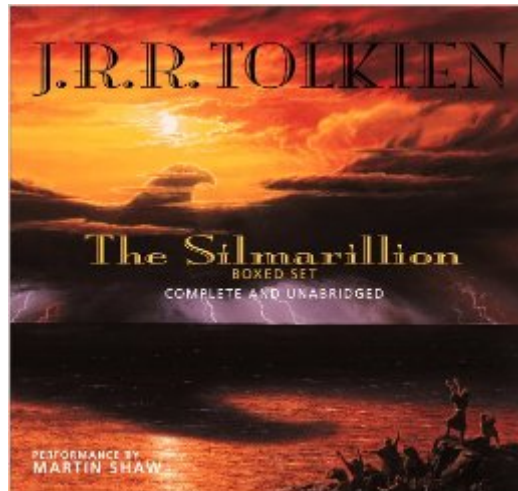


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The Silmarillion



Synopsis

The Silmarillion tells of the Elder Days, of the First Age of Tolkien's World, when Morgoth, the first Dark Lord, dwelt in Middle Earth, and the High Elves made war upon them for the recovery of the Silmarils, the jewels containing the pure light of Valinor. It is to this ancient drama that the characters in The Lord of the Rings so often look back to. Sit at the feet of the most beloved storyteller of the 20th century and hear how the world came to be. The Silmarillion is told here in a brilliantly faceted audio production, with all the glory of the First Age itself. Dazzlingly performed by Martin Shaw, it sparkles with the magic of the dawn of time--when Elves and Men roamed a world set spinning through space by the haunting music of supernatural choirs. Slip through the shadows and you, too, may catch the whisper of harp-song on the winds of the high air above the mists of the world. This exclusive audio boxed set of Tolkien's elegant masterpiece is one that will delight fans young and old. It is an extraordinary keepsake to be treasured and listened to again and again.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In the Tolkien canon, "The Silmarillion" is the most highly contested of all his works. Constructed as a prehistoric history of the Universe, the book has the cultural significance of the Bible in Tolkien's universe. It is Tolkien's primary work, but it's also his most troublesome, in more ways than one. One thing you need to know. In Tolkien scholarship, there are two primary ways to refer to the "Silmarillion". One is the Silmarillion, the legendarium proper, and then the 1977 "Silmarillion", which may or may not be what Tolkien envisioned. "The Silmarillion", the book Tolkien spent all of his

adult life writing, was, sadly, incomplete when Tolkien died at the age of eighty one in 1973. Naturally, this begs the question why did it take him decades to write the book, and it still be unfinished after all that time? Well, to understand that, you need to understand two things: the scope of the project, and how Tolkien worked. The scope of the book was a complete imaginary history, a totally self-contained mythology, all written and developed for his home country, England (my home country as well). Imagine the Greek and Roman mythologies, all those myths and gods, developed by one man. Imagine Homer completely inventing all the gods for his stories. Imagine how hard that would be to come up with your own mythological traditions as such. No wonder Tolkien had such a hard time completing the work. Now, the scope (which is extremely ambitious for any artist) was compounded by how Tolkien worked. First, he was a philologist first and foremost, and so before the stories he invented languages.

"The Silmarillion" is perhaps the most unique and difficult-to-explain book I have read. It is among the books I love the most, but this might not be the case if I had not read it in a bizarre way that I can hardly recommend to anyone else, and yet may be the best way to read it. For ten or twelve years I skimmed through "The Silmarillion," "The Hobbit," "The Lord of the Rings," and many of Tolkien's posthumous books (many of which present the stories of "The Silmarillion" in different forms which Tolkien wrote at various times in his life) without reading the books verbatim. Only in the last twelve months have I read these books all the way through. This was a wise way of approaching Tolkien's most famous works because of the odd nature of "The Silmarillion," which must be understood by anyone desiring to enjoy it. "The Silmarillion" is not a "novel," as are "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" (Tolkien preferred the word "romance" to "novel" for LotR). "The Silmarillion" is well described by the subtitle on the front of the jacket of the Ted Nasmith-illustrated edition: "The Myths and Legends of Middle-earth". "The Silmarillion" is the equivalent, for the imaginary world in which "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" take place, of a work like Hamilton's or Bulfinch's "Mythology". It does not tell one single story; rather it tells many stories in a briefer form, almost as though the stories are being synopsized rather than told.

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