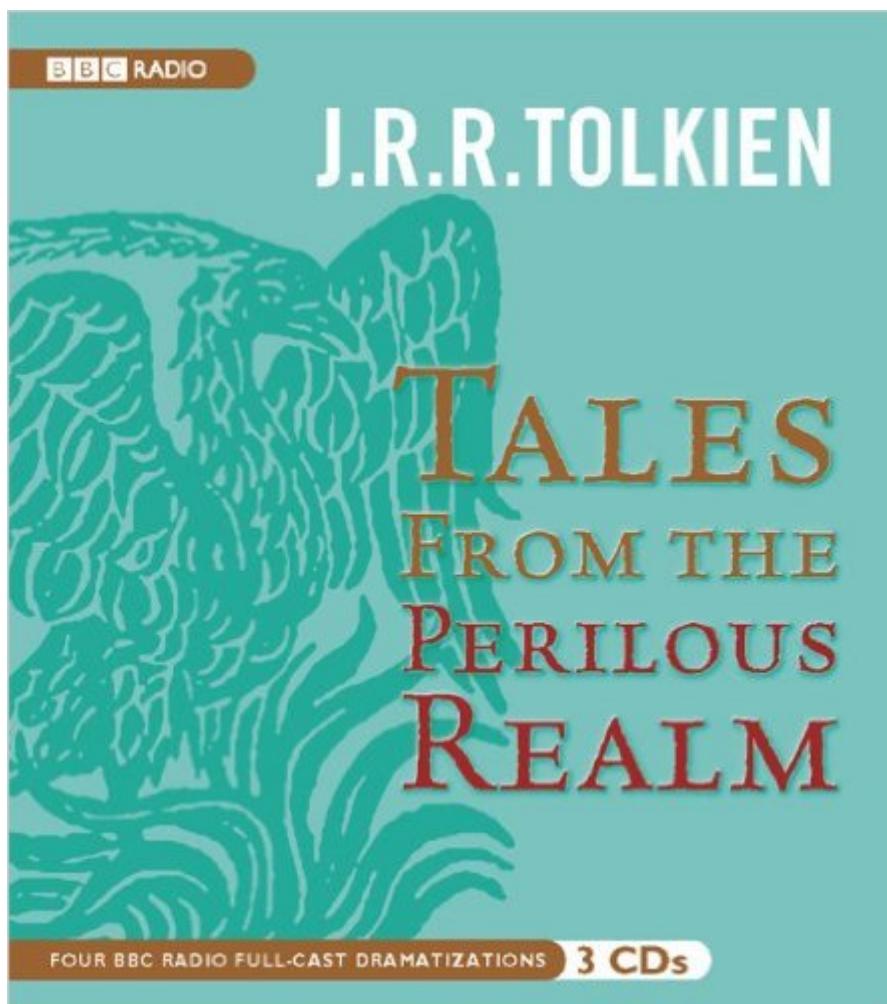


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Tales From The Perilous Realm



Synopsis

For the first time in A-format, the definitive collection of Tolkien's four acclaimed modern classic 'fairy' tales in the vein of *The Hobbit*. *Farmer Giles of Ham* is fat and unheroic, but -- having unwittingly managed to scare off a short-sighted giant -- is called upon to do battle when the dragon Chrysophylax comes to town; *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* tells by way of verse of Tom's many adventures with hobbits, princesses, dwarves and trolls; *Leaf by Niggle* recounts the strange adventures of the painter Niggle who sets out to paint the perfect tree; *Smith of Wootton Major* journeys to the Land of Faery thanks to the magical ingredients of the Great Cake of the Feast of Good Children. The four tales are written with the same skill, quality and hallmarks that made Tolkien's *Hobbit* a classic. Largely overlooked because of their short lengths, they are finally together in a volume which reaffirms Tolkien's place as a master storyteller for readers young and old.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Is this collection worth purchasing? Tom Shippey's introduction is, as always, incisive and insightful, packed with quotable phrases and interesting observations placing these shorter pieces within Tolkien's oeuvre. But it is aimed at the new reader of these works - it is a guide to how to read them, not ground-breaking new scholarship. I am personally not a fan of realism in illustration of Tolkien's works; I find that a more stylized approach better suits the atmosphere of his writing. This is perhaps purely a matter of personal taste, but I can't read the stories included in this collection without a deep longing for the original illustrations by Pauline Baynes - particularly for *Farmer Giles*, where

Tolkien himself said he felt her artwork reduced his text to a commentary on the drawings. To my mind, Lee's pale, washed-out pencil drawings hardly hold a candle to Baynes' ability to convey the humor, enchantment, and melancholy of Tolkien's shorter works. All of the included works by Tolkien are readily available elsewhere. Roverandom, Farmer Giles, Smith, and On Fairy-stories have recently appeared in excellent stand-alone editions with critical commentary and, when applicable, the original illustrations by Baynes or Tolkien himself. All but Roverandom and Smith are included in The Tolkien Reader, which is still in print, though alas only in paperback; I imagine this collection is meant to replace it in hardback. If you are a fan of Alan Lee, the answer may be yes, though for most of the tales there are actually only two drawings each.

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