

December 24, 2019

Dear Mr. Tolkien;

Merry Christmas

You hold in your hands a gift. It was originally a gift from your grandfather to the world: the gift of Middle-earth. Now it has come full circle. This is my gift to you.

Of particular interest will be two undiscovered poems by JRR Tolkien. The first can be found on page 218. I imagine when reading it, it will be obvious where it came from. It is 100% the words of your grandfather; "The Lay Of Númenor."

The second consists of roughly equal contributions between JRR Tolkien and myself. It is at the end of the book on page 370-372, "The Lay Of The Two Trees."

When I first started writing, I had no plan nor any real knowledge of what I was getting myself into. I only knew that I loved this world and it seemed to me the Holy Grail of fantasy adventure; the thing that everyone wanted someone to do: to write the sequel to The Lord Of The Rings.

So that's what I did. I have spent many, many years living in this world and breathing life into these characters. Sharing their journeys. As an author, you know what that is like.

But now that it's written, I'm not sure what to do with it. My goals are to protect and promote the Estate. If I, and all of my beta-readers, did not unanimously agree that these stories distinguish themselves as a credit to the literary legacy of JRR Tolkien, I wouldn't be offering them to you.

As a fellow writer, I imagine you might understand my predicament. There are doubtless very few people alive outside of the Estate and your collaborators who have spent so much time in this world and who know it as well as I do. These characters are like real people to me. Almost like my children. And like children, I want them to live; to see them make their way out into the world, succeed, be happy, and fulfill their purpose. I cannot conceive of deleting this manuscript.

I have zero interest in infringing on your rights; the rights of the Estate. I do not want any money from you. Quite the opposite, I am trying to put a ridiculous amount of money in your pockets. I am also offering the opportunity for a 'do over:' a once in a lifetime opportunity for the Estate to be on the ground floor of a whole new generation of characters and stories, coming to life across a whole new slew of entertainment platforms, and reaching an even wider global audience.

Does giving up ownership in these stories and characters I have labored over for years seem improbable? Of course. But I wrote them for your grandfather, to honor his legacy, and for the fans, like myself, who have spent years yearning; waiting our whole lives for these stories.

I know it is conceivable to change all the names and publish these books by myself as something else. To me, that feels like taking your child and putting them into a Witness Protection program, alone. It almost feels like a death. I do not have it in me to do that. Not to these characters I love.

But you can.

If you decide you do not want these amazing new stories and histories to be part of the Legendarium, not even as an expanded universe alternate future, then they won't be. This is your right. But I can't do that for you. I'm too heavily invested, as a fan, artist, creator; like a parent.

I will accept your decision, whatever it is. I only ask that you make a truly right and informed decision. I have made many sacrifices and spent many, many years bringing these characters to life in a loving homage, and I am offering them to you. I think it is fair to ask you to spend a few days reading what I've done and giving these wonderful characters, these heroes, the same fair and careful consideration you would give, have given, even to the most heinous of criminals.

That's not asking a lot.

When the expanded Middle-earth universe of the Amazon TV series has run its course, a new set of books that stays true to JRR Tolkien's vision would engage a whole new generation of readers. It would also revitalize interest in the original books. This would keep Middle-earth relevant and in the forefront of the public consciousness and conversation for decades to come.

Forgive me a moment of healthy pride in the craft and workmanship of what I have labored over: I truly cannot imagine, anyone else alive in the world who is capable of taking the foundation your grandfather wrote and expanding upon it as beautifully and imaginatively as I have. Not the film and cartoon adaptations; MMORPG's, video and board games, licensed and unlicensed; RPG's and merch. But again, that determination and decision is not up to me. It's up to you.

The proof of whether or not I have succeed is in your hands.

If, after reading this manuscript, it is your sincere and honest opinion that these characters and stories have no place in any version of Middle-earth, I accept the wisdom of your judgement.

But if, as I do, you see these imaginative tales as the next generation of thrilling adventures the world is desperately waiting for and whole-heartedly deserves, then an exciting new chapter in the history of Middle-earth lies opening before you, with the wonder of everything this entails.

Sincerely,

Demetrious