of orcs but they cannot directly relieve the siege. The chieftain of the Haradrim is enraged by the coming of Theoden and he seeks the King himself. Theoden sees him coming but does not wait. Instead he rushes forth and slays the opposing chief. Dark falls about the sky and Theoden calls his men to him. His horse falls and the king falls beneath him. A great dark creature flies down towards him and on it rides the Captain of the Nazgul. Theoden's knights bravely fall before him. Merry stays near the King and is amazed when Dernhelm stands to fight the Captain. He tells the creature to be gone, but the Nazgul says that no living man may hinder him. Dernhelm laughs and says that he is not a man but a woman. Eowyn lets loose her hair and says she will slay whomever harms her King. The Nazgul lord becomes silent for a moment and the darkness in the sky begins to recede. Tears glisten on Eowyn's cheek. Merry is enraged at the thought of something happening to her. He begins to move but is not noticed by the Captain. It leaps at Eowyn and she swiftly attacks. She severs the head from the flying beast and the Captain jumps to the ground. It charges and shatters her shield with one blow. She falls to her knees with the force of the hit. The Captain screams as Merry pierces its knee with his elven blade. She surges up and stabs the creature in the formless head. It disintegrates and collapses to a pile of rags on the ground. Merry stands over Eowyn's still body and hears Theoden's mighty voice. He forgives Merry for coming against his orders and asks him to keep messages for Eomer and Eowyn. He tells him that Eomer must be King.

The enemy is rallying despite the loss of their leader and Eomer leads the Rohirrim against them. Merry thinks of Gandalf as Eomer rides near and is hailed by his uncle as King. Eomer weeps and then sees his sister lying on the ground. He raises Theoden's banner and rushes back into the fray.

"And still Meriadoc the hobbit stood there blinking through his tears, and no one spoke to him, indeed none seemed to heed him. He brushed away the tears, and stooped to pick up the green shield that Eowyn had given him, and he slung it at his back. Then he looked for his sword that he had let fall; for even as he struck his blow his arm was numbed, and now he could only use his left hand." Book 5, Chapter 6, pg. 131

Merry's sword withers on the ground and Theoden's knights raise the king and defend his body from the enemy. Merry walks beside them as they struggle. Prince Imrahil approaches them through the melee. He is amazed at Eowyn and tells them that she still breathes. They rush her into the city as the fighting continues. In some places Mordor prevails, in others Gondor and Rohan. Imrahil leads them into the city and then charges with his knights back onto the field.

The Haradrim rally around their war elephants and keep the Gondor footmen from uniting with the Riders of Rohan. The fair wind shows the watchmen on the walls a



black fleet coming up the river. They cry out that the new army is upon them and they call the men of Gondor back to the city. The Rohirrim become somber and Eomer rallies his men to block the renewed advance of the Haradrim. He looks upon the black ships and decides to ride to a glorious death. Suddenly, he sees the banner on the lead ship. It is Aragorn's standard flying in the wind. Aragorn comes ashore with a great host from the southern cities. Aragorn and Eomer meet in the battle. They are happy to be reunited and they wage a furious resistance together. They fight into the waning sun until the enemy is repulsed. Most of the army is slain within the circuit of the long walls. Very few escape. Aragorn, Eomer, and Imrahil ride unscathed into the city. Many men lay dead or wounded on the earth.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 5

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 5

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 3



Book 5, Chapter 7

Near the gate, Gandalf hears the pleas of Pippin and runs off to stop Denethor from killing Faramir. He is torn between doing this and facing the Lord of the Nazgul, but he must put his faith in the Rohirrim. He tells Imrahil to take command of the army. They climb to the inner walls and find that Beregond has left his post. Within there is the ringing of swords and Gandalf tells them to stop. Beregond has slain two of the servants. Denethor tells Gandalf to kill Beregond. Gandalf asks why he is in the house of the dead. Denethor says that Faramir is already on the fire. Gandalf finds that the pyre has not yet been lit and he picks up the body of Faramir. Denethor watches him do this and Gandalf tells him that it is not his right to decide his son's death. Denethor exposes a glowing palantir and tells Gandalf that the black fleet will sail up the Anduin and kill them all. Denethor announces that he will not be supplanted by a new King because the king would be "last of a ragged house long bereft of lordship and dignity." Book 5, Chapter 7, pg. 142. Denethor draws out a knife and calls for his servants to help him. He lights the pyre and throws his body onto it. Gandalf closes the door and tells the servants and Beregond that they now serve Faramir. He tells them to take him to the houses of healing. They pass into the high circles of the city to find many men lying on beds. Gandalf leaves Faramir with Pippin and Beregond and looks down. Gandalf knew that there was a palantir in Minas Tirith but he thought Denethor was wise enough not to use it. It turned his spirit dark with fear of Mordor. Beregond had seen the light of the stone on many occasions. The wizard decides that his powers are of better use in the houses of healing.

