

Tales from the Perilous Realm

By J.R.R. Tolkien

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The definitive collection of Tolkien's classic "fairie" tales, in the vein of The Hobbit, illustrated by Oscar winner Alan Lee

Never before published in a single volume, Tolkien's four novellas (Farmer Giles of Ham, Leaf by Niggle, Smith of Wootton Major, and Roverandom) and one book of poems (The Adventures of Tom Bombadil) are gathered together for the first time, in a fully illustrated volume. This new, definitive collection of works -- which had appeared separately, in various formats, between 1949 and 1998 -- comes with a brand-new foreword and endmatter, and with a series of detailed pencil illustrations by Alan Lee, in the style of his other award-winning Tolkien work, most recently in The Children of Húrin.

The book is the perfect opportunity for fans of Middle-earth to enjoy some of Tolkien's often overlooked yet most creative storytelling. With dragons and sand sorcerers, sea monsters and hobbits, knights and dwarves, this collection contains all the classic elements for Tolkien buffs of all ages.

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Editorial Review

Review
Farmer Giles of Ham: 'A fabulous tale of the days when giants and dragons walked the kingdom' Sunday Times Leaf by Niggle: 'A haunting and successful demonstration of the qualities of faerie' New York Times The Adventures of Tom Bombadil: 'Something close to genius' The Listener Smith of Wootton Major: 'Whoever reads it at eight will no doubt still be going back to it at eighty' New Statesman

About the Author

ALAN LEE was born in England in 1947. Inspired by Tolkien's work to pursue his chosen path as an artist of the mythic and fantastic, he has illustrated a wide range of books including *Faeries, The Mabinogion, Castles, Merlin Dreams,* the centenary edition of *The Lord of the Rings,* and *The Hobbit.* He is a winner of the Carnegie Medal for his illustrated edition of *The Illiad.*

J.R.R. TOLKIEN (1892–1973) is the creator of Middle-earth and author of such classic and extraordinary works of fiction as *The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings,* and *The Silmarillion*. His books have been translated into more than fifty languages and have sold many millions of copies worldwide.

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

J.R.R. Tolkien, from *On Fairy-Stories,* a lecture given on 8 March 1939. The full text is reproduced at the end of this book.

• • •

Once upon a time there was a little dog, and his name was Rover. He was very small, and very young, or he would have known better; and he was very happy playing in the garden in the sunshine with a yellow ball, or he would never have done what he did.

Not every old man with ragged trousers is a bad old man: some are bone-and-bottle men, and have little dogs of their own; and some are gardeners; and a few, a very few, are wizards prowling round on a holiday looking for something to do. This one was a wizard, the one that now walked into the story. He came wandering up the gardenpath in a ragged old coat, with an old pipe in his mouth, and an old green hat on his head. If Rover had not been so busy barking at the ball, he might have noticed the blue feather stuck in the back of the green hat, and then he would have suspected that the man was a wizard, as any other sensible little dog would; but he never saw the feather at all.

When the old man stooped down and picked up the ball – he was thinking of turning it into an orange, or even a bone or a piece of meat for Rover – Rover growled, and said:

‘Put it down!’ Without ever a ‘please’.

Of course the wizard, being a wizard, understood perfectly, and he answered back again:

'Be quiet, silly!' Without ever a 'please'.

Then he put the ball in his pocket, just to tease the dog, and turned away. I am sorry to say that Rover immediately bit his trousers, and tore out quite a piece. Perhaps he also tore out a piece of the wizard. Anyway the old man suddenly turned round very angry and shouted:

'Idiot! Go and be a toy!'

After that the most peculiar things began to happen. Rover was only a little dog to begin with, but he suddenly felt very much smaller. The grass seemed to grow monstrously tall and wave far above his head; and a long way away through the grass, like the sun rising through the trees of a forest, he could see the huge yellow ball, where the wizard had thrown it down again. He heard the gate click as the old man went out, but he could not see him. He tried to bark, but only a little tiny noise came out, too small for ordinary people to hear; and I don't suppose even a dog would have noticed it.

So small had he become that I am sure, if a cat had come along just then, she would have thought Rover was a mouse, and would have eaten him. Tinker would. Tinker was the large black cat that lived in the same house.

At the very thought of Tinker, Rover began to feel thoroughly frightened; but cats were soon put right out of his mind. The garden about him suddenly vanished, and Rover felt himself whisked off, he didn't know where. When the rush was over, he found he was in the dark, lying against a lot of hard things; and there he lay, in a stuffy box by the feel of it, very uncomfortably for a long while. He had nothing to eat or drink; but worst of all, he found he could not move. At first he thought this was because he was packed so tight, but afterwards he discovered that in the daytime he could only move very little, and with a great effort, and then only when no one was looking. Only after midnight could he walk and wag his tail, and a bit stiffly at that. He had become a toy. And because he had not said 'please' to the wizard, now all day long he had to sit up and beg. He was fixed like that.

After what seemed a very long, dark time he tried once more to bark loud enough to make people hear. Then he tried to bite the other things in the box with him, stupid little toy animals, really only made of wood or lead, not enchanted real dogs like Rover. But it was no good; he could not bark or bite.

Suddenly someone came and took off the lid of the box, and let in the light.

'We had better put a few of these animals in the window this morning, Harry,' said a voice, and a hand came into the box. 'Where did this one come from?' said the voice, as the hand took hold of Rover. 'I don't remember seeing this one before. It's no business in the threepenny box, I'm sure. Did you ever see anything so real-looking? Look at its fur and its eyes!'

'Mark him sixpence,' said Harry, 'and put him in the front of the window!'

Users Review

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