PAUL CORFIELD GODFREY

NOTES ON THE TOLKIEN CYCLE

THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND INTRODUCTION

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PREFACE

Over the centuries a great many composers have attempted to explain the methodology that lay behind the products of their imagination, with explanations that range from the purely mystical to the severely practical with every conceivable nuance in between. Those in the former category are perhaps the least profitable area of study for those interested in the peculiar mechanisms of the human imagination. For example both Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakov and John Foulds, who wrote elaborate treatises on orchestration and musical inspiration, 'suffered' (if that is the correct word for so abstruse a medical condition) from synaesthesia, where they actually envisioned certain tonalities as possessing associations with specific colours which they blended with the sensitivities of an artist rather than purely as tone-colours. Which might be all very well (if somewhat disconcerting for those of us who do not possess this remarkable facility) if these gentlemen could actually agree specifically on what these correspondences might be (Foulds in his book muddies the waters further by pointing out a set of yet different associations enumerated by Alexander Scriabin, as well as combining his theories with various arcane and occult practices deriving partially from his readings in eastern mysticism). On the other hand the purely practical Paul Hindemith in his handbook for composers attempted to describe harmonic relationships purely in physical terms by reference to the system of natural overtones of any specific note, but found that his system landed him in some real difficulties when attempting to explain how chords remote from this basic tonality (such as the minor triad) were clearly and cheerfully accepted by all listeners as totally consonant. He also created difficulties for himself by verbally insisting that all composers must possess perfect pitch (I was told this by Alan Bush, who had it from Hindemith himself) despite the fact that many great composers did not have that ability to distinguish one note from another. Arnold Schoenberg attempted to avoid this whole question by a denial of any relationship between individual notes, and his twelve-tone system was specifically designed to avoid any such sense becoming evident to the listener at all. In this he, and his successors who attempted to apply his 'serial' system to all the other elements of music—rhythm, volume and even instrumentation—succeeded to the extent that they contrived to render many of their compositions almost totally incomprehensible to the vast majority of listeners.

There have of course been a great many performers who have tried their hands at composition, and many of them have proved to be highly successful even if they may have remained totally unable to read printed scores (Paul McCartney one of the most prominent of these); and also some composers whose practical skills on any instrument were highly limited (Hector Berlioz one of the earliest, although he has had a good many successors). And of course there is, and always has been, a whole fleet of composers both ancient and modern, many of them amateurs but including also a plentiful representation of professionals and academics in their ranks), whose inspirations remain obscure—in some

cases defying even self-analysis (I personally recall on one occasion Harrison Birtwistle declining to engage in any such discussion of his own work).

One of the most prolix of these self-analysts was of course Richard Wagner who, not content with the reams of exegesis and explanation poured forth on his behalf by disciples in his own lifetime, also generated volumes on the theory of musical composition and interpretation designed to foster and nourish his own theories of the origins of both music and drama as well as politics and moral philosophy. But even he balked at the idea of constructing an analysis of his massive cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen,* delegating the task instead to his friend Baron von Wolzogen whilst simultaneously privately deploring the errors of description and interpretations which the consequent publications promulgated. These errors continued to plague commentators such as Ernest Newman long after all those originally concerned were dead, and it was not until Deryck Cooke took up the task in the 1960s that any really informed attempt was undertaken to clear up some of von Wolzogen's grosser misinterpretations.

Deryck Cooke also, a couple of decades earlier, had written one of the most interesting works on the subject of musical composition in his book *The language of music.* This was published long before his labours on the completion of Gustav Mahler's unfinished final symphony (an edition still regularly encountered in the current repertory) and therefore was all the more remarkable in undertaking an entirely fresh view of the process of composition laying emphasis on the emotional and instinctive side of the art (and there the psychology of the mental processes involved). He showed with remarkable insight the essential similarities in approach to the portrayal of different emotional states by composers of totally contrasted cultural backgrounds over the centuries, and triumphantly demonstrated the essential soundness of his approach by a detailed analysis of two highly contrasted symphonies by Mozart and Vaughan Williams.

Whereas Newman in his analysis of Wagner's cycle included in his *Wagner Nights* was comprehensive and sympathetic in its outline of both the dramatic narrative and the musical construction of the score, it could not altogether avoid some of the pitfalls laboriously constructed by von Wolzogen or the unfortunate impression created by his deployment of numbered themes, of a jigsaw construction of various unrelated themes which were contrapuntally woven together. (Oddly enough he had regarded this technique as grounds for criticism when he adversely reviewed Strauss's *Elektra* some years earlier.) Cooke, in his analysis first issued as an audio commentary on five LP sides for the Decca recording of the complete *Ring* in 1968, took a diametrically opposed approach, starting from the opening of *Das Rheingold* and then examining the origins of each 'family' of Wagner's *Leitmotifs* through their ramifications throughout the cycle, before moving onto the next category. Only towards the end of this exposition did he begin to examine the manner in which the score was built up from these individual elements, confining his analysis here to three relatively short (though contrapuntally complex) passages. In the following decade he began work on his more intricate analysis in the book *I saw the world end*, beginning with some reconsideration of his earlier musical theses and then progressing to a full textual analysis of the cycle; but he was less than half-way through this when he died, and nobody since then has felt able to complete the mammoth task which he had set himself.

Now in this analysis of my own interlinked Tolkien 'mythological' cycles—the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*, the music chapters from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*—I have not sought to provide any attempt at a really comprehensive exegesis on either my construction of the text or the music. My general description follows largely the model of Newman's Wagnerian analysis, simply detailing the motifs as they first occur and then listing them on repetition drawing attention as necessary to their mutation in either meaning or significance. At the same time I have endeavoured to give sufficient autobiographical information to allow for some understanding of the manner in which the composition itself may have evolved over the period of more than half a century during which it was written. This also now includes some background analysis in the same manner on the appendices and supplementary works which surround the cycle. And at the end I have added a sketch of a preliminary attempt to undertake an evolutionary analysis in the Cooke style, taking as a basis solely those themes which arise in the *Ainulindalë* prelude to *Fëanor* and looking at their musical treatment and transformation in the later sections of the cycle. Hopefully this will enable later listeners to the music to pursue their own way along a similar course if they have the inclination and hardihood to do so.

During the years 2024-27 a Discord group undertook a whole 'read-and-listen' on the website *The music of Paul Corfield Godfrey*, and I took the opportunity to read the comments of many correspondents and respond to them. Some of those responses may have echoed elements within the thematic analysis, but many of them roved into more abstract areas such as the psychological or political interpretation of both text and music, or other details of an autobiographical nature. My responses from the website are accordingly appended to this analysis, with some minor adjustments as required to establish their context.

I have also added an article entitled *In Tolkien's own words* on the subject of my treatment of the actual vocabulary of Tolkien's text, especially in relationship to *The Silmarillion.* This was written in 2020, and first published in a slightly revised version by the Dutch Tolkien Society Unquendor magazine *Lembas* in 2023.

The sections of this analysis relating to *The Silmarillion* were originally written in the period before 1996 and the completion at that stage of the four-evening cycle. They have been revisited and to a certain degree rewritten for this publication. The similar analysis of *The Hobbit* derives from the years 1998-99 but has been revisited following the reconstruction of the final section of the score in 2022-23. The analysis of *The Lord of the Rings* mostly dates from the latter period, but includes some passages that were written earlier. There is also a section in the opening of the analysis of *The Children of Húrin* which quotes extensively from an article written for publication in *Amon Hen* in 1982. The analyses of the miscellaneous appendices, on the other hand, are almost entirely new.

1

epic scenes from THE SILMARILLION

My own interest in the works of Tolkien goes back now for some seventy years. I think it was in 1956 or 1957 that I was given a copy of *The Hobbit* by my soon-to-be sister-in-law Lois Mitchison (daughter of the novelist Naomi Mitchison whose recommendation of *The Lord of the Rings* originally appeared on the dust-jackets of the first edition). At that time I was so overwhelmed by it that I spent a considerable amount of time creating a dramatic adaptation of sections of *The Hobbit* and dragooning all my neighbours and friends into taking parts in a performance staged in my Wimbledon back garden; and some of the songs improvised then—Bilbo's mocking of the spiders, the wood-elves' *Down the swift dark stream you go* and the rejoicing in Lake Town—remain in the score to this day. I might note in passing that my perverse admiration for villains rather than heroes was clearly prefigured in my preference in these dramatic recitals for the character not of the clearly sympathetic Bilbo Baggins but for the morally flawed and ultimately unsuccessful Thorin Oakenshield; this may be regarded by armchair psychologists as having some bearing on my later treatment of similar characters such as Fëanor and Túrin, let alone Gollum.

Following this initial attempt at a Tolkien stage-work, it may seem odd that I did not then proceed to an acquaintance with *The Lord of the Rings*, which had just then been published; but, be that as it may, I did not. In fact, I did not read *The Lord of the Rings* until some ten years later, when my enthusiasm for the works of Middle-Earth was at once rekindled although still confined to the unrevised edition of Tolkien's text.

During these years, although I had learned to read music, undergone some lessons in elementary harmony, and had even undertaken some embarrassingly naïve compositions, the fact that my mother was a visual artist had the result that my own aesthetic leanings in those years had also tended towards the visual arts. I will not say that reading Tolkien afresh at the age of 16 *awoke* my musical sensibilities (other things happened at that time which I am inclined to think may have had considerably more significance), but it is certain that my first major orchestral work was intended to be a suite of short symphonic sketches, choral settings and songs inspired by *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* which I remember neatly copying into a manuscript book in the summer of 1966 by the lake at Chiddingstone in Kent. I still have some of the segments for this work (which was never completed) and, although a woeful and often embarrassing lack of experience is apparent, a not inconsiderable number of the musical motifs and themes in these drafts often found their way (in a transmuted guise) into later works. The initial idea for the theme of Sauron in *Beren and Lúthien* is one such; as are the theme for the Shire (complete with its contrasting rhythmic patterns), and sketches for the Lament for Boromir and Treebeard's chant *In the willow meads of Tasarinan.*

Slowly but surely over the years these "symphonic sketches" grew, and by the early 1970s I had drafted a grandiose design for performing *The Lord of the Rings* (incorporating *The Hobbit*) as an opera cycle which would have extended over thirteen evenings! Although none of the operas ever reached completion, both the evenings which would have constituted *The Hobbit* were fully drafted and the opera *The Black Gate is closed* (Book IV of *The Lord of the Rings*) was substantially scored—again, possibly, my liking for the flawed character attracting me to Gollum's crisis at an early stage.

In any event, the whole idea foundered when shortly after Tolkien's death I approached Rayner Unwin enquiring about the possibility of arranging performances of *The Hobbit* section of the cycle, to be encountered with the unwelcome news that United Artists, who had then recently acquired film rights to both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings,* were refusing to grant permission for musical settings to anyone. However, some of the purely orchestral material for *The Hobbit* was performed in London in 1971, and other parts of it were incorporated in my Third Symphony *Ainulindalë* and my rondo for solo piano *Akallabêth*, subsequently re-emerging in material for *The Silmarillion*. Other later works written in the late 1970s and 1980s, such as the setting of *Shadow-Bride* (performed in London in 1977) and *Daeron* (performed in South Wales in 1985) also formed material which was subsequently incorporated into *The Silmarillion.*

When *The Silmarillion* was first published, I found the tale of Túrin Turambar immediately attracted me as the possible foundation of a dramatic work. It was at once less discursive and extensive than others of the tales in *The Silmarillion,* and (presumably as a result of its early separation, initially as a long alliterative poem and then later as a story in its own right) was generally fairly self-contained. However, the very brevity of much of the writing meant that dramatic situations would have to be largely the manufacture of the composer, and I was at this stage reluctant to undertake the sort of tinkering with the author's intentions which would be involved (the later adaptations required for *Beren and Lúthien*, and even more extensively for *The Fall of Gondolin*, left little choice in the matter). The later publication of the *Unfinished Tales* resolved the problem; there was now plentiful (in places, indeed, excessive!) material which could be employed. And, as soon as I realised this, I wrote at once to Rayner Unwin and this time was advised that the estate might be willing to reach agreement regarding the use of the texts if they could hear some samples of the proposed work and approved them. Faced with this challenge I corralled James Meaker, a friendly local concert pianist who had already commissioned my piano rondo *Akallabêth*, and we got together in my front room to record the opening scene from *The Children of Húrin*, myself declaiming the role of the hapless Húrin and also providing a suitably amplified voice for Morgoth by putting my head into a large metal bucket.

Rather to my surprise (and I suspect theirs) both Rayner Unwin and Christopher Tolkien seemed to

understand what I was getting at, and gave their approval; Christopher Tolkien then furnished me with some additional material by his father at that time unpublished (it later appeared in the *History of Middle-earth*) to assist with some problems caused by the necessary abridgement of the text.

An additional problem now presented itself. I had originally thought of the proposed work as a straightforward opera, presented in conventional scenes; but it soon became clear that, since some excision of the various episodes in the original story was essential to keep the work within reasonable bounds (in *The Children of Húrin* Mîm and the outlaws were early casualties) there was also a need for a narrative element which might provide some commentary, and this was resolved by incorporating some choral episodes into the interludes between scenes. This choral element was somewhat increased as work on the score progressed, until in later works like *Fëanor* it completely takes over the whole action for the first three scenes. The result is something of a hybrid; although *The Silmarillion* could well be staged as a series of operas, it could also be performed in a purely concert version and thus might be attractive to choral societies as an alternative to similar semi-dramatic works such as *The Dream of Gerontius* or *The Damnation of Faust*. The chorus thus assumes the role of the teller of the tales, filling both a functional and a dramatic role. Against this background the soloists assume the dramatic function.

Following the completion of the score, Priscilla Tolkien arranged a performance of some sections of the work which were given at a recital at Oxonmoot in 1982 and for which we rehearsed during the same afternoon at her house using what I later gathered was Edith Tolkien's old piano. Priscilla herself took part in the chorus which concludes the love duet for the ill-fated incestuous pair. It was only following that performance that I was sent a draft libretto by Denis Bridoux for a proposed *Beren and Lúthien.* This was wildly different in almost every way from the final text as used in the cycle, which derives from my own drafts made at that time; scenes that he had included, I had omitted, and vice versa; and the two versions had not even been able to agree in a three-act structure where the breaks between acts should fall. Nonetheless this in its turn set me thinking, and expanded my thinking in a somewhat alarming direction. I had already been perturbed by the sheer weight of explanation which had perforce been omitted from *Húrin* and, idly toying with the idea, sketched out in one evening a complete four-opera cycle. Between them these four legends contained a brief summary of the whole history of the First Age of Middle-Earth. I immediately dismissed the idea as nonsense; I wrote to Helen Armstrong of the Tolkien Society in January 1983 that there was nothing like enough text for a first act of *Fëanor* and far too many characters involved for straightforward explanation to be possible; also that there was no text at all for the end of *The Fall of Gondolin* (unless one returned to a wholesale reworking and rewording of the early 1917-1920 drafts), and that there were dreadful gaps in narrative and dramatic structure everywhere. It will be seen in what manner and by what means these drawbacks were gradually obviated.

It had been immediately apparent when I came to look at the story of *The Children of Húrin* that it would be impossible to render the work fully self-contained without also including substantial explanatory references to other sections of *The Silmarillion,* which in their turn would seriously unbalance the work; music is not at its best when dealing with extensive explanations, even in Wagner. Such basic premises of the plot as who Morgoth was, how Húrin's family came to be in Dor-lómin, or even how Húrin came to be in Morgoth's power at all, had to be taken on trust. Some other names could be glossed for the benefit of "non-specialist" audiences (for example, "the earth" could usually be substituted for "Arda" where it occurs) but others, such as Angband or Doriath, could not, and again these had to be taken as read.

Faced with these explanatory problems, Christopher Tolkien did at one stage suggest to me that any attempt to preserve narrative appearances should be foregone; but I was anxious as far as possible to maintain a dramatic unity and, moreover, amongst all these considerations to retain wherever feasible the exact wording of the author (again, in *Beren and Lúthien* and *The Fall of Gondolin*, where the original texts were written at different periods and in vastly different styles, other compromises had to be sought). Obviously all of these were incompatible criteria; but with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien I have contrived to overcome some of them, and I hope that it may be thought that the efforts have been worthwhile. I have, incidentally, taken the precaution of "trying out" the text in isolation on various friends who had not read *The Silmarillion* and I am happy to report that they have confirmed that the final text does indeed hold together in its own right.

And there, I imagined in 1996, my work in the field of Tolkien came to a conclusion. Five years later I made a setting of Bilbo's *Lay of Eärendil* for solo voice and orchestra, using some of the same musical material, as a sort of appendix to round out the story. But this setting, like the rest of the cycle, found no ready executors. On the contrary, the work was regarded as a monster, a hugely ambitious and expensive enterprise with practically no chance of performance. And there indeed matters would have rested, had it not been for Simon Crosby Buttle who finally took up the cudgels on behalf of the cycle and began the business of recruiting a cast of willing volunteers from among his colleagues at Welsh National Opera to perform and record the works.

By 2019 the Prima Facie label had already released two double-CD sets containing *The Fall of Gondolin* and *Beren and Lúthien*, and Simon was urging me to undertake further composition to bring the *Silmarillion* cycle to a more comprehensively satisfactory conclusion. The first result was the prelude to *The War of Wrath*, eventually to open the fifth and final section of the epic scenes. There had remained of course a number of other loose ends from earlier in the *Silmarillion* cycle to be tidied up: the fate of the Silmarils themselves, and the doom of the two remaining sons of Fëanor, as well as the foundation of the Realm of Númenor, and the rise of Sauron. The main action of the epic scenes culminates inevitably in the creation of the One Ring, the link which will lead into the events of both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.*

And then what? For many months I was totally at a loss as to how the cycle would actually end. It was Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull who suggested that I should investigate further the potential in some other early poems by Tolkien, and eventually I alighted on the

massive *Kortirion* which had originally been drafted in 1915 but which Tolkien had continued to revise until the 1960s. Its message, of the influence of the Elves even in the secular days of the modern era, seemed to be a fitting sort of conclusion to the legendarium, and the final bars referred back to the opening prologue and Elbereth's verses along with a whispered reminiscence of the salutation to Eärendil. It even finishes on the same unresolved open fifths that opened the work.

That should probably have been the conclusion of my labours in the realm of *The Silmarillion*; but it was not. During the recording and issue of *The Lord of the Rings* I was induced to provide a series of appendices for the musical chapters in the form not only of verses which had been removed from that text because they had already been treated in *The Silmarillion*—Aragorn's *Lay of Lúthien* and Bilbo's *Lay of Eärendil*—but also two further lays—Gimli's *Lay of Durin* and Legolas's *Lay of Nimrodel*—which extended the roles for those two singers. This led in turn to two further additions: the conclusion of the saga with the final chapter of *Aragorn and Arwen*, describing events over a century after the cycle as a whole, and *The Quest of Erebor*, a semi-comic link between *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* itself. There was also at this time written a brief epigraph to the cycle as a whole: *Lost Tales*, setting part of an early quasi-autobiographical poem originally written to form an introduction to the legendarium.

Then Simon Crosby Buttle proceeded to point out one further major omission from the body of legends included in the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion.* The central tragedy of the disastrous Battle of Unnumbered Tears, treated in considerable detail by Tolkien in both *The Grey Annals* and *Narn i Chîn Húrin*, is referenced at several points in both the text and music of the epic scenes, but is at no point actually described although its history is essential to the stories of both *The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin.* I was consequently convinced to write one further triptych of scenes: the first detailing the aftermath of the Dagor Bragollach (described in *Beren and Lúthien*) and the second and third covering the childhood of Túrin and outlining the events that underlie and precede the opening scenes of *The Children of Húrin.* (This triptych of scenes should probably be considered between the musical structures of *Beren and Lúthien* and *The Children of Húrin*, but since it was not included in the completed recording—an omission which it is intended to rectify in due course—consideration of the score is postponed here to form part of its own appendix chapter with the other pieces in that category.)

In *The Lord of the Rings* the plot proceeded by way of a series of overlapping stories, one proceeding in isolation and then being interlaced in due course with another subplot (the BBC radio adaptation of the 1980s "rationalised" this by introducing a purely chronological order—later restored—as did Peter Jackson's cycle of films). In *The Silmarillion* Tolkien retained for the most part a strictly chronological approach, but in the context of a cycle consisting of five parts each of which was intended to be performable in isolation, it has been necessary to considerably alter this (and also now to make provision for the inclusion of the supplementary triptych *Unnumbered Tears*). The strict chronological sequence would be something like this:

Fëanor, Prelude and Scenes 1-5
The War of Wrath, Prologue and Scene 1
Fëanor, Scene 9 [first part]
Fëanor, Scenes 6-8
Fëanor, Scene 9 [second part]
The War of Wrath, Scene 2
The Fall of Gondolin, Prologue and Scenes 1-3
Beren and Lúthien, Prologue
Fëanor, Epilogue [taking the story in its original form]
Unnumbered Tears, Scene 1
Beren and Lúthien, Scenes 1-9
Unnumbered Tears, Scenes 2-3
The Children of Húrin, Prologue and Scenes 1-5
The Fall of Gondolin, Scene 4
The Children of Húrin, Scene 7
The Fall of Gondolin, Scenes 5-6
The Children of Húrin, Scene 6
The Children of Húrin, Scenes 8-9
The Fall of Gondolin, Scene 7
The Children of Húrin, Epilogue
Beren and Lúthien, Epilogue
The War of Wrath, Scene 3
The Fall of Gondolin, Scenes 8-9 and Epilogue
The War of Wrath, Scenes 4-9 and Epilogue

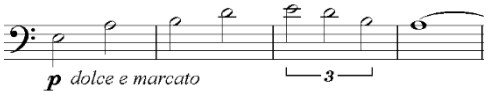
This may seem like a frightful tangle, but in context it does seem to work. *The Silmarillion* is not therefore like Wagner's *Ring* or Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha* (to take two examples) where dramatic and musical logic demands that the work be performed in one particular order. It would be conceivable that in a complete performance of the *Silmarillion* cycle, the works could be performed in any order (except that *Fëanor* clearly comes first and *The War of Wrath* last) without doing violation to dramatic sense. But the music is not similarly amenable to rearrangement. Even though in the original quartet of works *Húrin* was written first, and *Beren* last, the sketching of the music for the whole of the cycle, and its composition, was always intended as an evolving unity. The theme of Doriath, for example, only partially given in *Húrin*, is clearly a development of its earlier appearances in the first scene of *Fëanor* and (more elaborately) in the fourth scene of *Beren*. To perform the individual sections of the whole in a rearranged order would disturb this carefully designed evolution; and it is similarly expected that any performance of the isolated *Unnumbered Tears* should follow *Beren and Lúthien* and precede *The Children of Húrin.*

This analysis is intended as an exploration of the whole of *The Silmarillion* cycle, and intends to explain how the text and the music were adapted and composed, as well as to give some insight into the mythological, psychological and other considerations which underlay the construction of the work. I should perhaps add that these are purely my own considerations in regard to the sequence of epic scenes which constitute the musical work, and have of course no validity in the context of Tolkien's own considerations in the literary work which underlies the cycle; these considerations are exhaustively dealt with in Christopher Tolkien's *History of Middle-Earth*, especially in volumes 1-5 and 10 onwards, without which indeed the composition of the musical work would have been impossible.

Fëanor

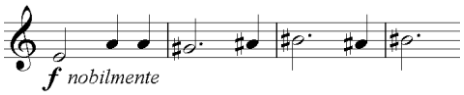
The orchestral prelude derives in every detail from the opening of my third symphony *Ainulindalë*: inevitably, since it describes exactly the same events, the creation of the world in the mythology of Middle-Earth. Both symphony and prelude open with two extended chords for divided strings, one centred on C and one on D (but both chords comprising all the twelve tones of the chromatic scale: a representation of chaos, indeed). Then, in E, the theme of Eru Ilúvatar, the One, is stated by the trombones:

S1



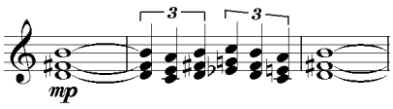
This is successively taken up by bass clarinet, violas, horns and finally trumpets before the theme of the Valar crashes in:

S2



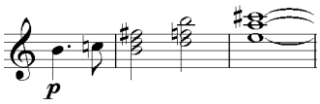
building to a full orchestral climax. Abruptly all is still and a number of individual strands emerge in various parts of the orchestra, each depicting an individual Vala. First we hear the theme of Elbereth, on clarinets, which later becomes a motif for the stars she kindles:

S3



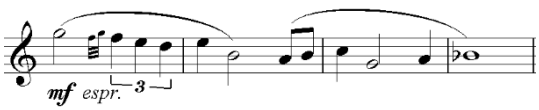
and this is followed almost immediately by the first appearance of the theme of Morgoth, very quietly introduced by trumpet, harp and oboes:

S4



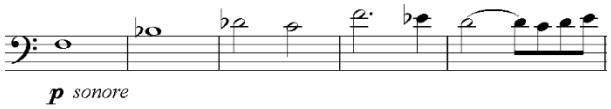
Two further themes appear, but the significance of these is not immediately apparent. One represents Yavanna, the goddess of the Trees, and will later be transformed into the theme of the Two Trees themselves:

S5



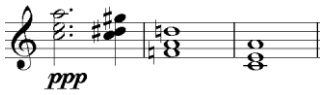
Another, a long sinuous melody rising from the depths, depicts the weavings of Vairë, the Mistress of Dreams. It will return as a pendant to the later theme of the Two Trees (a transformation of **S5**), but it will not recur as a distinct theme in its own right until the very end of *The Fall of Gondolin*, when the complete restatement of the whole theme will signify Tuor's passage through the Night of Nought on his journey to the Blessed Realm:

S6



After a further climax over a pulsing series of rhythms generated by this theme, one final motif—that of Arda, the Earth itself—is heard:

S7



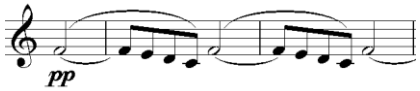
before a thunderous recurrence of No 1 brings to an end both the exposition of the symphony and the prelude to *Fëanor*.

It will have been noted that the theme of Ilúvatar (**S1**) is founded upon a chain of open fourths, and the harmony that accompanied the theme consisted of such a superimposed chain. It is therefore entirely intentional that the male chorus who sing the opening words do so on a series of open fifths, accompanied by **S1** itself:

> *In this Age the children of the One shall come indeed; the hour approaches, and within this hour our hope shall be revealed.*

This is followed immediately by the theme of the Elves, the Firstborn:

S8



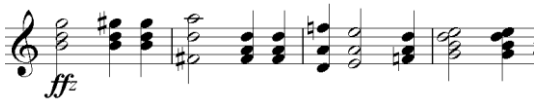
who will look first upon the stars (**S3**).

The female chorus now take over the narrative, to a continuing accompaniment of **S3** as they describe the labours of Elbereth in the creation of the Stars, again often accompanied by the open fourths of Ilúvatar. The theme of the Elves (**S8**) is heard again, and then the first intimation, in the same manner as in the Prelude, of Morgoth (**S4**). At the words

> *high in the North as a challenge to Melkor she set the crown of seven mighty stars to swing,*

the chorus declaim a new theme which will eventually become the motif of Morgoth's Northern fastness in Angband:

S9



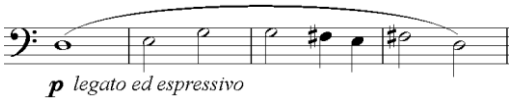
before the reference to

> *the Sickle of the Valar and sign of Doom*

brings a return of **S2**.

Starlight now illumines all the sky, and the figures of the Elves rise from their sleep. **S8** flows continually around the chorus until a new theme finally arises; at present it is a theme of magic, but it will eventually become the long-flowing melody which characterises the Hidden Kingdom, protected by magic, of Doriath:

S10

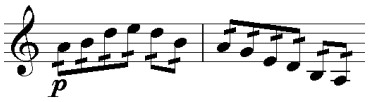


The orchestra eventually falls silent, and the chorus are left unaccompanied to sing of the wonder of the Elves at the sight of the stars (to a series of harmonies founded upon the open fourths of Ilúvatar).

S10 begins to sound again under a shimmering accompaniment of harp, celesta and violins as the chorus sings of the sound of the waters flowing down around the Waters of Awakening (**S7**). Then, as the chorus rhapsodises about "the beauty of the Singers in the days of their youth," the Elves in the days before their fall, the two themes of the Elves intertwine in the orchestra, **S8** sounding out in the violins above the sonorous declamation of **S10** by the horns.

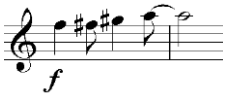
The second scene opens as a sudden interruption of the lyrical interweaving of these two melodies by a sudden reappearance of **S4.** On this occasion it is accompanied by a rushing figure in the strings, which will recur later:

S11



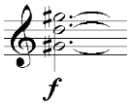
The chorus sings of Melkor, who fell from splendour to contempt. Another jerkily accented theme appears, first in the trumpets and then in the horns:

S12



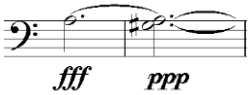
This also will recur when Melkor, later the Enemy Morgoth, seeks to corrupt those whom he envies. There is an initial movement towards the corruption of **S7**, the earth, before the chorus proceeds to talk of Melkor's desire for Light, when the open fourths of the Ilúvatar theme first twist into an augmented fourth:

S13



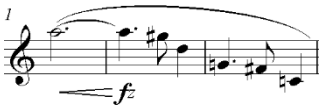
and then seek to combine the new augmented fourth with the old perfect one, producing a semitone discord which is blasted out by the muted horns:

S14



and against which Morgoth's own theme (**S3**) tries to assert itself before it is inverted into a fast-falling phrase:

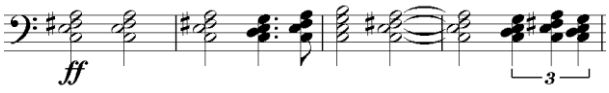
S15



which will also recur, and in due course become associated with Morgoth's creation the Dragon Glaurung. In the meantime the choral passages describing Morgoth's descent into darkness take **S15** and confuse it with the chords of **S13** and **S14** into a blurred and indistinct harmonic darkness of its own.

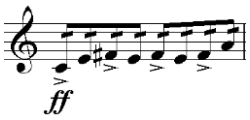
There ensues a passage where the orchestra briefly hints at the creation by Morgoth of the Orcs, the evil race of Middle-Earth from Elves whom he has seduced and twisted to his own ends. Melkor's original **S4** is flung out by the brass, immediately leading to two new themes presented simultaneously—the first a harshly accented phrase representing the Orcs:

S16



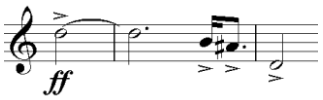
and the second a fast rushing string phrase which will afterwards be used on several occasions for thunderstorms, rain and other similar atmospheric phenomena:

S17



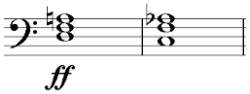
But this latter theme rapidly dissolves into other figurations as the theme of Ilúvatar (**S1**) thunders out, and the Valar intervene to deliver the Elves from the Shadow of Melkor. The theme of the Elves themselves (**S8**) leads into a version of **S15**:

S18



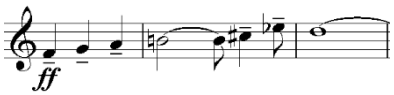
which will later transform itself into the theme of Morgoth's Curse upon the children of Húrin. Now, however, Elbereth's plea to bring the Elves to the Blessed Realm and deliver them from the shadow of Melkor is sung by the female chorus to an accompaniment of **S10** and then **S2**. As the Valar accede to her request, the male chorus sing Mandos's fateful words *So it is doomed* to the phrase that will later characterise Mandos himself:

S19



followed immediately by another phrase which will not recur for some time (until the final scenes of *Beren and Lúthien)* but which represents the notion of an existence beyond death:

S20

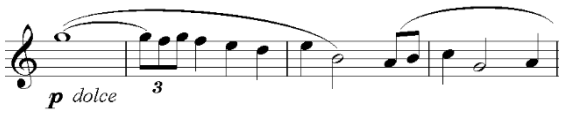


All is peaceful and still as the Two Trees begin to

> *become illuminated by a serene inner radiance, each in turn bending slowly towards each other and again shrouding their branches so that their lights mingle and fade in a solemn alternation*

and the music of Yavanna (**S5**) blossoms forth in an extended orchestral interlude:

S21



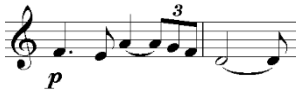
After some while this turns into a recapitulation of **S6** as the chorus sings

> *This is the Noontide of the Blessed Realm, the fullness of its glory and its bliss*

culminating as before in the statement of **S7** before the scene ends with a final reference to **S21**.

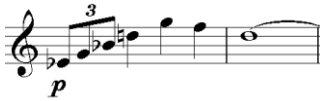
The third scene opens with a new theme representing the House of Finwë, the King of the Noldor in the Blessed Realm, which will later become the theme attached to his youngest son Finrod:

S22



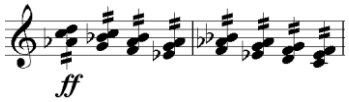
The chorus sings (over a steady accompaniment of **S8**) of the birth of Finwë's eldest son Fëanor, and his motif is at once given out by the horns:

S23



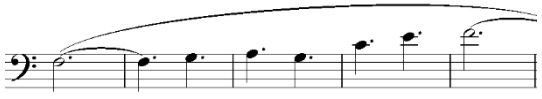
When the chorus describes him as the Spirit of Fire, another new theme appears:

S24



which initially is attached to Fëanor, but later will become a symbol of the physical element of Fire itself. The chorus then goes on to sing of the death of Fëanor's mother, and the grief of Finwë, over an extended series of statements of **S19**, rising to an impassioned climax. As **S19** finally dies away, the chorus turns to Finwë's remarriage to Indis, and the theme of her son Fingolfin appears quietly in the orchestra:

S25

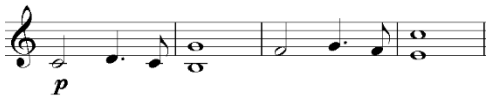


continuing in a passage interwoven with **S22** and **S23**. A quiet passage for four solo violins playing a combination of **S7** and **S22** leads to the description by the chorus of Fëanor's growth to manhood (**S23** and **S24**) and his creation of the first gems, which

> *being set under starlight...would blaze with blue and silver fires, as with the eyes of eagles.*

As with the other themes associated with the Valar, the Powers, their motives also attach themselves to their creations. We have seen how Yavanna's theme (**S5**) has developed into the theme of the Trees, and how Elbereth's **S3** has also become the theme of the Stars. Similarly here the mention of eagles, the creatures of Manwë, who as the Elder King is the vicegerent of Ilúvatar the One in Middle-Earth, take over the theme of Ilúvatar himself, thundered out by the full orchestra. The chorus proceeds to describe Fëanor's creation of the Silmarils from the blended light of the Two Trees (**S23** shading into **S21**) and the first hint of the theme of the Silmarils themselves is heard, shortly to be expanded quietly by the full orchestra:

S26



This theme dominates the remainder of the music of the scene, first in combination with **S21**, and then with **S7**, **S1** and finally in mounting ecstasy **S21** again; but for much of the time it is developed in isolation in music of increasing richness. Finally as Elbereth hallows the Silmarils, and Mandos foretells their fate, **S3** and **S19** accompany the words of the female and male choruses. The return of **S21** leads to further repetitions of **S26**, but the final three bars contain a quiet return of **S8** played by a solo cello.

The second triptych brings a quickening of the dramatic pace, using largely material already developed at some length in the opening scenes. The brief prelude opens with a quiet statement of **S11**, interrupted by brief reminiscences of **S26**; Morgoth is lusting for the Silmarils. Morgoth's own theme (**S4**) leads to the statement of the chorus regarding his sowing of discord among the Elves, to the music already heard in the prelude. The first solo voice heard in the whole work *is* that of Morgoth warning Fingolfin and Finrod against the growing pride of Fëanor. Brief references to **S4**, **S23**, **S25** and **S26** accompany his words before **S11** returns to accompany the chorus as they tell of Fëanor's promotion of rebellion against the Powers (**S23** set against **S2**, leading to a weighty climax).

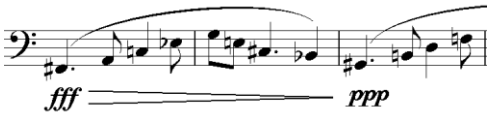
Fingolfin appears before Finwë to warn against the words of Fëanor, in the first dramatic scene of the whole cycle. His words are accompanied by the themes already heard of **S22, S25, S23, S24, S8, S2** and **S22** again, heard in quick succession as a tapestry of sounds. Fëanor's appearance (to **S23**) breaks the texture into faster declamation, and when he threatens Fingolfin with his sword his own theme **S23** is set against the fast and jagged **S12** rising up through the strings. Morgoth's theme (**S4**) is sketched under his words, showing that Fëanor's message is not entirely of his own creation. And **S11** (which might be called the theme of Rumour) surges in (over **S2**) to show that Fëanor's message reveals the complicity of Morgoth in the unrest of the Noldor.

It is Mandos who pronounces sentence of banishment

on Fëanor, over a slow-moving series of chords derived from **S19**, **S1** and **S7**. His admonishments for the future conduct of the sons of Finwë brings in its turn recollections of **S23**, **S22** and **S25**. But as Fingolfin speaks of his forgiveness, Fëanor's thoughts are dominated not by thoughts of reconciliation but of the truth of the predictions of Morgoth, whose voice (heralded by **S4**) is heard as if speaking in Fëanor's ear. But when Morgoth's words turn to the Silmarils (**S26** in the insinuating tones of the vibraphone), Fëanor turns on him and expels him from his gate, and the trumpets and horns blaze out **S26** against **S23** in the woodwind.