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 6

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 4



Book 5, Chapter 8

Merry approaches the gate of Minas Tirith as the rain begins to cease. He looks up to see Pippin standing before him. The two embrace and Pippin sees that Merry is hurt. They stagger together to go to the houses of healing. Merry gets more drowsy and Pippin almost drops him but Bergil comes to help. Gandalf comes and takes Merry to be cared for with Eowyn and Faramir. They are all very ill. Gandalf watches them tirelessly. An old woman tells him that the lore of Gondor says that the hands of a King can heal and Gandalf realizes that Aragorn might help.

Aragorn, Eomer, and Imrahil approach the city but Aragorn says that he cannot enter unless bidden by the steward. The Prince and Eomer enter and find the chair of the steward empty. Eomer is elated that his sister is not dead. Gandalf tells them that Eowyn, Faramir and Merry are stricken with dark wounds. He also tells of Denethor's death. Aragorn comes out of the shadows and says he entered because Gandalf sent for him. Pippin is overjoyed to see Aragorn. The ranger looks over the bodies and asks the old lady if they have certain herbs. She says "'Yes...but not enough, I reckon, for all that will need them.'" Book 5, Chapter 8, pg. 151. The herb he wants is called kingsfoil. He tells her to find it. Faramir is almost dead when the herb master comes and says that they do not keep kingsfoil. Aragorn tells him to go find it.

Bergil comes with six older leaves of the herb and Aragorn breaks two of them into boiling water. He lets it steam before Faramir's face and the man wakes. Aragorn tells him to eat and rest for many days. He goes to Eowyn and Aragorn regrets that she had to be such a foe. Gandalf responds that she had the strength to best many men, but the darkness had worked its way into her. Aragorn says that he may be able to help her. He breaks two new leaves and tells her to wake but she doesn't. Eomer tells her to wake after a few moments and she does. She knows that Theoden is dead and though she is saddened, she is happy that he died victorious.

Gandalf and Pippin join Aragorn with Merry. Merry wakes and says that he is hungry. He asks for pipe tobacco and Aragorn says he has not slept for many days and did not come all this distance to give him tobacco. He kisses Merry and leaves. Pippin begins to chatter to his friend. Aragorn and Gandalf tell the warden of the healers that Eowyn and Faramir are not to leave for many days. Many gather to see Aragorn and word circulates that the King has returned. Aragorn leaves quietly and goes to his tent to sleep.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 6

Book 5, Chapter 9

The next morning Legolas and Gimli are reunited with the two hobbits. Imrahil speaks to them but must leave to discuss affairs with Aragorn. As he leaves, Legolas says "That is a fair lord and a great captain of men." Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 164. They go to the houses of healing and Pippin asks about the Paths of the Dead. Gimli is ashamed to tell the tale but Legolas is willing to speak of it. The rode out of the mountain and sped for five days. They came to the Anduin and overthrew the fifty ships of the southern army. Aragorn claimed the ships were still afloat and filled them with men who had gathered around him. He told the Army of the Dead that their oath was finished and they disappeared. They sailed up the Anduin for a couple of days and found Minas Tirith in flames. They surged onto the plain of Gondor and defeated the enemy.

Imrahil joins Gandalf, Aragorn and Eomer. Gandalf recites the dying words of Denethor and says that they can either attack Mordor or wait for another siege. He guesses that Sauron is in doubt and if they attack it will draw the Dark Lord's attention from Frodo as he tries to destroy the ring. Although prudence would have them remain behind and defend the city. He thinks that they must rush forward and surprise Sauron in the hope that Frodo will destroy the ring before they face his full strength. When Gandalf pauses, everyone else is silent. Aragorn says he will go. Eomer and Imrahil say that some men need to be left behind to defend the city. Aragorn tells them that there are four thousand men who will arrive in two days to help them. They count the number of their troops and realize that after they leave adequate defense for Gondor, they will only be able to advance with seven thousand men. Aragorn and Gandalf say that Sauron will not laugh at them and Aragorn says "if this be jest, then it is too bitter for laughter." Book 5, Chapter 9, pg. 175. Two days later the army is assembled. Legolas and Gimli go with them and Merry is upset that he is too hurt to go. Pippin marches as a soldier of Gondor.

