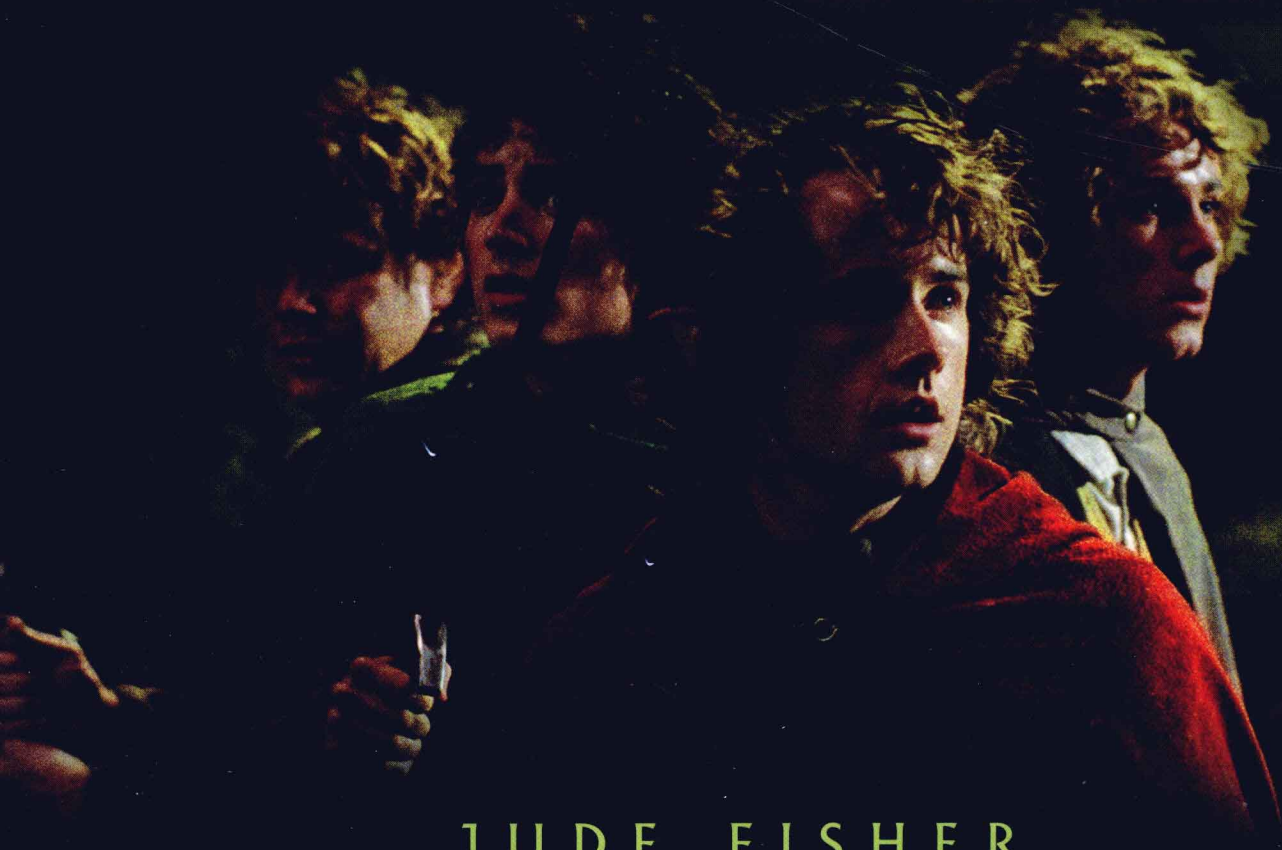


THE ULTIMATE MOVIE COMPANION TO THE PEOPLES AND PLACES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

VISUAL COMPANION



JUDE FISHER

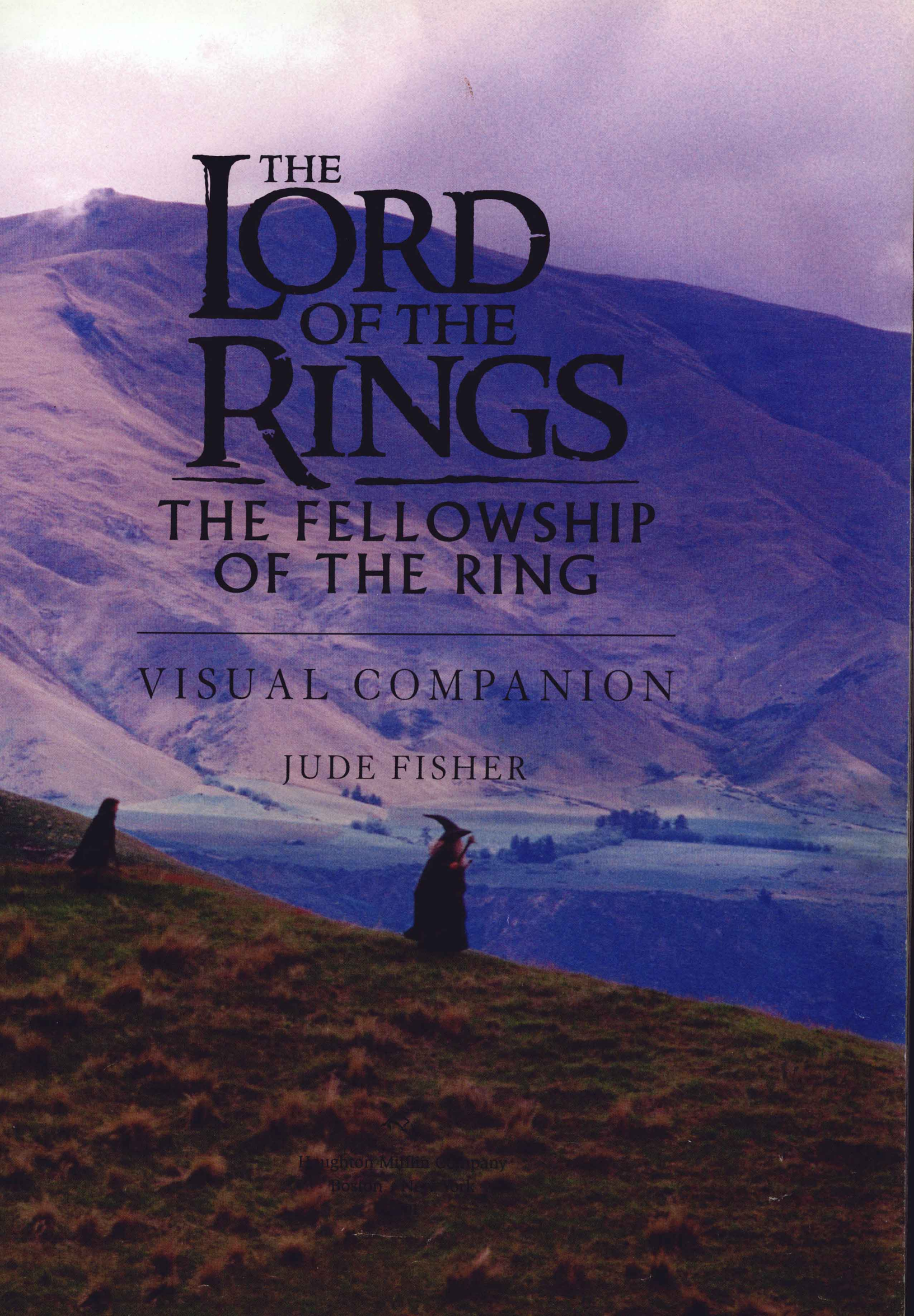
THE
LORD
OF THE
RINGS

THE FELLOWSHIP
OF THE RING

VISUAL COMPANION







THE
LORD
OF THE
RINGS

THE FELLOWSHIP
OF THE RING

VISUAL COMPANION

JUDE FISHER

Houghton Mifflin Company
Boston • New York



THE RINGS OF POWER

Long ago, in the Second Age of Middle-earth, there were forged nineteen Great Rings, each bestowing long life and magical powers upon the wearer. But Sauron, Dark Lord of Mordor, treacherously wrought a Ruling Ring, mixing its molten gold with his own blood and life force, by which he intended to bring all the other rings under his own control. Deep inside Mount Doom he forged it, and over it he chanted the Ring-spell which would bring it to life:

*Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky
Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,
Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die
One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne
In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.*

*One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them
One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them
In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.*

The three rings held by the Elves remained untouched by his evil, and the rings of the Dwarves were safely sequestered; but the nine held by the lords of men succumbed to him and those who wore them were ensnared, condemned to walk in the permanent twilight of his Eye, reduced to the state of Ringwraiths.



THE LAST ALLIANCE OF ELVES AND MEN

In the Second Age of the Sun, Sauron cruelly enslaved the Free Peoples of Middle-earth, and his shadow stretched far over the land. Despair and fear fell across the world until a Last Alliance of Elves and Men, under the leadership of the Elven-king Gil-galad and Elendil, High King of Gondor, was forged in a desperate attempt to break his power.

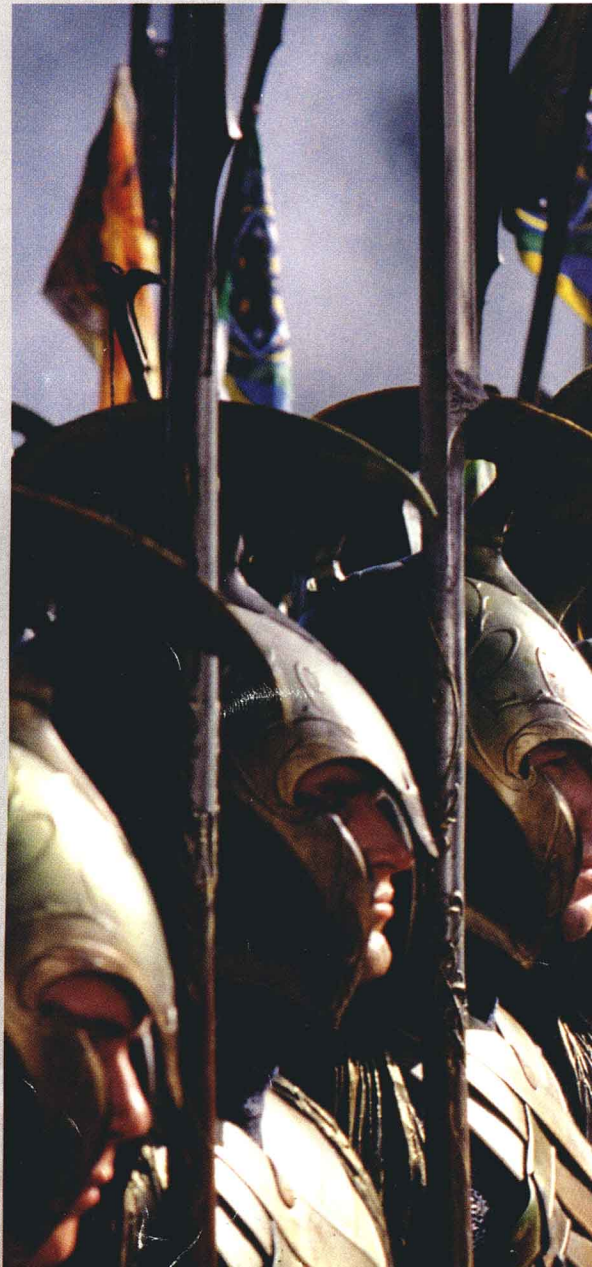
On the slopes of Mount Doom, their great army drove back the Dark Lord's forces; but there Gil-galad, though as an immortal Elf-lord he was born never to die, perished beneath the heat of Sauron's hand; and Elendil fell, too, breaking beneath him his legendary greatsword Narsil, which had been forged in the First Age by the Dwarves. His son Isildur, prince of Gondor, took up the shard and with its sharp edge struck from the Dark Lord's hand the finger bearing the One Ring, thus breaking at last his will and power.