There is a sudden and startling change of colour. The double-basses begin a dodecaphonic fugue in a limping 7/8 time, the depiction of the Great Spider, Ungoliant:

S27

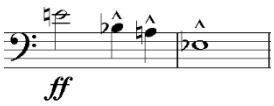


The shape of the phrase gives rise to a series of harmonies based upon diminished seventh chords, which threaten in their own way to disrupt the structure of the melodies as much as Morgoth's diminished fifths and minor seconds (**S13** and **S14**). These too now make their reappearance as Morgoth makes his approach to the Great Spider, and the progress of the fugue, soon disrupted, makes for a series of increasing dissonances, at first gently bruising and then violently insistent. **S21** on the bassoons underlines the purpose of Morgoth's approach, and an even softer **S2** on the horns explains the reason for Ungoliant's hesitation. Morgoth (to a thunderous statement of **S4**) makes his promise to the Spider:

> *if thou hunger still when all is done, then I will give to thee whatsoever thy lust may demand; yea, with both hands.*

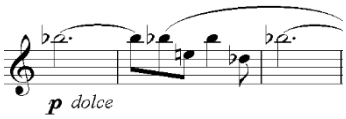
These last words are set to a downward chain of diminished fourths which afterwards will frequently recur in the words of Morgoth and of his creatures:

S28



The fugal treatment of **S27** returns as Ungoliant spins her webs to make an Unlight to protect her and Morgoth as they approach the Trees. As they stand above the Sea, a new theme briefly occurs:

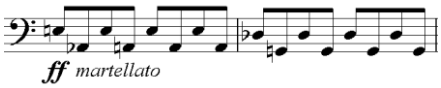
S29



and this too will be greatly expanded later in a more gentle manner. Finally Ungoliant and Morgoth stand looking down upon the Blessed Realm; and **S2** blooms *nobilmente molto* in the full orchestra, for the last time free of the Shadow. But this scene as a whole is a violent and extended interruption of a score that has until now been comparatively free of discord.

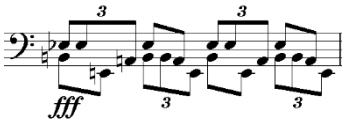
Fëanor and Fingolfin stand before the throne of the Elder King as Fingolfin extends the hand of friendship to his brother and has his offer of reconciliation accepted. **S8** leads through **S25**, **S22** and **S23** to a tranquil episode as the chorus sings gently of the final Mingling of the Lights of the Trees, in a radiantly concordant passage wherein **S21** is further developed as if to restore the peacefulness of a score that has recently been so extensively shattered; but it is not to be. An insistent rhythm on the basis of Morgoth's diminished fifth underpins the approach of Morgoth and Ungoliant, and this rhythmic repetition will henceforth recur in all four parts of the cycle:

S30



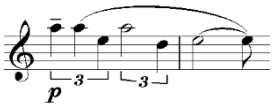
The destruction of the Trees by Morgoth and Ungoliant is an episode of violence and discord unparalleled before in the work. Over the insistent rhythm of **S30** the various themes associated with Morgoth—**S4, S13, S14** and **S17**—are combined even with Fëanor's **S24**, now for the first time identified as a theme of Fire and hence of Destruction to underpin the narrative of the chorus. Over (or more usually, submerged beneath) all the tumult of the orchestra, the theme of Ungoliant (**S27**) with its disruptive melody and even more disruptive harmonies jars and crashes against the rest of the music. Finally the male chorus breaks away in a passage underlined by an even more chaotic version of **S30**:

S31



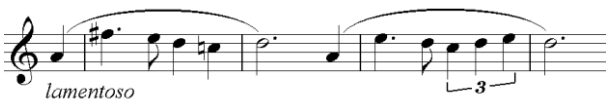
and **S3** is heard against rearing chords in the strings as Elbereth looks out across the darkening of Valinor. In the distance is heard the voices of the Elves beside the Sea, like the wailing of gulls, and **S29** now takes on a new form:

S32



A new extended melody begins to unfold, at first played by an oboe and then taken up by a disembodied piccolo over string harmonics; it represents the idea of Loss:

S33



and this theme now introduces a new scene. The Valar, with Fëanor before them, sit in darkness and ponder their fate. Elbereth (introduced by her own theme **S3** and

supported by that and **S21, S26, S23, S33** and **S4**) praises the foresight of Fëanor, who by creating the Silmarils has preserved the light of the Trees, so that they may be restored and the malice of Melkor confounded. Fëanor remains silent, and the Elder King now presses the case. The Elder King's music is unique in the cycle (as indeed is his position in Middle-Earth). He declaims, rather than sings, his lines on one immutable note, which preserves itself against all influence from elsewhere. It is this resistance to change, this impervious resistance, which Melkor/Morgoth has already sought to emulate. His words to Ungoliant, and his earlier words to Fingolfin, have begun as if in imitation of the Elder King, on one note alone, but always they have fragmented, shifted, twisted the line, as in **S28**. Now we hear what it is that Melkor has envied and tried to copy.

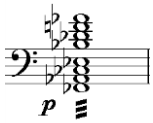
This may be an appropriate point to mention the matter of *voice amplification*. In concert performances, it will always be necessary to *amplify* the voices of the Valar, and the orchestration is written with that in mind. The amplification for the Elder King and Elbereth should be slightly vague and distant, with a halo of echo around the voice; that for Mandos (and for Ulmo, when he appears in *The Fall of Gondolin*) should be slightly less vague, slightly more implacable; that for Morgoth should be very powerful and all-embracing, if possible surrounding the audience on all sides, although the voice itself may often be required to sing quietly. Finally, Morgoth's creatures, Sauron and Glaurung (when they appear in their turn in *Beren and Luthien* and *The Children of Húrin*) and the multiple-voiced Ungoliant, should be amplified in a similar manner to Morgoth himself, but unlike Morgoth the amplification should not be omnidirectional but originate for a specific point on the stage or platform. In staged performances similar considerations should apply to the amplification, but it may also be necessary to amplify the chorus (to ensure audibility, most particularly of the words) and, in places with unhelpful acoustics, to assist some or all of the solo voices.

The Elder King appeals to Fëanor to grant Elbereth's request: he is accompanied by his own representative **S1**, Fëanor's **S23**, Elbereth's **S3** and finally the melody of **S26** associated with the Silmarils. Fëanor remains unmoved. Over a muted statement of **S23** and **S26** he refuses to comply. He cannot repeat his creation (**S21**) and to break the Silmarils will break his own life (**S24**, then **S8**), first of all the Elves in the Blessed Realm. Mandos (**S19**) ominously states "Not the first," and Fëanor hears the whispered voice of Melkor in his ear warning him as before that the Silmarils will not be safe if the Valar will possess them (**S4** against **S26**, then **S2**). Fëanor declares finally that he will *not* yield the Silmarils of free will. **S33** reappears, now in a stronger form than before, combined with **S23** in the bass, and when Fëanor reminds the Valar that Melkor is of *their* kindred, **S2** and **S19** also combine with **S33**.

In the original score at this point the chorus broke in to tell of the killing of Finwë by Melkor. At a later stage, the version of this scene given in the main body of the score was substituted and this is the preferred version for all performances (the original is no longer included in published editions). The music for the two versions is very similar, except that the original version with chorus, being shorter, considerably reduces the recurrence of the themes.

The description which follows relates to the revised version. Maedhros, the eldest son of Fëanor, rushes in. He has no independent theme of his own (in the original version of the score, he had no individual solo music to sing) but his arrival is heralded by a flurry of Fëanor's own **S23** followed immediately by **S22**. When he declares that the Silmarils are gone (**S26**), Fëanor falls prostrate upon his face, and Maedhros continues his narrative directly to the Elder King. The narrative is delivered over an agitated *tremolo* chord:

S34

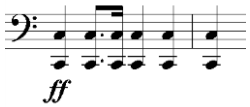


which also forms the background to the chorus narrative in the original version of the scene. Maedhros mentions the departure of Fëanor (**S 3**) and then the darkness which began to grow (**S27** and **S4**). The chord of **S34** rises ever higher and at the words

We heard the sound of great blows struck

another new theme appears, the rhythm of which will later assume massive importance in *The Children of Húrin*:

S35

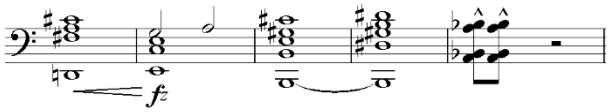


At the moment of the description of Finwë's death **S22** rings out in the high woodwind, and suddenly the scoring drops back to the agitated *tremolo* of **S34**, underpinned by the ominous rumbling of **S35** and a deep statement of **S27**. Then **S4** and **S22** lead back to **S26** as Maedhros describes how they discovered the theft of the Silmarils, and Fëanor rising pronounces his curse upon Melkor:

And here I curse Melkor, naming his Morgoth, the Black Foe of the World.

He rushes away into the darkness as the long scene comes to an end. The curse itself is underpinned by a series of powerful chords:

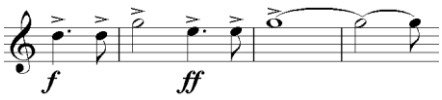
S36



and then by Melkor/Morgoth's own **S4** and increasingly desperate statements of **S23**.

The final scene is introduced by a flowing version of **S33** given out by the full orchestra. The scene is set by the light of flaming torches and **S24** precedes Fëanor's words. He addresses the assembled Elves (**S8**) and castigates the "jealous Valar*"* (**S2**), who cannot keep the Elves or themselves safe from their Enemy (**S4**, then **S12**). He refers to the theft of *his* treasure (**S26**) and rouses the Elves to fury (**S23**, **S22** and even **S32**). In the Blessed Realm, he declares, there once was light (**S21**) but now there is only darkness (**S33**, now on muted cellos). He conjures up a vision of what the Elves have left behind in Middle-Earth, to an extensive recapitulation of the music which concluded the First Scene. At his words "Come away!" a new theme is heard, declaimed over the original material:

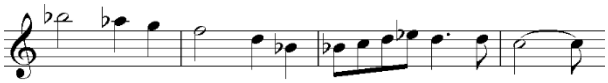
S37



and this recurs several times during the passage which follows. The music blossoms forth in fiery eagerness as he calls on the Elves to follow him out of the Blessed Realm (**S23**). Although **S37** sounds through the texture, there is also another new theme here, sung by Fëanor to his words

> *Fair shall the end be, though long and hard shall be the road!*:

S38

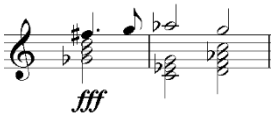


As he calls on the Elves to abandon their treasures, **S26** sounds briefly followed during the following section by **S23** and **S4**; but then Fëanor turns to the new treasures that will be theirs when they have "conquered and regained the Silmarils" (**S26** again) and that

> *we and we alone will be lords of the unsullied light, and masters of the bliss and beauty of Earth,*

it is **S8** which sounds beneath his words and leads into a new theme altogether:

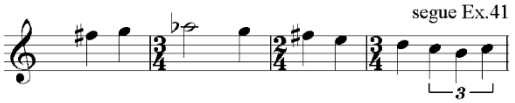
S39



This theme, the Oath of the Sons of Fëanor, will assume major importance throughout the rest of the cycle.

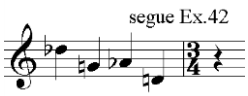
As explained above in the section on the text, the text of the Oath itself, which now follows, is wildly different from anything else in the cycle. For the same reason the music also inhabits a different and more primitive world, with wildly fluctuating rhythm:

S40



but it also contains within it reference to former themes; and, of course, the opening bars of **S40** are a direct reflection of **S39**. At the reference to *Morgoth Bauglir* a new theme refers back to Melkor's original diminished fourths (**S28**), now turned back within themselves:

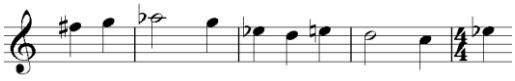
S41



and this is immediately succeeded by a brief allusion to a new theme which later will become extremely important, at the words

> *be he mortal dark that in after days on earth shall dwell*:

S42



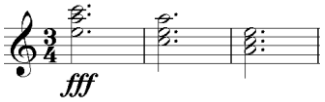
The whole of the Oath is here unaccompanied except for two pairs of timpani, which create chords and unisons underpinning the primitive and highly chromatic harmonies of the semi-chorus (Fëanor himself plus the seven solo voices of his sons). The conclusion of the oath is heralded by trumpet fanfares and a massive restatement of **S39**.

The music is interrupted by the words of the Elder King, on his usual single note (this time B♭ rather than B♮) over his harmonic fourths and **S1**. He warns Fëanor and his followers not to go forth in pursuit of Morgoth (**S39** again) for "the lies of Morgoth thou shalt unlearn in bitterness" (**S12**, now expanded) even though he is admittedly one of the Valar (**S2**). He concludes with a massive restatement of **S1** by the full orchestra, over which Fëanor begins his response, "Is sorrow foreboded to us?" with a full restatement of the theme of Loss (**S33**). He says they will now try a new and different road (**S10**), for it "may be that the One (**S1**) has set in me a fire (**S24**) greater than thou knowest (**S23**). Such hurt at the least will I do to the foe of the Valar (**S38**) that even the Mighty in the Ring of Doom (**S2**) shall wonder to hear it."

This last paragraph of Fëanor's oration is, as may be seen, a positive patchwork of various already-heard themes, the whole now bound into an all-embracing declaration. His own **S23** is blasted out by the full orchestra as he leads the Elves forth into exile; but the final word is given to a baleful statement of **S39** on the brass.

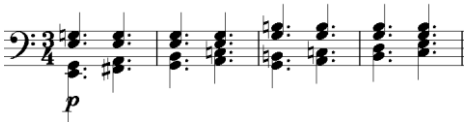
The third triptych opens with a short orchestral prelude, entirely constructed around intertwined canonic statements of **S32**, the theme of the Sea. The first scene concerns Fëanor's attempt to seize ships from the Elves of the Havens, their refusal, the subsequent armed struggle, and the rising of the Ocean in fury. At the climax of the orchestral prelude a new theme extends itself in large phrases over the repetitions of **S32**; this may be called the theme of Ulmo, because in *The Fall of Gondolin* (and later) it represents the Lord of the Ocean:

S43



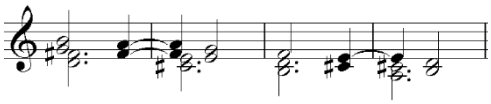
S8 appears in the bassoons as the chorus sing of the grief of the Elves of the Havens at the forthcoming exile of their kindred. But they will not assist, and a new theme appears:

S44



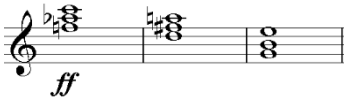
which finally develops into a rhythmically jagged phrase:

S45



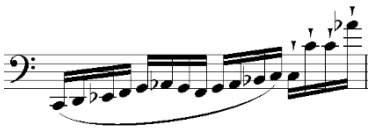
Fëanor's **S23** rises in conflict with the emollient **S22** over a ground of **S32**, followed shortly by **S25** as the dispute between the Elves grows. When Finrod sings of the white ships as "the work of our hands" **S32** is increasingly repeated over a series of jagged syncopated rhythms, with **S43** soaring above, before hints of Morgoth's **S4** echo Fëanor's previous drawing of his sword in Scene Four and the strife of the Kinslaying begins (**S44** and **S45**). As the sea rises in wrath Ulmo's **S43** transforms itself into a chromatically shifting version, which will eventually take on a separate identity as the theme of Storms:

S46



coupled with a number of other phrases suggestive of the anger of the Sea:

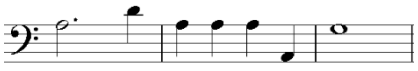
S47



which, again, will recur in *The Fall of Gondolin*. It is these themes, **S46** and **S47**, which will dominate the succeeding orchestral interlude (depicting the storm which wrecks many of the ships) in combinations with **S32**, **S44** and **S45**, finally dying down as **S46** gives way to **S32**.

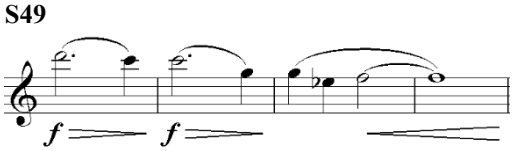
The new scene opens with a grinding statement of **S39** on muted brass, underpinned with irregular drumbeats. The fleeing Exiles have come into the North of the Blessed Realm, and a new theme suggestive of the shores of Middle-Earth is solemnly given out by the trombones:

S48



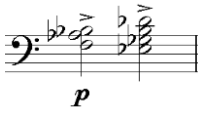
Mandos appears to the Exiles, and pronounces "the Prophecy of the North, and the Doom of the Valar." His opening words are declaimed (with massive amplification) over his own **19** and then lead to his pronouncement of banishment against Fëanor and his followers:

S49



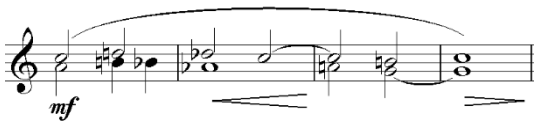
Their oath shall drive them (**S39**) and yet they shall never achieve their aim (**S26**), because of treason and suspicion between themselves:

S50



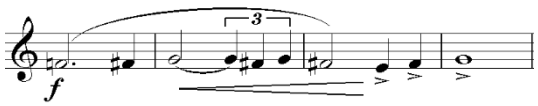
And because they have shed the blood of their kin (**S44**), Mandos continues, they shall pay the price with their own blood (**S49**); for though they may not die, they may be slain "by weapon and by torment and by grief":

S51



S19 resounds over and above his sentences. Finally he reveals the ultimate fate of the Elves: to fade "as shadows of regret" before the younger race of mortals who will succeed them. This is the first statement in the cycle of the *second* phrase of what will eventually become the theme of Men:

S52



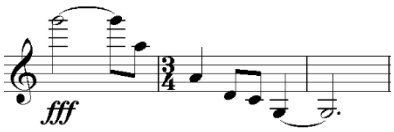
"The Valar have spoken" Mandos finally declaims, as **S19** and **S39** strive against each other in a rising phrase on full orchestra. Fëanor is unmoved (**S39**); the Elves will go on regardless (**38** blasted out by the horns). **S52**, now in a more extended form, is heard in the woodwind as he states

> *the deeds that we do shall be the matter of song*
> *until the last days of the earth*

but his words are interrupted by sudden darkness and the voice of the Elder King, resigned and full of pity (**S1** again, but leading back again to **S52**). Mandos pronounces that Fëanor will soon come to him (**S19**) and the scene closes over gentle restatements of **S48**.

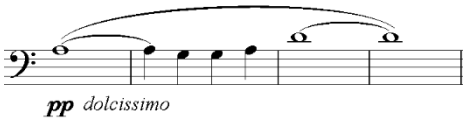
The scene changes to the dark shores of Middle-Earth and returns to Morgoth and Ungoliant (**S27**, stirring sinisterly on bassoons and violas). Ungoliant's voice is represented by four female singers, amplified and heavily distorted, but her theme of **S27** continues to sound in woodwind and xylophone, and the vocal harmonies are built on her chains of minor thirds. Morgoth refuses to deliver to her more than he has already done (**S4**, leading to minor seconds in an almost exact recapitulation of the music already heard when he promised to Ungoliant "whatsoever thy lust may demand"). Ungoliant in her response refers back to **S28** and her final words are an exact reflection of Morgoth's own, complete with minor second harmonies. It is her theme which now rises ever higher over Morgoth's continuing refusal, and only the reference to the Silmarils (**S26**) interrupts this. Morgoth in his desperation summons his spirits of fire, the Balrogs, to his aid; their theme is a wide-ranging plunging phrase passing down through the orchestra over four octaves:

S53



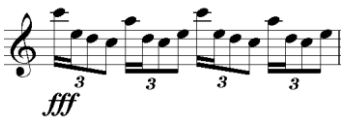
and this phrase, after a brief but violent struggle, overcomes Ungoliant's own **S27**, finally dying down to Morgoth's minor seconds as the Balrogs drive Ungoliant away. Again there is a gentle theme heard, a new phrase depicting the shores of Middle-Earth:

S54



and accompanied by echoes of **S32** as Fëanor and Fingolfin (or Maedhros) step ashore. "Whom shall they bear hither first?" (**S22** and **S25**) the latter enquires; and Fëanor (with **S23** leading directly into ferocious statements of **S24**) declares that he has no need of his allies or his brother's aid. He orders that fire be set to the ships, to a fragmented version of **S24** deriving from its flickering harmonic structure:

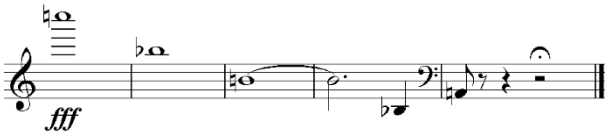
S55



This theme will continue, at ever-increasing volume and pitch, to dominate the whole of the remainder of the score to the final bars. Finrod, abandoned in Middle-Earth (**S22** and **S32** in counterpoint) sees the light of the burning beneath the clouds (**S54**, now clamant in the trumpet) and realises that he has been betrayed (**S50**). He follows after Fëanor as the Moon rises (**S7**) and his armies blow their trumpets as they enter Middle-Earth (with a version of **S21** recalled by the orchestra).

The wordless Epilogue, as **S55** continues on its relentless way, recalls **S7** as Morgoth comes forth (**S4**) to challenge Fëanor (**S23**). It is these two themes which accompany their combat, but the music also brings back references to the Silmarils (**S26**) and the Oath (**S39**); and finally Fëanor's **S23** rises through the orchestra is a disjointed statement by the piccolo trumpet at the extreme height of its range as Fëanor falls prostrate beneath the feet of Morgoth. The incessant **S55** finally ceases and the final phrase heard is a vastly extended version of the Oath (**S39**), stretched downwards over a span of five full octaves and accompanied by the thudding series of Morgoth's minor seconds in the timpani:

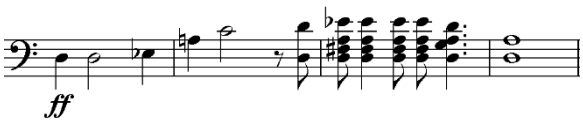
56



Beren and Lúthien

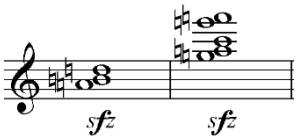
This second part of the cycle of epic scenes from *The Silmarillion* opens with a brief and violent prologue in which events prior to the story are detailed. Following Fëanor's invasion of Middle-Earth in pursuit of Morgoth, there occurs (some 450 years later in Tolkien's original mythology, but this can be imagined as a much shorter space of time in the context of the cycle here) *Dagor Bragollach, the Battle of Sudden Flame*; and the work opens with these words declaimed unaccompanied by the male chorus:

S57



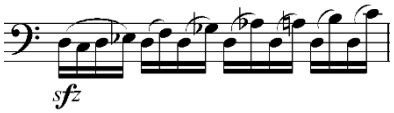
The resemblance of the opening of this phrase to **S4**, the theme of Morgoth, is of course no accident. There follows a brief orchestral passage depicting the battle itself, which consists of three elements: a series of sharp discords in woodwind and brass,

S58



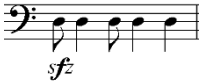
a rushing series of chromatically altered scales in the strings,

S59



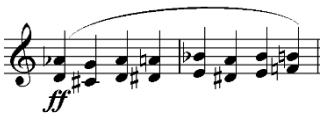
and, underpinning it all, a repetitive rhythm which derives from the latter part of **S57**:

S60



The chorus, now with its female members added, enters with a description of the battle and the forces summoned by Morgoth. Among these are mentioned wolves and serpents, and the music winds itself into a chromatic phrase:

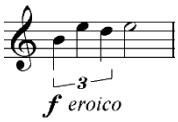
S61



It will be noted that this phrase is once again underpinned by Morgoth's augmented-fourth harmonies (see, for example, **S28**) and it will later become the theme of Morgoth's lieutenant Sauron.

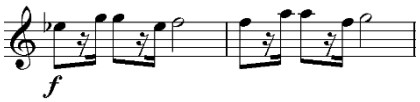
Finrod is involved in the battle; his characteristic **S22** sounds through the texture. He is overwhelmed by force of numbers and the mortal men Beren now appears to rescue him. Beren has a characteristic phrase which recurs in many guises, but its initial appearance is brief:

S62



With his help, the forces of Sauron and Morgoth are driven back and Finrod is rescued. A sprightly theme characterises his heroic deeds:

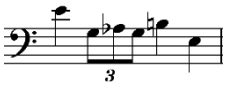
S63



Finrod swears an oath (**S22**, with **S62** in the bass) to Beren that he will aid him in any future need (hints of **S61**), and departs from the battlefield. **S63** subsides into a rocking bass as **S59** finally dies away.

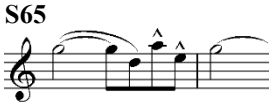
The chorus sing of Finrod's retreat to his fortress of Nargothrond, and a characteristic figure in the bass (representing this stronghold) underpins their narrative:

S64



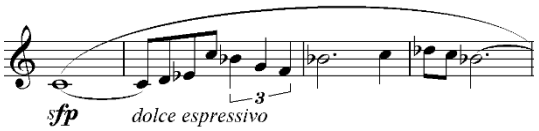
There is a brief reference to **S4** as the chorus turn to the unfortunate Gorlim (who has been seen as one of Beren's followers in the battle) and his capture by Sauron. Gorlim's characteristic theme is initially given out by the woodwind:

S65



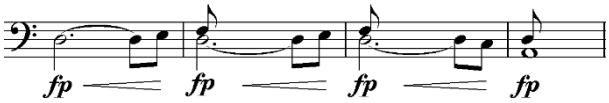
and Gorlim is brought before Sauron (**S61**, with **S60** on the bass drum). The captive Gorlim is approached by Sauron: **S61** appears insinuatingly beneath his words. Sauron aspires to Morgoth's monotone (itself an aspiration to the Elder King's one note) but whereas Morgoth in his most powerful mode nearly attains Manwë's single note, Sauron, tugged around by his chromatic theme, rarely achieves more than a vocal line which moves one semitone at a time. That is the case here. Gorlim (whose **S65** continually accompanies his words) is tormented by thoughts of his lost wife, Eilinel:

S66



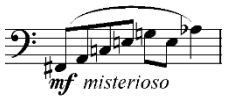
and eventually he allows himself to be daunted by Sauron. The theme of Daunting is at first heard in isolation by itself:

S67



but eventually it will become combined with the rhythm of **S60** and take on an independent existence. There is one other theme associated with Sauron, and it is the theme of Enchantment, his power not merely to dominate but also to insinuate thoughts into the minds of others. Sauron explains to Gorlim that he has been deluded by a phantom, for Eilinel (**S66**) his wife is already dead:

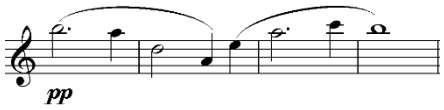
S68



This theme, like **S61,** derived ultimately from my earlier work on *The Lord of the Rings* (where they represented respectively Sauron as the Dark Lord and the Ring itself), but in the form they take in *The Silmarillion* they also occurred in the piano rondo *Akallabêth*. It is easier in this dramatic situation to forget the *Lord of the Rings* context, although the use of the same themes here is not inconsistent with their use elsewhere. Sauron has the treacherous Gorlim executed; **S67** rises up through the texture, is succeeded by a reference to **S16** and **S30** as the Orcs close in on the chained prisoner, and is then abruptly truncated to be succeeded by rapid repetitions of **S61**.

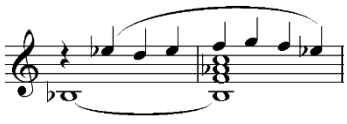
The scene changes to the shores of a desolate lake in the highlands where Beren (the choral line refers to **S62**) wanders as an outlaw. The lake itself has a drear and misty theme, full of open fourths and fifths in the harmonies:

S69



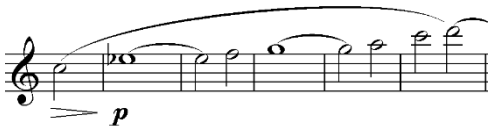
and this theme remains largely unaltered, without additional harmonisation or any modulation, as the chorus sings of Beren's life of wandering. Beren himself now sings for the first time, of Gorlim astray or dead in the forest (**S65**) and of his weariness and loneliness. A new theme, over the same dragging and persistent bass, underlines his words. The opening interval and first three notes of the theme echo Beren's own **S62**:

S70



At the end of Beren's "aria" a new melody extends itself in the highest register of the strings over the persistent repetitions of **S70**, like a vision of peace:

S71

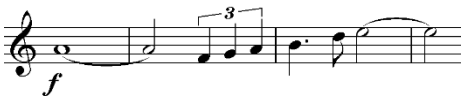


and **S70** itself peters away into nothingness.

The textures darken, as the chorus describe Beren falling into unconsciousness. Repetitions of **S69** lead to the return of **S65** as the wraith of Gorlim appears to him;

apart from one brief reference to **S4**, Gorlim's words are entirely accompanied by variants of **S65** in varying rhythms while his words are sung to a developed version of **S67**. As he vanishes, **S69** reappears in the double-basses. Beren rises, and proclaims his desire for vengeance:

S72



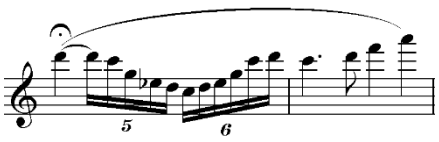
and then frantic repetitions of **S62** accompany his words as he sings (to the melody of **S70**):

No more shall hidden bowstring sing,
no more shall shaven arrows wing!
No more my hunted head shall lie
upon the heath beneath the angry sky.

The chorus take up the theme as they sing of his departure from the North, and references to **S4** die away into misty chromatic scales. The interlude which follows opens with **S62** followed immediately by **S72** as the chorus sing of the perils of Beren's journey southwards; fleeting reference to **S69** leads suddenly and unexpectedly to an *fff* restatement of **S27** from *Fëanor*; it is Ungoliant and her progeny who are hunting the fleeing mortal. A reference by the chorus to "the long night before the coming of the Sun" brings back **S7**, but this is again overwhelmed by **S27**, now rising to *ffff* and *largamente molto*.

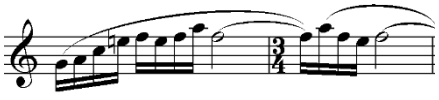
There is a sudden change of atmosphere, as the woodland glade in Doriath is revealed. A solo flute onstage plays delicate arabesques, at first over held string chords:

S73



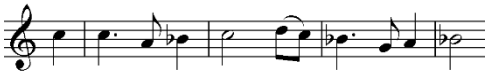
and then unaccompanied:

S74



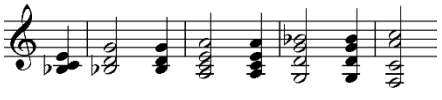
With its repeated melodic refrain, the scene of meeting between Beren and Lúthien constitutes a closed form of its own. The chorus sings, at first unaccompanied:

S75



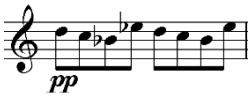
and then with the flute weaving arabesques around more sustained harmonies:

S76



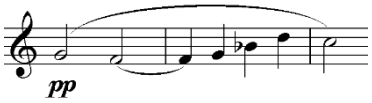
as Lúthien runs into the glade and begins to dance. Her words are accompanied by a delicate filigree on the harp:

S77



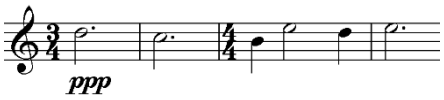
and the references in her song to Ilúvatar (**S1**), Elbereth (**S3**), Doriath (**S10**), the Elves (**S8**) are all accompanied by the appropriate themes repeated from *Fëanor*; the only new theme which is heard being that of Lúthien herself:

S78



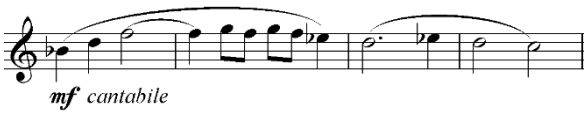
which is suddenly interrupted by **S62** as Beren stumbles into the glade. As he stops as if enchanted the two themes of Beren and Lúthien, **S77** and **S62** are combined into a new melody:

S79



before the chorus resumes the refrain of **S75**. Lúthien flees into the forest, and Beren is left *lonely still to roam in the silent forest listening*; a new theme now appears, that of Beren's desire:

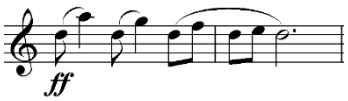
S80



which is repeated twice before the solo flute brings back a wistful echo of **S73**.

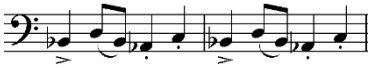
With sudden liveliness the chorus takes up its refrain **S75** again over an accompaniment of whirling flute and *pizzicato* strings as Beren sees Lúthien dancing beneath the moon on a distant hilltop. At the climax of the verse a new theme emerges *con slancio* on the full orchestra:

S81



and this theme continues to sound as Lúthien calls to Beren to join her in the dance. As Beren starts after her into the forest, a sudden chill descends on the music, but the dance themes continue to be heard in bassoons and strings:

S82

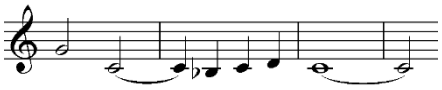


The chorus returns to its refrain of **S75** but this is now much slower as Beren wanders through the shivering forest in search of Lúthien. **S62** returns and this in turn

leads to another new theme, sung by the chorus to the words

He sought her ever, wandering far
where leaves of years were thickly strewn:

S83



Beren calls to Tinúviel through the forest, as **S83** wells up in the orchestra and then gives way to other themes (**S3**, **S8** and **S52**) before **S83** returns *ppp* as Beren sings:

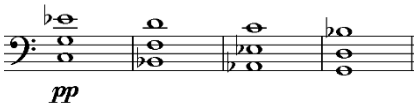
The woods are bare!
Ere spring were born, the spring hath died!

and **S79** reappears as Lúthien returns to Beren's side, forming an accompaniment to the chorus's **S75**. The still quiet restatement of that refrain is accompanied by rustling strings and wind, with **S62** forming a shifting bass line beneath. This in turn gives way, still to the accompaniment of rustling strings, to a full restatement of the solo flute theme from the beginning of the scene (**S74**) over two statements of **S80**.

The music quivers with ecstasy as **S75** re-emerges in the chorus, now very slow and delicate, and accompanied by statements of **S62** and **S77** drifting in the violins, flowing woodwind arpeggios and the ever-rustling strings. As the chorus bring their final statement of **S75** to a close, and darkness enshrouds the scene as the lovers fall into a long embrace, **S71** returns, again in the highest register of the violins, accompanied by the gentle movement of **S70** and hints of **S77** flecked in the harp. The curtain falls very slowly as **S70** turns from the minor to the major for the final chord.

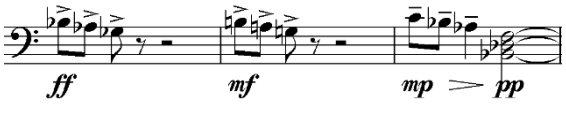
The prelude to the second act is a complete and full restatement of the whole of the Doriath melody **S10** with the solo flute strongly featured. Thingol, the King of Doriath and Lúthien's father, now appears and interrogates Beren to a descending series of chords:

S84



to which Lúthien (**S78**) responds. Her reference to Beren's many brave deeds bring back a reference to **S63**; indeed, it may be noted here that, after the profligate use of new melodic material in Scene Three, Scene Four confines itself with much greater circumspection to the use of existing themes. Thingol's angry response to Lúthien uses **S62**, **S10** and **S84**; Beren's reply takes up the melody of **S80** and contains references to **S27**, **S8** and **S78** before **S80** returns; there are then further references to **S63**, **S24**, **S8**, **S62**, **S78**, **S77** and **S79** as Beren declares before Thingol his love for Lúthien. At that moment there is a sudden convulsive theme hammered out by the full orchestra:

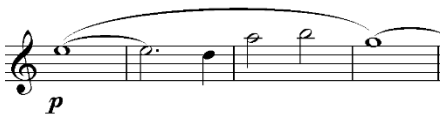
S85



as Thingol, in a cold tone, declares *Death you have earned with those words*; and indeed this theme is the theme of Death.

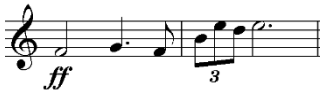
Beren is undismayed (**S63**); he holds up the ring of Finrod Felagund (**S22**) and reminds Thingol of his service on *the battlefield of the North* (57). Melian leans hastily over to Thingol:

S86



and warns him that Beren's fate is entwined with his. But Thingol can think only of his daughter (**S78**, followed by **S85**). He acknowledges Beren's deeds (**S22** and **S63**); but these "avail not to win the daughter of Thingol and Melian" (**S78** entwined with **S84** and **S86**). He has a price to extract, and **S26** hints already at what this might be; his oblique references to "the fires of Morgoth" (**S24**) and "the powers of the Elven-kingdoms" (**S8**) which "do not daunt you" (**S63**) leads back to a restatement of **S26** accompanied by the rhythms of **S60** *molto grandioso* on the full orchestra. He demands "a Silmaril from Morgoth's crown," whereupon Beren may claim Lúthien as his bride (**S79** and **S80**), even though "the fate of the earth lie within the Silmarils" (reference back here to the end of the first triptych of *Fëanor* with **S19**). Beren laughs, and promises to perform Thingol's will, as **S26** becomes a new phrase with the addition of **S62**:

S87



A complex web of **S26**, **S87**, **S77**, **S78** and **S84** accompany Beren as he departs on his quest; but the phrase which emerges from this is Melian's **S86** as she warns Thingol that he has "doomed either your daughter or yourself." Thingol's reply is unwavering: "I sell not to Elves (**S8**) or Men (**S42**) those whom I love and cherish (**S78**) above all treasure" (**S26**). One final muttering of **S62** is heard over an extended restatement of **S10**, which again brings back the solo flute from the prologue, now brooding and dark. The reference here is to the legend of the flautist and minstrel Daeron, who went into exile from Doriath in Tolkien's original myths.

The scene changes to Nargothrond, where Beren appears before Finrod. The whole of this scene consists of already heard musical material: Beren's plea for aid is accompanied by **S62**, **S22**, **S72**, **S85** and **S80**; Finrod's reply acknowledging his debt and his oath and explaining the guards that Morgoth has set about the Silmarils is accompanied by **S64**, **S26**, **S23**, **S4** and **S53** culminating in an exact quote of **S26** from the first triptych of *Fëanor* where the Silmarils were first seen. Finrod goes on to refer to the Oath of Fëanor and his sons (**S39**) which conflicts with his own oath (**S22**). There then follows a choral restatement of the Oath of Fëanor recapitulating the material from the second triptych of *Fëanor* but now the timpani chords which originally accompanied the Oath are replaced by a full orchestral accompaniment. Finrod stands and takes his crown from his head (**S22**, followed by a turbulent variation on **S64**; he laments the "shadow of our curse" (**S49**) before **S22** is haltingly but loudly blasted out by the full orchestra.

