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Abstract
Analyzes Smith of Wootton Major as a statement of Tolkien's theories on fantasy writing, particularly on the nature of Faerie, and notes autobiographical elements related to Tolkien's writing career, especially his concern about finishing his legendarium in the time left to him. (Note: the issue gives her first name as Margaret, which is incorrect.)

Additional Keywords
Faerie in Smith of Wootton Major; Tolkien, J.R.R.—Theory of fantasy; Tolkien, J.R.R. Smith of Wootton Major; Tolkien, J.R.R. Smith of Wootton Major—Autobiographical elements; Sarah Beach; Paula DiSante

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Tolkien On Fantasy in Smith of Wootton Major

Margaret Sammons

One of the great frustrations in studying fantasy is simply defining what it is. J.R.R. Tolkien has a quite specific and even unusual definition of fantasy, where it comes from, who receives the gift of the creative imagination, and what effects it has on the receiver. These ideas are presented in three of his lesser read yet significant works, "On Fairy Stories," "Leaf by Niggle," and Smith of Wootton Major. The first two comprise Tree and Leaf, which Tolkien says is primarily about the idea of "sub-creation." The non-fiction essay "On Fairy Stories," delivered as a lecture at St. Andrews College, discusses what fairy tales are, their origin, and function, and C.S. Lewis considered it the best thing of its kind ever written. "Leaf By Niggle" is a brief, allegorical tale about the problems of the fantasy writer as he faces death and is really an autobiographical piece about Tolkien himself and his frustrations in bringing together his his massive mythology. Finally, Smith of Wootton Major, published in 1967, appears on first reading to be a fairly light-hearted yet odd and perplexing little story, and it has been given very little critical attention. But through this simple and pleasant to read tale, Tolkien presents many of the same views about fantasy found in Tree and Leaf, as well as further insights into his own despair about writing. Clyde Kilby interprets it as "primarily about the creative process and the special problems of a fantasy writer like Tolkien." [1]

The story takes place in a little village called Wootton Major, noted for its craftsmen and especially its cooking. Although the town seems very British, the time and location are fairly vague. One of the most important events of the town around which the story centers is the Feast of Good Children, held only once every 24 years for just 24 children. For this great occasion, the Master Cook, a key figure in town, must provide the Great Cake. The Master Cook at the beginning of the story is Rider (who we learn later is Smith's grandfather). Disappearing unexpectedly for a while, he returns merrier and able to sing gay songs; he also brings back a seemingly too young apprentice named Alf. When Rider suddenly leaves again for good, the townspeople panic and appoint a plump, sly, incompetent man named Nokes as Master Cook, instead of Alf. Since Nokes knows little about cooking, he has to sneak lessons from Alf to learn how it is done.

Naturally, when the time comes for the next Feast, Nokes despairs, for he knows nothing about how to make a Great Cake. A fairylke cake, he assumes, must be iced in sugar with a pretty little fairy on top. While searching for some spices to add to the cake, he discovers a tiny, tarnished star. He decides to mix this, along with other trinkets and coins, into the Cake as surprises for the children. But Alf sternly warns him that this is a "Fay" star — from Faerie — and thus should be treated seriously.

On the day of the feast, each child gets a slice of cake; some get trinkets, others none. A quiet boy named Smith unknowingly swallows the magic Fay star which waits quietly within him for several months. Then one spring day he is suddenly awakened to the beauty of the world, begins to sing strange and wonderful songs, and becomes a skilled craftsman. The star is affixed to his forehead. Most important, though, he begins to take several journeys to the realm of Faerie and is privileged to witness many wondrous and marvellous things. Eventually told by the Queen of Faery that the time has come for him to choose a successor to wear the star, Smith reluctantly returns it to the King of Faery, Alf (Elf) himself, who has now become the Master Cook. Smith chooses Tim, Nokes' great-grandson, as the next recipient of the star.