"So small a thing ..."

Then the One Ring should have been destroyed; but Isildur succumbed to its seductive power and refused to cast it away, thinking to use it for the good of his people. He carried it with him always until he fell prey to Orcs at the Gladden Fields, and there, in the great River Anduin, the Ring was once more lost.

In this way the Dark Years of the Second Age of Middle-earth ended, and the Third Age began. For thousands of years since that time, Sauron has concentrated his efforts on rebuilding his armies and on his search for the Ruling Ring. But the Ring would not lie still, and by various means has made a long, strange journey.

*"He who commands the Ruling Ring ...
commands all"*



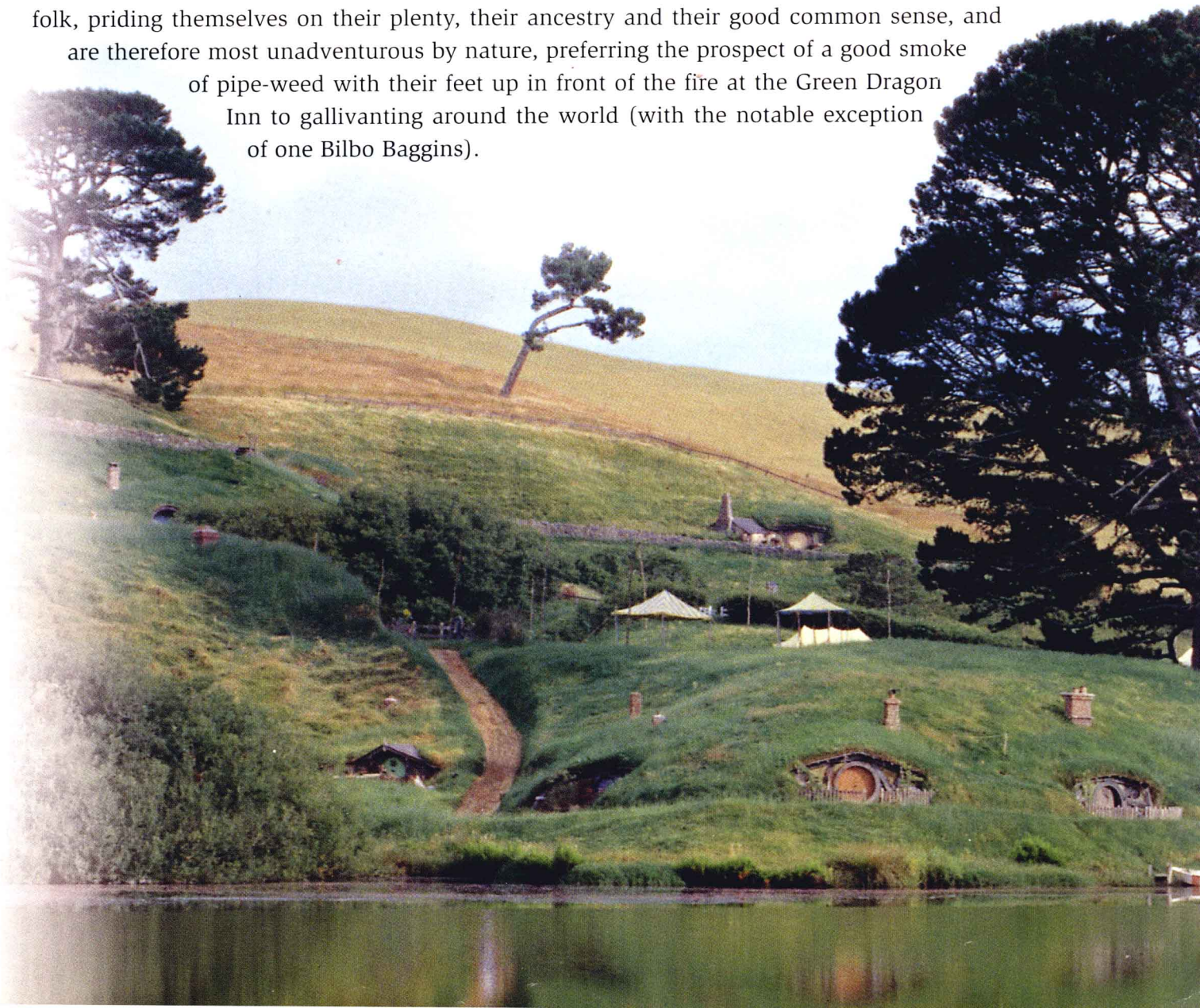


1

HOBBITS

In the northwestern corner of Middle-earth lies the peaceful agricultural region known as the Shire. And in that part of the Shire called the West Farthing, beyond the East Road, is found the sleepy village of Hobbiton, a quaint rural settlement inhabited by an ancient, unobtrusive folk, known as hobbits, or “hole-dwellers.” For hundreds of years they have made a good living in the rich earth of the Shire, and while the earliest of their number may well have lived in simple holes and tunnels, most now dwell in houses that have been built into the grassy hillsides – houses that are low-lying, rounded and comfortably appointed, much like the hobbits themselves, who stand barely four feet tall and like to eat as much and as often as they can. Daily hobbit meals include Breakfast, Second Breakfast, Eleveses, Luncheon, Afternoon Tea and Supper, supplemented with plenty of snacks in between. They are a cheerful, settled, well-ordered and clannish folk, priding themselves on their plenty, their ancestry and their good common sense, and are therefore most unadventurous by nature, preferring the prospect of a good smoke of pipe-weed with their feet up in front of the fire at the Green Dragon Inn to gallivanting around the world (with the notable exception of one Bilbo Baggins).