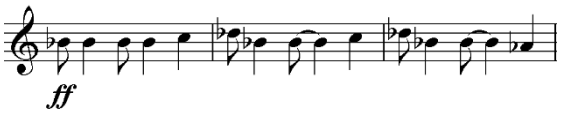
Beren (**S62**) reaffirms Finrod's rightful claim to the crown (**S22** and **S64**) as the scene ends.

There now follows a turbulent orchestral interlude which takes as its basis **S10** but combines it in rapid and kaleidoscopic counterpoint with **S8**, the latter part of **S6**, and **S4** finally culminating in a downward chromatic slide reminiscent of **S61** as Sauron captures Finrod and Beren (this material was originally written as part of the development section of the *Third Symphony*). He interrogates them to a heavy statement of **S61** simultaneously stated at normal speed and at half-speed a fifth below. This counterpoint continues beneath Finrod's evasive replies, referring to *tears and distress* (**S4**), *burning fires and flowing blood* (**S24**). Finrod feigns ignorance of what has transpired in Nargothrond (**S64** and **S22**), even denying his own abdication. Sauron is unimpressed (**S14**) but goes on to ask after the "fair white body" of Lúthien (**S77** in the highest reaches of the oboe, accompanied by **S60** and the harmonies of **S14**). This enrages Beren, and his grim expression arouses Sauron's scepticism. **S67** returns in a fragmented form on muted trumpets and horns; Beren attempts to deflect suspicion (**S62**) but Sauron advances towards them and unveils his cloak (**S61**, as before in counterpoint at the fifth).

The contest of wizardry between Sauron and Finrod is told in verse, as in the fragment of *The Lay of Leithian* introduced into the published *Silmarillion*, and is given to the chorus. **S67** now takes on a new form, using the rhythm of **S60**, as the chorus sing

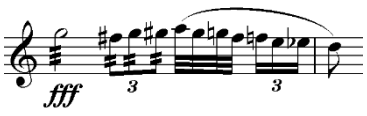
He chanted a song of wizardry,
of piercing, opening, of treachery:

S88



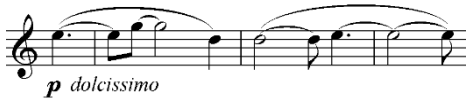
Finrod's theme soars higher above the chorus (**S22**) but Sauron's **S61** in increasing agitation overwhelms it. Finally Finrod "falls before the Throne" and **S22**, **S61** and **S62** subside before a massive eruption of wind and thunder. Beren and Finrod are seen in their dungeon. Beren offers to tell all to Sauron to save Finrod's life (**S22** and **S62**), releasing him from his oath; but Finrod (**S8**) warns that neither of them would ever escape from Sauron's clutches (**S62**, **S61** and **S4**) if once he knew their quest (**S26**). But Sauron has overheard their words (**S61**, again in counterpoint at the fifth), and while declining to save "the outlaw mortal" (**S42**), resolves to preserve "the undying Elvenking" (**S22** and **S8**) who "could suffer much that no man might endure." The rhythm of **S60** thunders out as a wolf appears and advances on the prisoners:

S89



Finrod breaks his bonds and struggles with the wolf (**S61**, **S89**, **S62** and **S22** in violent opposition) and breaks its neck; but he falls mortally wounded in the fight. As he falls back into Beren's arms a new theme is heard:

S90



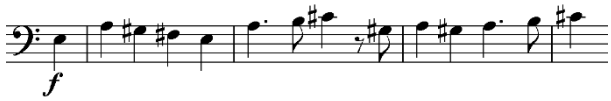
Those familiar with Donald Swann's settings of Tolkien in *The road goes ever on* will recognise this phrase as being one written by Tolkien himself as part of his setting of *Namárië*, Galadriel's farewell to the Fellowship of the Ring on their departure from Lothlórien. Its use here is deliberate, for this is a theme of farewell. Finrod dying (**S22**) tells Beren (**S62**) of his departure to his "long rest in the timeless halls beyond the seas and the mountains" (**S8**). The orchestra refers to the theme of Mandos (**S17**) before a solo violin and cello whisper a last farewell (**S90**) and Finrod dies (**S85**).

A voice is heard from above; Lúthien sings of the wonders of nature and of the Elvenstars. The music for this song originated in a separate setting of Sam's song in *The Lord of the Rings* although a number of alterations were made. **S85** returns at the end of the verse as Beren raises himself in defiance. At his words

beyond all towers strong and high,
beyond all mountains steep,

a new phrase will subsequently recur:

S91

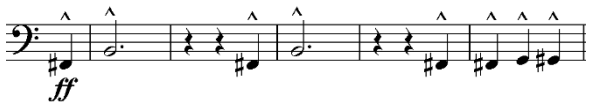


The phrase of *Namárië* (**S90**) continues to recur around the gentle restatements of **S85** as he brings the song to an end on the word *farewell*. The orchestra at once take up again the opening phrase of **S91**, Lúthien's voice responds with the second phrase:

I hear a song far under welling,

and Beren's own **S62** recurs again as she hears his voice. But Sauron too has heard her (**S61**, yet again with counterpoint at the fifth) and seeks to confront her. She overwhelms him by the power of light (**S77** and **S78** rising above **S61**); she threatens him with annihilation (**S68**, stated both as a sequence of notes and as a simultaneously sounded chord). Sauron rises in defiance:

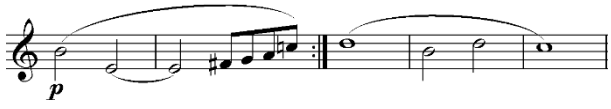
S92



and **S68** forms both the melody and (at eight times the speed) the harmony to his apostrophe to the powers of darkness, which terminates with a restatement of **S92** and a final dying whisper of **S68**.

Lúthien comes forward to find Beren, crouched over the body of Finrod; a memory of **S22** precedes **S62**, and then a new theme:

S93

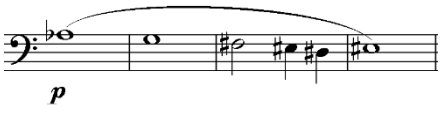


This theme will continue to dominate the remainder of the scene; a love theme for the reunited Beren and

Lúthien. After Lúthien has sung it, Beren repeats the long melody; a brief reference to **S4** at the phrase "terror's lair" hardly interrupts the extended outpouring. But when Beren contemplates his oath to Thingol (**S26**) and the thought that he has brought Lúthien's life into peril (**S85**), he wishes that he had been slain. Lúthien reassures him (**S91**); **S93** returns as she sings of her love which has made her subject to his doom (**S87**, **S85** and **S26**). A final restatement by the orchestra of **S93** is interrupted as Beren points to the body of Finrod (**S22**) and Lúthien recoils (**S61** and **S68**). Further *fff* statements of **S22** and **S78** bring the second triptych to an end—the longest single musical span so far in the whole of the cycle.

The third triptych starts with a sinister choral setting describing the fortress of Morgoth in Angband, with vast heights and pits suggested on all sides. Over a bass drum roll the solo trombone blares forth a desolate phrase derived from **S9**:

S94

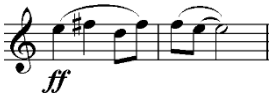


and this is taken up by the chorus. Sinister rumbles in the timpani and vague suggestions of **S4** hardly disturb the atmosphere of oppression. As the chorus comes to a conclusion the texture suddenly clears as a chilly phrase appears, the upper part on piccolo and flutes and the lower part, four octaves below, on bassoons:

S95

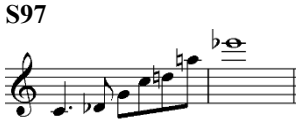
The long phrases coil and wind round one another in changing and different registers as Beren and Lúthien appear across the desert plains before the Gate of Morgoth. Suddenly they see the doorwarden, the giant wolf Carcharoth (**S89** returned). A rapid patter of **S60** and a disjointed series of **S62** accompanies **S89** as Beren challenges the wolf, but **S89** it is which rises higher and higher as the wolf seeks to attack him. Suddenly Lúthien stands forward with upraised hand, and her cloak of darkness and sleep ready to overcome the wolf:

S96



This new phrase, repeated in several different registers, is accompanied by rapid figurations based on **S77** and a deep slow bass line based on **S78**. **S89** also joins in the cacophony, but suddenly falls in a descending chromatic line as Carcharoth falls unconscious at Lúthien's feet and dies away in a series of rapid reiterations of the opening four notes of **S89** (which are also, by no coincidence, the notes of **S61**). The voice of Morgoth is heard from below, and **S4** rises up in a newly elevated form:

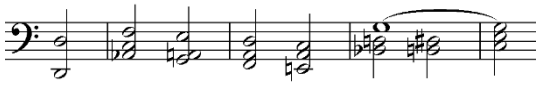
S97



which pierces through any "attempt to hide from thy Lord's gaze" (**S96**). As Beren and Lúthien descend to the Throne of Darkness, heavy statements of **S12** rise through the orchestra, as the harmonies of minor seconds and diminished fifths conjure up the vision of Morgoth before the eyes of the horrified Beren and Lúthien.

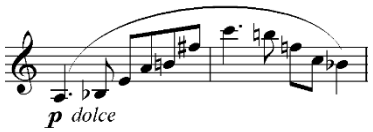
Lúthien adopts the form of a bat in the original text (by covering herself with the skin of Thúringwethil); in this context she does not change form, but Morgoth refers to her *"flitting...as a bat"* and she still assumes the identity of Thúringwethil. **S96** illustrates the deception which she seeks to practice; but Morgoth thunders out his demand for her real name:

S98



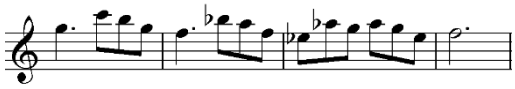
Lúthien puts aside her disguise, and Morgoth gloats over his prize (**S96** and **S4**). He asks why Thingol cannot keep his daughter secure, and Lúthien represents herself as in rebellion against her father and seeking refuge in Angband. Morgoth's reply is much softened (**S98** in gentle strings) and shortly **S97** (itself a transformation of **S4**) is itself transformed into an almost caressing melody:

S99



Morgoth sings (now totally forsaking his blasting monotones and becoming almost human in the shape of his melodic line) of the Bliss of Valinor and the delights of the flesh. A new theme laps around his voice as he sings of the honey-sweet blossoms which he has lost:

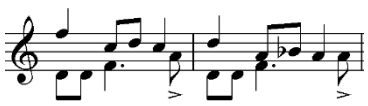
S100



before **S98** returns in the cloak of an even more heightened lyricism. Lúthien offers her services before him as a minstrel (to a similarly caressing variant of **S96** over **S99** and followed by a rocking rhythm founded on **S77**) before she begins her dance.

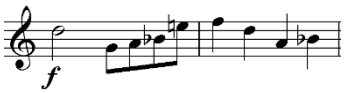
The dance of Lúthien is an extended orchestral fantasy on a number of themes already heard—**S96**, **S77**, **S78**, **S81** and **S82** all figure—before a new theme, almost capricious in its delicate cross-rhythms, forms a trio to the dance:

S101



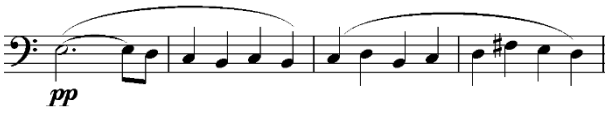
and **S81** and **S82** return in greater frenzy before a sudden quiet descends. The chorus gently re-enters as Morgoth and his court are enchanted into sleep: the themes of the first part of the dance return almost as a gentle lullaby, and as Morgoth's head droops and his crown falls to the floor **S94** is heard in the lowest depths of the orchestra. All is still as Beren cuts the Silmaril from the crown (**S26** and **S62** in harmonisation). But Morgoth's court is roused: **S16**, **S17**, **S31** and **S97** rise above an ever-more insistent **S98**. The wolf Carcharoth menaces Beren and Lúthien as they make their escape (**S89**) and Beren tries to menace him with the Silmaril clasped in his hand (**S26**); but the wolf bits off the hand together with the Silmaril it holds, and Beren and Lúthien flee desperately into the darkness. In the original story they are rescued by the Eagles whose intervention plays such an important part at such junctures in all Tolkien's tales from *The Hobbit* through *The Lord of the Rings* to several similar instances in *The Silmarillion*, but for sheerly practical reasons of staging I decided to suppress the perhaps overly obvious overtones of the *deus ex machina*. But the *theme* of the Eagles (which I had formerly used in my drafts for *The Hobbit*) does recur here, and again at a later point in *The Fall of Gondolin* where the Eagles played a part, so the *deus ex machina* is present in spirit if not in the flesh:

S102



The eighth scene opens in a forest glade back in the Hidden Kingdom of Doriath. The plunging flight theme of 102 gives way to a gently undulating theme which rises from the lowest depths of the basses:

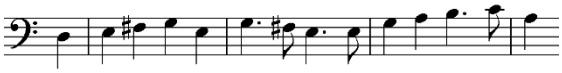
S103



and this in turn engenders a slowly moving theme sung by Beren to the words

Farewell now here, ye leaves of trees,
you music in the morning breeze!

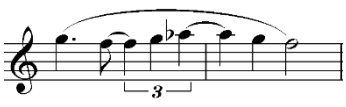
S104



Beren lies near to death, and his gentle song of farewell to the earth and to Lúthien is founded entirely around this new theme. When Lúthien responds, it is with words of hope, because she sees and proclaims that death is not the end of the story of their love. A new theme emerges as she sings

Oh bold and fearless hand and heart,
not yet farewell! Not yet we part!

S105



to an extended harmonisation of **S77**. **S20**, a theme heard in *Fëanor* on a few occasions as an adjunct to the theme of Mandos as the Lord of Death, now rises ever higher in the orchestra, its final phrase moving the music ever into more exalted keys, as she sings

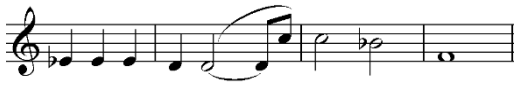
Beloved fool! escape to seek
from such pursuit:

and then, as the two lovers embrace to the words

Though all to ruin fell the world
and were dissolved and backward hurled
unmade into the old abyss,

yet another new theme, as the real "love duet" of the work reaches its climax:

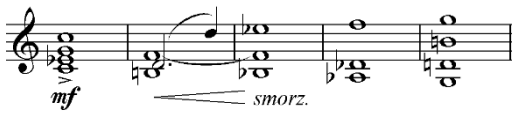
S106



Thingol and Melian enter the glade (to a combination of their themes, **S84** and **S86**). Beren looks up at them with pain in his eyes (**S104** weaving its way in counterpoint with itself) and explains that a Silmaril is indeed in his hand (**S26**), holding up his severed wrist in evidence. **S84** becomes more sombre as he lies back dying, saying that his doom is full-wrought. As he sinks into death **S85** sounds gently through the orchestra, and Lúthien sinks down upon his breast.

The scene is still. The harmonies of the theme of Mandos himself (**S19**) return, heard for the first time since *Fëanor*, and now **S20** instead of rising out of the theme and developing into new keys, is almost lost as the spirit of Lúthien comes to the realm of the dead seeking for Beren. The chorus sing gently of her beauty which moves even the Powers (**S2**) "where those that wait sit in the shadow of their thought." Lúthien sings to Mandos, and **105** rises in gentle spirals ever higher as she sings of the Lands of Ease and the "lands of the lost." Mandos raises his hand, and Lúthien dies upon the body of Beren; but, again, she and Beren are rejoined in life, as **S85** undergoes a mystical translation:

S107



The light slowly fades, and there is no movement as the unseen voices of the chorus quietly murmur the final words of the legend to the return of 75 (not heard since the scene of the lovers' meeting):

The Sundering Seas between them lay,
and yet at last they met once more,
and long ago they passed away
in the forest, singing, sorrowless.

The Children of Húrin

Prior to the performance of sections of *Narn i Hîn Húrin* (then so named) given by the Tolkien Society in Oxford in 1982, I prepared an introduction to the music for publication in the journal *Amon Hen.* In this I wrote at some length about the *nature* of the music, and much of what I then wrote retains its significance and applicability:

The music differentiates between three different worlds. The music of Morgoth, Glaurung and the Orcs is jagged and thrusting, often dissonant. The music of the elven kingdoms is solemn and slow and founded on calm and smooth harmonies; much of it is founded on extended melodies which proceed without interruption for lengthy periods. The music of the humans partakes of both spheres, restlessly moving by chromatic stages from dissonance to consonance and back again. Between the three worlds lies the music of the chorus, primitive and often simple in style, like the music of the ancient poet who narrates the *Narn* to the audience.

The music of the Enemy is founded upon two cells, one melodic and one rhythmic. The theme of Morgoth himself [originally heard in *Fëanor*] is simply turned upside down to become the theme of Glaurung, and the rhythm of Morgoth's opening words derives from and in turn generates the theme which depicts the Orcs. The theme of Morgoth's curse closely derives from that of Morgoth himself.

For the stately melodies of the elves one may cite the theme of the House of Hador; of Doriath [originally heard in both *Fëanor* and *Beren*]; of Mablung and of Beleg Cúthalion (both of these originating as parts of the Doriath melody itself); of Finduilas; and of the Second Children of Ilúvatar [also deriving from earlier citations in *Fëanor* and *Beren*], which concludes the work as a whole). [All of these, except those noted, are heard for the first time in *Húrin*.]

There are also short motifs which are developed symphonically, tending to transform themselves melodically in response to harmonic pressures, particularly the new themes of Húrin and Morwen; others are in themselves chromatic, such as Niënor, Brethil and Brandir. Túrin himself has no theme—his personality is reflected through his treatment of the other themes and melodies—but the names of Turambar and Níniel do. [All of these themes without exception are heard for the first time in *Húrin*. Only that of Húrin himself reappears in *Gondolin*.]

One should also note (to take one example) the shared musical harmonies, rhythms and melodic cells which lends a virtual *identity* to Morgoth and Glaurung, an identity which is underlined by the fact that both roles are taken by the same singer. At one stage I had even contemplated an actual alteration of Tolkien's text, implying an actual *physical* identity (it is, after all stated that Glaurung "spake by the evil spirit that was in him") but quite rightly Christopher Tolkien objected to this even in the context of *Húrin* as a separate work, and assuredly it could find no place at all in a complete *Silmarillion* cycle. Indeed the musical underpinnings, emphasising Glaurung's role as a creature of Morgoth's will, was and should have been sufficient.

What I did, and do, regard as important is that Glaurung's influence over Túrin and Niënor is not simply to be regarded as stemming solely from Morgoth. It stems rather from within themselves, and therefore their resultant incest also stems from the same source. Glaurung's words to Túrin demonstrate to the latter a vision of himself, as a murderer, traitor and foolhardy boaster, which is *not* unknown to him; on the contrary, he is fatally ready to believe such descriptions, because this view of himself is what he himself already believes in his innermost thoughts. It is for *this* reason, as much as because of any enchantment of Morgoth, that he hides himself and his identity in Brethil, as he has already fled from Doriath: because he seems himself in the role of a fugitive from justice. *This* is the shadow that, as Mablung proclaims early in his career, lies upon his heart; and that grows darker.

Similarly with Niënor. When she dwelt in Doriath she of course learned of her brother's flight from there, and can but have concluded that his failure to await and abide the King's judgement argued a measure of weakness. Consequently when Glaurung tells her that this same brother, left to defend the women and weaklings, deserted them and fled, it is a lie that she is already half-prepared to credit. Her defiance, her statement that "the children of Húrin *at least* are not craven," betrays her inner uncertainty; for if *the least* that she can say is that they are not craven, what else *does* she believe? Glaurung, inevitably, provides the alternative answer that she fears: "Then you are fools, both you and your brother", and it is the confirmation of these innermost fears in the dragon's words which finally drives her memory from her. At the end of the tale Morwen is the only one undefeated, if only because she has still not faced the questions within herself that her ill-fated family have; and Húrin will not answer her final question.

This approach to the work explains two mysterious chordal sequences which recur throughout the score. One is the representation of the shadow lying on Túrin's heart, that shadow upon which Mablung remarked, and reappears thereafter on many occasions. The other first appears when the chorus sings of Finduilas's cries to Túrin when she is taken from Nargothrond: "He may not stop his ears against the voice that will haunt him thereafter". This is the voice both of Finduilas and of his own conscience, and it too will reappear many times.

At the end of the work, Túrin is dead, and it is therefore appropriate that the long orchestral lament over the fallen hero should nonetheless recall us to thoughts of his living father; it begins with this theme in its original form, and continues to dominate the music. As the orchestral climax is reached the theme of the curse returns in a triumphant apotheosis as Morgoth, his ambitions fulfilled, releases the broken Húrin back into the world. Here at last he encounters Morwen his wife, bent and anxious but still unbowed. As she dies and the sun rises, a polyphonic web of themes shows the conflicting thoughts and emotions that are running through Húrin's head. For Túrin is *not* the hero of *Narn i Hîn Húrin*; he reacts to other events, and when he initiates action on his own account the results are invariably disastrous. It is therefore here, in this final and lonely defiance, that it is finally established that the father is indeed the protagonist. As he looks on the dead body of his wife, at the scene of the tragedy which engulfed their children, the musical reflection of his thoughts turns not to despair but to the theme of the Second Children of Ilúvatar, the theme that first occurred in the *Narn* when Túrin declared what may be seen as some of the key words of the work:

Though mortal men have little life beside the span of the elves, they would rather spend it in battle that die or submit...Is it not written into the history of the world, which neither Good nor Evil can unwrite?

On these words the teller of the *Narn* may bring his narrative to a fitting end.

There is nothing in this analysis which needs revision, but obviously it does not tell the whole story. While the same differentiation between different *realms* of music is clearly and carefully maintained throughout the cycle as a whole, the dichotomy between the different *strands* is perhaps most closely observed in this, the first work of the cycle to actually be written. The remainder of this musical analysis, which follows the same procedure as that previously adopted in *Fëanor* and *Beren and Lúthien*, and which includes references back to the music examples included in those analyses, should be read in the light of the foregoing.

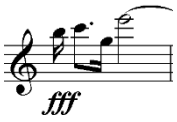
The Prologue opens with a hulking statement of **S4** on the solo tuba, and Morgoth's opening words are declaimed over the same accompaniment as that which

accompanied his first words as the Enemy in *Fëanor*. The rhythm of the opening phrase "I am the Elder King," his grand claim to be the rightful Ruler of Middle-Earth, has however a significance which goes far beyond the words themselves, and it will assume a role as the theme which reinforces Morgoth's claims to be the Master of the Fates of Earth. It will be noted that the theme has already been heard before, in *Fëanor*, as **S35**; but here in *Húrin* it will assume a far greater importance, for (to quote *The Silmarillion* in Tolkien's own words)

> *in this Tale is laid out much of the most wicked works of Morgoth Bauglir*.

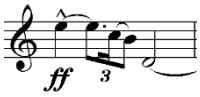
S4 returns again, and now leads to a new theme, that of the captive mortal Húrin:

S108



and this is immediately succeeded by another new theme, which will become significant as the theme of Morgoth's curse upon Húrin's children (it will be noted that this derives closely from one of Morgoth's own themes, **S18**, to which reference has already been made):

S109

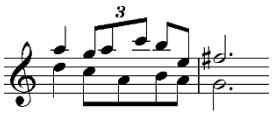


the whole of Morgoth's opening statement coming to a halt with the characteristic intervals of the augmented fourth (**S28**).

Húrin himself does not sing when he replies; indeed, his is the only purely spoken role in the whole of the cycle. The origins of this lay in the original plan for one solitary work, and arose because of the need for the performer taking the role of Húrin to spend the greater part of the evening perched aloft on top of a raised pillar or platform. I considered that this was asking a lot of the singer, if the role were to be sung, since operatic artists cannot unhappily be guaranteed to be models of athletic perfection. By throwing the role, therefore, open to an actor, it was possible to arrange for the sheer physical effort to be undergone by a great many more would-be performers. Having said this, the spoken voice in this scene is rightly dwarfed by the cavernous and amplified voice of Morgoth, and the dramatic contrast of this is in itself desirable.

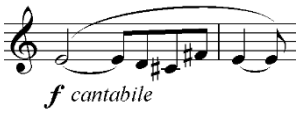
Morgoth attempts to daunt Húrin; in the original tale, he takes a sword and breaks it in front of Húrin's eyes. The theme of the sword is heard:

S110



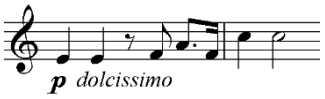
and the augmented fourths of **S28** are intertwined with the diminished seconds of **S14**. Húrin says that Morgoth cannot pursue his children "beyond the Circles of the World" (**S12**), and Morgoth chillingly agrees because "beyond the Circles of the World is Nothing." Húrin's protestation that Morgoth lies is hardly whispered, and **S109** rears and plunges through the whole spectrum of the orchestra as Húrin is raised to the high place from which he will behold the workings of Morgoth's curse. As Morgoth ceases, **S109** dies down and is replaced by another new theme, that of Húrin's forsaken and pregnant wife, Morwen:

S111



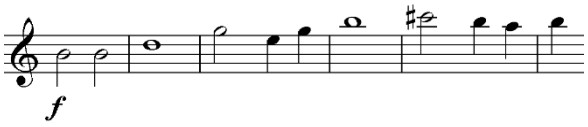
The first scene opens with a brief passage for chorus, which begins with a reference back to the theme of Húrin; but this reference will later assume an independent identity, as the theme of the storytellers (the chorus) who are telling the *Narn*:

S112



S4 flickers uneasily in the orchestra as the chorus tells of the irruptions of the Easterlings, the thralls of Morgoth, into Húrin's abandoned kingdom. **S112** brings this passage to an end, and another new theme appears, that of Húrin's family, the House of Hador:

S113



and, as will be seen, this theme assumes overwhelming importance for the remainder of the cycle and afterwards in *The Lord of the Rings*; because it is the theme of the Houses of Men, the Elf-friends, whose actions will come increasingly to dominate not only the rest of *The Silmarillion*, but the Second and Third Ages of Middle-Earth as well. Túrin is angry at the invasion of his land by the Easterlings (**S4** flickers uneasily again), and **S108** and **S109** accompany his complaint. Morwen's reply (**S111**) is fatalistic, and **S4** hints at her fears; Túrin is unable to restrain his tears, and **S109** takes on a new and plangent form.

The chorus take over as Morwen and Túrin fall silent. The once ominous theme of **S94** now takes on a violent and menacing aspect, as they ask

> *Who knows now the counsels of Morgoth?*
> *Who can fathom the depth of his thought*,

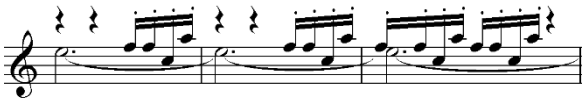
and **S4** rumbles forbiddingly in the bass. Morwen is roused from her gloomy contemplations, and **S112** becomes more agitated as she tells Túrin that he must leave his homeland and depart for the South.

Túrin is devastated at the thought of abandoning his mother and the house of his fathers, but **S113** underlines not only his protests but Morwen's reply that she does not wish him to fall into slavery and thraldom. **S109** also sounds through the orchestra, but Morwen now returns to the theme of Doriath, **S10**, which had already been foreshadowed in the preceding material; and then, as she bids farewell to her son, **111** takes on a heightened tone as the melody of her extended aria. Morgoth's minor seconds interrupt the lyricism as Túrin turns and cries "Morwen, Morwen, when shall I see you again?"—the last phrase to a reminiscence of **S109**—before **S4**, **S109**,

S35 and an exaggeratedly rapid reiteration of **S111** lead to the end of the scene with a final reference to **S4**.

The second scene opens with an extended passage for chorus describing the birth of Niënor to the pregnant Morwen, the journey of Túrin to Doriath, and his fostering and upbringing there. Throughout the scene a short jerky figure, derived from the profile of **S108**, continually makes its presence felt:

S114

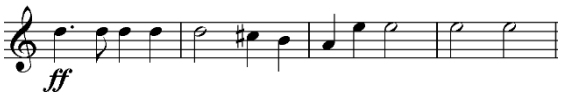


and in its initial appearance this is heard against the theme of Niënor:

115

and a brief reference back to **S108**, while the chorus's narrative is set to **S112**. The theme of Doriath (**S10**) is now heard once again at full length, with **S114** forming a persistent counterpoint; and at its climax the chorus takes over one wing of the lengthy melody, which will become the specific motive associated with Túrin's friend and protector, the elf Beleg Cúthalion:

S116

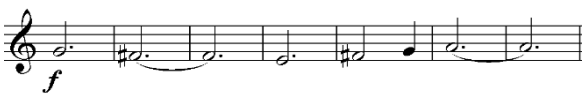


The chorus sings of Túrin's growing despair and anger at the fate of his abandoned mother, and reference is made to Saeros, Thingol's adviser, who takes advantage of this despair to rouse Túrin's wrath.

In some staged performances it may be it is felt that this provocation should be made more explicit, to explain what is after all the first of many killings for which the rash Túrin is responsible; in that case there exists a version of the scene where Saeros verbally upbraids Túrin (although the music for this scene remains otherwise unchanged) Otherwise the cause for Túrin's explosion into violence is given only by the repeated and heavy reiterations of Morwen's own theme (**S111**) in the bass under the increasingly violent clamour of **S114**.

It is these various forms of **S114** which underpin the music as Túrin sets Saeros before him to run *naked as a hunted deer through the woods*, and these are soon joined by the shadow of **S4**. As Mablung comes across the chase and calls to Túrin to hold, his own theme (like Beleg Cúthalion's, another wing of **S10**) is proclaimed by the trombones:

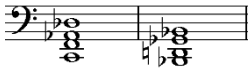
S117



and **109** finally peals out as the luckless Saeros falls headlong and lies dead. The opening limb of **10** is given out by a solo cello, and the *pizzicato* basses give one last hint of **S114**.

The various limbs of **S10**—firstly, Mablung's **S117** and then **S10** itself—underpin Mablung's call for Túrin to return with him to face the judgement of Thingol; but Túrin refuses (**S114**, **S109** and **S108**) and Mablung reluctantly lets him depart. **S109** is now succeeded by a new theme, a twisted chordal sequence which depicts the shadow which Mablung perceives to lie upon Túrin's heart (this is one of the two psychological themes referred to in the *Amon Hen* paper to which reference was made earlier):

S118



As Túrin passes from the stage, **S109** and **S108** compete with **S117** as Mablung asks

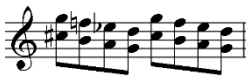
> *How shall we harbour one who scorns the law,*
> *or pardon one who will not repent?*

but he is immediately answered by **S116** as Beleg appears on the scene. The final phrase of **S10** is heard as he begins to explain the nature of Túrin's dealings with Saeros, and the chorus (initially to **S112**, but moving upwards now) tell of Túrin's capture by the Orcs who bound him and led him away. Themes from *Fëanor* which depicted the Orcs (**S30**, **S16** and **S17**) return and struggle with **S108** before **S10** suddenly returns and the action moves back to Beleg and Mablung in Doriath.

Mablung recognises that Túrin has been provoked (**S111**) and Beleg says that he will seek him out to bring him back to Doriath (various parts of **S10** including Beleg's own **S116**). Mablung offers Beleg a "sword of worth" and Beleg chooses the dark blade of Anglachel (**S110** returns from the Prologue). Mablung warns him that "it will not love the hand it serves" but Beleg is undaunted. To a full statement of **S10** he declares his intention of finding Túrin.

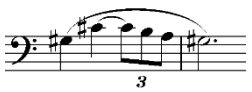
The final chords of **S10** are suddenly interrupted as the third scene begins. A furious *fugato* begins on the theme of **S17**, and this leads to a series of descending scales constructed around Morgoth's diminished fifths:

S119



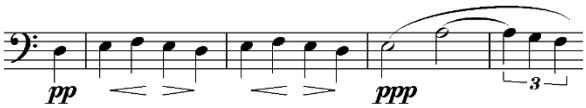
which will form the major themes of the thunderstorm which is soon to break. **S30** and **S16** accompany the chorus (who sing another variant of **S112**) as they tell of Beleg's pursuit of the Orcs who have captured Túrin. As Beleg comes across the sleeping and weary Gwindor in the forest, the first of Gwindor's two themes is darkly given out by the bass clarinet:

S120



and the strings then immediately give the second part of the theme, ending in a similar phrase:

S121

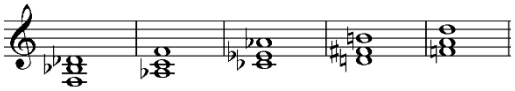


Beleg's theme itself is coloured by the diminished-fifth harmony as he rouses Gwindor, who explains about his captivity in Angband (**S4**) and his escape. As he tells of seeing the Orc-band passing northwards, **S119** flickers in the wind, and **S30** is percussively given out by strings and whips before a full orchestral declaration of the same theme accompanied by **S16**. A final blast of **S4** accompanies the two as they set out in pursuit of the Orcs and their captive, and the full orchestra boils and bubbles with **S17** and **S119**.

The chorus describe the rescue of Túrin from the orc-camp by Beleg and Gwindor; existing material (**S16**, **S30**, **S120** in conjunction with **S116**, **S108** and **S121**) accompanies their description of the scene. The storm draws nearer (**S17** and **S119**) as Beleg draws his sword to cut Túrin's bonds (**S110** and **S108**) but Túrin is roused, thinking the Orcs have come again to torment him (**S16** and **S30** again), and seizing Beleg's sword (**S110**) kills him. As he stands amid the raging storm (**17**) the lightning (**S119**) shows him Beleg's face, and a violent orchestral climax combines **S116**, **S109**, **S17**, **S119**, **S108**, **S113**, and **S35** in a passage of towering ferocity. Slowly the storm dies down, and **S17** mutters away into the distance.

Gwindor rises and approaches Túrin nervously (**S120** and **S121**). In answer to Túrin's expressionless question "Who are you?" he explains his escape from slavery to a rising series of chords:

S122



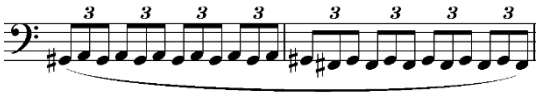
which will recur, and then talks of his forthcoming return to Nargothrond (**S64** from *Beren and Lúthien* here returns for the first time). Túrin asks whether Gwindor has seen his father (**S108**) but Gwindor says he has not (**S122**), although *rumour of him runs through Angband* (**S109**) *that he still defies Morgoth* (**S35**), and Morgoth has cursed both him and his kin (**S109**). As he leads Túrin away, several themes from earlier in the scene return in a final valediction: **S35**, **S110**, **S116** and finally a whispered **S109** brings the first triptych to a sombre conclusion.

The second triptych, set throughout in Nargothrond, opens by contrast in clear light. A wordless female chorus, divided into near and distant voices, give out a new theme which will become that of the elven princess Finduilas:

S123

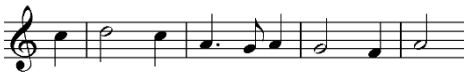
The fourth scene is divided into four quadrants, divided by varying intervals of time. At the opening of the first quadrant Túrin and Gwindor come to Nargothrond, and Gwindor (to **S64**, **S122** and **S4**) tells of the wrath of Angband which he soon expects. When he talks of the coming winter, a churning melodic line (partly derived from **S121**) accompanies his words:

S124



The optimistic Túrin (**S113**) is more confident, but Gwindor (**S122**) remains unconvinced. Túrin now sings the words quoted earlier in this analysis, those which will become the final melody of the work:

S125



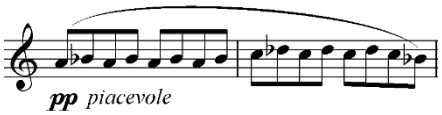
which is, as has been noted previously, a variation on **S42**. He apostrophises the defiance of Morgoth by Húrin (**S113**, **S35** and **S109**) and the orchestra triumphantly deliver **S125** as he proclaims

> *Even the Lord of the West shall honour it; and is it not written into the history of the world, which neither Good nor Evil can unwrite?*

and the wordless female chorus now deliver a ringing restatement of **S123** as the male chorus (accompanied by **S64**) tell of the growing love which develops between Finduilas and the heroic Túrin, which will form the subject of the second quadrant.

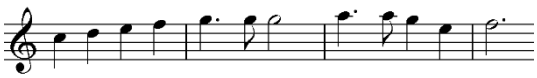
Túrin and Finduilas are now seen, walking before the Gate. Túrin is thinking of Niënor his sister (**S115**), but the flowing harmonies in the strings give a more romantic message:

S126



Finduilas says that although she does not know his true name (**S108** hints at it), she will call him *Thurin*, the secret. Túrin, alarmed at the nearness of her guess (musical as well as linguistic), changes the subject of the conversation to Gwindor (**S120** and **S121**) and the defence of Nargothrond which will give time to Gwindor for the healing he needs:

S127



A *ffff* restatement of the opening phrase of **S123**, answered *fff* by the full wordless chorus, leads to the third quadrant of the scene.

Túrin taxes Gwindor with his growing depression (**S122**) and is startled by the latter's reaction (**S124**); he wishes that he and Gwindor were "one in mind" (**S120** and **S121**), but an ominous rattle of **S35** hints at darker passions beneath the surface. Gwindor (**S122**) does not explain, but references to **S109** and the dark theme of Túrin's "shadow" (**S118**, now heard for the first time since its initial statement in Scene Two) say more than his silence can. The wordless chorus, now heard for the last time, is now confined to male voices in four parts,

and they sing only the final section of the extended melody of **S123**; the full strings play **S120**, *molto espressivo*.