Such a plot seems to lend itself to neither quick
allegorical interpretation nor profound insights into the nature of fantasy. Yet we can begin to understand it better by placing it in context. Just as "Leaf by Niggle" was written during a period of frustration over trying to finish Lord of the Rings, Smith of Wootton Major was composed at the end of January 1965 at a time of despair over the inability to work on the Silmarillion and fear of approaching old age. As Tolkien explained in an unpublished letter to Professor Clyde Kilby, the story evolved quite by accident. [2] At the request of an editor, Tolkien was attempting to write a Preface to a new edition of George MacDonald's The Golden Key, a fairy tale for children. Tolkien said he was not "aswarm an admirer of George MacDonald as C.S. Lewis was" but that he did "think well" of The Golden Key. [3] In the process of trying to explain the term "fantasy" to his readers, Tolkien began to illustrate what he was talking about: "This could be put into a short story like this..." When the result was about ten pages of a first version of Smith of Wootton Major, Tolkien realized that the story "had developed a life of its own, and should be completed as a thing by itself." Apparently, Tolkien also wrote up his own list of characters and said he knew a lot more about them than he actually told about them in his final draft. The original title was "The Great Cake," perhaps indicating a shift in focus from the work of fantasy to the creator himself. Tolkien said although "the title is intended to suggest an early Woodhouse [sic] or story in the B[ys] O[w] P[aper] it is of course nothing of the kind." (Ibid., p. 370.) Since P.G. Wodehouse wrote humorous stories with characters with unusual names living in an escapist world where nothing serious happens, Tolkien seems to imply his serious intentions.

The very simply told and, in part, humorous story, is nevertheless grave and often mysterious in tone and meaning. Humphrey Carpenter says critics received it well but did not note the personal references or uncharacteristic use of allegory. [4] One is, as with "Leaf By Niggle" and Lord of the Rings, tempted to try to associate characters and key symbols with what they "represent." But as Tolkien emphasizes in the Introduction to the Rings trilogy, he detested allegory; similarly, concerning Smith of Wootton Major, he wrote: "There is no allegory in the Faery, which is conceived as having a real extra-normal existence. There is some trace of allegory in the Human part, which seems to me obvious though no reader of critical has yet averted to it. As usual there is no 'religion' in the story; but plainly enough the Master Cook and the Great Hall, etc. are a (somewhat satirical) allegory of the village-church, and village parson: its functions steadily decay and losing all touch with the 'arts,' into mere eating and drinking—the last trace of anything 'other' being left in the children." (Ibid.)

Certainly the Great Cake and Fay Star are symbolic. As the story seems to suggest, the Cake is the created work of fantasy, and the Master Cook is the creative writer who must always try to provide "plentiful and rich fare" for the festival. In "On Fairy Stories" Tolkien also likens fairy story writers to the first Master Cook, apparently travels for a while in Faery and chooses Alf. King of Faery, as his successor. A Good Cake must be created by one who knows what should go inside it, even though a poor baker like Nokes can unwittingly produce an effective Cake. The Cake first must have various spices (devices, techniques). In "On Fairy Stories," Tolkien says that the "colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable details of a story" and the "general purport" which gives life to the plot are key elements.

[5] Most important, though, the "fairy" element is produced not by simply including fairies and elves in the story but by Faery, the region of Faerie itself. This is represented by the existing Faery established story which not only eventually gives off its own light but is reflected in the eyes of those who have it. The Cake must also be novel, not a repetition of other cakes. And it is no bigger than needed; there is "no coming again" for the children. While some children find several trinkets, others get none, "for that is the way luck goes, whether there is a doll with a wand on the cake or not." Perhaps Tolkien is saying that people get various rewards from fantasies but that a true fairy tale can the chosen receive the special, magic gift of the Fay star.

