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Poetry Contest

Richard Plotz

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Poetry Contest

POETRY CONTEST

Reproduced below is the poem "A Elbereth Gilthoniel" and its word-for-word translation as sent by Professor Tolkien. This is the first translation of the poem ever published. We wish to have a poetic version of the translation for publication in the Astron issue. The Tolkien Society of America will pay five dollars to the member submitting the poetic version which, in the opinion of the judges, best captures the flavor of the original Sindarin, at the same time being reasonably correct, poetic English. The Great Judge will be W.H. Auden, who has consented to give some of his time to this venture. All entries should be received at T.S.A. headquarters by 10 Astron (2 April).

A Elbereth Gilthoniel,
silivren penna míriel
o menel aglar elenath!
Na-chaered palan-díriel
o galadhremmin ennorath,
Fanuilos, le linnathon
nef aear, sí nef aearon!

O Elbereth Gilthoniel,
glittering...come slanting down...
sparkling like jewels...
from...heaven...glory...
(of) star-host! To-remote
distance...gazing-far...
from...tree-woven...
Middle-Lands, White-Snow,
to you...I will sing...
on-this-side-of...sea, here...
on this side...of great sea!

A UNIFORM SYSTEM OF TENGWAR FOR ENGLISH by Cory Seidman

Since my being a linguistics major can be traced to a desire three years ago to improve my use of the Elf-letters through a knowledge of phonetics, it is natural that my mode of writing should vary constantly with my growing knowledge of phonemics. At present, I am using a modification of the method of Trager and Smith, which is based on the fact that the "long vowels" of English are actually diphthongs. Trager and Smith recognize nine simple vowels, but I find seven sufficient. These are, in phonemic notation, i, e, æ, ə, u, o, a,

for which I use the tehtar $\dot{i}, \dot{e}, \dot{\text{æ}}, \dot{\text{ə}}, \dot{u}, \dot{o}, \dot{a}$. These have the values of the vowels in bit, bet, bat, but, put, bought, pot, which I would write $\text{p}\dot{\text{p}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{e}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{æ}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{ə}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{u}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{o}}, \text{p}\dot{\text{a}}$ ($\dot{\text{a}}$ is also used in any unstressed syllable: Longbottom, $\text{t}\dot{\text{e}}\text{p}\dot{\text{p}}\dot{\text{m}}$).