The fourth quadrant opens with Gwindor attempting to warn Finduilas against Túrin. His opening words exactly recapitulate the music from the beginning of the first quadrant, but this is soon interrupted by **S121**, and then by **S125** as he speaks of Túrin's *dark doom* (**S35** mutters in the bass, followed by **S108**). **S4** rises menacingly through the orchestra, to be succeeded rapidly by **S109** and then by **S41**. The impassioned climax of his appeal is followed by a forceful statement of **S120**; but Finduilas is unmoved. To a delicate filigree accompaniment wound around a restatement of **S123**, she sings of her love for Túrin; but recognises that this love is unrequited (**S125** wistfully played by the clarinet, leading to a cold restatement of **S126**. Further references to **S64**, **S4** and **S120** lead to her impassioned plea "What of death and destruction?" set to a violent restatement of **S94**. Her recognition of Túrin's worth (set to an insouciant restatement of **S125**) leads back to her own **S123**, now ever more emotionally charged; and this is succeeded by Ulmo's words of warning to Orodreth and the people of Gondolin:

> *Cast the stones of your pride into the loud river, that the creeping evil may not find the gate*

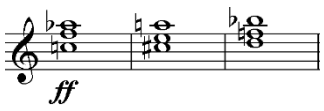
sung by the chorus to the final phrase of **S123** while the orchestra hints violently at the theme of Glaurung, the creeping evil referred to (**S15**).

Túrin comes from the Gate in haste and armed ready for battle; Finduilas asks him why he has concealed his identity (**S64**), for then she would better have understood his grief (**S111**). Túrin reacts with anger (**S109**) to Gwindor's betrayal of his name (**S35**), but Gwindor responds that the doom lies with Túrin himself (**S118**) and not in his name (**S120**). The scene ends as phrases from **S123** dissolve into silence.

Suddenly **S30** and **S16** erupt as the fifth scene begins with a description of the battle of Tumhalad. **S4** and **S35** also make their presence felt. When the chorus begins its description of the battle **S127** describes the warriors of Nargothrond in attack, and **S108** illustrates Túrin's attack; but the sudden appearance of the great dragon Glaurung (**S15**) puts all to flight. Gwindor (**S120** over **S16**) is killed and Túrin speeds back to Nargothrond (**S64**). Finduilas' melody of **S123** is heard *molto espressivo* over the discordant barkings of **S16**, **S30** and **S35** as the scene shows the sack of Nargothrond. Túrin comes rapidly across the bridge in the first wind of winter (**S124**) and is confronted by Glaurung.

Glaurung's opening words (set to **S28**) are accompanied at first by a high *tremolo* on the piano, and then by constant repetitions of his own **S15** and **S35**. Distorted versions of various themes are heard during his taunting of the "son of Húrin" (**S110**) as "slayer of thy friend, (**S116**), thief of love (**S64**), captain foolhardy" (**S127**) and "betrayer of thy kin" (**S109**); but as Túrin stands still, seeing himself "in a mirror misshapen by malice", a new theme is heard as Finduilas, calling for assistance, is dragged rapidly away by the Orcs:

128



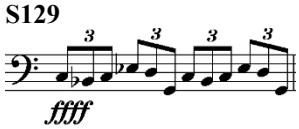
as the chorus sing the words of the narrator:

> *He may not stop his ears against the voice that will haunt him hereafter.*

This is the second of the "psychological" motifs referred to in the *Amon Hen* article cited earlier.

Túrin, suddenly stirring and coming to himself (**S110**), makes to attack Glaurung (**S15**), but Glaurung is unmoved (**S41**); Túrin's death will be of small help to his mother (**S111**) or his sister (**S115**). Túrin has paid no heed to the cries of Finduilas (**S64** rapidly interrupted by a violent restatement of **S128**); if he denies the need of his kin (**S28** and then rapidly figured repetitions of **S111**), Húrin shall learn of it (**S109**). As Túrin turns frantically away to go in search of his abandoned family, **S109** and **S108** are heard over a new figuration on the timpani, derived ultimately from **S110**:

S129



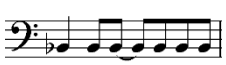
This figure is repeated one hundred and eleven times, like a thought drilling deep into Túrin's mind. Glaurung mocks him, bidding him haste in search of Morwen (**S111**), or his kin shall curse him (**S109**). The same figuration continues as the sixth scene opens with a brief reference to **S113** and **S111** as the chorus describe the riding of the distraught Morwen into the wild searching for her son (**S108**); and how she is followed by her daughter Niënor (**S115**) and Mablung (**S117**), who bids the women return with him to Doriath (**S111**).

Niënor proudly replies that she will not return (**S115**) to "mourn alone for father, brother, mother" (**S111**). Morwen asks what she would do; Niënor replies that she would seek refuge in Doriath (**S10**), but is willing to follow her mother to Nargothrond (**S121** followed by **S64**). Morwen insists she will go on (**111**) and as the figuration of **S129** begins again (this time for eighty-two repetitions) Mablung turns in dismay to his companions (**S117**), asking what is to be done. Morwen will not be swayed, and Mablung finally agrees to follow her also and provide them with protection.

The repetitions of **S129** now become ever more convoluted as they are overlapped one with another in three different rhythms. The mists descend on the stage, and both women become lost. Niënor alone comes through the mist to Nargothrond (**S4**) and looks into the eyes of Glaurung (**S15**, followed by the same *tremolo* on the piano). The psychological course of the conversation with follows has already been discussed in the *Amon Hen* article cited earlier. As Glaurung calls both Niënor and her brother fools, the piano *tremolo* descends to a deep reference to **S14** and the texture of his utterances become identical to those of Morgoth himself (even the use of Morgoth's monotone). References to **S4** and **S15** lead to repeated restatements of **S35**, yet more reiterations of **S129**, a solitary declamation of **109** and a cluster of timpani chords as Niënor, her memory stripped from her, runs in despair from the Gate and the curtain falls.

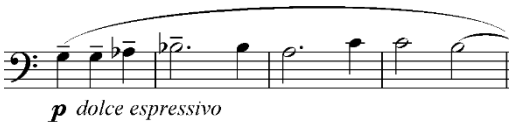
The third triptych opens with an extended orchestral prelude, beginning with a reiterated rhythm on the harp:

S130



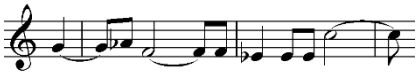
which underpins the following expressive melody played by English horn and strings:

S131



the final phrase of which is an echo of **S106**; then **S131** is repeated in its entirety over a new and flowing accompaniment. After a middle section depicting the sunrise in the forest glade of Brethil where most of the action of the third triptych will take place, the melody of **S131** returns over its original accompaniment of **S130**, and the latter brings the prelude to an end. It then begins again as the men of Brethil enter the glade, led by Dorlas, and the first words of the latter, "Who are you, and what do you here?" will become the theme of Brethil itself:

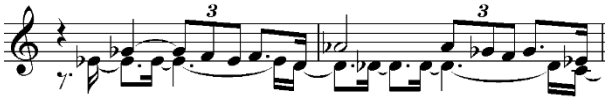
S132



Túrin revives (to **S109**), and explains that he has been searching for Finduilas (**S64**) for many weeks (**S128**). Dorlas (**S132**) says that his search is over, and tells of Finduilas' death to a final extended statement of **S123**, played on solo violins. Túrin falls in a swoon (**S109** against the closing phrases of **S123**, and followed by **S128** over a throbbing bass in the timpani and strings), and Dorlas recognises him as the hero of Nargothrond (**S108** followed by **S127**).

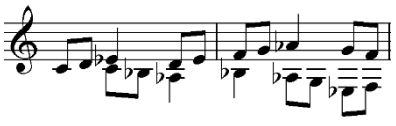
Brandir, the leader of the men of Brethil, enters; his theme depicts at once his nobility and his dragging gait:

S133



He upbraids the men for bringing hither *the last bane of our people*, but when Dorlas protests (**S132**), he bends over the unconscious Túrin to succour him:

S134

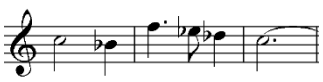


Túrin revives and sings regretfully of his past life:

> *All my deeds and past days were dark and full of evil. But a new day is come,*

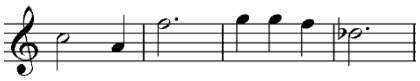
and the theme of his opening words will recur many times in the remainder of the action:

S135



S134 returns as he sings of his resolution to stay in Brethil at peace, and put his shadow (**S118**) behind him. He will take a new name, *Turambar, Master of Doom:*

S136



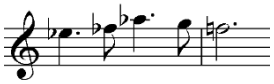
and he begs the men of Brethil (**S132**) to forget that he is a stranger among them, or that he ever bore any other name.

Brandir bows low in acknowledgement of his wishes (**S133**), and he and his men move away into the trees (**S134**). Dorlas alone remains (**S136**), and asks if he is not in truth the son of Húrin (**S132**); Túrin replies obliquely, but begs Dorlas not to give away his secret. As they turn to follow the others, the lower line of **S134** is heard in isolation on a solo cello.

The interlude which follows is given to the chorus alone over a thudding timpani *ostinato*, with fleeting references to **S121** ("the captives sad") and **S94** ("their dungeons"); and it is the latter theme which leads into the eighth scene. Over a bass line derived from **S4** Niënor runs into the glade, and **S115** is combined with itself in various rhythmic guises. The men of Brethil come in pursuit of her (**S132**, similarly rhythmically transformed), and as she revives the second phrase of **S113** is combined with a transformed and other-worldly variant of **S129** and the underlying rhythm of **S130**.

Túrin asks her for her name and kindred, but she is unable to answer, even when he offers to lead her "to our homes in the forest" (the original form of **S132**). A desperate hint at **S115** still leaves Niënor speechless, so Túrin declares that he will give her a name, *Níniel, Maiden of Tears*:

S137



She accepts the name, and asks for his: *Turambar* (**S136**), he replies, which means *Master of the Dark Shadow* (**S118**). **S130** begins again in the strings, and continues for its full length, becoming the theme which underlines the duet during which Turambar and Níniel realise their love for each other. The middle section of this becomes an interlude during which "time passes" and then Turambar proposes marriage to Níniel (to **S131** again) and the final phrase (**S106**) is taken up enthusiastically by the chorus, echoing not only the words but also the music of *Beren and Luthien*.

The ninth scene opens as Brandir stands before the people (**S133**) and tells them of the advent of Glaurung (**S15**), which means that they must flee (**S4** together with **S132**). But Túrin scorns such advice (**S127**); he proposes to confront the Dragon (**S110**). He calls for men to accompany him (**S4** and **S15** combined, followed by **S136** and then **S132**); Dorlas pours scorn on the crippled Brandir (**S132** leading to **S133**) who cannot lead his people, but Turambar defends him: "Your place is with your people, for you are wise, and a healer. And it may be that there will be great need of wisdom and healing ere long."

Brandir is unmoved. He allows Dorlas to go (**S132**), but refuses to bless the expedition, for the shadow which lies on Túrin (**S118**) will lead them to evil (**S109**). Níniel too, who now comes running through the woods (**S137**), also tries to dissuade Turambar; but he is similarly unbending (**S135**), bidding her remember their unborn

child (a sudden reminiscence of **S115**, followed by **S35**, reminds the listener of the unwitting incest which has given rise to this situation). He prophesies that neither he nor Níniel shall be slain by the Dragon (**S113**), *nor by any Foe of the North* (**S15**). He kisses her gently and raises her, sending her away with Brandir and the other woodsfolk: **S137** gives way to a calm recollection of **S131** and then Brandir's own theme **S133** *ppp* on the woodwind.

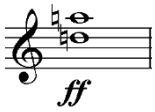
Túrin and Dorlas are left alone to confront Glaurung. The coming of the Dragon is heralded by eruptions of **S4**, **S14** and **S35**; and Dorlas, turning as if to flee with the other men, falls into the ravine and is killed (**S132**) leaving Túrin alone (**S108** and **S109**, leading to **S136**). His combat with the Dragon contrasts **S15** and **S35** with **S4** and **S110**, and his final words to Glaurung "and the darkness have thee!" echo **S28** before he too falls unconscious by the side of his defeated foe (**S35**).

Gently **S130** sounds again as Niënor steals cautiously out of the woods (**S137**), accompanied by Brandir (**S133**). She will not wait for tidings, she tells him (**S136** with **S130** ever more thrustful in the bass). Brandir still counsels patience, but she runs on before him and comes to the unconscious body of her brother (**S115**). As she bends over him, calling his name "Turambar, Turambar!" (to **S136**), the orchestra gives out **S15**. **S35**, **S108**, **S4**, **S133** and **S137** in one heartfelt flood over three bars. She calls out to him that the Dragon is dead (**S15**) but the dying Glaurung awakens for the last time to remove the enchantment from her senses. His music here recalls that when he placed similar enchantments on Túrin, as he calls her brother "a stabber in the dark (**S116**), treacherous to foes (**S16**), faithless to friends (**S64**), and a curse until his kin (**S108**), Túrin son of Húrin" (**S109**). His last words are set to **S109** descending to a voiceless bottom C as he expires. Niënor is devastated; she stands looking down at her brother with anguish (**S35**), runs towards the river as her own theme **S115** returns to haunt her, and casts herself into the ravine (**S35**) as Brandir looks on horrified (**S133**).

The men of Brethil return out of the forest (**S130** and **S132**), asking where Níniel has gone (**S137**). Brandir confronts them (**133**), telling them that the Dragon is dead (**S15**), that Turambar (for so he thinks) is dead (**S136**), and that *these tidings are good*. **S131** sounds once more gently in the orchestra as he tells the people that Níniel is also dead, for she has discovered in truth who she really is, the sister of her husband. The people stand in horror; and at that moment Túrin's voice is heard from the river (**S110**). He has revived. He comes briskly forward (**S108**), seeking his wife (**S137**) to tell her of what has happened. Brandir tells him that Níniel is not there (a final whisper of **1S31**), and tells Túrin that Níniel was really his sister (**S109**, as the curse begins to fall upon Túrin). Túrin is aghast (**S108**); he recognises that some may have guessed his identity (the bass line of **S134**, as when Dorlas made a similar guess at the end of the seventh scene), but that nothing could be known of his sister (**S115**): "It is a trick of your own vile mind, to drive my wife witless, and now me."

S133 sounds through the orchestra in various distortions, but Brandir remains firm, calling him by his name "Túrin son of Húrin" (to Morgoth's **S28**). **S133** in fragmented blocks of sound punctuate Túrin's increasing despair, and he draws his sword and hews the defenceless Brandir to death (**110**). At that moment Mablung enters the glade (**S117**), praising Túrin's deed in slaying *the Great Worm* (**S15**); but Túrin is no longer capable of response (**S10** and **S137**). His request for news of his family is greeted by Mablung with dismay (**S129** returns and rises to ever-greater heights until it is overwhelmed by **S35)**. This is the moment when Túrin realises the full measure of what has happened, as similarly the Finnish hero Kullervo finds in the *Kalevala* (on which Tolkien acknowledged several times in his correspondence the tale of Túrin was initially founded). It is therefore perhaps appropriate that one chord is quoted here from Sibelius's *Kullervo*, where it depicts the same instant of recognition:

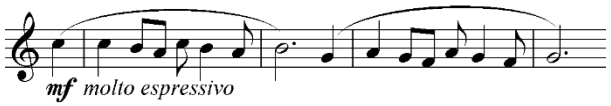
S138



Túrin's rage is extinguished; he is "blind, blind, groping since birth in the dark mist of Morgoth" (**S109**). He curses Doriath (**S10**) and hails the coming of the night; as he flees into the forest, **S108** gives way to **S109** and **S35** and one final statement of **S136**.

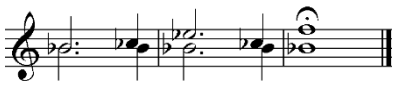
The cold light reveals Túrin standing alone and speaking to his sword. As in the Finnish legend of Kullervo, the sentient sword answers him declaring both its willingness and eagerness to take his life (**S110** in various ethereal and otherworldly forms). Túrin casts himself on his sword. A slow funeral march begins, initially building up from **S108** and then expanding into a new theme:

139



which gives way in its turn to a hint of **S127**. At the climax **S109** screams its way down through the full orchestra, and Húrin's pillar which has stayed aloft above all the action, settles to the ground. The funeral march begins again as Húrin makes his way towards the body of his son, and then turns to **S111** as he sees Morwen crouched by the side of the grave. Wisps of the funeral march accompany their conversation; since Húrin does not sing, Morwen here reduces herself to his humbled level of humanity by speaking also. He will not answer her questions; instead, he sits down by her and holds her hand as **S139** weaves its way through a tangled web made up of many of the themes associated with their luckless children: **S111**, **S137**, and **S136**. Finally **S111** sounds once again as Morwen grasps his hand, and lies still. He looks down upon her, and **S42** returns, bestowing its gentle benediction across the scene (for a fuller description of this passage, see the discussion from *Amon Hen* cited earlier). The final phrase is a transformation of **S108** and **S112**, the web of myth through which the whole of the tragic history has been viewed.

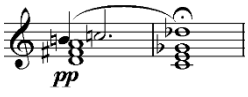
S140



The Fall of Gondolin

The prologue opens with two statements of an entirely new theme, which will become that of Tuor:

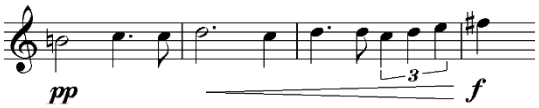
S141



This theme is phonetically notated from the initials of the name Tuor, originally called Tûr in some of Tolkien's early manuscripts, and transliterated into French: Te-Ut-Re. A number of the themes in *The Silmarillion* have been derived similarly, although some elaboration of the original notation has often been necessary. This procedure does however lend a certain family resemblance to some themes; and this is entirely deliberate. Tuor's is nevertheless a particularly obvious example. The harmonisation of the theme however lends it a somewhat detached air; and the scoring, for four recorders, introduces an entirely new orchestral colour into the score. The recorders were originally intended to supply an antique air to the Gondolin scenes, but having established themselves in the orchestral strength they then became very useful as an additional reinforcement to the woodwind colour, forming a separate family with the two flutes and piccolo as a contrast to the reed instruments. At any rate, they establish their presence from the very opening bars of *Gondolin*.

The chorus enter immediately with the opening words of the Prologue, and their opening phrase is an echo of **S141** which will in due course assume an importance entirely of its own:

S142



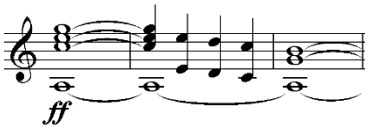
S141 and **S142** are the only themes heard for the first two minutes of the Prologue, but soon **S8** and **S7** return from *Fëanor*, and are succeeded by **S3**, **S26** and **S24**; we are in the midst of the familiar *Silmarillion* themes.

At the end of the first verse of the chorus, **S142** dies away in the English horn and flute, and the choir almost in a monotone declaim

But the music is broken, the words half-forgotten,
the sunlight has faded, the moon is grown old,

the last words to a statement of **S7**; and hints of **S32** and **S23** underline their words, before the melody of **S10** recurs and is given a luscious harmonisation by the full chorus before restatements of **S142** bring the chorus to a close. At once the orchestra crashes in with a new theme:

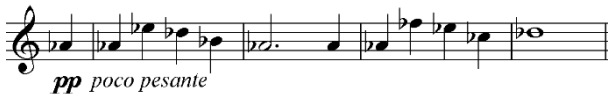
S143



which may be taken to represent the idea of sailing across the Ocean towards the Blessed Realm. Ulmo's voice is heard, as the Lord of the Ocean and protector of the Elves in exile; like others of the Valar his melodic line is confined very largely to one note (in this case A, which is peculiarly Ulmo's key) and is accompanied by gentle restatements of **S43** which finally die away in a series of harp *glissandi* underpinning chords on flutes and recorders.

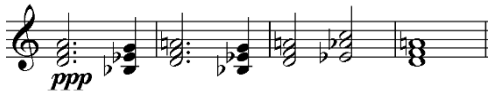
The depiction of the Hidden City of Gondolin given by the chorus at the opening of the first scene has a peculiarly archaic flavour, beginning with recorders, harp and oboes who state one of a number of themes associated with Gondolin and its inhabitants:

S144



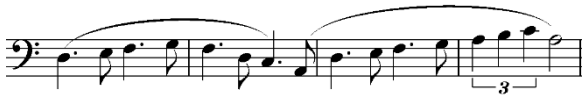
which is repeated before being succeeded by another,

S145



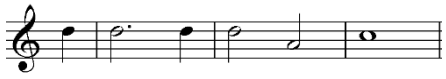
and then immediately by yet another:

S146



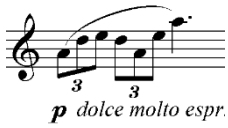
S146 is developed at some length before a reference by the chorus to the Trees of Gondolin, *images of the Trees of old*, brings a reference to **S21**. There then follow fleeting references to *Idril, Turgon's daughter, that was called Celebrindal:*

S147



and to *Aredhel his sister, the White Lady*:

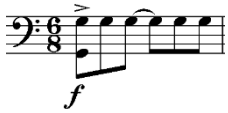
S148



before **S145** on recorders and **S146** on a solo clarinet bring this choral section to a gentle end.

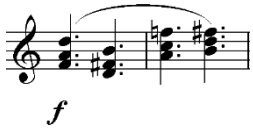
A suddenly livelier passage develops **S148** at some length over a galloping bass in syncopated rhythm:

S149



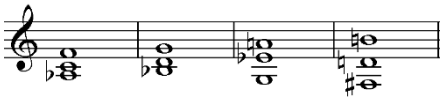
as Aredhel prepares to petition Turgon for permission to leave his Kingdom, and "walk in the forests":

S150



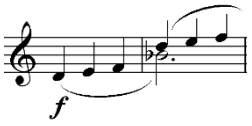
This theme will later be developed to become part of the music associated with Nan Elmoth. But Turgon's reply is negative:

S151



and Aredhel's proud response "I am your sister and not your servant" (to **S148** and **S149**) falls on deaf ears; Turgon is determined to preserve the secrecy of his realm. A brief theme, previously hinted at just before **S145** in the preceding chorus, now comes to the fore and signifies the Law of Gondolin, that none who find their way to the city shall ever be permitted to leave:

S152



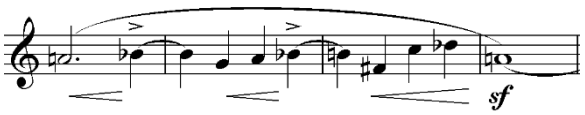
The rhythm of this theme underlies **S151** as Turgon expresses his continued reluctance to allow Aredhel to depart; but Aredhel turns away to a sweeping restatement of **S148**, and **S149** now assumes prominence as she rides away from the City, leading to a number of references to **S7**.

The second scene opens with an extended choral description of the forest of Nan Elmoth in which Aredhel becomes enmeshed. Over a steady rocking bass figure:

S153

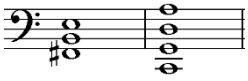
the main theme of the forest is stated by English horn and clarinets:

S154



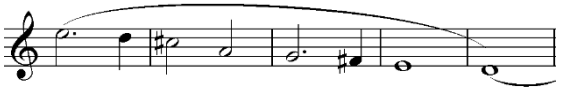
and it will be noted that the final phrase of **S154** is that which will metamorphose into **S150**. A wandering oboe restates **S148** and then the series of chords associated with the Dark Elf, Eöl the Lord of Nan Elmoth, is heard:

S155



When Eöl has drawn the weary Aredhel into his dwelling (to delicate and restful restatements of Aredhel's **S148** and his own **S155**) another new theme is heard:

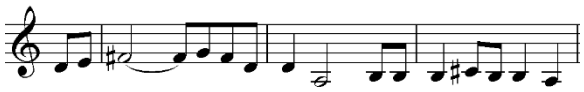
S156



followed by a choral melody to the words

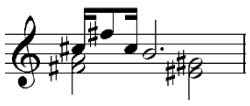
and they wandered far together
by the light of the sickle moon:

S157



Both these themes are drawn from the earlier setting which I made of Tolkien's poem *Shadow-Bride* (published as one of the verses in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*), a gloomy and disturbing depiction of a bride drawn into the realm of twilight darkness by a lover who has seized her. Although Tolkien gives no indication that this was intended as a description of the tale of Aredhel and Eöl (which had not apparently achieved such detailed narration at the time *Tom Bombadil* was in preparation; Christopher Tolkien has noted that much of the most finely detailed work on this part of the mythology was among the last work that his father undertook), the parallels were too close to ignore. **S157** in particular will assume continuing importance later on. The chorus then goes on to describe the birth of Aredhel and Eöl's son, Maeglin:

S158

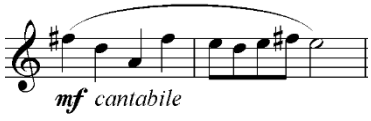


where it will be noted that the accompanying harmonies already hint at Maeglin's future treachery (see **S50**), and further references to **S156** and **S157** follow as it is imagined that some twenty years pass.

Maeglin, now fully-grown, and Eöl are seen in argument by the eaves of the forest. Eöl (**S155**) tells Maeglin that he must remember that he is *not of Gondolin* (**S146**). The reason for his hostility to the exiled Elves rapidly becomes apparent; it was the followers of Fëanor who slew his kin and invades his lands, and he storms away as the orchestra recalls **S44** and **S45** from *Fëanor*. Maeglin turns to his mother (**S148**) and speaks of their "bondage" (**S155**) and his desire to "search for Gondolin" (**S146**). Statements of **S146** and **S148** *ff* lead to a massive recapitulation of **S157** as Aredhel and Maeglin flee and leave Eöl in despair. **S150**, repeated quietly twice, leads to a quieter statement of **S157** and this forms a transition into the third scene. Eöl's ride in pursuit takes further phrases from **S157** and the *Shadow-Bride* setting, before **S152** depicts his discovery of the way to Gondolin and his coming to "the Dark Guard under the mountains."

S144 is succeeded immediately by **S145** and **S157** as Turgon rises from his throne to greet Aredhel and Maeglin; then, as Ecthelion as Captain of the Guard enters to tell of the arrival of Eöl in pursuit of his wife and son, a new theme is heard:

S159

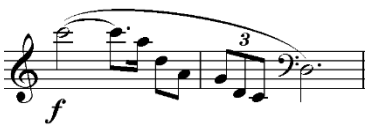


which is succeeded in its turn by references to **S151**,

S155 and **S148** before it returns to accompany his final words (and Aredhel in a whispered and flustered aside to her son reveals her fears that Eöl might indeed have followed them). To an accompaniment of her own **S148** she boldly declares that Eöl is indeed her husband, and (**S155**) the father of her son (**S158**). Turgon signs to Ecthelion to lead Eöl before him; and a severe and primitive restatement of **S144** on recorders and violins over an *ostinato* timpani rhythm lend a sudden air of ancient ceremonial to the proceedings.

Turgon begins by welcoming Eöl (**S151**) but explains that, having once found his way to the Hidden City, he cannot be permitted to leave (**S153**). Eöl refuses his welcome thus expressed (**S155**). The cause of his bitterness against the Elves in exile becomes plain as the orchestra refers back to the Oath of Fëanor (**S39**) and the bloodshed against Eöl's kinsfolk which resulted (**S44** and **S45**). He is willing to renounce Aredhel, if she has tired of him (**S148**); but he insists that Maeglin, his heir, shall come with him away from the house of his enemies (**S158** followed again by **S45** and then restated with great vigour). Maeglin remains undecided, and the echoes of **S157** on solo viola and bassoon die away as he stands in doubt. Turgon reads his silence as rejection, and to fragments of **S146** he refuses to debate further with this "Black Elf", who is only protected from thraldom under Morgoth by the swords of the Eldar (**S23** here referring to Fëanor's prowess in battle). In his realm, Turgon declares, he is King and his word is law (fragments of **S45** show what Eöl thinks of this claim). As Eöl stands in his turn lost in thought, three solo timpani play the first chord of **S155**; but suddenly he throws back his coat and throws a javelin at his son; and as Aredhel leaps before him (**S148**) the dart takes her in the breast (**S155** *ff* on the trombones and then **S158** dying away into silence). Eöl is seized by the guards (**S155**) and curses his son, that he in his turn (**S156**) may die the same death as his father. A new theme is heard, that of the precipice of Caragdûr from which Eöl is to be cast, and from which Maeglin in his turn will fall:

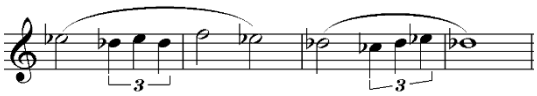
S160



Crashing timpani accompany a grandiose restatement of **S144** as Ecthelion leads Eöl to the precipice, and casts him over (**S160**). Throughout this Maeglin has remained silent and brooding (**S158**), and Idril comes to him to give him sympathy and consolation (**S147**). Maeglin looks into her eyes, but the thoughts which pass through his mind remain unspoken; only **S50** on the oboes hints at what will result from this glance, Maeglin's betrayal of Gondolin through the jealousy of his love new-born for Idril. A wisp of a statement of **148** on flute shows Idril's mind turning back to Aredhel, and she follows the funeral procession out as her own **S147** gently sounds over a restatement of **S144**. The last notes of the triptych refer back to Caragdûr (**S610**) and Maeglin himself (solo bassoon whispering **S158**).

The second triptych brings the action back to the realm of the mortal men who have come into Beleriand to aid the Elves, and the music in turn returns to the sphere of *Húrin*. The opening phrase of the prelude is a repeat of **S140**, and this is followed by a complete recapitulation of **113** and another restatement of **S140**. We are back indeed with the House of Hador and the family of Húrin, Morwen, Túrin and Niënor; now with Huor the brother of Húrin, his wife Rian and their son Tuor. The opening words of the chorus repeat the opening words they had in *Húrin* (**S112**); but when they go on to speak of *the* "Battle of Unnumbered Tears" a new phrase arises, expressive of the sufferings of the men who have aided the Elves:

S161

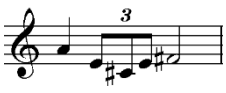


As the chorus describe the birth of Tuor, **S141** briefly reappears from the Prologue, and then **S161** is repeated with greater richness as the chorus describes his childhood. They go on to tell of his departure for the Sea (**S143**) and from the house of his fathers (**S113**), and then **S54** reappears from *Fëanor* as he comes to the shores of Middle-Earth.

The mists which have covered the scene during the prelude now part and the shores of the Great Ocean are seen. Ulmo's theme (**S43**) extends itself in a great leisurely expanse across the score as Tuor stands looking out at the sunset across the water. A storm is brewing, and mutterings of **S47** are heard in the bass, as **S43** slowly changes to **S46**. As the storm reaches its height, and the shape of Ulmo rises from the deeps, **S47** rises in great excitement over **S143**. Ulmo's opening words to Tuor recall his **S43** in the form it took in the Prologue; but as he moves on to speak of Morgoth (**S4**) and Tuor's need to seek for Gondolin (**S146**), his voice moves away from its monotone and takes on greater urgency. He declares that Tuor will be his messenger (**S43** followed immediately by **S141**), and shows him the arms which he is to bear as a token to Turgon (**S144**). He then goes on to speak of "the armour of Fate" (**S161**), and declares that "the curse of Mandos hastens to its fulfilment, and all the works of the Eldar shall perish." The music here returns to the original music of the curse of Mandos in *Fëanor* (**S19** and **S49**), but then returns to **S161** as he speaks of "the hope they have not looked for and have not prepared," which lies in Tuor (**S141**).

Tuor is overawed; **S146** sounds *misterioso* in *tremolo* strings as he asks of what assistance he, a mortal man (**S125**), can be "among so many and valiant of the High Folk of the West" (**S8**). Ulmo (**S43** once again) reassures him that he sends him to Gondolin not for himself alone, but "to bring into the world a help beyond thy sight" (**S143**); but the storm now begins to return (**S46**) as he tells of the one who shall come to Tuor "out of the storm", and the first hint of the theme of Voronwë, the Elf who will act as Tuor's guide, is heard:

S162

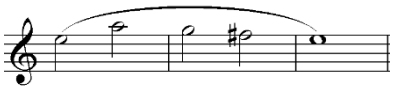


As Ulmo disappears, the storm gathers its full force and presses upon the land (**S46** and **S47**). The music at this point refers to the vision seen by Tuor which is described in full in Tolkien's description of this scene, as included in *Unfinished Tales*:

> And therereupon Ulmo lifted up a mighty horn, and blew upon it a single great note, to which the roaring of the storm was but a windflaw upon a lake. And as he heard that note, and was encompassed by it, and filled with it, it seemed to Tuor that the coasts of Middle-earth vanished, and he surveyed all the waters of the world in a great vision: from the veins of the lands to the mouths of the rivers, and from the strands and estuaries out into the deep. The Great Sea he saw through its unquiet regions teeming with strange forms, even to its lightless depths, in which amid the everlasting darkness there echoed voices terrible to mortal ears. Its measureless plains he surveyed with the swift sight of the Valar, lying windless under the eye of Anar [the Sun], or glittering under the horned Moon, or lifted in hills of wrath that broke upon the Shadowy Isles, until remote upon the edge of sight, and beyond the count of leagues, he glimpsed a mountain, rising beyond his mind's reach into a shining cloud, and at its feet a long surf glimmering. And even as he strained to hear the sound of those far waves, and to see clearer that distant light, the note ended, and he stood beneath the thunder of the storm, and lightning many-branched rent asunder the heavens above him.

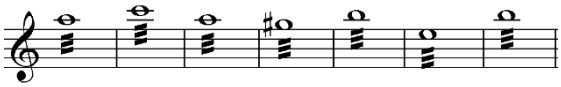
This vision is not precisely mirrored in the music, but the horn-call of Ulmo is sounded by amplified horns behind the stage (playing Ulmo's characteristic note of A), while the storm mutters far beneath in hurried string figurations based on **S17**. Over that float reminiscences of many themes from earlier in the cycle: the Earth (**S7**), the Valar (**S2**), the House of Hador as Tuor's ancestors (**S113**), and several times repeated the theme of Ilúvatar himself (**S1**). As the note ends, **S17** erupts suddenly in the trumpets, and **S143** strides beneath in horns and trumpets. Finally, as a ship is seen driven onto the shore and wrecked by the force of the storm, a new theme emerges:

S163



over which another theme is shrilled out, which will become reveal its significance only in the very last bars of the work:

S164



and as the thunder roars below a *fffffz* climax on **S43**, Tuor rises (**S141**) and calls out by name to the lonely mariner who alone has escaped the wreck of the ship:

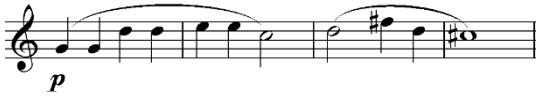
Hail, Voronwë! I await you,

and **S162** is sounded out *ff* by the horns before it dies away in two restatements by a solo cello. All is suddenly still.

Voronwë clambers up from his ship as wisps of themes reappear from the Prologue; he asks if the shadow is overthrown (**S4**), or if the armies of Gondolin have come forth (**S146**). It should be noted here, as Christopher Tolkien has pointed out in *Unfinished Tales*, that the *name* of Gondolin is not mentioned at any point during the dialogues between Tuor and Voronwë until they actually come to the City; but the thematic references in the orchestra make it clear to what they are referring. Voronwë remarks upon Tuor's newly-acquired armour (**S144**) and realises that despite this Tuor is mortal (**S113**); Tuor in his turn remarks upon Voronwë's identity (**S162**) as *the last mariner that sought the West from the Havens* (**S32**). Voronwë is startled by Tuor's knowledge, and as Ulmo's **S43** sounds above a reminiscence of his horn-call (again the single note A) Tuor explains his mission, and that Voronwë (**S162**) is to be his guide. The latter is overwhelmed (**S113** declaimed by the full orchestra) as Tuor goes on to explain the message he is to deliver to Turgon, when *Doom* (**S19**) *shall strive with the counsel of Ulmo* (**S43**, now in major mode) and recalls the promise made to Turgon by Ulmo in the Prologue (**S143**).

Voronwë turns away and looks across the sea (**S162**). The opening words of his extended narration, in which he describes his vain attempt to seek to sail back to the Blessed Realm in search of the aid of the Valar, are set to the melody already outlined during the storm (**S163**), but the next phrase will later reveal its true significance only at the very end of the work, when it will become the second part of the melody, **S164**:

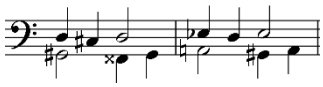
S165



This theme is succeeded in succession by **S163**, returns and then gives way to a version of Sauron's theme (**S61**) at Voronwë's words

But if Evil has grown while I have wandered, and the last peril approaches:

S166



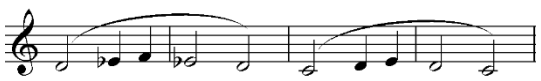
which is accompanied by **S35** and then gives way to **S144** as Voronwë declares *then I must go to my people*. Tuor agrees to follow the counsel of Ulmo (**S43**) and asks how far Voronwë proposes to lead him (**S125**, followed by **S52**). Voronwë (developments of **S162**, followed by **S163**) agrees, and then returns to the narrative of his voyage on the Ocean:

But the Great Sea is terrible, Tuor son of Huor; and it works the Doom of the Valar. Worse things it holds than to sink into the abyss and so perish,

where in a great climax **S43** is succeeded by **S141**, **S19**, **S49** and **S164**. He goes on to describe the terrors of the Sea (to variants of **S46**) before a final return of **S164** brings a sudden change of texture. All becomes quiet and still, as below mysterious *tremolandi* on strings with the vibraphone providing a halo of reverberation Voronwë sings in awe of his distant vision of the Blessed Realm and **S2** is given out by muted violins. But **S35** recalls him to the present, and his recognition that "none from mortal lands shall come there ever again" (**S3**). Tuor attempts to comfort him (**S141** and **S162** in rapid succession) with a prophecy that their roads will lie together far from the Shadow (**S143**); and both rise and pull their cloaks about them to prepare for their long journey (**S43** dying away in the lower strings).