Professor Kilby says Tolkien "staunchly denied" the story has any autobiographical meaning: "It was, he said, originally intended as 'just a story about cake.'" (Kilby, p. 37) Yet in some points of the story, Nokes seems to be a personal reference to Tolkien himself. In his Letters, Tolkien said it was "not intended for children! An old man's book, already weighted with the presage of 'bereavement.'" (Letters, p. 389-90) He also wrote that it was "written with deep emotion, partly drawn from the experience of the bereavement of retirement and of advancing age" because he knew he was getting old and would soon have to pass on the star to someone else. [6] In fact, Smith was the last story Tolkien ever wrote. He had experienced twelve frustrating years turning out a sequel to the popularly received children's story, The Hobbit. The publisher wanted another story about hobbits, yet Tolkien wanted it to be sufficiently new and allow him to include elements of his own grand mythology. At the time he wrote Smith, Tolkien was experiencing similar depression over trying to find time to work on the Silmarillion. Like Tolkien, Nokes worries about making the Great Cake for the next Feast of Good Children. For he has only been appointed Master Cook by the townspeople and knows little about cakes: "although with seven year's practice he could turn out passable cakes and pastries for ordinary occasions, he knew that his Great Cake would be eagerly awaited, and would have to satisfy severe critics. Not only the children. A smaller cake of the same materials and baking had to be provided for those who came to help at the Feast. Also it is with a respectfulness toward the Great Cake should have something novel and surprising about it and not be a mere repetition of the one before."

Nokes, whose name appropriately is an obscure word for "ninnny" or "fool," seems to "represent" the person with typical misconceptions about what a "fairy" and "fairy tale" are; he is also the bad writer. Unsure of what a "fairylike" cake should be like, he decides to cook it with sugar—"that will make it pretty and fairylike." For one, he thought, never grows out of liking sweets, though everyone grows out of fairyies. This notion violently contrasts Tolkien's conviction that fairy stories should not even be associated with children. In fact "if a fairy-story as a kind is worth reading at all it is worthy to be written for and read by adults" (OFS, 45).

As Professor Kilby in his book, Tolkien and the Silmarillion, suggests, Old Nokes may also represent George MacDonald, whom Tolkien frequently criticized and felt had written nothing worthwhile. If this is the case, Tolkien is perhaps saying that MacDonald believes Faerie is merely something sweet and funny and has little notion of what to put inside a great tale. Nokes thought the star "funny" and therefore amusing to children, but his young apprentice, who was actually a
far better cook, insisted it was faerie and a serious business. Nokes' idea of a "faerie" is a glittering and sparkling "little doll on a pinnacle. . . dressed all in white, with a little wand in her hand ending in a tinsel star, and Fairy Queen written in pink icing round her feet." Furthermore, he warns the children that she is a "tricky" and whimsical little creature. These are the typical views of fairies, writes Tolkien in "On Fairy Stories." Whereas even the lexicographer defines fairies as the "fluttering species," "supernatural being of diminutive," "flower- and-butterfly minuteness," it is man who, in contrast, is diminutive. When Smith later meets the Queen of Faerie herself, he ashamedly compares her to Nokes' little fairy on the cake: 'She wore no crown and had no throne. She stood there in her majesty and her glory, and all about her was a great host shimmering and glittering like the stars above; but she was taller than the points of their great spears, and upon her head there burned a white flame.'

When Smith returns home he seems odd to his friends but bears a light a fairy Queen gives him. Kilby believes this may mean one of two things. One is that Tolkien is saying that though "MacDonald knows nothing about the real inside of a cake, nevertheless he may accomplish something by the saccharine figures he presents." The other meaning may be that the imitation fairy Nokes had wanted to stick on the cake inspired Smith to find the true Queen, just as Tolkien was influenced by MacDonald. (Kilby, p. 39)

Naturally, Nokes is also unsure what should go inside a great cake — of what devices, techniques, and elements constitute a true fairy story. Finding most of the old recipe book containing Nokes hunts up some of their spices, only to find them old and musty. But in one compartment of a dusty black box filled with such things, he discovers a small, tarnished star. So he decides to throw it into the cake, along with trinkets and other "pretty little things," to make the children laugh.