8





Hobbiton remains as inward-looking and complacent as it has been for generation on generation: a place where hobbit-folk can raise their children in safety, grow vegetables and crops, tend their flower gardens and their animals and gather mushrooms for dinner, blissfully ignorant of the dark shadows that even now are encroaching from the east, from Mordor. Although activity on the highways has increased in recent years, and strangers are more frequently seen on the

outskirts of the Shire, most hobbits remain determinedly unaware that the peace they enjoy is being fiercely protected by the good offices of the wizard Gandalf (whom they associate more with fireworks than true wizardry) and the Rangers of the North. For Gandalf, the Shire represents a pocket of charm and innocence in an increasingly tainted world. Good-hearted and generous of spirit, hobbits are a folk worth saving from the horrors of the Dark Lord's rule.



H O B B I T S

BAG END

Hobbits stand less than four feet tall and their houses are equally compact and rounded; classic features of hobbit architecture include circular doors and windows, curved walls and beams. Their owners set much store by pleasant furnishings and local craftsmanship, specializing particularly in finely turned and polished wood and in skillful cabinetmaking. Hobbit holes are devoted to comfort and hospitality, containing as they do well-stocked larders, homely hearths and a ready welcome. Bilbo Baggins' house – Bag End – is a fine example of the type.

10







BILBO BAGGINS

“Far too eager and curious for a hobbit, most unnatural...”