Tuor's description of his vision of Ulmo forms the main part of the sixth scene. It opens with an entirely new theme played by clarinets and bassoons:

S167

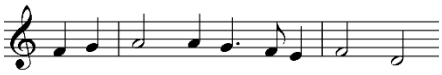


which is quickly taken up by the violins. Tuor's opening words

In a dim and perilous region in whose great tempestuous ways

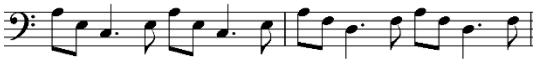
are set to a theme which will alternate with **S167** during the course of the narration:

S168



and it is this theme which immediately returns in the orchestra, over a characteristic bass figure:

S169



and is then succeeded, over a continuation of the same figure, by a full restatement of **S167** only briefly interrupted by a reference to **S141**. **S169** then takes over in the orchestra, in crashing string chords, while the voice returns to **S168** (the tune then being taken over by the trumpets), and after a final reference to **S167** returns to the music of the Prologue (**S141** accompanied by rushing string figurations and then a full restatement of **S142**). After the complete restatement of the opening twenty bars of the work, there follows a recapitulation of **S168** over **S169**; and then **S169** rises ever higher over a restatement of **S2** at the words

in the tumult as the Valar tore the earth
in the darkness, in the tempest of cycles ere our birth;

and then by an abrupt stillness as the narrative of the vision fades, and the heightened lyrical passage concludes with reference back to its opening bars (**S167**). It will be noted that the material for this section, apart from occasional citations of other motifs, is almost entirely self-contained; and indeed this narration is one of the closest approaches to a formal and traditional aria to be found in the score of *The Silmarillion*.

In the book, as Voronwë and Tuor lie close to death through freezing, they are roused and saved by the appearance of the Eagles who will lead them to the Hidden City. It is therefore appropriate that **S102** should here make a brief reappearance from *Beren and Lúthien*, although the Eagles are not in point of fact mentioned in the text. As Tuor and Voronwë rise and enter the path of the Dry River which leads them to the Gates of Gondolin, **S145** returns and is repeated eight times in succession in progressively changing keys and different orchestrations, even at one point combining in counterpoint with a phrase from **S146**; but as Ecthelion challenges them, **S159** returns and is succeeded by statements of **S152**.

S159 is proclaimed *ffz* by the full orchestra as Ecthelion unveils a lantern and examines closely the faces of Voronwë (**S162**) and then Tuor (**S141**); and the latter brings a note of sudden astonishment. **S159** is given out *esitando* by the flutes as Ecthelion turns to Voronwë in surprise (**S162**), citing their long friendship (**S163**) and asking plaintively "Why do you set me thus cruelly between the law (**S152**) and my friendship?" (**S162**). His own **S159** is combined with **S162** and **S152**, succeeded closely by **S113** and **S125** as he attempts to resolve his own confusion. Voronwë cuts through the texture with an affirmative restatement of **S163**, and reinforces it with a reference back to **S19** at the words "What I have done, I have done under command greater than the law of the Guard" (**S152**). He appeals to the King (**S146**) for judgement.

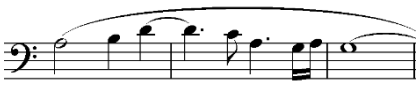
Tuor steps forward in his turn to challenge Ecthelion and does so to a full restatement of **S113**. Ecthelion warns him that those who enter the Gate may never return "save by the door of death" (**S152**) but Tuor remains unmoved (**S141**). To restatements of **143**, **S43** and **S159** he warns Ecthelion to "hinder not the messenger of the Lord of Waters!" and throws off his travelling cloak to reveal the armour left for him by Turgon and revealed to him by Ulmo, as the orchestra *fff* declaims the stentorian **S144**. Ecthelion once again is struck dumb with amazement (**S159**) and to repetitions of **S113**, **S43** and **S144** declares

even the name that he claims matters less than this clear truth: that he comes from Ulmo himself.

Turgon, with Idril and Maeglin on either side of him, now comes to meet Tuor and welcome him to the Hidden City, to which the name of Gondolin is now given for the first time in this triptych (**S146**, restated twice). Tuor stands before the King and delivers his message (**S43**), combining **S10** and **S125** into one phrase at the phrase

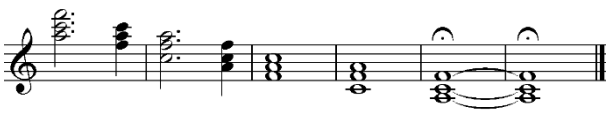
and who knows the minds of Elves and Men:

S170



His message and Turgon's response refusing to obey the commands of Ulmo are accompanied by a complex web of previous stated themes: **S143**, **S4**, **S152**, **S59** (here appearing for the first time since *Beren and Lúthien*), **S151**, **S24**, **S19**, **S49**, **S146**, **S163**, **S162**, **S50** and **S35** all are recapitulated and combined in various manners (as demanded by the references in the text) in a passage of 100 bars. From the thematic point of view this is probably one of the most densely-argued sections of the score. Turgon's final refusal (**S19**) is followed by his departure from the stage as **S146** slowly dies away and is succeeded by Tuor's despairing **S141**. Idril comes forward to comfort him (**S147** reappearing from the first triptych) and her sympathy blossoms into the first hint of their love theme, an extended development of **S125**. Idril and Tuor's themes combine once more, and the final phrase of the triptych consists of a downward series of arpeggios on recorders which portray Idril's sympathy:

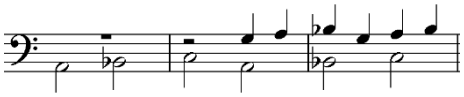
S171



The third triptych takes place some years later. The love of Tuor and Idril has blossomed and they are now married. The prelude to the triptych is therefore a *Wedding March*, so entitled and equipped with a concert conclusion for independent performance. The opening is sounded by bells (to be played with a synthesiser if no real bells are available: the only appearance of electronic instruments in the score if various wind and thunder

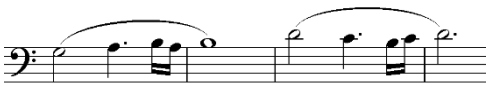
effects are discounted). The theme of the bells is a repetition in canon at the seventh of **S141**:

S172



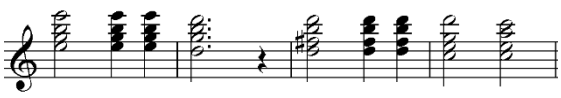
and the main theme of the March is **S142**. This is repeated twice, and then succeeded in the first Trio by **S171** at first by itself and then combined with **S147**. The sound of the bells returns, and then the main theme of the March, again repeated. The second trio brings an entirely new theme played initially by the English horn,

S173



succeeded by a chordal passage like a chorale or hymn,

S174



and then repeated by the full orchestra. The bells (**S172**) sound again before **S142** returns played by flute, piccolo and celesta and a final whisper of **S173** as the March comes to an end (in the concert conclusion, with a reference to **S141**).

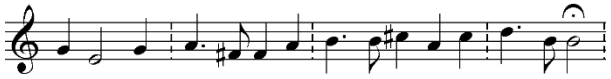
In the full version the March leads directly into the extended love duet for Tuor and Idril. The main theme for this is **S125**, to which is added its second phrase **S52** and an extended development drawn from the use of the same melody in the *Ainulindalë* symphony. Tuor sings this passage (which covers 48 bars) first and the whole of the melody is then repeated by Idril, whose voice is heard now for the first time. The middle section of the duet, referring to "the wandering fire," cites **S24** before returning to **S2**, **S49**, **S143**, **S49** and **S2** once again. The recapitulation of the main theme is again exact, bringing the two voices together in duet and at one point bringing in **S21** as a counterpoint. The duet then ends with a further repeat of **S125** and **S52**, now taking the form that they adopted at the end of *The Children of Húrin*. It is noteworthy that this duet draws entirely on previously stated material and introduces no new thematic material of its own. We are coming to the end of the cycle, and the mood is becoming valedictory.

The very short eighth scene where Maeglin, tortured by jealousy, betrays Gondolin to Morgoth, is delivered entirely unaccompanied until the final three bars except for a bass drum roll. It is strongly suggested that the whole passage should be pre-recorded with acoustics being controlled to give a *dead* sound suggestive of a tomb. The only previous thematic references occur at Morgoth's words "What is that to me?" (inevitably, **S4**) and right at the end of the scene, where Maeglin's theme (**S158**) is given out by the orchestra over the theme of Treason (**S50**).

The Hymn to Ilúvatar which opens the ninth scene is entirely unaccompanied, scored for six solo voices and chorus in eight parts. It opens with an entirely new theme to the words

Ilu Ilúvatar en káre eldain i fírimoin:

S175

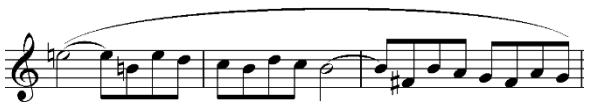


At various references in the Hymn there are hints of earlier themes woven into the thread of the chant: "for Elves they made the Moon (**S10**), but for Men the red Sun (**S125**)..to all they gave in measure the gifts of Ilúvatar (**S1**)..Lovely is Gondobar" (**S173**), and finally **S175** succeeded by **S2** at the words

Man táre antáva nin Ilúvatar, Ilúvatar
enyárë tar i tyel, írë Anarinya queluva?
[What will the Father, O Father, give me
in that day beyond the end when my Sun faileth?]

It is this phrase which is interrupted by the sudden eruption of the orchestra with **S4** and **S160** as the peaks beyond the Caragdûr are illuminated the sudden flame, and the chorus (to **S16**) realise that the forces of Morgoth are upon them. **S16** is accompanied by the usual diminished fifths (**S30**) and these continue beneath **S151** as Turgon, pale and shaken, realises that his pride has brought about the downfall of his City (**S24**). The harmonies of the Curse of Mandos (**S19**) sound out beneath his fateful words "Great is the fall of Gondolin," but Tuor calls out to him (**S49**) that Ulmo will not suffer the City to perish; Turgon however says that all his hope is gone (**S146**), except that "the Children (**S8**) of the One (**S1**) shall not be worsted for ever." A jagged variant of **S146** now sounds out over increasingly clamorous statements of **S59** as Turgon bids his people not to fight the inevitable, but to seek safety in flight (**S24**) and to let Tuor have their loyalty (**S141**); he himself will perish with his City (**S151** followed by and overwhelmed by **S24**). Ecthelion (**S159**) seeks to resist his commands, but **S30** and **S59** now combine and lead back to a full restatement of **S16**. Turgon goes slowly up the Tower, looking down on the fall of the City (**S146** slowly in the minor against agitated repetitions of **S59**); Idril makes to follow him (**S147**) but is detained by Maeglin (**S50**), whose treachery now becomes apparent. In the original legend it is told how Maeglin lays hands on the baby Eärendil, who turns and struggles, and a new theme now depicts those squirmings:

S176



but Tuor (**S141**) quickly rushes forward and struggles with Maeglin (still **S50**), casting him over the precipice of Caragdûr as his father before him (**S160**). Another new theme makes a brief appearance:

S177

before **S16** begins a slow canonic series of restatements as the Orcs begin their final assault on Turgon's tower. **S177** converts itself into a series of wailing shifts of

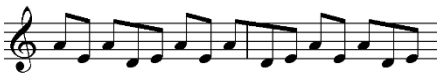
harmony as the chorus describes "the fume of the burning" and the withering of the Trees (**S21**) and the Balrog rises above the ruins of the City (**S53** followed by **S4**). The battle which follows between Ecthelion and the Balrog is accompanied by a cacophony of themes including **S4**, **S16**, **S53** and **S159**, and as the Balrog plunges to defeat in the abyss **S53** gives way to a joyous peal of bells (**S172**) and a surging statement of **S145**. A sudden quiet descends as an ascending scale slowly rises through the orchestra and a chorus describes the grave:

> *Then a green turf came there, and a mound of yellow flowers amid the barrenness of stone, until the world was changed.*

The chorus croon gently through half-closed lips and a solo violin rises from the depths playing **S173** *dolcissimo ed espressivo,* a lament for the fallen City. The chorus continue to hum **S174** as it is joined by a second solo violin, weaving arabesques around the harmonies, and then as **S173** returns over a delicate filigree of string writing.

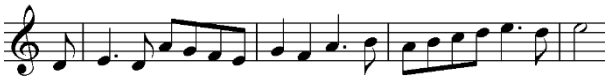
As **S173** dies away, the chorus's humming changes to **S32** and the Epilogue, *The Last Ship,* begins. The movement of **S32** is now converted into a quaver movement that laps across the bar-lines without reference to the remainder of the music:

S178



and as Tuor bids farewell to Idril as he sets sail across the seas, the theme of his opening remarks is paralleled by the strings under a solo oboe lament:

S179



A distant chorus, singing in Elvish, sing **S143** over and over again like a distant chant, and the A-minor-seventh harmony (the key of Ulmo again) sustains itself throughout these opening passages of the Prologue with the oscillations of **S178** introducing a D into the chord. **S179** returns *molto espressivo e cantabile*, and then eventually **S6**, which has not been heard since the opening scenes of *Fëanor,* rises through the texture in the unusual combination of unison flutes, recorders and bassoon. This leads in turn through the same progressions as heard in the Prelude to *Fëanor* to **S7** and then finally back to **S178** and **S179** as Tuor goes on board the ship which will bear him to the Blessed Realm (**S143**).

A faster movement, based on **S1**, accompanies Idril's song of farewell to the "happy mariner." Her words are accompanied by **S113** on flutes and harp, and this passage derives from the section of my piano rondo *Akallabêth* which there described the sailings of the remnants of the Fathers of Men to the Land of Gift, Númenor, after the fall of Morgoth in the Second Age. Whereas the distant chorus in Elvish which accompanied Tuor consisted of female voices, here the chorus is generally male voices; but again they introduce **S143** and the harmony remains unchanged until **S179** returns once again, this time on solo oboe.

In the second section of Idril's lament the male-choir harmonies begin to shift uneasily over the return of **S124**, and then the female voices join them for the words *ellenillor pellar* [beyond the stars], to the return of **S3**. Idril's reference to "the lost land of the Two Trees" brings back **S21** and then a full-scale restatement of **S33**, the theme of Loss, which has not been heard since the sixth scene of *Fëanor*.

Finally the full chorus enters with the final section of the lament (to **S179**), at the same time as the offstage distant semi-chorus continue with their Elvish chant. Over this the glockenspiel sparkles with constant repetitions of **S178**. This in turn dies down as Idril's voice re-enters for the final four lines, and the oboe *dolce* recalls the theme of their love duet (**S125**). The themes which arose in the second triptych as Voronwë described his voyage towards the Blessed Realm return: **S164** followed immediately by **S165**, all over a timpani rhythm of plangent sadness. Idril's words are accompanied by the full chorus in octaves singing a monotone E above the timpani rhythm; and then, like sun breaking through the clouds, the distant chorus break out with the final statement of the theme of the Two Trees, **S21**:

> *Man kenuva metim' andune?*
> [Who shall see the last evening?]

and **S113**, the theme of the ultimately triumphant House of Hador, is sonorously declaimed by the brass. The voices cease. **S164** and **S165** return, now delicately spun by the woodwind over harp harmonies, with the timpani rhythms banished to a distant and occasional murmur. The final phrase to be heard is that with which the whole cycle opened: **S1**, the theme of Ilúvatar the Father and Creator of All Things. But it is *pppp*, and dies away to nothing; the legend grows more distant and ultimately fades.

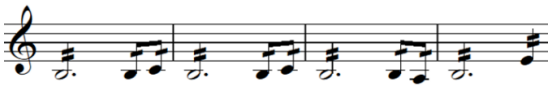
The War of Wrath

When, after a hiatus of over twenty years, I returned again to the realm of *The Silmarillion* to complete the cycle with the addition of *The War of Wrath*, I also inevitably returned again to the skein of musical references that had featured in the original cycle with additional material also garnered from *The Lay of Eärendil* added as an appendix to the sequence of epic scenes some ten years after the completion of *The Fall of Gondolin.*

The constitution of scenes in *The War of Wrath* reflects of course the same pattern as in the previous segments of the *Silmarillion* cycle and therefore begins with a scene-setting Prologue which stands somewhat apart from the subsequent action. The text in fact is the very first poem that Tolkien ever wrote on the subject of Middle-earth (or so he recollected in later life, although there may be some doubt as to the reliability of his memory over half a century later): a setting of a poem on the subject of the shores of Valinor ('Faery' as it was entitled when originally written) and allocated here to the voice of Elbereth as the semi-divine being who created the stars in Scene Two of *Fëanor.*

The music begins with an entirely new theme which depicts the shores of Valinor:

S180

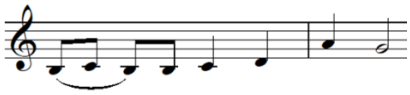


This theme is preceded and succeeded by a line in the chorus setting Frodo's words *Aiya Eärendil*, which are in turn an Elvish translation of the old Anglo-Saxon couplet

Eala Earendel engla beorhtast
ofer middangeard monnum sended

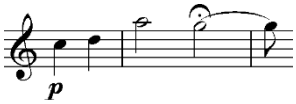
which Tolkien described as the germ of his linguistic exploration of Middle-Earth and its languages:

S181



The second part of this phrase is soon detached and brought forward by the solo violin over the repetitions of **S180** and one of Ulmo's themes of the ocean (**S143**, already foreshadowed in the phraseology of **S181**); it now refers specifically to the vision of Eärendil as a star floating above Middle-Earth:

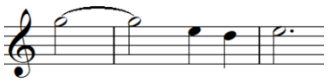
S182



This theme was originally written for, and indeed opened, the setting of *The Lay of Eärendil* which I made in 2004, and assumes greater importance both there and in the Second Triptych of scenes in *The War of Wrath.*

Finally, when the voice of Elbereth does enter with her setting of Tolkien's opening line, we hear yet another entirely new theme:

S183



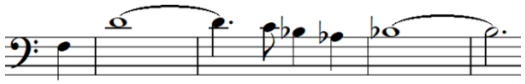
which will also recur later in the score.

These elements constitute the whole of the new musical material of the Prologue, but there are also references to existing themes from earlier in the cycle. At the mention of the Two Trees the theme from *Fëanor* recurs (**S21**) and the theme of the ships from that score, where it referred to the Haven of the Swans (**S32**), also makes it presence felt. The Prologue finally dies away with the overarching theme of **S143** and muttered reiterations of **S180**.

The first scene of the action depicts the host of the Elves summoned to Valinor in Scene Two of *Fëanor* and their arrival at the shores of Middle-earth under the leadership of the mariner Círdan. This character has not yet made an appearance in the *Silmarillion* cycle, but he did feature in my sketches for *The Grey Havens*, the closing scene of *The Lord of the Rings*, where the ship which he provided for the Ring-bearers on their passage over the sea acquired its own theme (which will shortly make an appearance in this score as well). However at first his intention is to build a ship to sail to Valinor at once, a purpose underlined by the return of **S32** as a counterpoint to his words. But he is contradicted by the voice of Ulmo, whose utterances derive partly from a late sketch of the scene by Tolkien and also from words attributed to Mandos in prophecy in passages written in the 1950s. The music here juxtaposes the theme of Ulmo himself (**S43**) with that of Mandos (**S19**) and references soon appear to the coming of Eärendil (**S176**) and the ultimate authority of the Elder King (**S1**). This contrast between themes from the farther reaches of the *Silmarillion* cycle will continue to be a feature of the score.

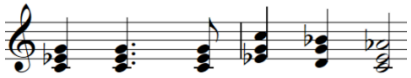
As Círdan sees a vision of Eärendil's ship the choral description of this vision is underlined by **S32** floating above a bass line derived from **S180**, but both these soon give way to the extended theme of Vairë as the weaver of dreams (**S6**), a long-breathed melodic line that has already been associated with the passage to Valinor in the Epilogue to *The Fall of Gondolin.* As the vision dies away, and Círdan acknowledges the authority of Ulmo, we hear another theme from that Epilogue—this time the theme associated with death of the Trees from Fëanor (**S33**) which now assumes a longer and more extended form

S184



which is mingled with repetitions of Eärendil's own **S176** before giving way to the melody originally written for *The Grey Havens* and there associated with Círdan's own ship:

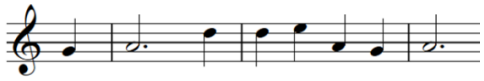
S185



With the return of **S184** we move into the action of the second scene.

The text of this scene focuses around the character of Melian, already featured in *Beren and Lúthien* but here assuming a pivotal role as the protectress of the Hidden Kingdom of Doriath in a series of dialogues with her husband Thingol and her companion Galadriel, one of the Noldor exiled from the Blessed Realm under the circumstances described in *Fëanor.* Galadriel as a character had not existed before her appearance in *The Lord of the Rings*, and Tolkien's account of her in *The Grey Annals* therefore derives entirely from texts written in the 1950s. During the first of these conversations Melian questions Galadriel concerning the banishment of the Noldor in a manner that clearly implies that she discerns that something of importance is being hidden from Thingol and herself. After the choral introduction of the scene over **S184** as described, the music derives entirely from themes already established earlier in the cycle—Melian herself (**S86**), the Curse of Mandos (**S19** and **S49**), Fëanor (**S23**), the Oath (**S39**), the Valar (**S2**) and finally Morgoth as the thief of the Noldor's treasure (**S4**). There is only one new element, a theme describing the character of Galadriel, which underpins much of her increasingly evasive responses:

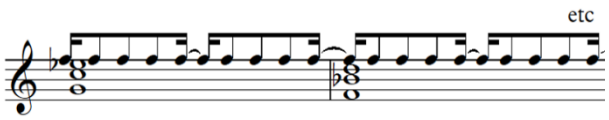
S186



As Galadriel gives way to pressure from Melian, she unveils more (as the chorus describes), and now yet more themes from earlier in the cycle emerge: the Silmarils themselves (**S26**), Finwë the Elvenking whose death is now disclosed (**S22**), a greater prominence given to the Oath (**S39**) and the burning of the ships in the final scene of *Fëanor* (**S55**). But Galadriel refuses to reveal further information which might incriminate her kin, and **S186** becomes ever more elusive as the chorus proceed to introduce the later discussion between Melian and her husband. The theme of the Silmaril now assumes the form that it took when Thingol demanded one of the jewels from Beren in exchange for the hand of his daughter (**S87**).

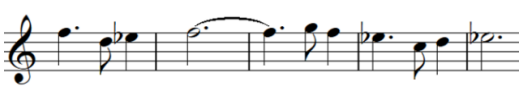
The discussion between Melian and Thingol which now ensues is musically derived entirely from themes already familiar from their deployment earlier in the cycle. Melian's **S86** is now combined with the descending chords associated with Thingol himself (**S84**) and repetitions of the Silmaril theme (**S26**) are interspersed with the motives of the Elves (**S8)** before Melian's narrative of the deeds of the Noldor brings references to Fëanor (**S23**), his attribution as Spirit of Fire (**S24**), his father Finwë **(S22**) and his murder by Morgoth (**S35**). Thingol is shocked by her revelations (**S84**) and he now draws the association with the Curse of Mandos (**S19**) and the exile of the Noldor from Valinor (**S49**) attributing this to the action of the Oath (**S39**) which is now combined with the chords sequence associated with treachery (**S50**) before the music returns to the matter of the Silmarils themselves (**S26**). Melian's forebodings are underlined by the combination of the chords associated with the Curse of Mandos and those of treachery (**S19** and **S50**) which are heard in sequence; Thingol in his dismissal of her fears refers back to the motive of Fëanor (**S23**) which Melian in her turn combines with the chords of treason. As Thingol leaves, his own chord sequence (**S84**) is overlaid with a syncopated violin line which now assumes a thematic importance of its own:

S187



Melian, left alone with Galadriel, now sees a vision of the future events which will alter the fate of Doriath—the love of her daughter for a mortal man, which of course has formed the main action of *Beren and Lúthien.* Her declaration that the deeds of these lovers will transform the destiny of Middle-Earth is set to a full-length recapitulation of the theme associated with their first meeting, now extended in rhythm and intertwined with reiterations of **S187**:

S188



As the scene concludes the whole passage is elaborated by the orchestra alone, slowly dying away as the vision itself fades. All that remains is the despairing theme of the Death which will claim Beren and Lúthien (**S85**), heard as the chorus sings of the winter "as it were the hoar age of mortal men" which descends upon Thingol with the loss of his daughter.

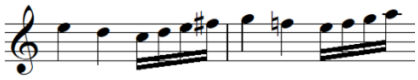
The third scene of *The War of Wrath* treats of the events which lead in Tolkien's narrative to the ruin of Doriath. This was one of the most complex webs of conflicting and indeed contradictory material which the author bequeathed at the time of his death, and the version of the story published in the original edition of *The Silmarillion* as edited by Christopher Tolkien departed in many significant ways from the author's own text. The only full-length version of the tragic events left by Tolkien was a sometimes illegible draft entitled *The Tale of the Nauglafring* which not only introduced the Dwarves significantly into the history of the First Age but also made substantial play of treachery among the Elves themselves, signified by a character Ufedhin who appears nowhere else in any of Tolkien's writings. For the purposes of this scene I have combined elements of the *Nauglafring* text with the description of the actions of the Sons of Fëanor as described both in that tale and the brief accounts in Tolkien's later *Tale of Years*, but eliminating altogether the participation of the Dwarves and generally cutting and simplifying both the progress of the narrative and the genealogy itself, where Tolkien's dialogue either becomes sketchy or non-existent.

In the first place, the acquisition of the Silmaril by Thingol is represented by a brief tableau in which Mablung is seen to take the jewel from the stomach of the slain wolf Carcharoth, where it had been abandoned in the narrative of the epic scenes *Beren and Lúthien* (a passage where Tolkien's full-length narrative in *The Lay of Leithian* had been left incomplete by the author). Mablung delivers the jewel to Thingol, as in Tolkien's version of the tale in the *Grey Annals*; but the participation of Beren in the slaying of the Wolf is perforce omitted. The scene then moves forward many years, with Thingol now in possession of the Silmaril which is coveted by the Sons of Fëanor under the compulsion of their Oath. The Sons now invade Doriath (as they do in *The Tale of Years* after the death of Thingol) but in the version of the story seen here they take on the function of the Dwarves in Tolkien's 'Lost Tale', throwing the head of Thingol at the feet of Melian. It is the latter who now commits the Silmaril to the care of Elwing, and she bids farewell to the realm of Doriath in words derived from Tolkien's unfinished prose version of *Beren and Lúthien* written in the 1950s. Otherwise the dialogue in this scene, both that of the Sons of Fëanor and between Melian and Elwing, is adapted from the *Tale of the Nauglafring*. And the final words of the chorus describing the ruin of Doriath come from Christopher Tolkien's version of the narrative in the published *Silmarillion.*

In musical terms this assembly of textual fragments is, like much of Scene Two, once again almost entirely derived from material heard earlier in the cycle. As Mablung presents the Silmaril to Thingol, the music associated with the jewel in *Fëanor* is heard at full length —at first combined with theme of Thingol himself (**S84**) and then as heard in *Fëanor* (**S26**). As the music describes the hunt by which Thingol is lured to leave the protection woven by Melian around the realm of Doriath, we hear the motives heard previously when Túrin hunted Saeros through the woods (**S114**) where the theme of

Morgoth forms an uneasy undercurrent (**S4**) to the threats of the Sons of Fëanor. Elwing comes to Melian, enquiring the reason for her disquiet, and her theme is now heard for the first time:

S189

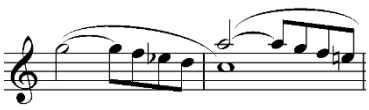


Melian replies (**S86**) with deep foreboding, and for the first time in *The War of Wrath* the Doriath melody, last heard in the prologue to *The Fall of Gondolin*, is hinted at in the accompaniment (**S10**). As she consigns the Silmaril to Elwing for safe-keeping the themes of Elwing (**S189**) and Melian (**S86**) are interwoven with that of the Silmaril (**S26**) before the entry of blood-stained Curufin who, taking over the role of Ufedhin in the *Nauglafring* tale, walks to Thingol's throne and seats himself in it to a combination of **S39** and **S23.** Melian confronts him (in a diatribe originally addressed to Ufedhin) as the theme of treachery (**S50**) rises to a climax over the music associated with the hunt. And as the head of Thingol is hurled at her feet, an outburst of despair from the orchestra combines the chords associated with treachery with the sequence of Thingol himself (**S84**) and then is in turn overlaid with the extended version of the lament associated originally with the death of the Two Trees in *Fëanor* (**S184**). As Melian passes from the scene, her own theme **S86** evaporates and gives way to a full statement, for the very last time in the epic scenes, of the extended melody associated with the realm of Doriath (**S10**). Brief fragments of other themes depict the fruitless search of the Sons of Fëanor for the Silmaril (**S23** and **S26**). And the Doriath melody itself, which has in its earlier appearances always risen to a triumphant climax, now collapses into an eviscerated silence where it is uneasily juxtaposed with the rhythm of **S187** as the First Triptych comes to its end.

As has been explained elsewhere in my description of the process by which *The War of Wrath* came to be written, the musical material of the Second Triptych is constructed around my setting of *The Lay of Eärendil* made some years after the conclusion of my work on *The Silmarillion* cycle in its four-evening version. Indeed the narrative substance of the *Lay* surrounds and explicates the inserted dramatic scenes which are drawn from other sources, and can indeed continue to stand as an independent work in its own right.

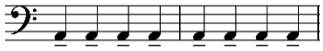
It opens with the theme associated with the idea of Eärendil as the evening star (**S182**); this theme recurs throughout the work, and is used to separate each of the verses of Tolkien's original poem. After this initial theme, the flute gives out the theme associated with the Elves in *Fëanor* (**S8**), but unlike its appearance in that work the theme is immediately imitated (before its initial statement has even finished) by the oboe and clarinet:

S190



The use of this theme gives a nod to the fact that *The Lay of Eärendil* in its original appearance in *The Fellowship of the Ring* is sung by Bilbo to an audience consisting almost entirely of the Elves of Rivendell, who subject the poem itself to a rigorous textual analysis once its recitation is completed. The imitations of the theme pass to violins, cellos, horn, back to flute and piccolo, trumpet, violins, horns and back to violins and horn again and are set against an increasingly elaborated orchestral texture which finally is underpinned by a throbbing A on the timpani which deliberately mirrors the appearance of Ulmo as Valar of the Sea in *The Fall of Gondolin* and will be repeated later (although has not previously been cited as a specific motif):

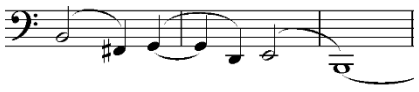
S191



The chorus, taking on the role of Bilbo, then enter with the opening words of the poem, which are accompanied for the first three bars by continuing statements of **S9** by the violins; but this restatement of the opening theme is soon joined by **S21** which originally in *Fëanor* referred to the Two Trees that gave light to the land of the Valar, but which later assumed a more general reference to the Blessed Realm itself. Here it apparently simplistically reflects the reference to the boat built of timber, but it also has a further significance is showing the very special nature of the boat that has been created. The statements of **S190** return, but at the mention of the boat's prow being "fashioned like a swan" **S32** enters on the oboe. This theme will recur many times in the legend of Eärendil, always with the same significance as a theme of the sea; and the first verse comes to a conclusion with a full orchestral statement of **S182**, given out by all four horns with their bells in the air.

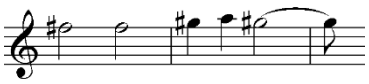
The second verse opens with a full restatement of the theme of the House of Hador originally found in *The Children of Húrin* (**S113)**. Eärendil is of course a direct descendant of that House, through his father Tuor who also made extensive use of the theme in *The Fall of Gondolin*; and Eärendil will also be the father of Elros, the founder of the realm of Númenor (hence the further appearance of the theme in my rondo for piano solo *Akallabêth*, which tells of the downfall of that realm). Here the theme underpins the first part of the text in which Tolkien describes Eärendil's armament. Halfway through its course, this theme is accompanied briefly by a horn phrase (**S63**) depicting battle and war. And immediately after **S113** reaches its conclusion, a new theme enters briefly in the tuba as the singer talks of Eärendil's bow "of dragon horn". This theme is not to be found in *The Silmarillion*, but derives from my earlier work on *The Hobbit* where it was indeed the theme of the Dragon Smaug:

S192



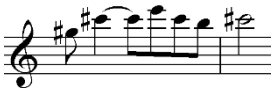
This theme is immediately succeeded by further statements of **S63** and then, as the singer goes on to tell of his sword, *two* sword themes enter almost simultaneously. One, heard on trumpets, again derives from *The Hobbit*, where it depicted the elven blades used by Gandalf, Thorin and Bilbo:

S193



The second, heard on woodwind, is the theme of Túrin's sword from *The Children of Húrin* (**S110**). And one bar later, as the singer tells of the gems that wreathed his helmet, another theme from *The Hobbit* is heard on the glockenspiel (it originally described the jewels found by the dwarves under the Lonely Mountain, specifically the Arkenstone, but here its use is more generic):

S194

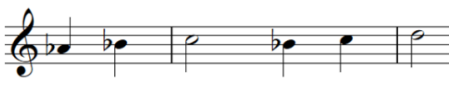


and this is followed in its turn by **S24** from *Fëanor*, where it was symbolic of fire; however in the *Lay* it becomes a more general theme, depicting the forces of nature rather than any specific manifestation of these.

Finally two other themes are heard, both of which will recur in the *Lay*. First is the theme of the One **(S1**) which in the *Lay* has a wider relevance as the theme of the Elder King (this reflects its later use in *Fëanor*, where it was also specifically used—as here—to refer to the Eagles as the special envoys of the Elder King). And to end the verse, as the singer tells of the emerald that Eärendil wore upon his breast, the woodwind and brass give out an initial statement of the theme always associated with the Silmaril itself (**S26)** which brings the second verse of the *Lay* to a conclusion with a general pause.

There now occurs the first of several newly introduced passages into the course of the Second Triptych which expand the dramatic context of the setting by reference to other sources in Tolkien's manuscripts. This scene, showing the departure of Eärendil from his wife Elwing on his voyage of discovery, combines a brief recitative with a text written by the author as part of his work on the legend of Númenor with a more extensive treatment of the song of the Elf Legolas from *The Return of the King*—Legolas, like Eärendil, is in search of the realm of Valinor beyond the Sundering Seas. While the recitative brings back the depiction of the shores of Valinor (**S180**) the setting of Legolas's verses brings a new theme:

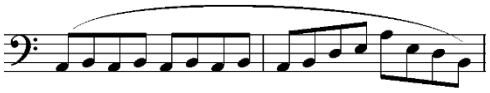
S195



which is set in contrast with already established themes such as **S32** and **S49.** At the second return of the melodic line **S195** it is now placed in counterpoint with **S185** and this combination leads to a full statement of the theme of the Valar (**S2**) and the triumphant return of the theme of the Elves (**S8**) before the accompaniment to the song melody dies away in mutterings of **S32** and **S195**.

The trombones then give out a new statement of **S182** and this leads into the description of Eärendil's early voyages which forms the third verse. The orchestra directly quotes one of the sea themes from *The Fall of Gondolin* (not cited in the analysis at that point) which is also to be found describing the voyages of the Númenoreans in the *Akallabêth* piano rondo:

S196



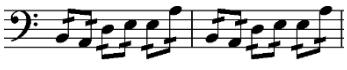
This is overlaid firstly by violin figurations which recall another of the textures in the same passage from *The Fall of Gondolin*, but then move in a totally different direction with the introduction of the theme of Arda as the Earth itself (**S7**) which will again recur many times in the *Lay*. This is repeated a number of times, descending in pitch from piccolo through oboes to clarinets and horns, as the singers describe Eärendil's wanderings across the ocean. As the text moves on to describe his flight "from gnashing of the Narrow Ice" two themes from *The Silmarillion* are given simultaneously. The first, on trombones, describes the Northern lands where the rebellious Elves wander (**S48**) before they are exiled from the Blessed Realm. The second theme, on English horn, bassoons and strings, is the theme of Elbereth herself (**S3**) and this is soon underpinned, as the chorus two bars later sing of the shadow that lies on the frozen hills, by the appearance of Morgoth's rhythmic pattern from *The Silmarillion* (**S35**) on timpani and bass drum. Then, as the narrative goes on to tell of "burning waste" **S24** reappears before the return of **S32** on oboe and English horn, and then another *Fëanor* theme (**S54**) which there depicted the shores of Middle-earth but in the *Lay* assumes a wider significance. And then for the first (but not the last) time is heard the theme of the Valar themselves (**S2**), as the singer tells of Eärendil's fruitless quest to find the Blessed Realm. It is heard here on muted horns, with an ominous muttering version of **5** on the timpani underpinning it. But the storms overtake Eärendil, and the use of material from *Fëanor* shows that the cause here is the same, the wrath of the Sea itself (**S46** and **S47**). Eventually these themes are joined not only by **S32** but also by another, the chaotic version of Morgoth's theme also heard at this point in *Fëanor* (**S31**). Only then finally do all these themes subside, and the cellos and basses give out a *ppp* statement of **S182** to bring the verse, and Scene Five, to an end.

The next verse of the poem which opens Scene Six is entirely an addition of Tolkien's which was made after the original version of the *Lay* was sent to the printers. Christopher Tolkien in *The Treason of Isengard* has explained how the author came to continue to revise his poem after its publication, and many of these later revisions have been introduced into the musical setting. The new verse, rather shorter than the others, describes how the sons of Fëanor launch an attack on Eärendil's dwellings in Arvernien, and as such it of course utilises a good many other themes from *Fëanor*. The first of these is the theme of Fëanor himself (**S23**) and the second is the theme of the Oath sworn by the sons of Fëanor (**S39**); the third is the theme of Battle first heard in the prologue to *Beren and Lúthien* (**S59**). These underpin the dialogue of the sons of Fëanor, and all three of these themes are combined as the chorus describes the attack, culminating in a massive statement of **S26**, before the motif of Elwing **S189)** is immediately taken up by the woodwind and strings as the singers tell how Elwing

throws herself into the sea to escape capture and the loss of the Silmaril (to the accompaniment of woodwind runs springing out of **S28**). At the end of this passage the timpani thunder out **S182** very briefly before the next verse begins.

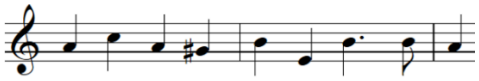
As Elwing comes to Eärendil bearing the Silmaril, **S28** leads into **S14** and this is developed at some length as he binds it upon his brow. As he turns his ship to make his way back across the seas, a new version of **S15** is taken up as a string ostinato:

S197



and this is then combined with the original version of **S15** to underpin first **S20** and then the theme of the Banishment of the Elves pronounced by Mandos (**S49**), which Eärendil is now defying by the power of the Silmaril he bears. As he passes away across the Ocean, the narrative is almost immediately interrupted by a stormier version of **S180** which builds towards a duet for the reunited husband and wife, beginning with an rhythmically inflected version of **S164**:

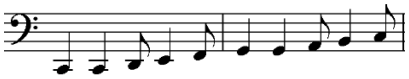
S198



and where the central section consists of a counterpoint woven from the themes of Eärendil (**S176**) and Elwing (**S189**) before the flute delivers a gentle reminder of **S182** to bring the verse to an end.