But the star, warns Alf, is "Fay — from Faerie — and it is thus the true ingredient he needs to make the Cake a true fairy story. Nokes misunderstands the true purpose and nature of Faerie even though his Cake contains the right elements: "Fantasy thus, too often, remains undeveloped; it is and has been merely for decoration; it remains merely 'fanciful'" (OFS, p. 48). Despite the fact that Nokes doesn't know what he is doing, he nevertheless manages to create a Cake containing the true Fay element. In his Preface to The Golden Key, Tolkien wrote: "Fairy is very powerful. Even the bad author cannot escape it. He probably makes up his tale out of bits of older tales, or things he half remembers, and they may be too strong for him to spoil or disenchant. Someone may meet them for the first time in his silly tale, and catch a glimpse of Faery, and go on to better things." (Carpenter, p. 242)

Unfortunately, Nokes remains unaware of what Faerie is all his life. But like Atkins in "Leaf by Niggle" who cannot stop thinking about the small fragment of Niggle's painting, underestimating the strange star out of his mind: "It was the best cake I ever made. . . a good cake. . . enjoyed and praised. . . It's the little trinket, the star. I cannot make up my mind what became of it." But he remains impervious to Alf's explanation: "Nokes," says Alf, "your knowledge is so great that I have only twice ventured to tell you anything. I told you that the star came from Faery; and I have told you that it went to the smith. You laughed at me. Now at parting I will tell you one thing more. Don't laugh again! You are a vain old fraud, fat, idle, and sly. I did most of your work. Without thanks you learned all that you could from me—except respect for Faery, and a little courtesy." (Is Tolkien again, perhaps, sadly referring to himself here?) But Nokes only sneers at Alf, half expecting something faerie to happen. He has little time for the rebuke. Even after Alf reveals himself as King of Faerie and sends him such disturbing dreams that he becomes gaunt, Nokes believes it all a nonsensical, silly little dream: "Why, he hadn't no wand. And if you stop eating you grow thinner. That's natural. Stands to reason. There ain't no magic in it."

What happened to the star? It disappears, eaten unknowingly by Smith. And it "remained with him, tucked away in some place where it could not be felt, for it was what it was intended to do," Kilby says the unconscious swallowing of the star "suggests the manner in which creativity rises in seemingly accidental fashion without precedent." (Kilby, p. 38) For the gift of fantasy is not revealed until the time is right, several months later. Then one spring day, "the world seemed quiet and expectant. A little breeze, cool and fragrant, stirred the waking trees. Then the dawn came, and far away he heard the dawn-song of the birds beginning, grew and rose as it came towards him, until it rushed over him... like a wave." His gift is now awakened, and with the star affixed to his forehead, Smith immediately begins to show the effects of Faerie. Like his grandfather, the first Master Cook who had returned greatly changed from Faerie, merrier and able to sing gay songs, Smith too begins to sing stange words in a high, clear voice. In fact, his voice becomes so increasingly beautiful that people, appreciative of his gift, come not only to listen to him, but to sing with him. The next recipient of the star, shows the same effects. With a new light in his eyes, the plump, clumsy little boy begins to laugh, become merry, and sing softly to himself. "Then he got up and began to dance all alone with an odd grace that he had never shown before."

Smith's workmanship changes, too. The useful and practical objects he makes — tools, pots and pans, horseshoes and bolts — are now only durable but graceful and pleasing to behold. Kilby believes the autobiography is "unmistakable," comparing the useful things Smith makes with Tolkien's scholarship. Smith also creates delicate and beautiful things, both light and wonderful yet strong as iron. Thus Faerie takes hold of even the most simple and practical objects and gives them a new beauty. "Fantasy," writes Tolkien, "is made out of the Primary World, but a good craftsman loves his material, and has a knowledge and feeling for clay, stone and wood which only the art of making can give. By the forging of Gran cold iron was revealed; by the making of Pegasus horses were enabled; in the Trees of the Sun and Moon root and stock, flower and fruit are manifested in glory" (OFS, p. 59).

