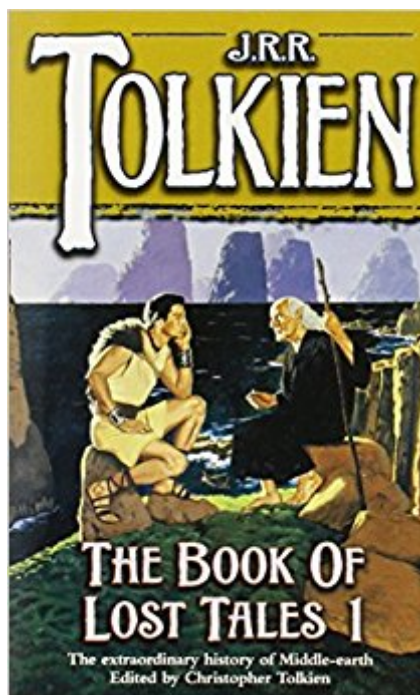


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The Book Of Lost Tales 1(The History Of Middle-Earth, Vol. 1)



Synopsis

THE BOOK OF LOST TALES, I, stands at the beginning of the entire conception of Middle-earth and Valinor. Here is the whole, glorious history of Middle-earth that J.R.R. Tolkien brought to mythic and dramatic life with his classic fantasy novels of the Ring Cycle.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It takes great strength of mind to be able to stick through this book, but if you're a true Tolkien fan, you'll love every minute of it. The Book of Lost Tales Part I tells the story of Eriol, a great mariner who finds his way to the lost island of Tol Eressëa, The Lonely Isle, where dwell a lost tribe of Elves. He finds himself in the company of Lindo and Vairë, who grant him shelter. He becomes a part of their lives, eagerly drinking in the stories they have to tell him of the origin of the world, and the ancient times, of Valinor, the origin of evil, the great works and deeds of the gods, and the creation of the world as it exists now. For readers of the Silmarillion, many of the stories are familiar. They are told, however, in greater detail than that which is set down in the Silmarillion, and contain several interesting literary differences. (Nearly all of which are expounded on by Christopher Tolkien, who is, of course, the son of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.) Some are as small as name changes, some are opposing details about the events surrounding a character. (Such as Dwarves were originally an evil race by nature, and Beren was an ELF!) Christopher Tolkien pored through the scribbles and snatches that his father composed in his lifetime, and somehow managed to put it all together in this published form. He even offers commentary on each tale once it is finished. I often found that these commentaries are of little interest; I enjoyed the tales themselves more. Still,

there are unique facts to be gleaned, such as such-and-such a page containing differences between this tale and that that Tolkien wrote, and a few interesting facts about his father. The book contains the very beginning of Middle-Earth, as told to Eriol by Lindo.

"The Book of Lost Tales, Part 1" is the first of two volumes containing the very first versions J.R.R. Tolkien wrote of the legends that ultimately formed "The Silmarillion". He began writing these stories during World War I, and his quest for perfection in their form and presentation was so rigorous that he was unable to publish any version of "The Silmarillion" before his death in 1973. His son Christopher edited "The Silmarillion" for publication and followed it up with thirteen more volumes of his father's writings on Middle-earth and Valinor: "Unfinished Tales" and the mammoth twelve-volume series "The History of Middle-earth," of which "The Book of Lost Tales" comprises the first two volumes. "The Silmarillion" itself fails to appeal to many readers of "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings," and the thirteen tomes that followed it will have even less appeal to such readers (except perhaps for the four volumes that show how Tolkien went about writing LotR). However, for Tolkien aficionados the History series (affectionately abbreviated HoME) is essential reading, and "The Book of Lost Tales, Part 1" is not only its beginning but one of its most important volumes. In it are found versions of the early stories of "The Silmarillion" (the birth of the Two Trees, the coming of the Elves to Valinor, the flight of the Noldoli or Gnomes, later renamed the Noldor by Tolkien, into exile, and the making of the Sun and Moon) which are far fuller than any later versions written by Tolkien, but the plots and nomenclature of which are still far from evolving into their final forms. Reading these stories is necessary to gain a full appreciation of the beauty of Valinor and of the Trees, the Elves' longing for which underlies all of Tolkien's work.

It takes great strength of mind to be able to stick through this book, but if you're a true Tolkien fan, you'll love every minute of it. The Book of Lost Tales Part II continues the story of Eriol, a great mariner who finds his way to the lost island of Tol Eressëa, The Lonely Isle, where dwell a lost tribe of Elves. He continues to learn the stories of the ancient world they have to tell him, of the great heroes of the world after its corruption by the Dark Lord Melkor. For readers of the Silmarillion, many of the stories are familiar. They are told, however, in greater detail than that which is set down in the Silmarillion, and contain several interesting literary differences. (Nearly all of which are expounded on by Christopher Tolkien, who is, of course, the son of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.) Some are as small as name changes, some are opposing details about the events surrounding a character. I enjoyed reading this book, partly because I am a Tolkien aficionado, and partly because

it satisfies the fantasy itch in a lot of people, myself included. The Book of Tales 2 begins (sort of) where Book 1 left off. The stories that the editor, Christopher Tolkien sets forth are less whole and complete than those found in book 1, but this is by no means the fault of Christopher Tolkien. His father, beloved author and scholar J.R.R. Tolkien was perfecting and re-shaping these tales to his death in 1973. Nonetheless, the stories are enjoyable to read. In Book 2, we read such stories as the Tale of TinÃ©viel (Or, LÃ©thien) the elf-maiden who forsook her immortal life for the love of a mortal man, Beren, much as the more popular union between Arwen and Aragorn in the Lord of the Rings books themselves.

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