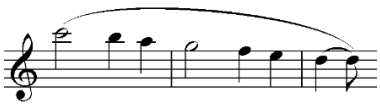
The next verse contrasts three themes which are presented simultaneously, as Eärendil crosses the pathless seas. Firstly there is a rising theme in the bass:

S199



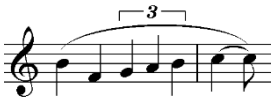
against which there is presented a falling theme in the woodwind reminiscent of the Elves (**S2**):

S200



and these two themes are bound together with a third ostinato which adopts an idea from the second phrase of the theme of Men (**S6**):

S201

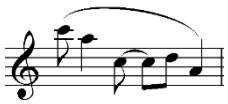


to depict the fact that Eärendil is bearing the appeal of the kindreds both of Elves and Men.

As he arrives on the shores of the Deathless Realm, **S185** is heard and, because this is the Land of the Valar and the coming of Eärendil there will signify the end of the Loss of the Silmarils, the theme used in *The Silmarillion* for this Loss (**S33** in *Fëanor*) is now heard on muted strings followed by a fuller restatement of **S185**. This leads to a mysterious restatement of the theme of Elbereth (**S18**) as Eärendil sets foot upon the undying lands.

Here he is hailed by Eönwë, the herald of the Elder King, in an apostrophe which extends itself over three full-scale and massively scored statements of the theme of the Valar (**S2**) over which **S182** is declaimed to bring this verse of the poem to an end. Eärendil takes counsel with the people of the Immortal Realm, and themes which have been heard in the *Silmarillion* cycle now return after a prolonged absence. After a brief recapitulation of **S2** and **S4** comes the theme originally identified (**S6**) with Vairë, the Weaver of Dreams; and then Eärendil is led through the Calacirya, the Pass of Light, and vertiginous themes plunge upwards and downwards sheerly on all sides:

S202



to be followed immediately by the fateful chords associated with Mandos as Lord of Death (**S19**). Over this material Eärendil bids farewell to Elwing, bearing his message to the Valar on behalf of the Two Kindreds of Elves and Men. As Eärendil passes further into the Realm of the Immortals, more of their themes are restated: that of Ilúvatar (**S1**) is followed again by that of Vairë (**S6**), and then by a combination of the theme of the Elves (**S8**) with that of mortality (heard here in the version **S125** associated with Eärendil's parents in the *Silmarillion* analysis), as Eärendil consults concerning the futures of Elves and Men. The verse then continues with the music associated with Vairë as Weaver of Dreams, and after this has built to a climax a distant echo is heard of the theme of Earth (**S7**) before **S182** is heard on harp harmonics to bring the verse to an end.

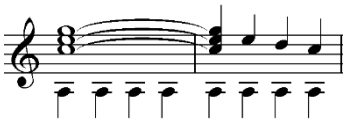
Once Eärendil's request for aid has been granted, the Valar turn their attention to the fate of the messenger and his spouse. Mandos, to the severe chords of **S19**, asks whether a mortal man should be allowed to live once he has set foot in the Undying Lands. Ulmo responds with emollience, and his theme of **S143** as heard in *The Fall of Gondolin* is now definitively underpinned with the throbbing of **S191**.

He cites Eärendil's descent from both Men and Elves (**S113** and **S147** are heard at references to Tuor and Idril); but Mandos remains adamant that the Noldor are equally barred from return to Valinor (**S49**). It is left to the Elder King to resolve the conflict, as over quiet statements of **S1** he decrees that the messenger and his spouse will be given a choice under which kindred they are to be judged, with solo violins delicately outlining the themes of both Eärendil (**S182**) and Elwing (**S189**). As the theme of mortality surges forth in the orchestra (**S125**) Eärendil states his preference for his father's house; but Elwing, influenced by the memory of her grandmother Lúthien (**S78**), elects for immortality and her husband agrees to

her decision. From this point onwards all the characters in the cycle are, as in *Fëanor*, immortals; and like the use of the chorus, this lends both to *Fëanor* and *The War of Wrath* the form of a legendary frame into which the three human dramas—*Beren and Lúthien, The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin* are inlaid.

The next verse introduces the idea of Eärendil as the Mariner, the messenger who will bring hope to the beleaguered peoples of Middle-earth, and it begins with a further statement of the theme associated with Ulmo in *The Fall of Gondolin* (**S143**):

S203



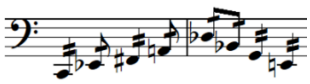
The theme associated with the infant Eärendil (**S176**) now drifts back into the music, delicately outlined by violins over a rippling celesta, as Eärendil receives the gift of rebirth. And as his boat is hallowed by the Immortals, many of the preceding themes crowd back. Firstly we hear the theme of the Silmaril itself (**S26**), overlaid with **S40**; then, as Elbereth sets the Silmaril on his mast, **S26** is counterpointed with **S18**; finally **S38** leads to a restatement of **S16** before **S1** is played delicately by the bassoons.

The next verse of the poem consists entirely of a rumination on **S182**, played initially as an *ostinato* on harp and celesta and then condensed into a series of chords. Against this the solo violin and cello weave repetitions of **S21** before **S190** returns. Above the verse sung by the chorus, Maedhros and Maglor see the Silmaril rise into the heavens and take hope; and this is followed by the return of **S24**, **S7** and finally **S54** to depict the "grey Norland waters." The statement of **S182** at the end of this verse turns for the first time to the minor mode, and is overwhelmed by a massive orchestral statement of **S203** as the forces of the Valar assemble to march upon Morgoth's realm in Middle-Earth.

The final verse begins with a restatement of **S113**—treated here almost like a recapitulation of a second subject in classical sonata form. It leads into a doom-laden declamation of **S19** (against which **S203** descends on *tremolando* violins), and this is followed by strong statements of **S49** and **S125**. The last four lines of the poem are introduced by the theme based on **S164** in the orchestra: and at the lines "the Flammifer of Westernesse" **S21** is restated for the last time, before a massive orchestral statement of **S113** and the return of **S164** on woodwind. The final statement of **S182** is left to a solo violin in harmonics at the utmost extreme of its range.

The Third Triptych opens with a cracking whip as the scene opens on the Great Battle which brings the War of Wrath to its conclusion. A whole welter of themes associated with Morgoth are thrown into violent juxtaposition with each other, over a twelve-tone theme in 6/8 rhythm which derives ultimately from the 7/8 music associated with Ungoliant in *Fëanor* (**S27**) but now rushes around contrapuntally in the strings, alternating between duple and triple rhythm as a depiction of the Unlight that Morgoth has created to surround his realm:

S204



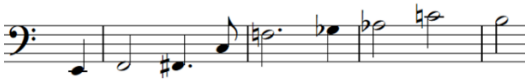
Trumpets in close imitation introduce the forces of the Orcs (**S12**) and the percussion underpin this with the violent rhythms of **S30**. The trombones solemnly intone the theme associated with Morgoth in Angband (**S98**) and as the chorus enter with their narrative describing the battle **S9** shrills out in the woodwind. As the forces of the Valar engage in battle the brass deliver **S1** in a stentorian canonic imitation, and the figuration that in *Beren and Lúthien* was associated with the Battle of Sudden Flame (**S59**) accompanies the description of Beleriand as "ablaze with the glory of their arms" with **S63**, last heard in the description of the arming of Eärendil, challenging the Orc theme **S12**.

This welter of themes placed in violent juxtaposition with each other is suddenly overwhelmed as Morgoth releases his dragons upon the Army of the West, and the theme originally associated with Glaurung as the first of the breed (**S15**) is now combined with the bulking and shorter phrases depicting the winged dragons such as Smaug (**S192**) before the appearance of Eärendil in his ship (**S176**) renews the battle with the return of the earlier themes such as **S12**, **S30, S1**, the conflict between **S176** and **S192,** all of these superimposed in chaotic fashion over the continuing ostinato figurations of **S204** and **S59**, before the music suddenly broadens with the victory of the Valar (**S2**) which abruptly clarifies the texture.

The choral narrative resumes as the male voices describe the overthrow of Morgoth (his principal theme **S4** only now belatedly making its appearance, as the pits of Angband are opened to disclose the cowering Enemy) and the timpani impotently thudding out his claim "I am the Elder King" (**S35**) as the clanking of metal plates depicts his chaining. As the Silmarils are taken from his iron crown **S9** is heard in the form originally employed in *The Children of Húrin*—"Who knows now the counsels of Morgoth?" and the theme of the Silmarils themselves (**S26**) returns to the form that it had originally assumed at the time of their creation in *Fëanor.*

The choir describe the exile of Morgoth to the realm beyond the Door of Night is a wide-ranging theme rising up from the bass and combining elements of Morgoth himself (**S4**) with the Valar (**S2**):

S205



and this is followed by **S7** as the Earth itself is restored to order, and a triumphant statement of **S2** depicts the unity of the Valar with Eärendil on watch (**S176** leading to the triumphant return of his "To the Sea!" **195**). But this triumph is only illusory; the chorus reminds us that the lies of Morgoth (**S67**) continue to dominate both Elves (**S8**) and Men (**S125**) and a fugal development of **S205** rounds the description off in an ambiguous manner.

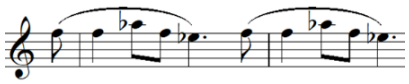
For the Oath of Fëanor has not yet completed its baleful work, and its music (**S39** to **S42**) is now assigned wistfully to muted brass as Maedhros, one of the two surviving sons of Fëanor, now demands the return to

theme of their father's creation (**S9** again, but now with an emphasis on the semitonal dissonance which has always underpinned the theme even in its most tranquil guises). Eönwë as herald of the Valar (**S2**) refuses to yield the Silmarils from his charge, and despite a forthright assertion of the theme of the Oath (**S39**) he declares that the jewels will be returned into the West whence they came (**S9** again, but now with the semitonal dissonance smoothed over). After this statement the focus shifts to the two remaining sons of Fëanor, Maedhros and Maglor, as they debate their course of action. A grandiose statement of **S23** is followed by an obsessive repetition of **S39**, and the two are then combined with the theme associated with the Kinslaying (**S44**) as the first fruit of the Oath and then with an underlying bass statement of the theme of Ilúvatar (**S1**).

But it is the insidious repetition of **S39** which eventually wins out (in its final moments it is even overshadowed by Morgoth's **S12**), and it finally bursts forth as the two brothers seek to seize the Silmarils by force. Eönwë forbids his followers to slay the two remaining sons of Fëanor (**S2**) and they triumphantly seize their prize; but the music of the Silmarils, now combined ineluctably with **S23**, finds the harmonic discord of **S9** emphasised by thudding percussion in a rhythm also associated with Morgoth (**S60**) as the jewels burn the brothers' hands and they realise that their claim to the possessions of their father is in vain. Maedhros is despair throws himself into a pit in the earth (repetitions of **S1** rising up in the orchestra to submerge in a plunging series of repetitions of **S7**) and Maglor in his turn throws his Silmaril into the sea (**S196**). Indeed the music at this point directly quotes from my piano rondo *Akallabêth*, as we have here reached the same point in the drama. And through the mists that cover the sea we discern the ships of the Númenóreans sailing across the waters to their new homeland, and the theme formerly associated with the House of Hador (**S113**) now takes on a more general significance as described before. The chorus now describes the fate of the Silmarils themselves: one in the depths of the earth, one in the sea, and the third—that held by Eärendil—in the skies of heaven (**S2** repeated twice and leading to a majestic and triumphant statement of **S113**. This is the situation at the end of the First Age of Middle-Earth when, as Elrond states in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, "the Elves deemed that evil was ended for ever, and it was not so."

The reason for this becomes clear in Scene Nine, where *The War of Wrath*—and indeed the whole of *The Silmarillion*—makes contact with the Third Age when the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* is set. Tolkien himself deliberately made this link in his plans for *The Silmarillion* where the last segment of the book was designed to contain a description of the creation of the Rings of Power, and of the One Ring in particular. The first element in Scene Nine is the partially successful attempt made by Sauron to convince the Elves to aid him in his work of 'recovery'—to make the lands of Middle-Earth blossom in a manner to rival the realms beyond the Sea. A pastoral theme from the piano *Akallabêth* (in a section omitted from the orchestral version of the score) underlines his appeal. This theme will eventually in *The Lord of the Rings* become attached to the land of Eregion (or Hollin), the Elven Kingdom where the Rings of Power are forged, but by that stage any connection specifically with Sauron will be irrelevant:

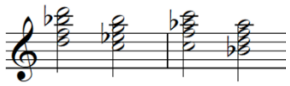
S206



But the repetitions of this theme gradually subside into a growling bass, and the true nature of Sauron's desires is made clear as **S61** underlines his betrayal of the Elves.

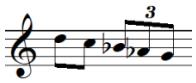
As he begins his task of forging the One Ring to give him control of Middle-Earth the theme associated in *Beren and Lúthien* with his enchantments (**S68)** forms a persistent undercurrent to the music. His allocation of three Rings to the Elvenkings is inevitably accompanied by an insidious statement of **S8**, just as his temptation of nine mortal Men is underlined by **S42**; but two further themes are also briefly heard in this passage, both of them deriving from my work on *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* but neither otherwise found in *The Silmarillion.* When the verse tells of the seven "Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone" we hear the theme of descending thirds associated with that race in *The Hobbit*:

S207



and as the theme of mortal men dies away we hear the very briefest hint of one of the motifs that will be used in *The Lord of the Rings* to characterise the Nazgûl (heard in more developed form as a background menace in the Drinking Song, for example);

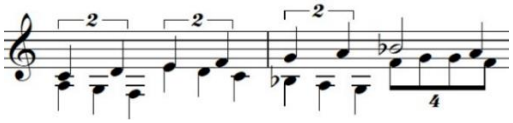
S208



But the music associated with Sauron now builds progressively towards a climax based on **S61** over the persistent repetitions of **S68**, and the voice of the banished Morgoth is added to his casting of the spell as the orchestra thunders out for the last time the menacing statement of **S98** before the uprushing theme of Ilúvatar **(S1**) crashes into conflict with the theme of the Earth itself (**S7**) and the catastrophic element of **S196** (now at tempestuous speed) underpins the emergence of the Ring itself in the inflected version of **S68** previously heard in *Beren and Lúthien*). This dies quickly away over a final muttering of Sauron's **S61**.

The epilogue, illustrating the continuing influence of the Elves over the world of mortal Men, is launched by offstage female voices in four parts delicately spreading a series of repetitions of the theme of Elbereth (**S3**) under which the male voices once again return us to the themes of the prologue and two statements of **S181**. The three bearers of the Elven-Rings—Galadriel, Elrond and Círdan—apostrophise "the turning of the year" with the repetitions of **S3** now in the orchestra suspended over reiterations of a solitary sixth in the bass (as at the similar juncture in the epilogue to *The Fall of Gondolin*). Gradually a new theme emerges from the texture:

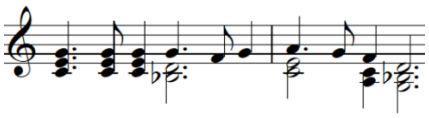
S209



and it is this theme, with is constant rhythmic vacillation between duple and triple rhythms, which will underpin the whole of the music throughout the epilogue. For now the melodic counterpoint rises steadily higher in the orchestra as the chorus add their voices to the trio of solo voices and take over the description of the coming of autumn to the landscape. As the repetitions of **S3** slowly die into the distance, Elrond steps forward and over the descending triplets of the lower voice in **S209** warns of the approach of winter, before the chorus once again add their voices to his as the upper melodic line emerges gradually into prominence.

It is now Galadriel's turn to take the lead, and as she does so a new dancing theme emerges initially in the bass but gradually rising to a greater persistence:

S210



eventually resolving into a return of the music associated with the first appearance of the Elves in *Fëanor* (**S8**) although the dance rhythms of **S210** continue to make their presence felt. As she concludes the juxtaposition of **S3** with the underpinning added sixth rises to ecstatic heights.

As Círdan begins his mournful yet fundamentally optimistic description of the winter landscape, his own theme **S185** underlines his words although the restless surging of **S3** continues throughout in the bass. And this juxtaposition finally and inevitably leads to the return of the principal theme **S209** now assuming a triumphant tone as the three solo voices and the full chorus join in a paean to the "undefeated…Folk Immortal". The constant contrast between duple and triple rhythms finally appears to reach coalescence.

But the mood of triumph is tinged with sadness, and is short-lived. After the chorus have ceased the oboe returns us to the opening of the prologue with the melody of Elbereth's song **S183** and a final choral statement of **S181** while the oscillating triplets of **S3** die progressively away and descend into the depths of the bass, and the muttering strings *sul ponticello* bring a last whisper of **S180,** progressively slowing down and finally resolving onto the suspended open fifths with which the prologue had originally opened.

This symmetry, it should be noted, is not exclusive to the score of *The War of Wrath* alone. The provision of a fifth segment to the cycle of epic scenes which constitute *The Silmarillion* as a whole also serves to bring a further element of structure both to the music and the drama throughout. It frames the three 'Great Tales' of *Beren and Lúthien, The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin* with their mortal protagonists, with two mythological legends where immortals either figure exclusively (as in *Fëanor*) or to a considerable extent (as in *The War of Wrath*, most notably in its final pages including the whole of its Third Triptych). Similarly the role of the narrative chorus, relatively circumscribed and restricted in the three central panels of the whole, assumes much more prominence in the outer sections of the cycle with whole scenes delegated to purely choral writing and other sections where the choral element predominates. As will be apparent also from this exhaustive analysis of the musical material, the symphonic development of the representative themes continues throughout, with the material itself progressively combined in different juxtapositions. And I trust that this analysis may assist listeners in this, also serving to highlight the manner in which one theme heard earlier in the cycle may evolve into another psychologically related theme as the drama develops. It is to be hoped that the discovery of these varied permutations will continue to provide interest to an audience even when the overall dimensions of the work may have become familiar to them.

2

musical chapters from THE HOBBIT

The vocal score of *The Hobbit* was originally commenced during the spring of 1970 but the sketches had only proceeded as far as Act Three Scene Two when I broke off composition to begin work on my setting of *Diarmuid and Gráinne*. After the latter was completed in the summer of 1971 (when an orchestral suite from *Over Hill and Under Hill* was performed in London, using the material as it existed at that time) I returned to my original sketches and recommenced work on the last three Acts, subsequently returning to the beginning and reworking and completing the whole of the first three Acts. The opera was designed to be performed over two complete evenings, with three Acts being given on each evening.

The vocal score was bound into two volumes, one for each evening, and at that time the two volumes were given the independent titles *Over Hill and Under Hill* and *Fire and Water*. During the autumn of 1974 I again returned to the scores, and at the suggestion of Alan Bush made very substantial cuts intended to bring the whole within the scope of one evening. This abridged version was then used as the basis for the full orchestral score, of which only the first two scenes were fully completed (although a number of later passages were also fully scored).

There the work rested for some twenty-five years. During that period the only compositional activity which took place was the extraction of the two orchestral suites from *The Hobbit* which were published separately.

However, during the period 1982-83 the vocal score of *Fire and Water* was lost, and the only passages preserved were those which had been incorporated into the orchestral suites, those which had already been orchestrated in the complete full score, and one passage from *Flies and Spiders* which had been photocopied.

During the period 1998-99 I returned to the now incomplete score and concluded work on the full orchestration of the first three Acts, restoring the previously cut passages where necessary from the vocal score. I also reproduced the fragments of *Fire and Water* which still existed and reconstructed some of the incomplete sections.

It was only when my work on the completion of *The Lord of the Rings* sketches was finalised in 2023 that I eventually turned back to *The Hobbit*, making some further revisions to the existing score and reconstructing (as far as I could remember) the now missing pages from *Fire and Water* although even then I did make some less drastic abridgements to the original text in order to bring the sheer length of the work to within reasonable bounds.

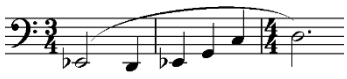
The text for *The Hobbit* was relatively simple to construct, although the fact that my own first acquaintance with the book had come from a reading of the 1937 First Edition meant that some of more minor alterations of the vocabulary and phrases from that version were permitted to take precedence over the author's later revisions. For example I preferred to use the original "cold chicken and tomatoes" rather than Tolkien's revised "cold chicken and pickles" purely because the stresses provided the desired rhythmic and musical ictus that I sought at that point. On the other hand I had of course absolutely no desire to substitute the earlier version of the riddles scene between Bilbo and Gollum for the infinitely more dramatic revision of 1951.

We are now of course aware of Tolkien's own attempt at a further revision of *The Hobbit* during the 1960s to bring it into closer conformity with *The Lord of the Rings* and, presumably at some later stage, with *The Silmarillion.* Much of the process of this revision would appear to have been designed to remove the presence of what Tolkien seemed to have come to regard as an intrusive authorial narrator, giving moral and didactic guidance to the reader. In fact he did succeed in removing some of these elements in his third edition of the book in 1966. But happily almost none of these amendments were allowed to affect the dialogue itself, and the light-hearted and jocular flavour remained in a manner that might have been endangered by a more widespread and significant revision of the text. This same approach continues to appear in the music, and in the process of revision and reconstruction which I undertook in 2022-25 to bring the whole musical structure into the cycle of "epic scenes" and "musical chapters" I made no attempt to impose a more serious style in what should after all be regarded as a jocund work. A theme from *The Fall of Gondolin* at one point, for example, hardly brings the work into the same tragic sphere as *The Silmarillion*; and some of the comical tone of *The Hobbit* is quite properly reflected in the opening chapters of *The Lord of the Rings.* The parallels are further underlined in my setting of *The Quest of Erebor* which I added as an appendix to the score for the Volante Opera recording issued on Prima Facie in 2026 (and discussed in greater detail in a later chapter).

Over Hill and Under Hill

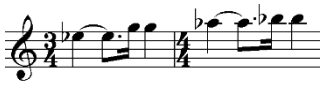
When *The Hobbit* was originally intended to form the first two evenings of the massive thirteen-evening cycle on *The Lord of the Rings*, it was my intention to include an extensive overture which would lay out the themes and argument for the whole work at the beginning of the first evening; since it would be made up entirely of themes subsequently developed in the cycle, its full dramatic significance could only be appreciated by a knowledge of the later action, and it was envisioned that the Overture would be played with the house lights up and a complete analysis of the material provided for the audience. However this Overture was never written, or even sketched; and the score of *Over Hill and Under Hill* therefore opens with a series of four sharp chords, each one resolving onto a unison C in different registers of the orchestra. The final one of these extends itself upwards onto a high B♭, and then below this a solo cello winds itself through the gently pastoral Shire melody, which extends its leisurely way through two full octaves. Although the melody recurs frequently in its complete form, the opening limb also detaches itself as a separate motif, which for convenience may be regarded as a 'Shire-motif':

H1



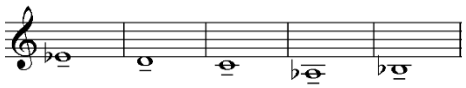
After this exposition, the clarinet gives out a pert little theme, which will typify the hobbits:

H2



It too subsequently undergoes various transformations, both of rhythm and melodic outline, but the basically rising character remains unchanged and distinctive. After this brief interruption the woodwind take up the cello's Shire melody, now with arabesques weaving their way around it. Its conclusion is again marked by **H2**, but now this has itself received a coda, a more solemn conclusion. It is the menacing downward passage of the motif of Adventure:

H3

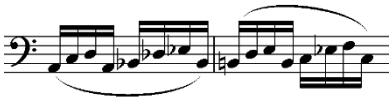


The Shire melody now returns for the third time, this time in parallel fourths on two bassoons with a delicate flute figuration in fifths rising above it (both these being harmonies of rustic simplicity), and the recurrence of **H2** is now taken up more excitedly by the woodwind. After a brief silence the curtain rises as the full orchestra again declares the Shire melody, now clad in rich and glowing harmonies.

The First Act is subtitled *An unexpected party*, and the scene disclosed is that outside the door of Bag End, the home of the respectable and wealthy Bilbo Baggins. The

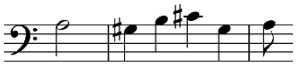
latter is sitting outside the door and smoking peacefully, enjoying himself but saying nothing. **H2** reappears, and is succeeded by a new whiff of theme, insubstantial as the smoke rising from his pipe:

H4



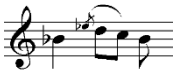
This theme acts as a binding force during the opening of the scene that follows. Whilst **H4** is being developed *pianissimo* by the strings in a fleeting *fugato*, an old man comes along the road—Gandalf, the magician. He is at once proclaimed by his own motif,

H5



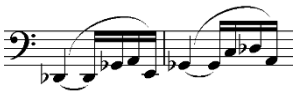
the mystery of which is immediately contradicted by **H2** and Bilbo's cheery greeting "Good morning!":

H6



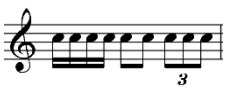
Gandalf's response is ironic. He questions both Bilbo's meaning and intentions in uttering these words, and makes much ironical use of **H6** and **H4.** The latter, indeed, undergoes a transformation into an important theme—the motif initially associated purely with Gandalf's good humour and sense of enjoyment:

H7



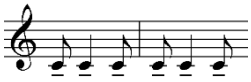
which has a perennial tendency to relapse into **H4**, until the two become readily interchangeable. This relapse occurs immediately, as Bilbo asks Gandalf to join him for a smoke, throwing in his own ironical version of **H5**. Gandalf has no time for such trifles; he has important business to attend to. He is looking for someone to share in an Adventure he is arranging: **H3** proclaims his intention. Bilbo also has no time for frivolities; his interests are **H2** and **H6**. To an uneasy combination of **H2** and **H4** he tries to ignore the old man, and read his letters; but Gandalf does not move, and after some rapid dialogue is compelled to reveal his identity, to a grandiose statement of **H5**. Bilbo is flabbergasted, and recites Gandalf's achievements as known to him in an excited arietta. As he talks about Gandalf's fireworks, a lively rhythm makes the first of its many appearances:

H8



It is always to be associated with the workings of 'magic' in its most practical sense, and more particularly with Gandalf's skill with fire. The excited figurations die down to another rhythm (previously heard earlier just before Gandalf's disclosure of his identity) which acts as a more grandiose version of **H8**:

H9

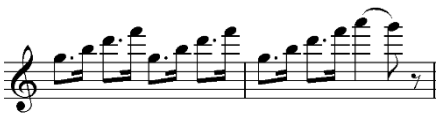


But when Gandalf offers Bilbo a part in his Adventure, Bilbo is horrified. To a rapid succession of **H2**, **H3**, **H6** and **H7** he makes his rapid excuses; but assures the magician that he bears him no ill-will, and even asks him to tea the next day. Having done which, he rushes back indoors, only pausing at the last moment to regret his rash act of politeness.

Gandalf remains alone in the centre of the stage. Slowly he steps up to the door of Bilbo's home, and gravely marks it with his staff. As he does so the orchestra gives out in full scoring—in marked contrast to the light textures of the preceding scene—firstly the Adventure motif (**H3**) and then twice the theme of Gandalf himself (**H5**), the second time counterpointed by an excited **H4** from the woodwind. He pauses to contemplate his handiwork, and then passes from the stage. The flutes take **H4** and turn it into a gentle triplet dance rhythm as the light fades. During the interlude this dance rhythm continues over a string statement of the full Shire melody. This is interrupted towards its conclusion by a violent statement of **H3**, and then **H2** and **H6** as the curtain rises and the lights go up again.

The scene is set in Bilbo's home, where a large table stands towards the back of the room. It is the next evening, and dusk can be seen falling over the countryside through the window. Bilbo himself is sitting by the hearth having tea. We gather that he has forgotten all about his invitation of the previous day, and over a quiet statement of **H2** by the strings the piccolo executes a carefree phrase,

H10

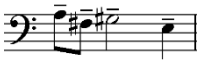


itself based on **H2** and yet breathing an air of relaxation. But the idyll is rapidly shattered as the front door bell rings. At once **H10** is convulsed, and together with **5** provides a frenzied counterpoint to Bilbo's sudden bustle of preparation for his unexpected visitor. As he answers the door, **H6** appears again.

The function of **H6** may perhaps be summed up as a representation of the theme of Social Pressures. Under this guise it attaches itself at various times to various people. It is, as we have seen, the theme of Bilbo's *Good morning!*, and will now become the theme of the dwarves' *At your service!*; but it will later become equally applicable to the Sackville-Bagginses, and finally attach itself to Saruman, whose treachery is always concealed beneath the veneer of Social Responsibility. In this sense it is also the theme of Conformity, and it is to be noted that as Bilbo departs more and more from his social norm, so at the same time he ceases to use it.

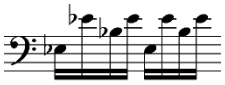
It is not Gandalf at the door, but a dwarf. Over a counterpoint of **H6** he enters and bows low, and his first greeting to Bilbo—"Dwalin at your service!"—is itself closely moulded on **H6**. But beneath it comes the first hint of the phrase that is later to identify itself as the motif of the dwarves:

H11



At first it is scarcely noticed as, to variations of **H10** at first excited and then hesitant, Bilbo invites his unexpected guest to stay to tea and makes Dwalin comfortable. No sooner is this end—and calm—again achieved, than again the bell rings. This time it is Balin who enters and bows low, to the same musical background as his brother. Slowly the texture becomes increasingly excited as the other dwarves arrive—at first Fili and Kili, then Dori, Nori, Ori, Óin and Glóin—with a heavy insistence on a dogged figure

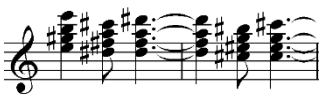
H12



which does not recur in later scenes, but may perhaps be called the theme of the Unexpected Party; and with ever-greater prominence the unwelcome Adventure motif **H3.** Gandalf's arrival, together with Bifur, Bofur, Bombur and the immensely important Thorin Oakenshield, unleashes a torrent of themes—his own **H5**, **H6**, **H12**, **H11** in both its original slow form and a faster rushing version (Thorin like Bilbo has no purely personal theme, relying entirely on themes borrowed either from the idea of Kingship or utilising the dwarves' themes), and finally a variation in quicker time of **H9** as the dwarves settle themselves to eat. Thorin demands music; instruments are fetched, and the dwarves embark upon the first of their three set-piece songs.

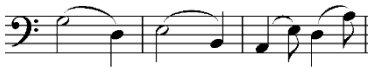
The song *Far over the Misty Mountains cold* which follows summarises in its length many of the main themes of the opera, including many which have already been heard. The main melody is a compound triple-time variant on **H11**, which although it is sometimes used afterwards in connection with Thorin may be better regarded as a theme of the Dwarves' Hope:

H13



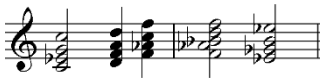
The second and third strophes of the song, in which Fili and Kili sing of the riches of Erebor the Lonely Mountain, are closely founded on this theme, but also include the theme of Adventure (**H3**) and a brief trumpet figure which is a glimpse of the future Sword motif (**H26**). The fourth strophe brings back the material of **H13**, and then the song turns to matters more serious and more tragic: the sack of Erebor by Smaug the Dragon. Amid the descriptions of fire and pillage there come two vitally important themes: the theme of the Dragon

H14 [see S192]



and the theme of the Kings under the Mountain, Thorin's ancestors:

H15

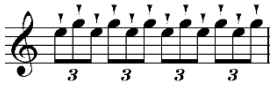


And when Thorin describes the death of the dwarves beneath the feet of the dragon, the Adventure theme (**H3**) is given out gently by the muted strings. The final strophe returns to the hope of the song's beginning with **H13**, but is broken off abruptly as Bilbo rises suddenly (**H14** tells us of the fear that has suddenly arisen in his mind).

Thorin begins his exhortation to the dwarves, and the increasing clamour of **H3** tells us in no uncertain terms that Bilbo's worst fears are being immediately realised. He jumps up with a scream and collapses shivering on the carpet. Gandalf is inclined to treat the episode as rather amusing (**H7**), but the others and especially Glóin are more sceptical. Their suspicion stings Bilbo as he recovers consciousness, and **H2** mingles surprisingly with **H6**, **H4** and **H3** as Bilbo indignantly declares his readiness to join their adventure. But his misgivings are not entirely allayed; and to satisfy him it is necessary that Thorin narrate the story of the sack of Erebor in more explicit terms than was possible in the earlier song.

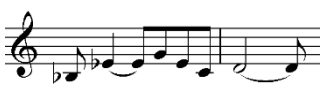
Most of the themes which are employed are those already heard in the song—their significance only now fully realised—but two themes, one now important and one entirely new, should be singled out. The first of these is little more than an ostinato rhythm which accompanies Thorin's description of the *merry town of Dale in the valley beneath the mountain.* It is, in fact, the theme of Dale itself:

H16



The other new theme occurs as Thorin describes the treasure found by the dwarves in the Lonely Mountain. It is the first appearance in *The Hobbit* of the theme of the Arkenstone, although the theme was later taken up and employed at an earlier stage in the cycle during *The War of Wrath* (as indeed was the theme of the Dragon already cited).

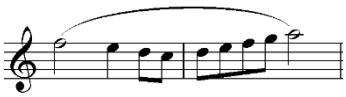
H17 [see S194]



It is here played in the lowest registers of the vibraphone, marimba and pianoforte—this tuned percussion scoring is to characterise it henceforth. Thereafter the narration follows musically a similar course to the song, until Thorin tells of the escape of his grandfather and father from the dragon. At first this

description is accompanied by a slow and mournful variant of **H11**, and then as he tells of the small side door into the halls beneath the Mountain which only he and his ancestors knew about, a flowing theme appears, which will subsequently recur:

H18

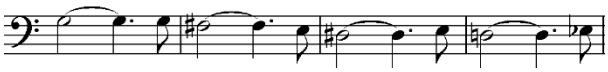


It may be noted that all the themes associated with the Lonely Mountain are closely related; the descending theme of the dwarves is not dissimilar from the descending theme of the dragon, and their respective intervals of a third and a fourth also characterise **H3**, **H18** and in inversion the important Kingship motif **H15**.

As Thorin concludes his narration **H3** surges through the orchestra in an increasing flood, and all the company rise and sing in chorus the last verse of the dwarves' song (**H13**). Bilbo, rising and joining his voice with the others in a florid *coloratura* passage, makes evident his awakened if transient enthusiasm for the adventure, and to a resounding statement of **H3** the curtain falls.

The cadence at the end of **H3** is interrupted by a suddenly hushed **H11** on the solo violin, and at once we are transported out into the Wilderlands, to places where the empty hills surround the road with menace. A combination of **H2** and **H3** is heard, its harmonies shadowed and clouded:

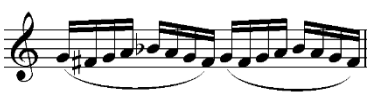
H19



The opening phrase of the Shire melody (**H1**) brings a measure of hope, and the hobbit's theme (**H2**) is heard as a delicate bass to a filigree version of the Adventure theme (**H3**) descending gently in the woodwind. The material builds to a sonorous climax which also embraces **H5** and a hint of **H1** (the rising portion of the phrase only) before the opening material of the interlude returns, now a sixth higher. The prominent part played in this interlude by the solo violin leads to a brief cadenza, at first expressive and then turning towards violence, which acts as a link to the next scene.

The setting is laid out in the Wild some months later, in an evening camp beneath the edges of a wood. It is raining heavily, and the dwarves and Bilbo are huddled under the trees for shelter. The violin cadenza resolves itself into a stormy phrase:

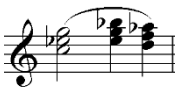
H20



against which the woodwind enunciate in slow harmony the Adventure theme. Bilbo is sitting apart at the front of the stage, and in a quiet monologue sings of his disgust at the weather and at the adventure in which he is so unfortunately involved. His longing for home is expressed by a full version of the Shire melody, but its climax is interrupted by **H3** and prosaic remarks from Thorin about finding somewhere dry to sleep.

It is at that moment Balin sees—not for the last time—a light in the forest. A fire is being lit, and although it is not yet clear who or what has lit it, there is a strong hint from the woodwind in a mysterious phrase—the first of the major reconfigurations of **H6** (since, although the trolls do not represent Social Pressures, they epitomise the ultimate freedom from them):

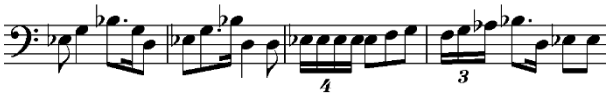
H21



The substitution of the minor for the major third in this theme, although not exclusively adopted, tends to typify this form of the motif.

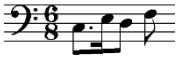
After some argument, during which they discover that Gandalf is missing, the dwarves decide that Bilbo, their burglar, is the ideal scout to find out about the light. Thorin pushes him off into the woods, and at the same time the scene begins to change; henceforth the action is to concentrate not on the camp by the riverside, but in the trolls' clearing in the woods. A short interlude covers this change (it is based entirely on rising repetitions of **H21** counterbalanced by spread descending repetitions of **H2**), and as Bilbo arrives at the clearing and hesitates as he sees the trolls, the trumpet fixes the new form of **H6** by declaiming **H21** *fff*. The trolls as usual are arguing, and the very first phrase of their argument becomes a distinctive theme:

H22



The argument continues, with an orchestral accompaniment consisting of held bass pedal notes, **H21** and occasional orchestral irruptions of **H22**, especially its opening phrase. Bert and Tom complain that William has brought them down from their native mountains, and since then they have starved. William's irate response is cut short as he sees Bilbo and grabs him, and **6** returns to its original form as Bilbo, desperately attempting to be polite in spite of his terror, tries to answer their questions. But all they really want to know is if he edible:

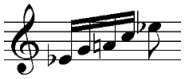
H23



Satisfied at last that Bilbo by himself would make a scanty meal, the trolls endeavour to discover if he has any companions. Bilbo prevaricates; and his answers lead to a fight between William (who wants to let him go) and Bert (who wants answers). The fight which ensues is accompanied by the themes already heard, but is interrupted by **H11** and the arrival of Dwalin. At once the fight stops, and Dwalin is seized and put into a sack. The trolls begin to realise that supper may be at hand after all, and slip into the shadows. Their subsequent

capture of the rest of the dwarves, as they arrive in small groups, is typified by a restless drum rhythm based on **H9**. Towards the end of this sequence **H22** recurs with a driving upward surge in the brasses:

H24

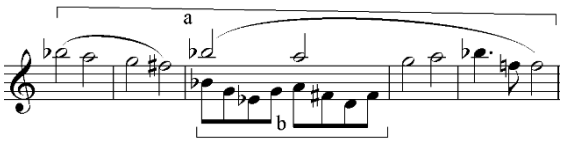


which in its harmonic outline echoes the future theme of the Ring—the trolls are creatures of Sauron.