Most important, Smith becomes acquainted with Faerie itself, just as Tolkien became called to the world of Middle Earth and gave up the seemingly "practical" world of scholarship for a grand adventure. Tolkien's fiction was looked upon skeptically by many of his colleagues: "The beauty and terror seen by Smith on his longer journeys clearly represent. . . Tolkien's particular birth into the world of myth and his own 'calling' to the myth of Middle-earth, a calling which is intensified by visits to elfish country and the treebearing 'leaves and flowers and fruits uncounted.'" (Ibid.) This vision is one aspect of the story, Tolkien emphasizes, which is not allegorical but has a 'real
Men, when we are enchanted" (OFS, 9). Smith discovers water and stone, wine and bread, and ourselves, mortal men, when we are enchanted. He sees the immeasurable depths of a cliff; the air there is so lucid that he can "see the red tongues of birds as they sing on the trees on the far side of the valley;" he even sees a new kind of green. When he returns from Faerie for the last time, ready to pass on some of the secrets, the Great Hall appears to him in a totally new light. Then as he removes the star from his forehead, he cries, "I cannot see clearly anymore; yet his sight does return. Though he is no longer possessor of the creative imagination, his perspective remains affected, and he is able to gaze at the beauty of the luminous Moon and Even-star.

Another result of fantasy, says Tolkien, is fulfillment of our desire to commune with other living things. Smith is able to speak "without words" to the Queen, "learning many things in her thought." And when he dances with her, he is able to experience "swiftness" and "power" and "joy." Smith, says the Queen, was granted entrance to Faerie because he had a desire or, as C.S. Lewis calls it, Sehnsucht, longing for something "other." After his first taste of the new realm, Smith is unable to forsake Faerie and has a desire to "go deep into the land."

So Faerie is a very real place with real effects on one who enters it. The fantasy writer, Tolkien suggests, creates a Secondary World which your mind can enter, hopefully a self-consistent world with its own laws. He calls this artistic activity "sub-creation," the most nearly pure form of art. In his poem "Mythopoeia," Tolkien writes:

...Although now long estranged, Man is not wholly lost nor wholly changed. Disgraced he may be, yet is not de-throned, And keeps the rings of lordship once he owned: Man, Sub-creator, the refracted Light through whom is splintered from a single White to many hues, and endlessly combined in living shapes that move from mind to mind. Though all the cunnings of the world we filled with Elves and Goblins, though we dared to build Gods and their houses out of dark light, and sowed the seed of dragons—twas our right (used or misused). That right has not decayed: we make still by the law in which we're made. (OFS, 54)

Man creates because he is made in the image of the Creator and because there is a part of him which is unsatisfied by the rational, natural world. He uses materials from our world, drawing on "reality," but expresses truths that cannot be expressed or explained in any other way. According to Tolkien, the Secondary World of fantasy, perceived and created by the imagination, is the world of "fact" in space and time. In his biography of Tolkien, Humphrey Carpenter notes that Tolkien treated the ideas and events in Lord of the Rings and The Silmarillion not as his own personal story but as actual history.

Tolkien holds an almost Platonic view of reality, symbolized in Tree and Leaf by the Tree, but to him reality is dynamic and we can add to it. In "Leaf By Niggle," Niggle’s life work is a Great Painting of a tree; but because he concentrates on individual leaves, he never completes the picture. Again, Tolkien is referring to the creation of his approaching old age and his tendency as a perfectionist to rework individual stories and details within his mythology, Tolkien feared the work would never be finished. After Niggle dies, he goes to an afterworld where, to his amazement, he sees his Tree, now alive and completed: "Before him stood the Tree, his Tree, finished..."
All the leaves he had ever laboured at were there, as he had imagined them rather than as he had made them; there were others that had only budded in his mind, and many that might have budded, if only he had had time" (LBN, 103–4). In "On Fairy Stories," Tolkien explains that this Tree is Truth itself, and each sub-creator can reveal parts of this Tree in his own work: "It is easy for the student to feel that with all his labour he is collecting only a few leaves, many of them now torn or decayed, from the countless foliage of the Tree of Tales, with which the Forest of Days is carpeted. It seems vain to add to the litter. Who can design a new leaf? The patterns from bud to unfolding, and the colours from spring to autumn were all discovered by men long ago. But that is not true... Each leaf, of many that might have budded, if only he had had time" (OFS, 56).