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 5



Book 5, Chapter 10

Merry and Bergil watch the army leave for Mordor. It presses on through Osgillath and into the gloom of the crossroads. Aragorn announces that Gondor has returned and then they move forward toward the main gates of Mordor. Throughout the third day, they travel onward announcing to the surrounding lands that they are free of Sauron's control. A sortie of men and orcs attacks but they defeat them easily. Aragorn knows that this was a ploy to distract them or slow them down. Legolas can see the Nazgul pacing them far above. When they come close to the gates, some men are overwhelmed and Aragorn allows them to leave. They approach the black gates with fewer than six thousand men.

When they reach the gate, it is evident that the two great hills on either side are hiding armies of the dark lord. The armies of Gondor are protected by either hill and Aragorn rides forward with Eomer, Imrahil, Gandalf and Pippin. A messenger comes forward and offers them Frodo's mithril coat and his cloak. The messenger tells them that Sauron demands that they retreat to Gondor and pay him tribute to return Frodo alive. Gandalf asks the messenger how Sauron could expect one prisoner to be worth so much. He takes the mithril coat and cloak from him but says that there will be no retreat. The messenger lets loose a hideous cry and the gates of Mordor crash open. Armies come from behind the hills and pour from the gate. The men of Gondor leap to battle. Pippin prepares to die as he draws his sword. The swarms of orcs break like a storm on the ranks of Gondor. A great orc falls over Pippin and as he passes out he thinks he hears men yelling about eagles.

"For one moment more Pippin's thought hovered. 'Bilbo!' it said. 'But no! That came in his tale, long long ago. This is my tale, and it is ended now. Good-bye!' And his thought fled far away and his eyes saw no more." Book 5, Chapter 10, pg. 187

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 6



Book 6, Chapter 1

Sam rouses himself and realizes that he was stunned by throwing himself into the iron doors of Minas Morgul. He knows he must either rescue Frodo or die. He can see fires in the towers above and walks away to where he can sit down. He puts the Ring on and his senses are strengthened. He can hear bands of orcs fighting in the tower. He runs forward and slips the ring off. Far off in Mordor he can see the glowing summit of Orodruin where they must destroy the ring. He knows that he cannot trust the ring this close to Sauron. He thinks that he could either bear the ring the rest of the way himself or claim its power and challenge the dark lord. Only his love for Frodo suppresses the wild fantasies running in his mind. He knows that these impulses are part of the power of the ring.

He makes timid steps back towards the tower and sees two orcs shot by their companions in the courtyard. He creeps around and tries to enter through the gate but is stopped by an invisible force. There are large statues of vultures on either side and they seem to stare at him. He tries again and fails but then pulls out the phial of Galadriel. Its light shines and he walks through the gateway. He finds the door into the tower propped open with a body. He begins to wander through the passages inside, finding more corpses wherever he goes. He hears an orc coming and his hand jumps to clutch the ring. The beast is intimidated by what he sees as a gray warrior. Sam follows him as he flees but cannot keep up with his pace. He plods up the stairs. "He felt that he was on the right road, and his spirits had risen a good deal." Book 6, Chapter 1, pg. 199. There is no life, only the occasional torch as he ascends the staircase. He hears voices and realizes that he is listening to the lead orc Shagrat. Shagrat hurls a smaller orc out of a room and Sam draws his sword. Sam follows Shagrat as he runs away. He stops following him and begins to look around the higher chambers of the tower. He knows that there is a topmost chamber, but he cannot figure out how to get there. He begins to sing a song in his depression. He hears an orc coming and then realizes that the highest chamber is reached by trap door. An orc pulls the ceiling of the hall open and pulls down a ladder. Sam listens to him climb up and yell at Frodo.

Sam rushes up the ladder and finds the orc threatening Frodo with a whip. He cuts the creature's arm off and as it turns to attack him, it trips in its haste, tumbling through the trap door. Sam holds Frodo and Frodo asks if he is still dreaming. He had heard Sam singing and thought he was having a dream. Sam asks him if he can walk and even though the orcs questioned him brutally, he can stumble along. Frodo thinks that the ring is gone and that the quest has failed, but Sam tells him that he has the ring. Frodo demands that the other Hobbit surrender the ring to him. Sam does and Frodo apologizes for being so cruel; the power of the ring is deep within him. Because Frodo is naked, Sam suggests that they dress like orcs. He gives Frodo a sword and cloak while he finds the right size clothes.

