

The Children of Hurin

By J.R.R. Tolkien

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The large print edition of the epic tale of The Children of Hurin will reunite fans of The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings with Elves, dragons, Dwarves and Orcs, and the rich landscape and characters unique to Tolkien. Includes a colour frontispiece, fold-out map and full-colour plate section of all of Alan Lee's paintings. There are tales of Middle-earth from times long before The Lord of the Rings, and the story told in this book is set in the great country that lay beyond the Grey Havens in the West: lands where Treebeard once walked, but which were drowned in the great cataclysm that ended the First Age of the World. In that remote time Morgoth, the first Dark Lord, dwelt in the vast fortress of Angband, the Hells of Iron, in the North; and the tragedy of Turin and his sister Nienor unfolded within the shadow of the fear of Angband and the war waged by Morgoth against the lands and secret cities of the Elves. Their brief and passionate lives were dominated by the elemental hatred that Morgoth bore them as the children of Hurin, the man who had dared to defy and to scorn him to his face. Against them he sent his most formidable servant, Glaurung, a powerful spirit in the form of a huge wingless dragon of fire. Into this story of brutal conquest and flight, of forest hiding-places and pursuit, of resistance with lessening hope, the Dark Lord and the Dragon enter in direly articulate form. Sardonic and mocking, Glaurung manipulated the fates of Turin and Nienor by lies of diabolic cunning and guile, and the curse of Morgoth was fulfilled. The earliest versions of this story by J.R.R. Tolkien go back to the end of the First World War and the years that followed; but long afterwards, when The Lord of the Rings was finished, he wrote it anew and greatly enlarged it in complexities of motive and character: it became the dominant story in his later work on Middle-earth. But he could not bring it to a final and finished form. In this book Christopher Tolkien has constructed, after long study of the manuscripts, a coherent narrative without any editorial invention.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The first complete book by J.R.R. Tolkien in three decades--since the publication of *The Silmarillion* in 1977--*The Children of Húrin* reunites fans of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* with Elves and Men, dragons and Dwarves, Eagles and Orcs. Presented for the first time as a complete, standalone story, this stirring narrative will appeal to casual fans and expert readers alike, returning them to the rich landscape and characters unique to Tolkien.

Adam Tolkien on *The Children of Húrin*

How did a lifetime of stories become *The Children of Húrin*? In an essay on the making of the book, Adam Tolkien, grandson of J.R.R. Tolkien (and French translator of his *History of Middle-earth*), explains that the Húrin legends made up the third "Great Tale" of his grandfather's Middle-earth writing, and he describes how his father, Christopher Tolkien, painstakingly collected the pieces of the legend into a complete story told only in the words of J.R.R. Tolkien. "For anyone who has read *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*," he writes, *The Children of Húrin* "allows them to take a step back into a larger world, an ancient land of heroes and vagabonds, honour and jeopardy, hope and tragedy."



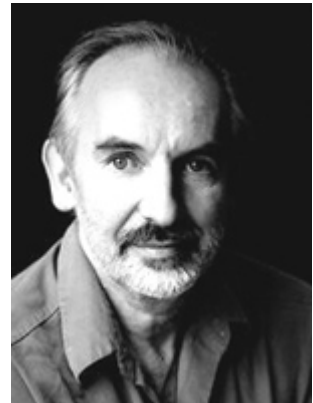
A Look Inside the Book

This first edition of *The Children of Húrin* is illustrated by Alan Lee, who was already well-known for his Tolkien illustrations in previous editions (see our Tolkien Store for more) as well as his classic collaboration with Brian Froud, *Faeries*, and his Kate Greenaway Medal-winning *Black Ships Before Troy*, before his Oscar-winning work as conceptual designer for Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy brought him even greater acclaim. Here's a quick glimpse of two of Lee's interior illustrations for *The Children of Húrin*. (Click on each to see larger images.)



Questions for Alan Lee

We had the chance to ask Alan Lee a few questions about his illustrative collaboration with the world imagined by J.R.R. Tolkien:



Amazon.com: How much of a treat was it to get first crack at depicting entirely new characters rather than ones who had been interpreted many times before? Was there one who particularly captured your imagination?

Lee: Although it was a great honor to illustrate *The Children of Húrin*, the characters and the main elements of the story line are familiar to those who have read *The Silmarillion* and *Unfinished Tales*, and these narratives have inspired quite a few illustrators. Ted Nasmith has illustrated *The Silmarillion* and touched on some of the same characters and landscapes. This was the first time that I ventured into the First Age; while working on *The Lord of the Rings* books and films--and *The Hobbit*--I've had to refer back to events in Middle-earth history but not really depict them.

I'm drawn to characters who bear similarities to the protagonists in myths and legends; these correspondences add layers and shades of meaning, and most of the characters in this story have those archetypal qualities. However, I prefer not to get too close to the characters because the author is delineating them much more carefully than I can, and I'm wary of interfering with the pictures that the text is creating in the reader's mind.

Amazon.com: The Húrin story has been described as darker than some of Tolkien's other work. What mood did you try to set with your illustrations?