Having subdued Thorin, the trolls can afford to relax and consider the culinary preparation of their captives. But their discussion is continually interrupted by a voice from the trees which fans their arguments and disrupts their agreements. The trolls think that the voice is one of themselves, but the orchestra informs us differently—with **H5**. At last Bert and Tom put their joint feet heavily down: the arguments must cease, and the preparation of their meal must commence. But dawn comes, and as **H5** sounds out in the full orchestra Gandalf steps forward into the clearing, and the trolls freeze as they turn into stone with only a last twitter of **H21** remaining like a bird greeting the rising dawn.

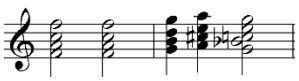
As the sun rises it has also disclosed the trolls' cave where they spent the daytime hours sheltering from the deadly rays of the sun. As soon as Bilbo and Gandalf have released the dwarves, they go up and enter this in search of treasure. Gandalf and Thorin remain outside, because Thorin wishes to know what had happened to Gandalf the previous night. Gandalf explains that he had gone on ahead to spy out their road (all the foregoing is accompanied by various themes which are all familiar) when he met two Elves from Rivendell. The orchestra at once simultaneously gives out two themes both associated with the Elves, and both destined to play a major part in the subsequent action (the long phrase **H25a** will later be split up into several independent components):

H25



It was these Elves, Gandalf continues, who told him about the trolls encamped by the river; and it was this knowledge that brought him back—as it transpired, only just in the nick of time. As he concludes his narrative, the dwarves and Bilbo emerge from the cave. Bilbo has found a large knife (almost a sword) for himself, and Fili and Kili carry two great longswords which they present to Gandalf and Thorin. The sword theme, foreshadowed as long ago as the dwarves' song in Scene Two, asserts itself:

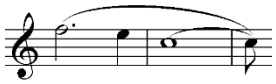
H26 [see S193]



Gandalf is fascinated by the runes on the blades, but the others wish only to get away from the "horrible smell." Gandalf leads them back towards their camp and baggage, and amid **H26**, **H7**, **H3** and finally **H5** the curtain falls.

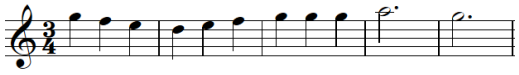
The Second Act *Riddles in the Dark* opens without preamble on the floor of the valley of Rivendell. The oboes play a new theme, specifically associated with the valley and its lord Elrond, but which is based upon the opening phrase of **H25a**:

H27



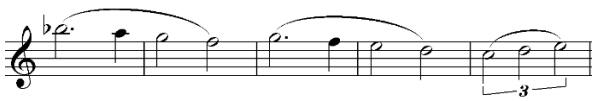
Immediately the curtain rises to show the scene, shrouded in dusk. Bilbo, Gandalf and the dwarves wait silently on the valley floor, and a chorus of elves mock them from trees in the wings, accompanied purely by harps playing various forms of **H25b**. The elven chorus, shadowy and fleeting, derives from a rapid triple-time version of **H25b** itself:

H28



leads back to **H27**, which now takes on a more extended form henceforth to be used interchangeably with the original:

H29

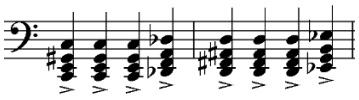


(it is quoted here in its definitive form; the final triplet figure does not appear initially). A tall young Elf (identified in the score as Glorfindel, later to figure in *The Lord of the Rings*) steps forward from the trees to greet them, and Gandalf reproves the elvish voices for their levity. As their guide leads them to cross the river, the light fades as the harps ruminate on **H25b**, expanding it in a gigantic fantasia on **H27**, a massive series of harp arpeggios in B♭. The final phrase of **H27** turns itself into the definitive form of **H28** as the lights rise again, to disclose the moonlit river terrace.

Elrond is examining the swords, to **H26**, and proclaims them to be ancient and famous blades. Indeed the orchestra (in a later revision to the score) is more specific, since they proclaim the origins of the weapons to be the fallen city of Gondolin and theme **S146** from *The Silmarillion* is briefly cited. Thorin promises to keep his in honour, in the hope that it may soon live up to its name—Orcrist, the Goblin-cleaver. Elrond has little comfort for him; it is likely all too soon to be needed in the mountains. Once again the mocking voices of the elves are heard, but their jollity is interrupted by thunder as the scene fades and the inner curtain falls.

Lightning flashes across the scene, and a clamorous new theme thunders through the bass (although it too has been previously prefigured in *The Silmarillion* as an underlying counterpoint to **S16**):

H30



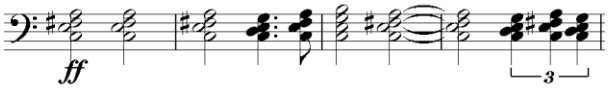
The tritonal harmony is typical of the Orcs; the chromatic modulations are the bearers of more sinister import. A great storm is raging, and as it slowly dies down the lights rise to disclose the second scene.

The dwarves and Gandalf are sleeping for shelter in a cave high in the mountains; but Bilbo is tossing restlessly. He mutters about a crack in the wall opening to swallow him up, and finally wakes up with a scream (all of this accompanied by the relevant musical themes). At once **H30** rises up ferociously, and a great company of Orcs and Goblins rush out of one of the cave fissures, seizing the dwarves and the unfortunate Bilbo. But Gandalf, wakened by Bilbo's scream, raises his staff—**H5** and **H8**—and a flash from it strikes his would-be captors dead. He turns and speeds after the captives, and the scene becomes suddenly totally dark.

In the darkness there is at first silence, and then suddenly an echoing spoken chorus is heard. For thirty bars there is no note of pitched music in the score; all that the interlude comprises is the laughing and jeering of the Orcs (which is, however, precisely rhythmically notated) and the cracking of their whips—eight of them, lined up stereophonically across the stage. Incidentally it may be noted that the opening rhythmic chant of "Clap! Snap! the black crack!" echoes precisely Morgoth's **S35**.) After this extraordinary passage of writing **H30** roars out once again, as the lights go up and the dwarves are driven into a large cavern deep beneath the earth.

The cavern is filled with Orcs, but dominating them is the Great Goblin surrounded by his guards. His first utterance is obsequiously and ironically polite—it is inevitably based closely upon a variant of **H6**—but its pleasantness is contradicted by an enunciation by the pizzicato strings and harp of a violent harmonic theme:

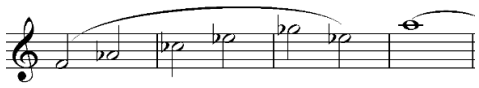
H31 [see S16]



This theme, harmonically founded upon the same tritone harmony as **H30** (and already heard in *The Silmarillion*), will reappear many times in significant situations. At present it is only hinted at, because the Great Goblin continues the interrogation of Thorin and the slave driver who captured them in a rougher tone. Thorin's attempts at explanation, culminating in **H15** as he refers to "these truly hospitable mountains," are cut short roughly by the slave driver, who draws the Great Goblin's attention to the sword Orcrist at Thorin's side. There is a shriek from the assembled Orcs, and the Great Goblin in a rage commands the dwarves to be led away to torture and a slow death.

At that moment Gandalf steps from the shadows and with one stroke of his sword swipes off the Great Goblin's head. The fire goes up in a shower of sparks (**H8**), and **H31** blares out in the brass as a valediction while Gandalf urges the dwarves to follow him out into the tunnels. It becomes rapidly dark as they pass out of the cavern; Gandalf pauses to ensure that everybody is with him, but that is his undoing. A group of Orcs pursuing them along the tunnel now set upon them with fury—**H26** conflicts with **H30**, with the personal motifs of the protagonists laid on top—before Gandalf leads the dwarves rapidly away down the passage, pursued finally by fleeting echoes of **H30**. But not all have followed him. The flute plays a slow **H2**, and Bilbo raises himself painfully from the ground. Something glints in his hand: the golden ring on which the rest of the opera cycle is to be founded. The definitive form of its theme is heard for the first time, although its harmonic basis makes its origins clear in **S68**:

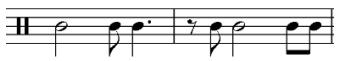
H32



He places it on his finger, and then picking up his knife —**H26**—makes his slow and painful way after the dwarves.

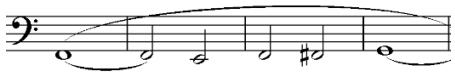
He may not yet realise the significance of his discovery, but the orchestra in the ensuing interlude describe its importance in no uncertain terms, incidentally introducing for the first time two major themes of the cycle. The first of these is a pure rhythm which will henceforth be associated with the notion of Evil: it is delivered now at very slow speed, a brooding menace given out by two bass drums in canon:

H33



The second is the theme of Sauron, the Lord of the Rings himself:

H34

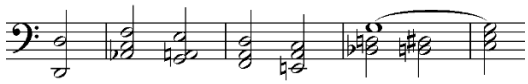


It will be seen that this shares the same chromatic characterisation as **H30;** this is simply because **H30** is a reflection of the power of the Dark Lord, rather than because Sauron is to be identified in the mind with the nature of the Orcs. Even at this stage, however, **H34** does not climax the interlude; this honour is given to a theme symbolising the Evil Effect of the Ring. It will later become immediately identified with the words

One Ring to rule them all,
one ring to find them,
one Ring to bring them all
and in the darkness bind them,

but at present it is merely a psychological theme and a climax leading back into a long fugue for the woodwind upon **H32**:

H35

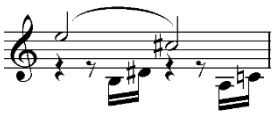


The relationship of this theme to Morgoth's employment of it in *Beren and Lúthien* is immediately apparent (**S98**), as is its specific use to illustrate the forging of the One Ring in *The War of Wrath*; but neither of these implications is to assume any further significance until *The Lord of the Rings.*

After **H32** dies away, the richness of the scoring of the interlude falls away to a bare nothing—a high note for the violins held indefinitely over the dry tones of the marimba sounding like a drip of distant water—as the lights rise on the new scene, set by the bank of a deep underground lake at the foot of the mountains.

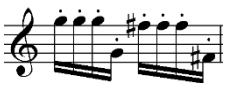
The high violin line descends slowly in a series of thirds—echoing the rising thirds of **H32**—and shortly afterwards a series of slight jerking upward thirds interrupt them. This will become the Gollum theme, which will be quoted for convenience in its definitive form:

H36



Bilbo, vainly trying to follow the dwarves, has found himself by the edge of the water, and is peering out into the darkness when the gentle swish of oars is heard on the lake. Slowly a small boat draws into view, with Gollum (**H36**) rowing. Bilbo, alarmed, threatens the creature with his sword, but Gollum is at first all friendship. In order to gain Bilbo's confidence, he suggests a game of riddles, to which Bilbo agrees. A short motif, which recurs continually throughout the scene, may be regarded as a Riddle theme:

H37

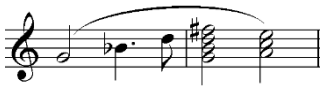


Gollum then asks the first riddle. Each riddle is a minor closed aria, but their essential unity is demonstrated by the fact that the pattern of the accompaniment to each vocal melody is always identical, a shifting series of arpeggios across the violins' open strings:

H38

Bilbo guesses the first riddle easily, and at once Gollum is more defensive. He now suggests that they turn the game into a competition: if he cannot answer he will show Bilbo how to escape from the orc-tunnels, but if Bilbo in his turn fails to answer Gollum will eat him—**H23** returns, and begins to take on its significance as a theme of Hunger, both physical and spiritual. Bilbo, from force of circumstances, agrees; and he presents the second riddle, which Gollum guesses easily. The riddle the latter presents in turn causes Bilbo more difficulty, and Gollum begins to anticipate an easy meal—**H23** again—but when he steps out of the boat a frightened fish jumps out of the water, and Bilbo at once guesses that the answer is *Fish*. His riddle in its turn presents Gollum with problems; he has to search through his memories, and these in turn remind him of his life in the outer world—memories he has vainly tried to suppress and which therefore make him suffer and become angry. These memories are the memories of his former self, Sméagol, and have an entirely independent theme:

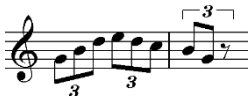
H39



The harsh harmonies of the final two chords of this theme pervade his next question: what is it that devours all things, and which nothing can escape? Bilbo is at a loss; he attempts to think—**H3**, **H23** and **H36** are three of the possible answers which present themselves to his mind—but **H23**, in conjunction with **H36**, sends him into a panic, and all he can beg for is more time; and the word *time* gives him the answer.

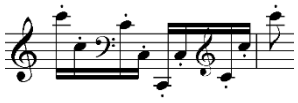
Gollum is disappointed, and comes and sits down beside Bilbo on the bank; a movement of **H38** onto notes other than the open strings of the violins hints that this is in breach of the rules. Bilbo is flustered by it; the only question he can think of is "What have I got in my pocket?":

H40



It is the ring in his pocket trying to declare itself, as **H33** indicates; but Gollum is unable to guess, and when Bilbo finally tells him that his time is up, it is only Bilbo's sword that saves his life. Gollum has now only one thought—his hunger, **H23**—and begins to search his own pockets for the ring; but it is lost. Now he leaps to a guess, too late—**H32** tells us clearly what it is—and rushes at Bilbo with the cry "What has it got in its pocketses?" Bilbo, alarmed, plunges his hand into the pocket at issue to protect the ring, and immediately vanishes:

H41



In his horror and confusion, Gollum begins to murmur to himself; his old personality, long suppressed by the power of the Ring, comes to the surface again and begins an argument with him; **H39** subdues **H36**, until both subside into the slow drip of water and the hollow dry sound of the marimba. The argument between his two personalities—Sméagol and Gollum—continues, until he decides to set off to the way out of the tunnels, to prevent Bilbo's escape; **H32** declares his intent, and in a rapid rushing interlude **H39** is heard again, with the chains of falling seconds repeated constantly, leading to **H36**; and finally **H40** is heard three times in succession before an abrupt and eerie silence descends.

The new scene is laid in the passage leading towards the way out of the tunnels. **H3** sounds in the strings,

tremolo and *sul ponticello*, as Gollum peers down the passage; Bilbo is following behind him. Gollum is suspicious—he smells the goblins guarding the exit, but he smells also Bilbo following him. As the latter tries to step past him and continue on down the tunnel, Gollum detects him. He screams and tries to grab at him, but it is too late; Bilbo has escaped and flees along the passage, pursued by Gollum's curses.

As Bilbo stealthily progresses **H33**, **H32**, **H2**, **H3** and **H30** make shadowy appearances, until he suddenly runs into the guards at the door. The moment they see him—he has removed the Ring from his finger—they rush down upon him. At once he puts the Ring on again (**H41**), and amid **H2** makes his way gingerly to the door, finally escaping amid **H3** and leaving the goblin captain staring and amazed.

The inner curtain slowly rises during the ensuing interlude. Bilbo has escaped, but he believes the dwarves to be still behind him; **H11** is played as a fugue by the horns and strings, and over it the saxophone plays a gentle lament based upon **H13**, which is taken up by the woodwind; then a gloom falls over the scene, and the piccolo plays a piercingly high theme suggestive of the howl of a wolf:

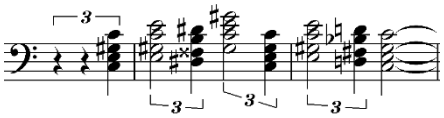
H42 [see S89]

After a while this leads into a flute cadenza as the lights rise. The scene is dominated by five tall fir-trees under which there is a cluster of bushes. In these bushes Gandalf and the dwarves sit arguing. **H11** continues as Gandalf tries to convince the dwarves that the loss of Bilbo is an irretrievable disaster, a contention the dwarves are inclined to doubt. Bilbo's unexpected arrival surprises them considerably, and Thorin is especially interested to learn how he escaped. At once **H39** rises from the bass, and **H35** threatens warningly as Bilbo fails to disclose his possession of the Ring to his comrades. Instead he pretends that his escape was due entirely to his own skill, an assurance that Gandalf (as **H7** reveals) is sceptical about. But **H30** mutters in the bass, and **H42** rises above it, as Gandalf urges the others that they must press on.

It is too late. **H42** transforms itself into a genuine wolf-howl, and it is horribly apparent to Gandalf that the wolves are gathering to the attack already. He urges them to climb the trees, as the chorus howls ever louder; but Bilbo's inability to scale the trunk of his tree until aided by Dori alerts the wolves to their presence. They surround the trees, howling dangerously, until Gandalf suddenly sends a series of fireballs from the trees at them—the rhythm of **H8** flares up ever more violently. As the wolves flee back in terror, the flames catch at the bushes beneath the trees, and it is now the refugees rather than the wolves who are menaced by the fire.

At this moment the Orcs arrive, heralded by a furious storm of triadic harmonies in the style of **H30**. In a menacing chorus, now sung rather than spoken, the Orcs gather round and mock the dwarves while others of them fetch brushwood to stoke the fires that Gandalf has so injudiciously started. It culminates in a leaping phrase:

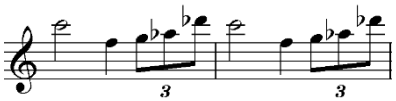
H43



which will later recur as one of the Mordor themes: that of Joy in Wickedness.

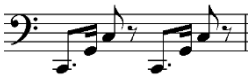
Gandalf climbs up to the top of his tree as the flames leap higher up towards him. At that moment Gwaihir the Lord of the Eagles sweeps down over the clearing, seizes Gandalf in his talons, and bears him away:

H44 [see S102]



Despite the screams and yells of the threatening Orcs, further eagles sweep in across the scene and bear away the dwarves, with Bilbo last of all, as the trees erupt into great torches of fire. As mists veil the scene, the orchestra takes up **H44** vigorously and develops it in a volatile interlude, interspersed with **H3**. A variant of **H2**, here an almost typically Eagles theme, is heard in the bass:

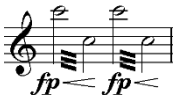
H45



After two full statements of the main theme, the mists disperse to reveal the eagles' eyrie high in the mountains, and the rhythm of **H45** continues as an accompaniment to the following dialogue.

The eagles have brought the dwarves and Bilbo to their eyrie, where Gwaihir and Gandalf are already deep in discussion. Bilbo is terrified—**H2** perpetually leaps up anxiously in the bass—but Dori's attempts to reassure him lead him to keep silent if only to hide his embarrassment. The Lord of the Eagles, addressing Gandalf, tells him that his subjects will be willing to bear the Company out into the plains, for which Gandalf is greatly gratified. The dialogue here is set over a solemnly descending chromatic scale over which hovers a recurrent *tremolo* pattern which perhaps may be cited as a motif of Flight:

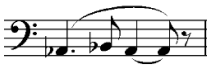
H46



This theme grows increasingly louder as the dwarves prepare to depart. As the eagles and their passengers rise into the air against the rising morning sunlight, **H44** ring out heroically once more, with **H45** continuing in the bass—and these two motifs bring the act to a close, **H46** alone remaining and slowly dying into the distance.

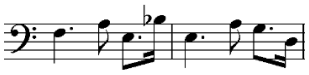
This same material also forms the prelude to the Third Act *Queer Lodgings*, but it is preceded by an uneasy introduction which introduces another variant of **H6**, now symbolising Bilbo's disquiet:

H47



As the eagles set their passengers Gwaihir and Landroval sing a duet of farewell to which Gandalf responds (**H5**). He then tells them that he is shortly to leave them, because "after all, this is not my adventure" (**H15**). Thorin offers him rewards to stay, but Gandalf proceeds to tell them of "a very great person…who lives not far away" and from whom they will be able to seek help:

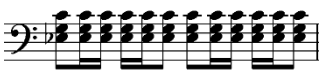
H48



He tells them to come after him in pairs, and leaves with Bilbo. The rhythm of **H48** is taken up with increasing acceleration during the following orchestral interlude, then calms down to a humming figure in the strings suggestive of a swarm of bees. The return of **H48** leads to a broad dotted version of **H3** followed by **H5** as Gandalf and Bilbo enter Béorn's hall.

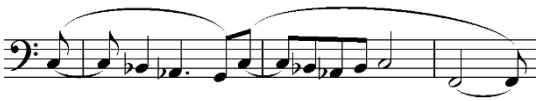
The scene in which Béorn is introduced progressively to the dwarves is a light-hearted scherzo which recapitulates in abridged form much of the material of the preceding Acts. Great play is had with **H6** as the company greet their reluctant host, and as Gandalf concludes his narrative **H48** returns in a broad and nobly welcoming manner. Béorn now offers his assistance. He offers to lend them horses:

H49



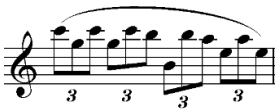
which will take them to the edges of the forest of Mirkwood to their east:

H50



The forest is inhabited by elves, although we do not know this yet; and **H50** is therefore a mutated and subdued version of **H25a**. Béorn goes on to warn them of the dangers of the Enchanted River:

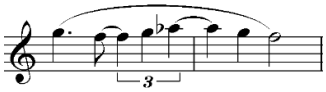
H51



As Thorin thanks him for his aid, **H48** spreads in an ever more grandiose manner throughout the orchestra.

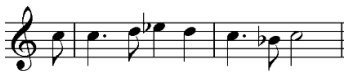
An interlude follows, the second of the three set-piece songs for the dwarves. It is opened by a plaintive oboe theme:

H52 [see S105]



and all the dwarves then declaim the opening line of their song. The second line "but in the forest stirred no leaf" brings a new theme which will be of greater significance later:

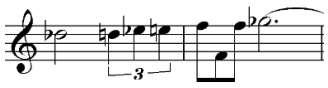
H53



This theme is of course identical with the song with which Lúthien charmed Mandos in the closing scene of *Beren and Lúthien* (**S105**); it might perhaps be assumed in this interlude that the dwarves had sufficiently overcome their mistrust of the elves to adopt the melody as a basis for their own improvisations. The theme is taken up by the orchestra while Balin continues alone with the next strophe of the song. **H52** returns as an accompaniment to Dwalin in the next verse and continues below the rather more agitated stanza given to Óin; but in the strophe allocated to Glóin a reference to the Dragon brings an ominous reference to **H14** before all the dwarves take up the final verse with **H53** prominent. As Béorn smiles his appreciation of the song, the orchestra follows a final restatement of **H52** with **H53** as the music sinks down to a gloomy return of **H50**.

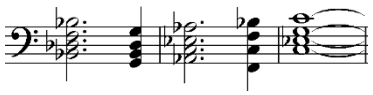
The scene now revealed is the entry to the forest path through Mirkwood, and **H50** is taken up as a slow *fugato* in the lower strings. As Gandalf reveals that he is now leaving, **H50** transmutes subtly into a reminiscence of **H34** which discloses the nature of his "pressing business". But when he turns to their path through the forest, and his hope that they will emerge safely at the other side, a new theme unwinds:

H54



which will recur at the relevant later point in *Fire and Water*. **H49** returns as Gandalf mounts his horse and rides off, to the despair of Thorin and the dwarves; **H11** lurches violently in the bass and leads to a new version of itself which moves upwards:

H55



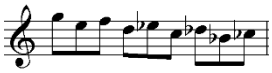
finally leading to a new series of ruminations on **H50** as the curtain falls on the first evening.

Fire and Water

The First Act subtitled *Flies and Spiders* opens with a long *fugato* statement of the Mirkwood theme (**H50**) given out by ten solo lower strings and then decorated by woodwind with the figuration (**H51**) associated with the Enchanted River. The curtain rises on that scene, but the music for most of the crossing of the River was one of the passages deleted when the opera was cut to fit into

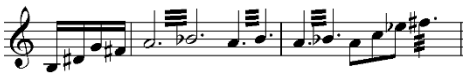
one evening and was not therefore orchestrated; it is one of the episodes therefore still missing from the score. As the music resumes and continues the crossing is more or less completed, and **H50** is played expressively as the last boatload of dwarves comes to shore. Yet again Balin sees a light in the forest, and a high eerie statement of **H11** accompanies his vision and leads through flickering figuration to a distant chorus singing the opening phrase of **H25a**. This merges with **H50** during a choral interlude during which the dwarves abandon the path and plunge into the trackless forest, finally emerging as a grandiose statement by full chorus with harp accompaniment of **H25a** as the elves are seen at feast. Thorin steps out into the circle (**H25a** with **H11** in the bass) and at once darkness falls. The dwarves run around calling out each others' names, and **H11** tumbles down in a crazy helter-skelter pattern:

H56



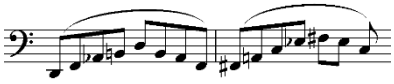
and a whisper on xylophones of the theme of the spiders who will capture them:

H57



Finally only Bilbo is left alone, and the gloomy phrases of the Mirkwood theme **H50** mingle with a downtrodden version of **H3** to express his dejection. But a spider is wrapping him in her threads, and to a rapid upburst of **H2** Bilbo rouses himself, drawing his sword (**H26**). He stabs the spider, which jerks up and down in frenzy before falling dead; as it does so there appears in the bass the definitive form of the theme for the Spiders, which is clearly related to their ancestress Ungoliant from *The Silmarillion*:

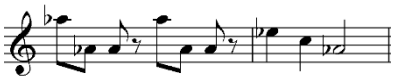
H58 [see S27 and S204]



and this is succeeded by a grandiose series of statements of **H26** as Bilbo names his sword *Sting*. As he disappears into the forest in pursuit of the dwarves, **H50** returns in a *fugato* as at the beginning of the scene.

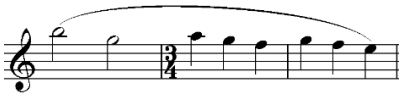
The next scene is set in the spiders' lair, bedecked with cobwebs and decorated by xylophone shiverings. **H58** rises and falls as the spiders converse between themselves of the dwarves they have captured and hope to eat shortly. As one of them goes to check on Bombur's edibility (**H11**), the dwarf kicks out and knocks it off the branch; but as the spider prepares to take its revenge, the voice of Bilbo is heard from the trees. His phrase "Attercop! Attercop! down you drop!" becomes a motif in its own right:

H59



When the spiders have set off in pursuit of his voice, Bilbo comes back and cuts the dwarves down with his sword (**H26** interspersed with **H2** and **H59**). The spiders return and in a *fugato* take up the "Attercop" theme over a roaring accompaniment of **H58** but Bilbo retaliates with a second song while the dwarves make good their escape to a variant of **H56**. But they are immediately captured by the wood-elves (variations on **H49** and **H25a**) and as darkness covers the scene the recorders take up another *fugato* on a new variation of the elvish theme:

H60

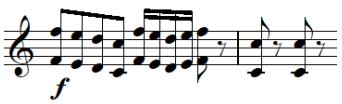


This in the next scene becomes the theme specifically associated with the Elvenking Thranduil, and accompanies his interrogation of the captured dwarves; it will later in *The Lord of the Rings* become the principal theme for his son Legolas.

The following interlude leads back to a restestatement of **H60** and the music for the beginning of the following scene was missing altogether following the loss of the original vocal score. Most of the remaining music however was preserved, as the Elvenking interrogates first Thorin and then Balin, but in unable to discover from either what their errand is in the forest. He orders that the dwarves should be imprisoned until they provide the information, but Bilbo using his ring of invisibility contrives to slip in unseen. The themes of **H60** are contrasted with those of **H11** and **H32** at the appropriate junctures, but otherwise there is no new thematic material at all to be found in this short narrative scene.

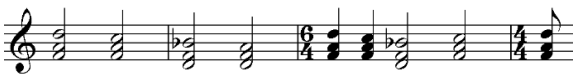
The opening of the fifth scene (as far as the song of the wood-elves' barrel porters) was entirely missing when the score was lost, and the lacuna has been filled with suitable music for the carousing butler and his friend the captain of the guard which derives from the elvish chorus which had greeted the dwarves on their arrival at Rivendell in Scene One of *Riddles in the Dark* (**H28**). The music as Bilbo filches the keys from the captain's belt and releases the dwarves revisits existing material, but when he explains his elaborate plan to effect their escape by packing them into barrels to be conveyed away down the river, the dwarves' dismay is outlined by a brusque version of **H50**;

H61



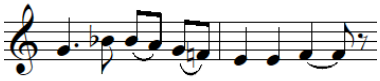
And the elven porters who now arrive are equally unimpressed with the fact that the drunken butler appears to have provided them with full barrels rather than empty ones for disposal (**H60** juxtaposed with **H28**) until they begin their sextet with a forthright restatement of the main elvish theme of **H50**:

H62



which soon acquires a counterpoint of its own at the lines "back to ocean, back to stream":

H63

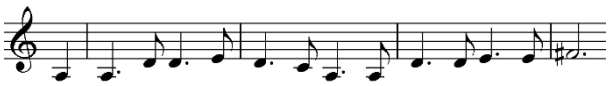


and the sextet finally dies away with restatement of **H11** as the dwarves are borne off downstream.

The following interlude consists of a restatement of the material heard at the end of *Over Hill and Under Hill* where Gandalf described the coming of the company to the end of the forest (**H54**); similarly the music for the final scene, also missing, contained the first statement of a theme for the song *The King beneath the Mountain* which was preserved because it was restated in a later interlude which became part of the first orchestral suite. The scene opens however with sly repetitions of **H63** as the barrels are brought into land and Bilbo releases the dwarves from their reluctant imprisonment.

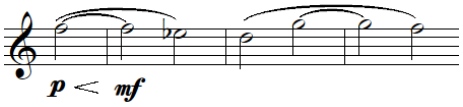
As Thorin proclaims his title to the astonished Bard and the guards, however, the song comes abruptly to the fore and it may for convenience be given here in the more formal statement it later receives:

H64



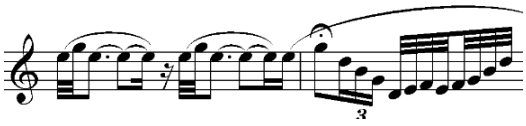
And when the Master offers them assistance, despite his scepticism that they will ever contrive to defeat Smaug, an overweening theme arches high above the rejoicing and the hubbub:

H65



The music for the opening of the Second Act *The Gathering of the Clouds* was preserved because it was orchestrated before the vocal score was lost. It opens with a statement in canon of the Dragon theme **H14** first on three tubas, then on three bassoons and finally on strings as the curtain rises. Thorin stands on the mountainside searching for the hidden door, and **H18** returns from the passage when he was describing the escape of his father and grandfather from the destruction of Erebor using this same door. He then moves on, and Bilbo appears (**H1** describes his depression). He looks up as a thrush sings to him:

H66



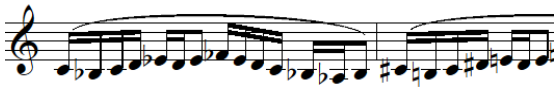
As the thrush flies off, **H1** returns and is stated at length before Bilbo realises the significance of the thrush's actions. As he rises and calls to the dwarves, the original fragment of music came to an end; in the revision of 2021-22 the dwarves come scrambling up to investigate, and the musical material reverts to their debate in Bag End during Scene Two of *An Unexpected Party.* This repetition of material continues as they open the hidden door, and Thorin launches into his grandiloquent address to the company in exactly the same terms as his oration in the earlier scene (originality of expression never being one of the dwarf's strongest talents). Bilbo, justifiably annoyed, interrupts the proceedings impatiently and asks for volunteers to accompany him into the Mountain with an optimism that is rapidly disappointed. Reverting to his own material from *An unexpected party*, he enters the door alone.

His soliloquy as he descends into the heart of the Mountain brings a full-scale recapitulation of the melody associated with the Shire (**H1**) as he laments the folly that has led him on this perilous adventure. But as he sees the apparently slumbering shape of the Dragon, and realises from a glint of his eyelids that the monster is only feigning sleep, he steps back into the gloom where his Ring renders him invisible and conceals his shadow.

The dialogue between Bilbo and Smaug is one of the iconic comic scenes in *The Hobbit*, with the Dragon initially adopting the haughty manners of an elderly gentleman who has been disturbed in his ruminations by an uninvited, unintroduced and unwanted visitor. The theme **H14** forms a lurching counterpoint to Bilbo's **H2** and then to various other themes—**H2** (Hobbits)**, H45-6** (Eagles)**, H32** (the Ring), **H38** (Riddles), **H59** (Attercop), and **H22** (Trolls) in rapid succession—as the hobbit describes his identity in riddling references to his earlier adventures and experiences. Only at the final point, when Bilbo refers to his escape to Lake-Town by describing himself as Barrel-Rider (**H63**), does Smaug betray a sudden suspicion regarding the originators of this plot against his wealth.

And it is only when Bilbo suggest that the Dragon might also be the subject of a desire for revenge by those whom he has despoiled, that Smaug drops the supercilious mask and launches into a ferocious diatribe that moves chromatically upwards in a repeated pattern that coils and uncoils in an uncontrollable passion:

H67

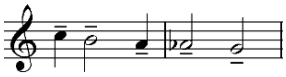


Bilbo, hardly daring to respond to this outburst, makes a feeble reference to the supposed weakness of Dragons in "the region of the chest", which brings Smaug's boasting to an abrupt halt as he displays that part of his anatomy to the hobbit. Having thus discovered the vulnerable portion of the Dragon's armoury, Bilbo makes haste to effect his escape, pursued by the wrath and flame of the monster (**H67**) which continues throughout the following brief interlude as he escapes back to the dwarves on the mountainside, and tells them of his discovery of Smaug's vulnerability. This is overheard by the thrush (**H66**); but the dragon sets off to Lake Town in search of revenge as **H67** continues to rampage through the orchestra.

The following scene returns us to Lake Town where Bard and two watchmen are looking northward at the

lights on the distant Mountain raised by Smaug's ire (**H63** returns to set the scene). We hear now for the first time the distinctive theme associated with Bard, with its dour chromatics demonstrating his surly and pessimistic nature:

H68



The other watchmen interpret the lights as a sign that the King under the Mountain is forging gold (**H64** is taken up enthusiastically by the townsfolk), but it is left to Bard to correctly realise that the Dragon is descending on the town bent on destruction. **H65** now rises above the tumult of **H67** with **H14** roaring below in the tubas, and the resistance of the townspeople is futile until the thrush suddenly appears to Bard to tell him of Smaug's weak point (**H66**). In an impassioned address to the black arrow that he saved for the last, Bard evolves **H68** into an evocation of **H65** until he is able to find his mark and kill the beast. The folk of Lake Town lament the destruction of their dwellings (**H65**) and the presumed loss of their bowman, but Bard emerging from the ruins declares that he will seek to re-establish his ancestral kingdom of Dale in the shadow of the Mountain which he now expects to find deserted—his apostrophe to the black arrow now rises to even more elevated heights.

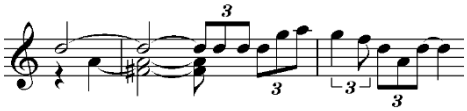
The interlude which follows is one of the passages that was preserved in full score from the original version of the material, and opens with Bard's theme **H68** followed by **H65.** The middle section of this march, which in the suite was entitled *The banners of Lake and Wood*, is yet another restatement of the triumphant song **H64.** The whole of the material is then repeated with different orchestration before the arrival of the Elvenking to the aid of the refugees (**H60**); the music then returns us to the end of the preceding scene as the Dragon flew away in search of revenge (**H67**).

Bilbo now persuades the dwarves that they can only now escape through the lower caverns of the mountain, despite the peril of the dragon. Reluctantly they agree; the music here returns to that heard before Bilbo's first surreptitious expedition into the mountain with **H2** prominently.featured.

Entering the dragon's den once more, Bilbo finds the Arkenstone, the heart of the Mountain and the most treasured jewel in the hoard (**H17**) and the theme associated with the secret passage (**H18**) soon gives way to an increasingly assertive statement of **H15** as Thorin assumes his role as King under the Mountain. This validity of this title is now confirmed as the thrush re-appears to tell them of the death of the dragon (**H66**), but warns them that others beside themselves now seek to gain possession of the treasure: not only Bard seeking redress for the damage suffered by the Lake-men, but also the Elves of Mirkwood—both **H60** and **H65** recur to signify the threat of these new claimants. Thorin sends the bird to seek aid from his cousin Dáin (we hear a brief reference to the theme that will shortly establish itself as **H70**), and prepares for a siege as **H15** mounts ever more stridently in the orchestra.

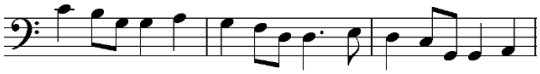
Much more of the music for the Third Act *The Clouds Burst* was orchestrated and survives for that reason from the original version. As the curtain rises a fanfare is sounded by three offstage trumpets, and this is the theme associated with the army of Elves and Men which will shortly be arriving to claim the Dragon's treasure from the Dwarves of Erebor:

H69



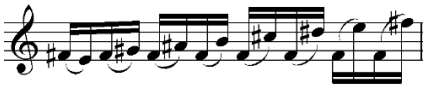
The dwarves sing their third set-piece song; the opening theme consists of an inverted statement of **H15** (the Kingdom under the Mountain has been restored, but not in the expected manner):

H70



As the Dwarves anticipate the battle that is to follow, a new warlike theme erupts:

H71



The next verses are an elaborated version of similar material from the first of the set-piece songs, but the final verse brings back **H70** in counterpoint with its original form **H15,** as the fanfares of **H69** sound ever more insistently on the offstage trumpets. As Balin enters to warn that the armies have arrived outside the Gate, Thorin rises to meet them in a hasty restatement of **H11**.