Sam returns with clothing and is very eager to get out of the tower. He dresses his companion.



"There were long hairy breeches of some unclean beast-fell, and a tunic of dirty leather. He drew them on. Over the tunic went a coat of stout ring-mail, short for a full-sized orc, too long for Frodo and heavy. About it he clasped a belt, at which there hung a short sheath holding a broad-bladed stabbing sword." Book 6, Chapter 1, pg. 209

Sam only puts on an orc helmet and cloak. Frodo asks about food and Sam says that he has enough lembas to last a week or so. Frodo realizes that they must find water somewhere. He tells him that he still has some of his lembas in his bag and makes Sam eat some before they go. They eat and then move outside. Frodo does not feel he can move on once they get outside. Sam makes him push on and they struggle toward the invisible gate. Sam withdraws the phial again and as they make their way past the vultures, they hear screeching and feel something close behind them.

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 7

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 7



Book 6, Chapter 2

Frodo and Sam struggle into the shadows and they hear the scream of a Nazgul. They wander to the main road of Mordor and fear capture unless they find another route. The Nazgul shrieks again and they hide underneath a bridge. Sam drops and Frodo follows. They both land in thorny bushes. They walk until they can go no further and rest without water. Frodo demands that he be allowed to take the orc armor off because it would do him no good and is just too heavy. Before long, he senses another Black Rider and they stare at it flying about the peaks of Mordor. Frodo feels hopeless as they sit down and share some lembas. As they walk on they can see the valley before looming Mount Doom. They take a frequently traveled path and soon they find a stream of murky water. The both drink thirstily and fill their water skin. They decide to rest for the night and search for an appropriate place until Frodo falls down from exhaustion.

They wake hand in hand but the sleep did not refresh Frodo. They wander the plain and look over. "Still far away, forty miles at least, they saw Mount Doom...." Book 6, Chapter 2, pg. 221. The sight of the land and the armies of tents set within it for Sauron's dark armies sicken them. Sam thinks it is all over, but then realizes that they might be able to steal food and water from the host. Frodo says that they must get across at all costs. They cannot make their way on the ridge around the valley, so they must go into the peril. They hear orc voices from the other side of the rock. The voices are arguing about whether they are searching for a man, elf or dwarf. They argue and talk about an odd creature who helped them but then ran off. Sam and Frodo realize that Gollum is still a real threat. They move into the darkness unsure if they are going the right way. Frodo thinks the mountain will take a week to reach. They begin to march again and look over the marred landscape. They come to a dead end and begin to understand that the only way they will make Mount Doom is by the main road. While Frodo rests, Sam finds some water that is good enough to drink. When he returns he sees the shadow of some creature running away and he knows it is Gollum. Frodo wakes and lets Sam sleep.

They begin their journey again in darkness. After twelve miles or so they hear the noise of marching behind them. They know that they are trapped, but they hide behind the closest boulder anyway. Soon they hear orcs marching in great haste with their captains whipping them from behind. One of the captains sees them in the shadows and yells for them to get into line and march. They are forced to run with the others and it is a very grueling trip for them. They go for miles and Frodo's strength begins to give out. Sam knows that he will fall at any moment and give them away. He prepares to fight when they come to a crossroad and almost collide with another band of orcs. There is a conflict and the hobbits use it as their opportunity to slip away. They crawl for some time and then collapse in a shallow pit.

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 7

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 8



Book 6, Chapter 3

They shiver together under the cloak. When they wake, they eat and drink what is left of their water. The mountain looms in the distance and Sam realizes that when they get there they will have no food left:

"So that was the job I felt I had to do when I started...to help Mr. Frodo to the last step and then die with him? Well, if that is the job then I must do it. But I would dearly like to see Bywater again, and Rosie Cotton and her brothers, and the Gaffer and Marigold and all. I can't think somehow that Gandalf would have sent Mr. Frodo on this errand, if there hadn't a'been any hope of coming back at all." Book 6, Chapter 3, pg. 234

This dying hope turns into determination as Sam looks over the land and realizes that they will be able to creep over the broken plain without being noticed. They rise the next morning and Frodo feels that the weight of the ring is too heavy. Sam offers to carry it, but Frodo snaps at this suggestion. They decide to lighten their load so they drop everything they don't need into a pit. They turn to the mountain and walk further than they had thought possible that day. During this walk, however, they drink the last of their water.