During his journeys through Faerie, Smith spends hours studying just one tree or one flower, pieces of the Pattern itself. Then one day he discovers the King’s Tree, arising from a shadow: "its light was like the sun at noon; and it bore at once leaves and flowers and fruits uncounted, and not one was the same as any other that grew on the Tree." Although Smith searches for the Tree ever after with much suffering, he never sees it again. Through fantasy, then, we can gain a "sudden glimpse of the underlying reality or truth" of things (OFS, 71). Just as Niggle's painting of the Tree is only a "glimpse," the Queen of Faerie consoles Smith that even a pretty little fairy on a cake is better than no idea of Faerie: "Better a little doll, maybe, than no memory of Faery at all. For some the only glimpse. For some the awaking."

Smith is fortunate in being able, for a short while, to experience both worlds. For only a brief moment the two worlds are actually in union: "he seemed to be both in the World and in Faery, and also outside them and surveying them, so that he was at once in bereavement, and in ownership, and in peace." In what Professor Kilby feels is a very personal reference, when Smith returns home, even his son (Christopher Tolkien?) recognizes that his father has experienced Truth itself. As he stands by the fire, Smith's shadow looms up in the darkness "you look like a giant, Dad," Ned remarks. Later, Ned perceives the significance of this symbol: "'Father,' he said, 'Do you remember the day when you came back with the Flower? And I said that you looked like a giant by your shadow. Your shadow was the truth.'" Smith can impart to his son an important kind of knowledge, even after he is forced to relinquish the star: "There is much you can teach me yet," Ned realized. "And I do not mean only the working of iron." It is thus appropriate that "Wooton" most likely means "town where one knows." 7

Tolkien holds and almost Wordsworthian view of man—that, as children, we were still near to the eternal state of innocence from which we came but, as adults, we have lost it. We forget. Even Nokes, in reading recipes of past cooks, finds things in them that "he had forgotten and now had no time to get." When Smith's creativity is first awakened in him, the music of the birds sweeping over him like a wave "reminds him of Faery, and he begins to sing "strange words that he seemed to know by heart." During his journeys in Faery, he witnesses things of "both beauty and terror that he could not clearly remember or report to his friends, though he knew they remained in his mind as wonders and mysteries that he often recalled." He brings back delicate bells from Faery, and even his son remarks, "Dad, there is a scent in the bells: a scent that reminds me of, reminds me, well, of something I've forgotten." I think Tolkien is saying that we too can know Faery if we only remember: "There was a village once, not very long ago for those with long memories."

Only some receive the gift of creative imagination, though: "For some the only glimpse. For some the awakening." And often, the person who receives the star is not the obvious choice. Smith was quiet and slow; Tim, Smith's successor, is not only fat and clumsy, but Nokes' great-grandson! The 24 children who attend the very rarely occurring festival come almost by chance of birthday, and "some who deserved to be asked were overlooked, and some who did not were invited by mistake." Rider, Smith, Tim, Alf, and Harper are all chosen. Tolkien also makes it clear that the star is a Gift, lent only to those who truly need it. Remaining tucked away, unnoticed and unfelt in Smith, it is activated only when the time is ripe; and when the time comes, Smith must pass it on. Similarly, Smith brings back a flower from Faerie, kept in a locked casket. Although his family could open the box to gaze at this reminder of Faerie, it closed on its own, for "the time of its shutting was not theirs to choose."

It is certainly significant, then, as Paul Kocher notes, that time is carefully recorded all through the story. Smith is 57 years old when he is told that it is time for him to give up the star (two 24 year apart feasts have passed; he was nine years old when he received it). Tolkien, too, was 57 when he completed Lord of the Rings in 1949 and sadly notes that a Master Cook seldom lasted long enough to make a second Great Cake. Alf, too, goes away at the end of the story, but most of the townpeople are glad: "they had had him for a very long time and were not sorry to have a change." So it is not difficult to see in this haunting little story not only Tolkien's explanation of the meaning and significance of fantasy and the preciousness of the gift of the creative artist, but perhaps his own sad farewell to his art.

