



The Lord of the Rings

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In THE LORD OF THE RINGS, the world that Tolkien has created is rich and real, complete with civilizations of men, orcs, trolls, dwarfs, elves, and hobbits, all fully imagined, with customs, traditions, and languages of their own. Full of quiet humor and high moral seriousness, the trilogy appeals equally to young and old, to aficionados of fantasy and serious students of literature.

In Part 1, THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, the hobbit Frodo, his servant Sam, and his companions Merry and Pippin set out on the first stage of the quest to destroy the ring. They are joined by the wizard Gandalf and a mysterious man called Strider, later revealed as Aragorn, King of Gondor; these two are the most formidable of the heroes leagued against Sauron. Along the way they are hounded by the Black Riders, Sauron's agents, and the party splits up.

Part 2, THE TWO TOWERS, tells of the opening of the War of the Rings, in which the forces of Gondor defeat Saruman, the traitor wizard and minion of Sauron. It goes on to recount the journey of Frodo and Sam into Mordor, Sauron's black and blighted kingdom.

Part 3, THE RETURN OF THE KING, recounts the defeat of Sauron and the triumph of Aragorn, made possible by the fulfillment of Frodo's quest. THE LORD OF THE RINGS, which can be enjoyed both as an adventure story and as a profound exploration of the nature of good and evil, is a deeply rewarding work that invites rereading.

Additional Information

For an analysis of the meaning of Tolkien's works, see T. A. Shippey's *The Road to Middle-Earth* (1992) or Paul H. Kocher's *Master of Middle-earth*.

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