Sam realizes that Frodo might not make it alive to the mountain and he worries because he has no idea what they are supposed to do with the ring once they get there. They near the last leg of their journey, when the slope turns forever uphill. The air is thick and painful to breathe. They sleep for the night. They sleep huddled together and Frodo has trouble standing when they wake. Sam lifts him and carries him up the mountain, unsure where to go next. He struggles for a long time until he can move forward no more. Frodo thanks him and they are amazed how far up the mountain they have come. Sam feels a little hope for the first time in awhile. He recognizes a path and knows that it will lead into the mountain. He is worried about making it up the slope but Frodo says that he will crawl all the way if he needs to.

They begin to struggle up the mountainside until suddenly a stone comes crashing between them. They hear Gollum's voice hissing, "Wicked masster cheats us; cheats Smeagol!" Book 6, Chapter 3, pg. 245. Gollum jumps on Frodo and they begin to wrestle. Sam is amazed by Frodo's sudden strength. He breaks free and orders Gollum to the ground. Gollum submits and Frodo orders him to be gone. Sam tells him that he will watch Gollum while he walks up the mountain. Sam draws his sword and Gollum lies on the ground begging the hobbit not to hurt him. Sam is undone by pity and he tells Gollum to be gone. He turns and flees upward in the wrong direction and Sam follows him fearing for Frodo. He enters a tunnel using the light of Galadriel's phial to guide him. Frodo calls out and speaks in an abnormally loud voice that he will not destroy the ring but will claim it as his own. Sam cannot see him because he has the ring on his finger. Frodo knocks him down and runs off. When Sam rises, he sees Gollum struggling with what must be Frodo, who is invisible. Gollum seems to overcome his opponent and bite down on something. Frodo appears and Gollum dances away holding his severed finger in his hand showing off the ring. Gollum wails with joy but jumps astray and slips into



the gulf of the mountain plunging into the depths below. Fires explode from within and the mountain begins to rumble. Sam finds Frodo and tries to sop the blood from his maimed hand. Frodo tells him that they must forgive Gollum because he was the only one who could complete the quest.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 8

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 8



Book 6, Chapter 4

The hosts of Mordor rage and the Captains of Gondor founder in their endless onslaught. Gandalf looks to the sky and sees the Eagles coming. He shouts out and the Nazgul retreat in view of the immense army of giant birds. The armies of Mordor falter and the men of Gondor charge but Gandalf commands them to halt. There are explosions from within the gates and the black gate disintegrates before them. Gandalf announced that the era of Sauron has ended. Most of the creatures of Sauron retreat but the Men stand to fight the host of Gondor. Gandalf asks one of the eagles to carry him. They fly into Mordor.

Frodo and Sam lie together within the cavern but Sam decides that he does not want to die without seeing the open air again. They exit the mountain and see that it is crumbling into itself. The eagle sees them from above and swoops down with two of its brothers. They pick up the hobbits and fly away.

"When Sam awoke, he found that he was lying on some soft bed, but over him gently swayed wide beechen boughs, and through their young leaves sunlight glimmered, green and gold. All the air was full of a sweet mingled scent." Book 6, Chapter 4, pg. 255

Sam thinks it smells like Ithilien and wonders if he is dreaming. He turns to find Frodo lying next to him. Gandalf speaks and tells him that he is in Ithilien. Frodo sits up and tells Gandalf that he feels all right. It is noon and they are supposed to eat and drink with the new king, Aragorn. Sam is worried that they are not properly attired but Gandalf assures them that they will be fine. They enter a clearing and find the entire host assembled before them. They are saluted with cheers and a song. The hobbits blush and are led to a table with three high seats. Aragorn is in the middle chair; the hobbits take either side.

Frodo is happy to see Aragorn but Sam is hesitant. Aragorn bows to the two hobbits and takes them by the hand. A minstrel comes out and begins to sing of Frodo and the ring of doom. Sam laughs and weeps. Soon many are weeping with him. Frodo and Sam are brought to a tent and Gandalf presents them with their weapons to wear at the banquet. They sit at the table of the king and Sam sees Merry and Pippin. The banquet draws on and the army is left to make merry. Frodo and Sam learn much of their friends' travels. Sam is amazed at Merry and Pippin's height. Gandalf rises and says that the hobbits have gone to great lengths but should get some rest. Frodo and Sam go to sleep and in the morning they wander the forest. The host is made ready for its return to Minas Tirith. It is the month of May as they sail up the Anduin to Osgillath.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 9

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 9



Book 6, Chapter 5

Doubt almost overcomes Gondor. Eowyn rises two days after the army left for Mordor despite the protests of her healers. She asks for tidings of the war but there are none to be had. She asks the healer who rightly commands Gondor and he points to Faramir. She tells Faramir that she had sought death in battle but did not receive it. He tells her that he cannot command the Warden of healing to release her. A tear falls down her cheek and Faramir says he will get her a window looking east. Despite the dark air, he says, "Eowyn of Rohan, I say to you that you are beautiful." Book 6, Chapter 5, pg. 266. He tells her that it would make him happy if she would stay near him.