Continued on page 37
much like the Holy Spirit which works in the New Testament miracles underlying the whole Christian faith. (Biblical references will be to the Douay-Confraternity version.)

The Descent of the Holy Spirit in The Acts of the Apostles 2:4 describes how the Holy Spirit appears to human eyes. At Pentecost the apostles of Jesus who, after His death, are all gathered in the upper room which is their meeting place, hear "a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind blowing... And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire which settled upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues, even as the Holy spirit prompted them to speak." Its effect is to inspire them to become missionaries of the Christian message, whose language will be understood throughout the world even by hearers who do not understand the Hebrew tongue.

Moreover, that central event, the incarnation of Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mary, it is related by St. Matthew's Gospel 1:18-20 as follows: "When Mary his mother had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit, But Joseph her husband was minded to put her away privately... But behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Joseph, son of David, to take to thee Mary thy wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.'"

In St. Luke's Gospel 1:35: "And the angel answered and said to her: 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God.'"

This attribution of "parted tongues of fire" and the begetting of Jesus in Mary's womb to the Holy Spirit of Christianity was certainly not lost upon Tolkien. His Catholicism required a close knowledge of all these Biblical passages. And when he came to write his account of the Music of the Ainur, although his mythological approach to the Creation prevented him from naming the Secret Fire and the Flame Imperishable as equivalents of the Holy Spirit, his unspoken intent to do so is plain enough. He derived them from his Christian faith.

The Profession of Faith spoken aloud by the people at every Catholic Mass, after expressing belief in God the Father and in his Son, goes on to declare belief in the Holy Spirit, "the Lord and Giver of Life" (Dominum et vivificantem in the Latin Mass used in Tolkien's youth). In the Music of the Ainur, the Secret Fire and the Flame Imperishable, which are really one and the same, are always necessary accompaniments to Eru's giving of life.

Tolkien on Fantasy, continued from page 7

NOTES
1 Clyde S. Kilby, Tolkien and the Silmarillion (Wheaton, Illinois: Harold Shaw, 1976), p. 37. I would like to acknowledge the help of Professor Kilby, who provided me with his notes on Smith. Professor Kilby spent several months helping Tolkien prepare The Silmarillion and read the then unpublished draft of Smith, recording his comments of the story at that time. Paul Kocker's comments on Smith in Master of Middle Earth (N.Y.:Ballantine, 1972), pp. 184-93, are also very enlightening, especially his discussion of the Tree symbol.
5 "On Fairy Stories," The Tolkien Reader (N.Y.:Ballantine, 1966), pp. 18-19. All future references to "On Fairy Stories" (OFS) and "Leaf By Niggle" (LYN) will be noted in the text.
6 Letter to Prof. Kilby, October 1967.
7 "Hoot" is probably derived from the archaic English form of the verb "wit," or "to know," as in the Witan Council.

Arwen, Shadow Bride, continued from page 25

endured the painful separation from her father, she knows that he still lives; and she had, at that time, the comfort of Aragorn. Arwen does not know how to endure the separation of Aragorn because the fate of men is "uncertain" and she cannot know if her sacrifice of immortality will really lead to a reunion beyond death.

At the end she despairingly calls him by his mother's name for him -- Estel, which means "hope." She calls for hope and is given no answer, no assurance or reassurance. For Hope must come from within, a hard won lesson of personal faith, learned by daring and risking. You cannot truly know what you can do -- until you do it. Hope for future achievement comes from having, at some past time, achieved, as Luthien learned in the exercise of her power. Having dared the dungeons of Thangorodrim, why lose hope in the halls of Mandos?

Arwen's story is a cautionary tale against passivity. Regardless of how strong the bonds of societally assigned roles and historical circumstances or of parental or the beloved's affection or expectations, we are not allowed to have the kingdom of personal autonomy handed onto our laps. The price of accepting this gift unearned may be higher than we can bear.

NOTES
３ op.cit. The Return of the King, p.428.