Scholar, poet, maker of songs, wearer of fancy brocade waistcoats, teller of stories and friend to Elves, Bilbo Baggins is one of the most famous and long-lived hobbits in the Shire’s history. He is best known, however, as an adventurer, a rare thing among hobbits, following the events he has been recording in his book, *There and Back Again, A Hobbit’s Tale*, in which he took part in a heroic, epic quest with Gandalf the wizard and several Dwarves, and came back to Hobbiton with a certain Ring, which he had won in a riddle contest with the creature known as Sméagol, or Gollum. Many of his neighbors – and some of his relatives – now refer to him as “mad Baggins” as a result of these adventures.

Sixty years after returning from his journey, Bilbo celebrated his eleventy-first birthday and passed all his worldly goods to his young relative Frodo, choosing instead to travel to the Elven refuge of Rivendell, there to complete his great work in tranquility and to study Elven lore in the company of Elrond Half-elven.



*“The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone
And I must follow, if I can ...”*

FRODO BAGGINS

“It is a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door ...”

Orphaned at a young age, Frodo Baggins was adopted by the hobbit he knows as Uncle Bilbo. Bilbo brought Frodo to live with him at his large house at Bag End, not out of charity, but because he was the only one of all his many relations to show any spirit. Frodo has grown up into a serious, sensitive and intelligent lad, fascinated by Bilbo’s library and by stories of his exotic travels across Middle-earth. An apt pupil, Frodo has even learned to read and speak a little of the Elvish language, an ability that will earn him the name “Elvellon,” or Elf-friend.

However, many of the inhabitants of Hobbiton are rather of the opinion that since he has spent so much time having his head turned by fanciful tales of Elves and Dwarves and dragons, Frodo is not as practical a hobbit as he should be and barely has the sense “to know a swede from a turnip,” as the Shire saying goes.





Despite this, Frodo has wandered far and wide around Hobbiton, exploring the highways and byways of the Shire with his friend Sam Gamgee, and as a result has himself developed something of a taste for travel. Which is as well, since he will be called upon to undertake a long journey.

When Bilbo Baggins decides to leave Hobbiton to spend time among the Elves, he leaves not only the house at Bag End, but also the rest of his possessions, including a certain Ring, to Frodo, who must bear it out of the Shire, and way beyond.

“Even the smallest person can change the course of the future ...”

Although it may look no more than a harmless gold band, the Ring is a heavy burden indeed, with its constant temptations and whisperings of Black Speech, the language of Mordor. It has the power to draw the attention of the Enemy’s servants, and is the constant focus of Sauron’s seeking Eye. Always the Ring wishes to return to its maker.

Whoever bears it will be in constant danger; for his protection, Frodo will receive from Bilbo an Elvish-made sword known as Sting – a magical weapon which has a blade that glows blue to warn that Orcs are close – and a mail shirt made from a marvelous substance called *mithril*, a metal mined from deep and secret places by the Dwarves. As light as a feather, but as hard as dragon scales, it can be concealed beneath clothing, yet will turn the fiercest blade. It was once given to Bilbo by the Dwarf king Thorin.



SAMWISE GAMGEE

A gardener like his father, Hamfast (known as “the Gaffer”), Sam Gamgee has spent his whole life in and around the village of Hobbiton. Although he has explored the neighboring areas of the Shire with his friends, on mushroom-gathering expeditions and vegetable-raiding forays, he has never traveled further afield, even though he has been entranced by Bilbo Baggins’ exciting tales. Tending the garden at Bag End, Sam has been treated to many of Bilbo’s adventure stories about his journeys to foreign parts, where he encountered the more exotic folk of Middle-earth. Elves, in particular, have taken Sam’s fancy.

The barmaid at the Green Dragon Inn, Hobbiton’s popular hostelry, has also captured Samwise’s fancy. Young Rosie Cotton is one of the prettiest hobbits in the Shire, but unfortunately Sam is too shy to make approaches to her, despite the encouragement and teasing of his friends. Instead, he is happy to sit comfortably with a good smoke of pipe-weed and a flagon of the finest Shire ale and listen to the chatter of others.