Faramir listens to everything the warden has to say about her and then interrogates Merry about her. They walk alone outside the next day and continue spending their time together. After five days they worry that there has been no sign from the east. They watch over the landscape and do not realize that they are clasping each other's hands. Eowyn asks him if he thinks that the final darkness is coming and Faramir says his mind says yes but his heart says no. A messenger comes and heralds the end of Sauron. Merry is called to come to Ithilien but Eowyn stays with Faramir. Eowyn's demeanor gets dark again when she hears that Aragorn is returning. She admits to Eomer that she used to love him. Eomer professes his love for her and her heart softens to him.

Everything is readied in the city for the return of the King. As the army approaches, Faramir stands outside the city and faces Aragorn, Frodo, Sam and Gandalf. Aragorn comes last and Faramir approaches him. Faramir asks the assembled people of Gondor if they will have Aragorn as their king and they shout in assent. He gives Aragorn the crown to coronate himself but Gandalf wants Frodo to present it to Gandalf and the wizard to place it on his head. He enters the city and takes his place in the hall of the kings.

Aragorn makes Faramir prince of Ithilien and offers a new treaty to Eomer. Eowyn tells Faramir that she will go home to Rohan but then return to marry him. The city is rebuilt and the hobbits linger with Legolas and Gimli for some time. Aragorn did not want to dissolve the fellowship.

"At last all such things must end...but I would have you wait a little while longer: for the end of the deeds that you have shared in has not yet come. A day draws near that I have looked for in all the years of my manhood, and when it comes I would have my friends beside me." Book 6, Chapter 5, pg. 277

They live together in a great house but soon Frodo wonders after the Shire. Gandalf says that they will return. One day, Gandalf is not to be found. Aragorn and the wizard left the city. They find a sapling of a magic tree that disappeared from Minas Tirith. Gandalf tells Aragorn that the last age has past. The silver tree is taken back to the city. In the middle of the summer Galadriel and Elrond come to Minas Tirith with Arwen. Frodo understands why they have waited: Aragorn weds Arwen and their long wait ends.



Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 10
Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 10
Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 9



Book 6, Chapter 6

After many days, Frodo approaches Arwen and Aragorn and tells them that he must go to Rivendell and then on to the Shire. He longs for home and his uncle Bilbo. Aragorn asks him to wait seven days until Eomer returns to Minas Tirith to bear the body of Theoden home. Arwen explains to Frodo that she chooses to be mortal and remain with Aragorn rather than go across the sea as an elf is entitled. She gives Frodo a white stone on a necklace signifying that when he has tired of this land he may travel with the elves to a better place.

The day of departure comes and all of the remaining original companions ride out with the men of Rohan, Elrond, Galadriel and Arwen. At Edoras, there is a great feast in honor of Theoden and Faramir and Eowyn announce their plans to marry. Aragorn wishes them joy. Eomer releases Merry from his service and Eowyn gives him an ancient horn as a gift. They ride off toward Helm's Deep and then they find that Isengard has been converted into an orchard. Gandalf thanks Treebeard and Aragorn assures him that the help of the ents will never be forgotten in Gondor. Treebeard admits that he let Saruman go a few days before and Grima Wormtongue went with him. Aragorn receives the keys to Orthanc. Legolas and Gimli depart the group to investigate the forests around. Merry and Pippin say farewell to Treebeard. Aragorn leaves with Arwen to return to Minas Tirith.

"Soon the dwindling company, following the Isen, turned west and rode through the Gap into the waste lands beyond, and then they turned northwards, and passed over the borders of Dunland." Book 6, Chapter 6, pg. 291

They enter a mountain range and come upon Saruman dressed as a beggar with Grima following close behind him. Gandalf offers him help but Saruman says that he does not trust Galadriel. Saruman glares at the hobbits and asks them for some pipeweed. Merry gives him some, but Saruman just takes the whole bag and walks off. Gandalf is disappointed that Saruman has fallen so far. They come near Moria and Galadriel departs for her forest. After a couple weeks of traveling, they return to Rivendell. When they come to Bilbo, the old Hobbit tells them that his birthday is the next day. The hobbits stay at Rivendell for a couple weeks. When it comes time for them to go, Bilbo gives them small gifts and asks Frodo to collect his notes and finish writing the tale of the hobbits and the ring. They take their leave the next day and Elrond tells Frodo to look for him and Bilbo in the Shire in another year or so.