Lee: It is a tragic story, but the darkness is offset by the light and beauty of Tolkien's elegiac writing. In the illustrations I tried to show some of the fragile beauty of the landscapes and create an atmosphere that would enhance the sense of foreboding and impending loss. I try to get the setting to tell its part in the story, as evidence of what happened there in the past and as a hint at what is going to occur. My usual scarred and broken trees came in handy.

Amazon.com: You were a conceptual designer (and won an Oscar) for Peter Jackson's film trilogy of *The Lord of the Rings*, which I think we can safely say had a bit of success. How does designing for the screen compare to designing for the page?

Lee: They both have their share of joys and frustrations. It was great to be part of a huge film collaboration and play a small part in something quite magical and monumental; I will always treasure that experience. Film is attractive because I enjoy sketching and coming up with ideas more than producing highly finished artwork, and it's great having several hundred other people lending a hand! But books--as long as they don't get moldy from being left in an empty studio for six years--have their own special quality. I hope that I can continue doing both.

Amazon.com: Of all fiction genres, fantasy seems to have the strongest tradition of illustration. Why do you think that is? Who are some of your favorite illustrators?

Lee: A lot of excellent illustrators are working at the moment--especially in fantasy and children's books. It is exciting also to see graphic artists such as Dave McKean, in his film *MirrorMask*, moving between different media. I also greatly admire the more traditional work of Gennady Spirin and Roberto Innocenti. Kinuko Craft, John Jude Palencar, John Howe, Charles Vess, Brian Froud ... I'll stop there, as the list would get too long. But--in a fit of pride and justified nepotism--I'll add my daughter, Virginia Lee, to the list. Her first illustrated children's book, *The Frog Bride* [coming out in the U.K. in September], will be lovely.

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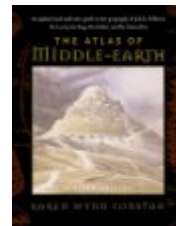
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The Atlas of Middle Earth

From Publishers Weekly

Tolkien fans are sure to treasure this tale of Middle-earth's First Age, which appeared in incomplete forms in the posthumously published *The Silmarillion* and *Unfinished Tales*. Those earlier books, also edited by Tolkien's son, Christopher, only hinted at the depth and power of the tragic story of Túrin and Niënor, the children of Húrin, the lord of Dor-lómin, who achieved renown for having confronted Morgoth, who was the master of Sauron, the manifestation of evil in the *Lord of the Rings*. The lengthy and fatiguing battle against Morgoth forms the backdrop for the moving account of the life of Húrin's eldest son, Túrin, a valiant but proud warrior whose all too human frailties augur an unhappy end. Perhaps Tolkien's most three-dimensional figure, Túrin flees from the elven kingdom where he has grown into manhood, sheltered from the forces of evil, after he's unjustly judged responsible for another's death. He hides his true identity as he begins a new life as leader of a band of outlaws, a choice that has dire consequences when he crosses paths with a family member after many years of separation. Deftly balancing thrilling battles with moments of introspection, Tolkien's vivid and gripping narrative reaffirms his primacy in fantasy literature.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School--While much of the material here was published posthumously in books like *The Silmarillion* (1985) and *Unfinished Tales* (1988, both Del Rey), Tolkien delivered it in a loosely connected way that made it difficult to read. Edited by his son, this new volume draws from both of these earlier sources to pull together a complete single narrative set in pre-Hobbit Middle Earth. Túrin, son of the human lord Húrin and the elven lady Morwen, becomes a pivotal force in the ongoing battle against evil in an epic

adventure full of intrigue and clever battle scenes. The early parts of the story focus on Túrin's young life. As an adult, he is wrongly judged for the death of an elf and banished for the rest of his life. He manages to become the leader of a ragtag band of forest outlaws that cause no end of problems for forces of evil trying to usurp the kingdom. Túrin is charismatic, brave, cocky, and as equally skilled at getting into trouble as he is at getting out of it. Lee's black-and-white drawings and full-color paintings come from the traditions of fantasy illustration and offer dramatic visuals throughout the book. The language and vocabulary, especially in the dialogue, might intimidate casual readers, but ambitious fans of fantasy will find a work that reminds them why we continue to place Tolkien at the zenith of fantasy literature after so many years.—*Matthew L. Moffett, Pohick Regional Library, Burke, VA*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Fleischmann:

As people who live in the modest era should be upgrade about what going on or information even knowledge to make these keep up with the era which is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know what kind you should start with. This *The Children of Hurin* is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Marcella Aragon:

This *The Children of Hurin* tend to be reliable for you who want to become a successful person, why. The explanation of this *The Children of Hurin* can be on the list of great books you must have will be giving you more than just simple reading food but feed anyone with information that maybe will shock your earlier knowledge. This book is definitely handy, you can bring it everywhere and whenever your conditions at e-book and printed people. Beside that this *The Children of Hurin* giving you an enormous of experience such as rich vocabulary, giving you trial run of critical thinking that we know it useful in your day task. So , let's have it and luxuriate in reading.

Walter Pressley:

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