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 11



Book 6, Chapter 7

The four hobbits and Gandalf begin to travel back to the Shire. Frodo's old wounds trouble him. When they arrive in Bree the guard tentatively welcomes them. They come to the old inn and when they see the innkeeper, Barliman, he exclaims "'They've come back!'" Book 6, Chapter 7, pg. 301. Barliman cannot believe that they have returned after so long. The common room and the inn are pretty empty. They tell him a good part of their story and it amazes him. The situation in Bree and the Shire has not been good. Business is bad and people have been killed. Many of the men who served the Black Riders have taken to wandering and thieving. Barliman says that because they are dressed in armor and carry weapons many of the thieves have left the town for a while. Gandalf tells him that better times will come soon and Barliman just wants Bree to be left alone by the rest of the world. Gandalf assures him that there is enough space in the world and he also tells him that Bree is known and loved by the King of Gondor. When Barliman realizes that Aragorn is the king, he is amazed that a man who used to lurk in his inn is now a king.

They stay for another night and on the second night, people gather in the room and ask Frodo if he has written his book yet. On the third day they wake and decide to ride to the Shire as quickly as possible. Barliman bids them well but warns them that there are troubles in the Shire. Frodo and the others do not know what is going on, but Gandalf tells them that it has something to do with Saruman. He tells them that they will have to set things right in the Shire without him. They part from Gandalf and head towards Buckland worried about what they will find. Merry says that they are returning together just as they left.



Book 6, Chapter 8

They arrive in Buckland after nightfall but the guards at the gate will not let them in the city. One of them recognizes Merry but cannot let them in because of their orders. Merry and Pippin begin to force their way in and a large man comes out to threaten them. He sees their weapons and simply unlocks the gate and runs away. Merry asks for shelter but "taking in folk off-hand like, and eating extra food, and all that..." Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 311 is not allowed. The new men who have been brought to the region have been draining resources. Eventually, the hobbits are allowed to sleep in the guardhouse. In the morning they decide to go straight to Hobbiton. At night they encounter a band of shirriiffs barring the road. They announce that the four companions are to be put under arrest. Frodo and the others laugh when the shirriiffs tell them to be quiet. The inn is closed, so they sleep in the shirriiffs house for the night. Sam knows one of them and he tells him that the chief closed all the inns and now all the ale and tobacco go to the chief's men. The hobbits all over the Shire are intimidated and beaten by these men. The chief already knows that they are in the Shire.

The next morning some of the shirriiffs come out to escort them to Hobbiton but they don't have ponies. For about fourteen miles, the companions make the shirriiffs move in front of them, but they give up. As they approach Hobbiton, they are shocked by the new ugly houses. Trees have been cut down and there is a new mill exuding black smoke into the air. They enter the old inn and find a half dozen men lounging around. They tell the hobbits that their boss Sharkey will take care of them. Frodo laughs and tells them that their day is over. Pippin draws his sword and the other hobbits rush the ruffians. They run away but Frodo fears they may have returned to the Shire too late. He warns the others that they must not kill hobbits and should avoid killing any men. Merry thinks they should call the Shire to arms and goes to the farm of Farmer Cotton. Cotton brings his sons out, very ready to help Merry. Sam talks to his daughter Rose. Within the day, a hundred hobbits have gathered together with axes and other weapons. Frodo asks Cotton how many men there are and he answers,

"That's hard to tell....They moves about and comes and goes. There's sometimes fifty of them in their sheds up Hobbiton way; but they go out from there roving round, thieving or "gathering" as they call it. Still there's seldom less than a score round the Boss, as they names him." Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 321

Despite how many men there are, they are poorly armed. Pippin rides off to get some of his family. Soon they hear that men are coming. Some hobbits stand up and tell them to stop and the men laugh. Then the rest of the hobbits show themselves, and the men realize that they are surrounded. Some drop their weapons and some fight but once their leader falls they stop.

Cotton tells them that the trouble started when a wealthy Hobbit started to buy up a lot of tobacco and land. He had men come to protect his stuff and soon they were just pushing around everyone in the region. A man named Sharkey came later and made the whole situation worse. Everyone listens to him and he built a big mill that fouls up



the water. Sam comes back with his grandfather and Frodo proudly tells the old man that his grandson is one of the most famous people in the world. Everyone gathers the next day and a messenger says that Pippin is returning with a band of hobbits but a band of over a hundred men is coming. Pippin arrives with over a hundred new hobbits and they make plans to deal with the men. When the large band walks over the road, hobbits push carts and wagons in front of them and behind them and soon they are surrounded. Pippin calls for them to sit down but some charge the barricade. Some escape but 80 are trapped. The fight begins furiously. At the end 70 men lay dead and 19 hobbits. Frodo did not draw his sword during the battle, instead he cared for the wounded. He could not stand the thought of fighting any longer.

They gather together the sturdy hobbits and head off to deal with Sharkey. They are grief stricken by the desolation of the land around them. They come to the door of Frodo's old home and knock but there is no answer. Sam looks around and says it is like Mordor but Frodo says "'Yes, this is Mordor.... Just one of its works.'" Book 6, Chapter 8, pg. 332. Merry complains about Saruman and then the wizard himself steps out of the shadows. He tells them that he laughed at them when he encountered them before because he knew the state of their homeland and that Gandalf would not help them. He tells them that he took pleasure in ruining the land. Frodo tells him to leave even though the other hobbits want to kill him. As he walks by, Saruman tries to stab Frodo but his knife breaks on Frodo's mithril coat. Even then, Frodo tells the other hobbits not to harm the fallen wizard. He explains that he has fallen further than death could take him. Saruman glares at Frodo and complains that the Hobbit robbed him of revenge. Wormtongue follows him but Frodo tells him he can stay behind and be free. Saruman explains that Grima killed their boss with his own hands and then he kicks the man. Grima jumps up and slits Saruman's throat. Three hobbits shoot their bows and both figures fall to the ground, dead. Frodo watches Saruman's body dissolve. Sam says good riddance and Merry hopes that their war is over. Sam says that now it is time to clean up and repair.

Topic Tracking: Sacrifice 10

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 11

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 12



Book 6, Chapter 9

The cleanup takes a lot of work but not as much time as Sam thought it would. Frodo returns to his home and the mayor is set free from prison. Frodo acts as his deputy for a while. Merry and Pippin hunt down the rest of the men over the next few months. All the brick houses are torn down and new holes are dug. The trees are the worst loss, but after some time, Sam remembers the dust he was given by Galadriel. Frodo refuses to advise him how to use it. Sam plants a sapling for every tree that was cut down and puts one grain as its rot. He throws the remaining grains into the air and they spread over the Shire. He plants the silver nut in the middle of a field. The next spring the trees grow with unbelievable speed and the silver nut grows a great silver tree. Tobacco and fruit grow the next summer like never before. The beer that year is especially good.

In the spring, on the anniversary of the destruction of the ring, Frodo falls very ill and slowly recovers. Sam marries Rose Cotton and they move in with Bilbo. Merry and Pippin become very popular in the Shire as Frodo slowly begins to drop out of public affairs. In the fall, Frodo falls ill again and he is sick yet again the following spring. Rose has a baby girl even though Sam was hoping to have a son to name after Frodo. Frodo decides to return to Rivendell. He gives the almost finished book to Sam. A few pages are left empty for Sam to complete.

"On September the twenty-first they set out together, Frodo on the pony that had borne him all the way from Minas Tirith, and was now called Strider; and Sam on his beloved Bill. It was a fair golden morning, and Sam did not ask where they were going: he thought he could guess." Book 6, Chapter 9, pg. 343

Sam and Frodo set out and begin to look over the landscape. They remember when they first left so many years ago. Suddenly, there are elves around them. Elrond, Galadriel and Bilbo are among the crowd. Galadriel greets Sam and Bilbo tells Frodo that he is 131 years old. Sam realizes that they are all leaving together. Frodo gently tells him that he cannot come across the sea: he has a family. He promises Sam that his life will be well worth it. They all ride for some time through the night and the next day. They arrive near the edge of the sea and find Gandalf waiting there. As they stand greeting him, Merry and Pippin arrive to bid Frodo farewell. Frodo kisses them goodbye and they board the ship. It slips over the sea. Sam is silent as the three companions ride back to the Shire. He enters his house and takes his children into his arms.

Topic Tracking: Love and Loyalty 12

Topic Tracking: Metamorphoses 13