As Bard and the Elvenking come forward to parley, and **H69** is sounded once again, Thorin hails them to a formal statement of **H15** once again establishing his credentials as King under the Mountain. Bard's response is accompanied by **H68** but a mutter of **H71** underpins his words. As he states his descent from the former Lords of Dale **H16** returns from *Over Hill and Under Hill*, but his claims are brushed aside by Thorin to a violent upsurge of the warlike **H68** and a contemptuous headlong rush downwards based on the second phrase of **H60** as he questions the presence of the wood-elves.

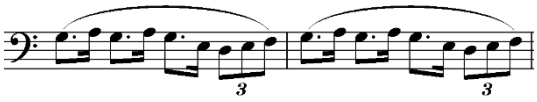
Bard affirms his gratitude to the Elvenking to a more placid restatement of **H60** and a brief reference to **H62**; and as he declares the Mountain besieged, the fanfares of **H69** are given in a more confused and belligerent tone. As Thorin and the Dwarves go back into the Mountain, Thorin declares his intention to search for the Arkenstone of Thráin (**H17**), unaware of the fact that Bilbo has already found and pocketed this gem. Bilbo, left alone to watch, takes a torch and signals (a resolute statement of **H2**) and Bard appears to talk with him (**H68**). Bilbo gives him the Arkenstone (**H17**); Bard expresses his thanks and offers him sanctuary, but Bilbo declines (the final words of his response were lost from the musical score and only reconstructed later).

The next section of music was incorporated into the orchestral suite *Fire and Water* and therefore also survives from the original full score. Bard's theme **H68** is restated as he goes back down the Mountain, and then **H1** returns in a long-drawn atmospheric restatement as

Bilbo shivers in the cold dawn. As the melody dies away, the theme of the Elvenking **H60** is heard on solo violin and then the distant trumpets ring out again with **H69**, now as a call to battle and war, finally dying away with an echo of Bard's **H68**.

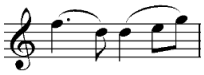
Thorin and the Dwarves emerge from the Mountain (**H11**) with a gift for Bilbo, a coat of mithril mail:

H72



but the scene of Bilbo's robing is interrupted again as the trumpet fanfares **H69** ring out again. The Dwarves' theme **H11** is combined with that of the Kingdom under the Mountain **H15** to produce a new phrase which will subsequently recur:

H73

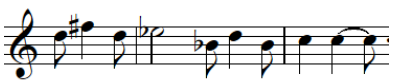


At this point the music preserved in the full score comes to an end; the remainder of this scene until after the Battle of the Five Armies was reconstructed from memory during 2022 and further revised in 2025. During the following negotiators with Bard and the Elvenking, Thorin remains obdurate until Bard offers the Arkenstone in exchange for reparations; and when he discovers that it was Bilbo who has given them the jewel, his fury is only averted by the sudden appearance of Gandalf who intercedes on behalf of the hobbit. He now agrees to the terms proposed by those besieging him, with a whispered hint of **H17** dying away into silence; all the preceding dialogue has consisted to repetitions of existing thematic material as appropriate.

Dáin now arrives at the head of an army of dwarves (**H73** challenging **H65** and **H60**), and suddenly conflict erupts as the assembled forces are attacked by orcs and goblins also in seek of plunder. The sounds of pitched battle **H71** rage in the orchestra, and onstage trumpets sound a summons to war with **H69** as Gandalf proclaims "Doom has come upon you all!" and the theme associated with the Orcs **H31** is blared out by the brass.

It is this theme, together that of the wolves **H42**, which launch the Battle, superimposed over the recurring pattern of **H71** and the rhythms associated with the Orcs **H30** and the ambitions of Morgoth (**S35,** heard here for the first time since *The Silmarillion* although it will assume a much greater importance in *The Lord of the Rings*). The voices of the wolves are heard, but these are soon interrupted by the battle-cries of the Dwarves as they charge to the attack. Their chant of *Baruk Khazad!* has a thematic similarity to the music associated with Beren's defence against the forces of Morgoth (**S63**):

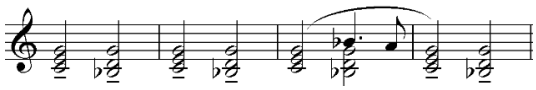
H74



Pitched battle rages, with the original material extended and developed and a return of the music heard during the orc attack in *Riddles in the dark* (**H43**); and Thorin, who now emerges from the Mountain in full armour (**H15**), although his intervention at first turns the tide of battle (**H70**), is severely wounded in the struggle. Bilbo, seeing the Eagles arrive in the distance (**H44**), is stunned by a falling stone and the music fades as he loses consciousness. The music of the Eagles continues throughout the following interlude.

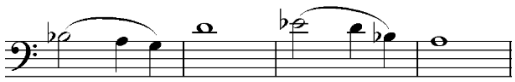
In the next scene Gandalf finds the unconscious hobbit on the battlefield, and takes him to Thorin with whom he is reconciled before the dwarf-king dies. During this scene we hear a series of rocking chords over a slow drumbeat:

H75



and a long-limbed string melody emerges as Thorin sings his final words "There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West":

H76

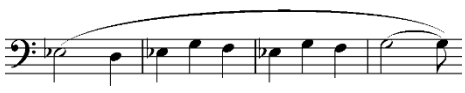


Dáin now steps forward as King under the Mountain as the body of Thorin is solemnly interred. These final scenes of *The Hobbit* are preserved complete from the original, both in the orchestral score and in the suites extracted from this. As Thorin dies a long funeral march begins the chords of **H75** progressively overlaid with other themes associated with Thorin and the Kingdom under the Mountain: **H11**, **H15** and **H73**. The string melody **H76** is in its own turn overlaid with the same other themes as earlier, and is then followed by a new statement of **H11** interrupted by increasingly massive reiterations of the theme of the Arkenstone (**H1**7) before the opening material returns.

The next scene returns us to the valley of Rivendell, and the opening chorus of elves is an exact echo of that heard in the first scene of *Riddles in the dark.* As Elrond enters **H25a** returns (**H25b** has been heard in the preceding chorus) to greet Bilbo and hail him as an Elf-friend, and they stand and listen to a second chorus of offstage elves. This is somewhat different, a reflective hymn to the falling evening, and dies away in a chromatic series of harmonies. There is however a dance-like central section which echoes **S210** from *The War of Wrath.*

The final scene depicts Bilbo's return to his home enriched by his experiences, and the music was subsequently detached to form the last of the *Seven Tolkien Songs*. The opening theme should be cited, as it is subsequently used as a principal motif in *The Lord of the Rings*:

H77



and at the end of the first verse the opening limb of **H1** returns to lead into the second verse. This however is interrupted halfway through its course and a full restatement of **H1** takes over. At the end this dies away in brief echoes of **H77** and a quiet final chord.

3

musical chapters from THE LORD OF THE RINGS

It was I think while sitting by the lake at Chiddingstone in Kent during the summer of 1966 that I first began to sketch substantial musical material for the works of Tolkien, even before I had begun work on the *Nativity Mass* which was later to become my Op.1. These first sketches included a lightly rhythmic theme for the hobbits and an early version of the Shire melody (**LR1** and **LR2**), and were followed in the autumn of that year by other elements that survived into later work: the lament for Boromir, for example, and an early version of *In the willow-meads of Tasarinan.* These short pieces were originally fragmentary, but soon began to coalesce into a larger framework in the shape of a complete setting of Book IV of *The Lord of the Rings*, originally given the grandiose title of *The Doom* but eventually to materialise as *The Black Gate is closed.*

Work on this fully operatic setting had advanced far enough for a piano rehearsal of the first scene given in the summer of 1968, and the score was substantially sketched by March 1969 including some passages—such as the thunderstorm in Act Three—which would later find their way in largely unaltered form into *The Silmarillion.* The final chords of the score were written during my Easter holidays that year in a freezing cold cottage near the Gap of Dunloe in County Kerry—as I discovered much later, less than twenty years after Tolkien himself had spent a holiday in the same Irish mountain landscape. But even so at that time much of the work was left incompletely orchestrated, and some of the scoring was clearly impractical. The amateur orchestra at the London School of Economics rehearsed sections of a much-reduced orchestral suite in the autumn of 1969, but that was as far as the work ever progressed, despite some interest expressed by those in London who saw the score and a suite from *The Hobbit* sketches given by the LSE orchestra in 1971. Indeed I was far from clear in my own mind regarding the function of the three-Act torso, except that it might in due course form part of a complete *Lord of the Rings* cycle of a massive scale. Having completed the sketches, I soon turned to the more practical subject of Michéal Mac Liammóir's *Diarmuid and Gráinne* which had reached completion and indeed partial performance by the summer of 1971.

During that period I had not entirely abandoned thoughts on the projected Tolkien work, and indeed this took a new departure with my setting of the lengthy poem *The Sea Bell* completed early in 1972. The principal theme of this song, which returns several times in varied forms during the progress of the narrative, is in all essential features the same as the extended melody employed initially for the Elves as the second subject in my third symphony *Ainulindalë,* and eventually associated in *The Silmarillion* with the elven realm of Doriath (**S10**). At the same time I finally established a projected form for the putative operatic cycle on *The Lord of the Rings*, a totally impractical scheme extending over thirteen evenings of performances (including two evenings devoted to *The Hobbit*); and I went so far as to devise a complete text for this monstrous construction, covering the whole territory in great detail and leaving very little out. In due course I began some very tentative work on this task: the two evenings which comprised *The Hobbit* were fully sketched, and some other Acts—*Tom Bombadil* and *The Grey Havens*—were also substantially completed in short score (although the end of both was missing). A good many other sketches also date from this period, but eventually the whole enterprise was brought to a halt by the difficulties of obtaining copyright clearance for the texts, and in due course—following the publication of *The Silmarillion* in 1977—the diversion of my musical attention to the newly emerging material.

I have explained elsewhere how, beginning with my purely orchestral and instrumental approach to the texts in the *Ainulindalë* symphony and the piano rondo *Akallabêth* (both dating from the period 1978-79), and with the approval of the Tolkien estate—and encouragement from both Christopher and Priscilla Tolkien—I eventually began work on my epic scenes from *The Silmarillion* with *The Children of Húrin* in 1981-82 and then followed this with the other segments of the cycle during the following years. The completion of *Beren and Lúthien*, the last of the cycle to be composed at that time, in 1996 was followed by a frustrating series of attempts to obtain performance of at least some part of the cycle which was ultimately defeated by the incessant refrain that the work was too long and too complicated, even when attempts were made to reduce the size of the orchestration and forces demanded for suites of excerpts. An attempt to utilise some of the material from the cycle for a setting of Bilbo's *Lay of Eärendil* was equally stillborn, although the use of texts from *The Lord of the Rings* had been authorised by the Tolkien estate as part of the construction of the *Silmarillion* scenes. At the same time I assembled the remaining fragments from the *Lord of the Rings* material, completing the scores for *Tom Bombadil* and *The Grey Havens* and putting the other sections into some sort of order.

It was only when recording work on the epic scenes finally and belatedly began in 2017 with *The Fall of Gondolin* that I began to give any further consideration to this material. The indefatigable Simon Crosby Buttle, as I have described elsewhere, began by urging me to bring the legends of the First Age to a proper conclusion with the addition of a further *Silmarillion* segment based around my existing *Eärendil* setting, which we eventually decided to entitle *The War of Wrath.* And it was he who suggested at much the same that it might be an interesting idea to provide an Appendix to the recording—in the time-honoured Tolkien tradition—including some of the *Lord of the Rings* material which had not been incorporated into the *Silmarillion* cycle. This would also have the advantage of binding the various scores together, allowing listeners to appreciate the connections between them. The theme of Eru which opens *Fëanor* also closes *The Grey Havens*; and this is not the only theme associated with the Valar to make a subsequent appearance in the *Lord of the Rings* sketches

(although as might be expected much less frequently than in the *Silmarillion*). The themes of Elbereth (**S3**) and Yavanna (**S6**) both re-emerge in *The Mirror of Galadriel* as Galadriel presents the Fellowship with her gifts; and the 'Arda' theme from *Ainulindalë* and *Fëanor* (**S7**) also reappears, both in its original form and to represent the downfall of Sauron as in the *Akallabêth* rondo. Even Morgoth, long-banished from Middle-Earth, returns musically in the Balrog scenes and to menacingly underpin the threat of the Nazgul (**S4**). Ulmo (**S46**) too reappears at several points; although significantly not Mandos, whose curse has been exorcised during the *War of Wrath* (even at the death of Saruman, where the wistful search of the Maia's spirit for resurrection is banished by the theme of Ilúvatar alone).

With these considerations in mind, Simon Crosby Buttle began the long task of reducing down my original rambling libretto to a series of relatively briefer musical chapters which would require a relatively more limited amount of new musical composition to bring to a satisfactory conclusion. With the completion of my work on *The War of Wrath* in 2020 I turned back to the earlier sketches, beginning in an entirely arbitrary and fortuitous manner with the completion of the scene of triumph at *The Field of Cormallen*, and linking Frodo's song at *The Prancing Pony* through to the first appearance of Aragorn's description in the following scene. I then worked backwards through the earlier version of *Tom Bombadil*, making some thematic amendments; and returned to my 1970s sketch for *A long-expected party*, again revising and bringing the score into accordance with the existing *Silmarillion*. The revision of *The Black Gate is closed* had perforce to be much more extensive—some of the themes, such as that for the Ring itself, had been substantially altered over the years—and the music later written for the Gondorian scenes had to be incorporated into the originally much more basic thematic material supplied for Faramir. Because of the isolation imposed upon me as a result of the worldwide corona pandemic, I found with the opportunity for uninterrupted composition that the new and revised music fell into place with remarkable fluidity and ease; and what emerged was a set of musical chapters which formed a partnership with the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion* in a manner which reflected Tolkien's own scheme for his work as envisioned in the 1950s with the two cycles forming part of an integral whole.

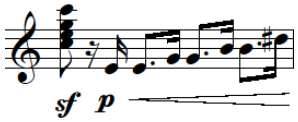
In some ways, of course, the musical chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* are quite distinct in dramatic style from *The Silmarillion* in the same manner as the disparate texts themselves. The role of the chorus in delivering the narration in the 'epic scenes' vanishes altogether in the 'musical chapters', which therefore become somewhat more conventionally operatic in form. At the same time the *Lord of the Rings* texts, generally more closely argued and complex in their development, engender a more contrapuntal and elaborate response in the thematic treatment. The action sequences, for example, which form such a major part of both the Peter Jackson films and the Howard Shore scores for them, are trimmed back considerably with many of the battle sequences taking place 'offstage'. The chapters focus on the lyrical and philosophical aspects of the text in a manner that goes far beyond the simple restitution of Tom Bombadil and the scouring of the Shire to their places in the tale.

The Ring sets out

A LONG-EXPECTED PARTY

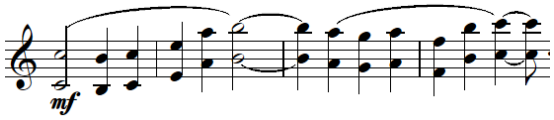
The opening scene of *A long-expected party*, set entirely with hobbits drinking in the Ivy Bush pub, has perhaps unsurprisingly almost no common musical links at all with *The Silmarillion*. Instead we are presented with a whole sequence of brief motifs associated with the Shire and hobbits, most of them derived from the earlier-written setting of *The Hobbit*. These consist of the theme of the hobbits themselves:

LR1 [see H2]



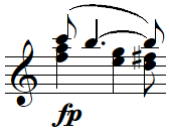
that of the Shire:

LR2 [see H1]



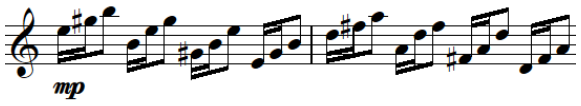
that of the Sackville-Baggins, a languidly drawn-out version of Bilbo's "Good morning!":

LR3 [see H6]



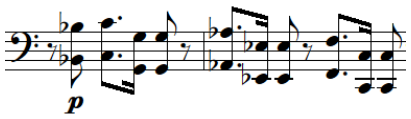
and that of Bilbo's wealth, associated particularly with his coat of mithril mail and heard in *The Hobbit* as a counterpoint to **H72**:

LR4



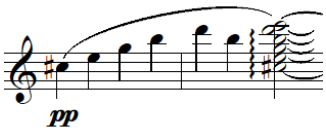
to which may perhaps be added an entirely new theme associated with the rustic hobbits of Buckland near the Old Forest, but which later becomes associated with Tom Bombadil as the spirit of the Forest itself:

LR5



and one theme which *will* be familiar from *The Silmarillion* (and *The Hobbit*), that of the Ring itself:

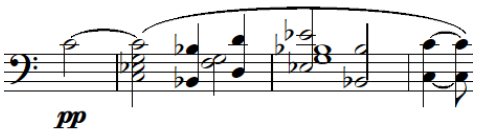
LR6 [see H32]



which here occurs only once and in skeletal harmonic form, at the moment when the Gaffer alludes light-heartedly to Bilbo's unexpected longevity and youthfulness.

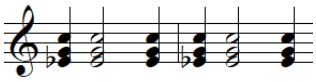
The scene ends with an extended symphonic development of the Shire theme **LR2** which leads into a brief interlude set in Bilbo's garden with the hobbit and Gandalf looking out at the blossoms—a final moment of peace and tranquillity before the dangerous action begins. Gandalf's theme re-emerges from *The Hobbit*:

LR7 [see H5]



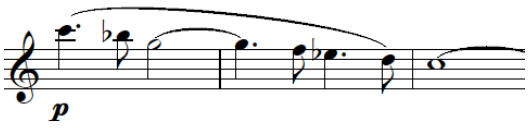
together with a tranquil rhythmic phrase which originated in the earlier score and will continue in various forms to be associated with the wizard:

LR8 [see H9]



and the theme associated in *The Hobbit* with adventure, which has already been heard in the preceding scene but now moves more firmly into the limelight:

LR9 [see H3]

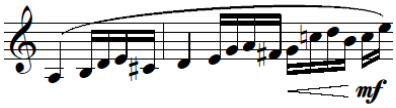


At the end of this brief pastoral episode the orchestra is reduced down to a bare sextet of solo strings, whose further statement of the Shire theme **LR2** is now more perturbed by uneasy harmonic shifts, before the music plunges back into the frenetic whirl of the unexpected party itself.

The music of this section again largely recapitulates the 'hobbit music' heard in earlier scenes, with a solitary reference back to *The Hobbit* with Bilbo's reminiscence of his arrival in Lake Town with a bucolic tuba playing the melody "The King beneath the Mountain" (**H64**—although it cannot here be regarded as a leitmotif, since it never reappears in *The Lord of the Rings*). There is however one rather startling exception, as the young hobbits begin their Springle-Ring. It is clear that this is a very old traditional tune indeed; in fact, one that they must have originally garnered from the Elves in the days when their races intermingled. For it is nothing less than the central section of Lúthien's dance of enchantment before Morgoth, as heard in *Beren and Lúthien*, now transformed into a light-hearted country revel (**S101**). It is perhaps not altogether surprising that Bilbo, who is presumably familiar with the origins of the tune, brings proceedings to a halt with three loud toots on an out-of-tune wooden trumpet; but the jolly treatment of the melody quickly re-assets itself after his disappearance, and only slowly dies away as the music moves into the next scene.

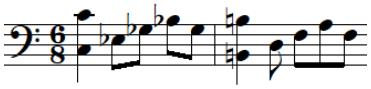
This begins with an orchestral restatement of Bilbo's walking song from *The Hobbit* (**H77**) which is truncated as the curtain rises on the interior of Bag End. The theme of the Ring **(LR6)** now takes over almost entirely, as Bilbo displays his indecision about whether to leave his treasure behind or put it in his pocket (finally deciding on the latter); and the slowly insinuating **LR9** accentuates his uncertainty. And then, when Gandalf appears, the theme associated with him in *The Hobbit* with pipe-smoking and general good humour reappears with him:

LR10 [see H7]



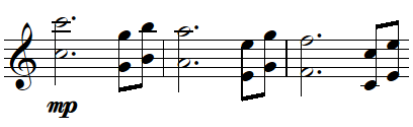
But the good humour does not remain evident for long. As Bilbo's talk moves towards his going away on a holiday and leaving everything to Frodo as his heir, the statement of the Shire melody **LR2** remains untroubled and the music moves towards a peaceful full close just as at the end of *The Hobbit.* But when Gandalf mentions the Ring (the music unexpectedly stepping down by a semitone and the Ring theme itself telescoped into a flickering and ominous celesta arpeggio) the mood changes abruptly. Bilbo confesses that he has been disturbed and worried, and an arpeggio version of the Ring theme in 6/8 moves steadily chromatically downwards in conjunction with the adventure theme **LR9**:

LR11



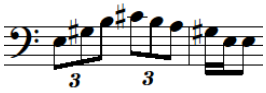
And as Gandalf's frustration and anger grow, **LR10** assumes a darker form. Individual notes within **LR11** are picked out by the xylophone, and the theme of Gollum from *The Hobbit* is outlined as Bilbo insistently begins to refer to the Ring as his "precious":

LR12 [see H36]



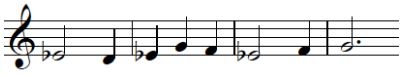
and even more ominously the phrase associated in *The Hobbit* with his phrase "What have I got in my pocket?":

LR13 [see H40]



It is this muttered theme, combined with **LR9**, which dominates the texture as Bilbo surrenders to Gandalf's pressure and abandons the Ring; and the music returns to the serenity of the second scene as he places his treasure in an envelope on the mantelpiece for Frodo, after Gandalf has nervously declined the offer to act as its custodian. Bilbo now prepares to set out on his travels, and sings his walking song from the end of *The Hobbit*:

LR14 [see H77]



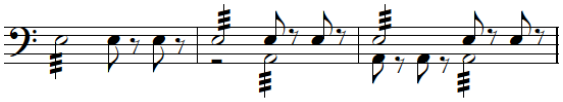
and it is this melody, taken up by the orchestra, which accompanies Frodo as he finally makes his entrance onto the scene.

This final conversation, in which Frodo accepts the bequest of the Ring together with Gandalf's warning to avoid making use of it, is entirely accompanied by material already heard: firstly the Shire melody **LR2** interwoven with **LR8** and **LR9**, then Gandalf's own theme of **LR7** leading to the hobbit motif **LR1** and finally that of the ominous Ring itself **LR6** slowing down and fading into silence.

THE SHADOW OF THE PAST

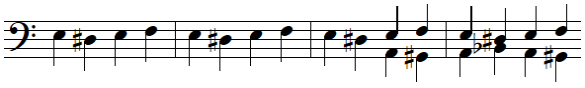
The action of the following chapter, taking place some eighteen years later, is preceded by a short prelude which combines two themes associated with Sauron as the Lord of the Rings. Firstly we hear an antiphonal positioned pair of timpani exchanging ominous rolls and rhythms in a pattern that will recur occasionally throughout the remainder of the cycle:

LR15



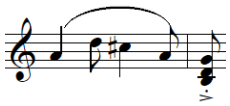
and against this is set the chromatic modulations of the theme of the Dark Lord himself, here outlined by the *pizzicato* strings but later to assume a more sinister form derived directly from Sauron's textures in *The Silmarillion*:

LR16 [see S61 and H34]



But when the curtain rises we are back in the bucolic atmosphere of a Shire tavern, this time the Green Dragon Inn in Bywater where Sam Gamgee (the son of the Gaffer from the preceding chapter) is engaged in an argument with the irrepressibly sceptical Ted Sandyman (a slower version of **LR3**):

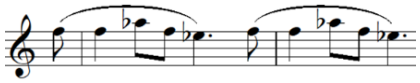
LR17



Initially their argument revolves around the reported sighting by Sam's cousin of a giant tree-man on the North Moors, and **LR5** hints at a possible connection with the untamed Old Forest; but soon the discussion shifts to the departure of the Elves across the Sea, and the music returns to the end of *The War of Wrath* (**S209**) when this emigration is shown to have commenced. The conversation ends acrimoniously, with Sandyman dismissive and unconvinced (**LR1**) and the music subsides back into the discontented menace of **LR15** and **LR16** as the scene changes back to the parlour of Bag End.

Here Frodo greets the arrival of Gandalf (**LR7**) with initial pleasure, but the slow accretion of the chord associated with the Ring (**LR6**) soon disrupts the sociable atmosphere as Gandalf launches into a description of the history of the Rings of Power, and Frodo's Ring in particular. He begins with the background of the creation of these weapons in the Elven realm of Eregion, and the music immediately harkens back to the final scenes of *The War of Wrath*:

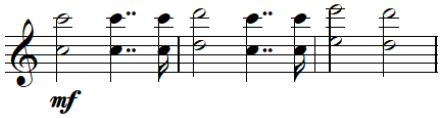
LR 18 [see S206]



and, as Gandalf describes the annihilation that awaits one who makes use of a Ring of Power, the theme of Sauron **H34** looms in the background, with each note sustained to emphasise the minor seconds in the harmony.

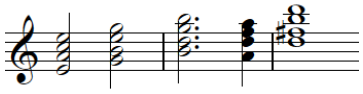
Gandalf then proceeds to outline his concerns regarding the Ring (**LR11**) but this soon in turn generates a new theme as he describes his wish to consult with Saruman the White as the chief of the Order of the Wizards:

LR19



and the succeeding phrase establishes his stature as the protagonist in the White Council opposed to Sauron:

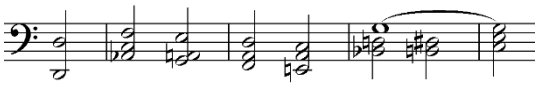
LR20



After the return of **LR11** Gandalf proceeds to the test of fire which he applies to Frodo's Ring, casting it into the flames and disclosing the writing that is engraved into it

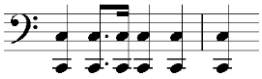
(**LR15** and **LR16** now quicker and more insistent). He recites the rhyme associated with the One Ring as the master Ring to control the destiny of Middle-earth, and the music leads back to an almost literal quotation from the scene in *The War of Wrath* where Sauron created the Ring:

LR21 [see S98, H35]



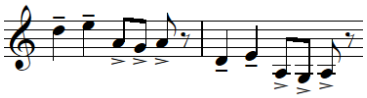
And, as before, this interwoven with references to the races for whom the Ring are destined: the Elvenkings (**S4**), the Dwarf-lords (**S207**) and mortal Men (**S125** and **S208**), all of them declaimed over a persistent statement of the theme of the Ring itself. Finally, as he refers to Sauron as the Dark Lord of the Rings, the rhythm associated with Morgoth's claim to be regarded as the Elder King also returns:

LR22 [see S35]



Frodo is naturally concerned to know how the Ring came to him, and Gandalf now proceeds to outline the ancient history of the artifact beginning with its loss by Sauron at the end of the Second Age; the music harkens back even further to the realm of Angband in the First Age (**S94**, here making a solatary reappearance in the *Lord of the Rings* score). He goes on to tell of the discovery of the lost Ring in the river by Sméagol and his companion Déagol, and the appearance of the themes **H39** and **H36** immediately suggest that the former of these is the character whom we have already encountered as Gollum in *The Hobbit.* There is also a further new theme which will be associated with the 'tales from the South' of which Gollum will reminisce much later in the action, and which will then assume much greater importance:

LR23

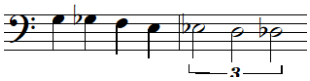


At present the music associated with Gollum takes on the development already received in *The Hobbit* as Gandalf emphasises the fact that Bilbo in pity spared the life of the wretched creature despite the fact that he wished to kill and eat him, and that this might well prove to be a significant factor in the future operation of destiny. But at present Frodo is more concerned to know what he should do with the Ring; and the music associated with the Shire (**LR2**) underlines his resolve to leave and accept Gandalf's recommendation that he should seek immediate refuge in Rivendell, adopting the alias of Underhill to throw off any possibility of pursuit. It is at this critical juncture that the wizard detects that their conversation is being overheard, and he abruptly hauls the eavesdropping Sam Gamgee into the room (**LR1**). But it rapidly becomes clear that the gardener is more exercised with the possibility that he might be able to go with his employer to see the Elves (**S209**); and the theme associated with their departure overseas mounts in growing passion as he bursts into tears of joy at the prospect.

This theme now gradually subsides in a lengthy orchestral interlude as the scene changes, and soon leads to a grandiose statement of the themes associated with Saruman (**LR19**) and the White Council (**LR20**). Gandalf has already informed Frodo that he needs to leave rapidly to gather news, and this gives some hint as to his purpose and the sources he means to consult. But when the curtain rises again we are back into the more purely domestic concerns of the Shire. It is now some months later, and Frodo has decided to move back to his birthplace in Buckland where it will be easier for him to leave the Shire without attracting undue attention. Merry is going ahead to prepare the way and transport furniture and chattels, and Frodo proposes to follow on foot with Pippin and Sam as his companions. As dusk falls Merry sets out with a cart piled high with belongings, and Frodo is left to contemplate the evening sunset.

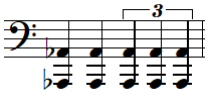
The offstage dialogue between the flustered Gaffer and the inaudible Black Rider (not yet so identified, of course) is accompanied initially by a version of the Adventure theme **LR9** but this moves progressively into a more limping rhythm associated with the Riders themselves which had already been heard when Gandalf described the Nazgûl to Frodo in the preceding scene, and foreshadowed in the epilogue to *The War of Wrath*:

LR24 (S208)



and this dies away as muttered irregular rhythm as the Ringwraith withdraws down the Hill:

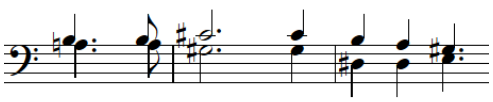
LR 25



LR1 (in its **H2** form) accompanies Frodo as he rousts out Pippin and Sam from Bag End, and as they set off to walk to Buckland the music returns back to the naïve simplicity of *The Hobbit*, with an almost literal repetition of the first orchestral interlude from that work. The air o rustic charm is maintained as Frodo launches into a verse of the walking song (**H77** in its **LR14** version), only to be interrupted halfway through as Sam observes that he can hear a horseman following them.

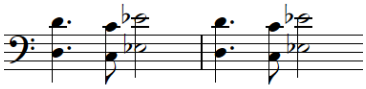
The themes already associated with the Black Riders **LR24** and **LR25** now form the basis for an altogether new theme which will assume major importance throughout the remainder of the cycle:

LR26



This alternates with a querulous note of enquiry derived from its final cadence, which is repeated obsessively over the existing material as the rider gradually approaches the concealed hobbits:

LR27



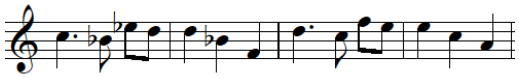
All of this material, most of it completely new to the cycle, will recur with regularity; but for the present the Nazgul withdraws, and the themes fade into the distance as Sam and Pippin (who have seen nothing of the pursuer) start a merry drinking song. This however is shadowed by obsessive repetitions of **LR24**—danger is ever present—and then interrupted by **LR27** which brings their light-hearted jollity to an abrupt halt.

The themes associated with the pursuing Black Rider return with the menacing **LR26** but soon fade away into sinister wisps of **LR24** as the voices of distant Elves are heard in the trees. Immediately the music plunges back into material associated with the Elder Race in *The Silmarillion*, and their invocation of Elbereth is set to the theme of the Valar themselves (**S2**) succeeded by versions of the themes from the end of *The War of Wrath* (**S209**) where the departure of the Elves over the Sea had been described; these Elves are abandoning Middle-earth and undertaking a journey to the Undying Lands, as indeed Sam had already noted in Scene One. The music of **S209** accompanies the dialogue between Gildor and Frodo; when the former warns the hobbit of the danger represented by the Black Riders, the hints of **LR1** and **LR24** hardly ruffle the surface before the calm of **S2** returns as the distant chorus recedes once more into the distance.

The ultimate destination of the hobbit's journey—the refuge of Rivendell—is recalled by the orchestra during the following interlude, another almost literal return to the atmosphere of *The Hobbit* (**H25b** and **H27**). But this is soon scattered into panic as Pippin bursts into the house at Crickhollow, to describe to the startled Merry the pursuit that they have been experiencing. The theme of the Ring itself now emerges (a leisurely statement of **LR6** spreading out as a luxuriously sustained chord), but this is soon overwhelmed in its turn by the more jocular rhythms of the hobbits **(LR1**) as the conspirators—Sam, Merry and Pippin—reveal their knowledge of Frodo's mission and their determination to accompany him. When it becomes clear that their avoidance of pursuit will involve them in an expedition into the perilous Old Forest, the sinister nature of the woods is invoked by a reference back to the land of Nan Elmoth in *The Fall of Gondolin* (**S153** and **S154**) as well as a brief reference to the notion of the "queer" fascination of the Bucklanders for the forest itself **(LR5**) as Merry reveals that he has previously visited the woods and experienced their perils.

But the final section of this scene is the reconciliation between Frodo and Sam, the latter apologising for his deception during the conspiracy but pledging his support for the quest, and Frodo's acceptance of his loyalty and Gandalf's good judgement in recommending such a companion. A new theme emerges for the first time, and it will assume a major role thereafter during the cycle at moments of emotional significance:

LR28



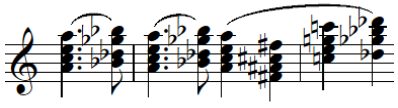
TOM BOMBADIL

The first draft of this score formed part of the massive cycle which I planned in the 1970s with texts from Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit.* The score was substantially completed in short score in the summer of 1976 but was then abandoned. In preparing a supposedly final version in 1998 I completed the episode in accordance with the original plans and sketches, and the orchestration was completed as far as possible from those sketches, with only minor amendments to the original short score for reasons of practicability. These were amplified during the later revisions made during the period 2019-22 to incorporate the existing material into the newly reconstituted cycle, but the amendments were largely restricted to the closing scene anticipating the arrival at the Prancing Pony in Bree, and most of the original score remains largely unchanged, even when some of the music later found its way into other contexts.

That is certainly true of the prelude which, after a brief reference to **LR24**, describes the hobbits wandering lost in the mazes of the Old Forest. Here the material written in 1976 was retained almost unchanged as a description of the forest of Nan Elmoth in the sunken lands of Beleriand at the opening of Scene Two of *The Fall of Gondolin.* Indeed the principal themes (**S153** and **S154** are almost entirely replicated here, the only difference being that the *ostinato* oboes that in *The Silmarillion* represented the wandering Aredhel among the trees (**S148**) are here transformed into the similarly shaped Ring motif (**LR6**).

It is only when Merry leads the hobbits out of the trees into the valley of the River Withywindle that the music begins to diverge from that heard in Nan Elmoth, firstly with the irruption of the hobbit motif **LR1** below the drifting phrases of **S153.** But the themes of the enchanted forest and its soporific effect on the travellers rapidly return and we then hear a theme associated with the "primal forests" of Middle-earth (**S150**) which will later become a major theme associated with Fangorn as the last remaining representative of those vast woodlands but here also stands for Old Man Willow, the malign controlling spirit that rules over this small enclave of barely surviving wilderness. That malignity becomes clear as he entraps the sleeping hobbits in his roots, leaving only Frodo conscious:

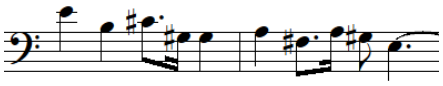
LR29 [S150]



Frodo, only just escaping the trap of the willow tree, calls out for help; and a distant voice responds. The theme of

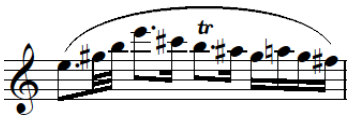
Tom Bombadil is clearly closely allied to that of the hobbits of Buckland (**LR5**) but it has a clear profile of its own:

LR30



And Tom quickly introduces a new theme of his own, that representing his fellow nature-spirit Goldberry:

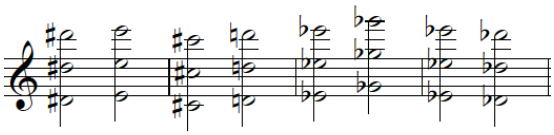
LR31



These two themes, together with **S150**, constitute the whole of Tom's song as he makes his leisurely way onto the scene; Frodo's panicked pleas for help (**LR29**) are the subject of rapid reassurance as Tom picks up a willow branch and lambasts the tree into submission and the release of the captive hobbits. He rapidly instructs them to follow him, and leaps off back up the path with the same alacrity with which he had arrived, echoes of **LR30** scattered in his wake.

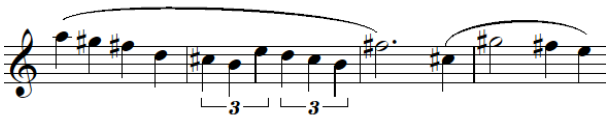
As the hobbits hasten to follow him, the menace of the Old Forest asserts itself once more, with **S153** and **S154** assuming ever more threatening forms and the night shadows which surround the trees adding to the sense of menace. But the voice of Tom Bombadil, sounding from the distance, dispels the darkness, and when Goldberry adds her voice to his, her theme is succeeded by a series of naturally modulating chords which represent her free spirit of nature:

LR32



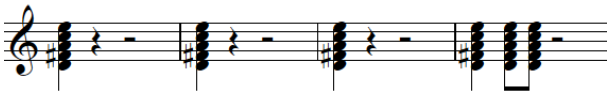
Frodo, appearing before her, is moved to an apostrophe of his own which similarly seems to cut free from any sense of formal structure but which culminates in a broad restatement of **LR31**. Goldberry responds courteously, assuring the hobbits that they are safe from danger in the dwelling of Tom Bombadil and the river-daughter:

LR33



Tom Bombadil too, takes up a position over the sleeping hobbits; and he warns them of the dangers which they will experience when they leave his house to venture into the Barrow-downs, where cold Wights wait to entrap those that come into their power:

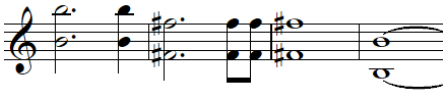
LR34



But he instructs the hobbits, if they fall into peril, to call upon his for assistance (**LR30**) and they settle down to sleep.

In the interlude that follows Frodo dreams of Gandalf, and in his vision he sees the perils that have prevented the wizard from joining the hobbits as their guide. We hear pre-echoes of the theme that will be associated with the wizard Saruman (**LR3**) and Gandalf himself (**LR7**) as well as echoes of the howling of wolves as heard in *The Hobbit* (**H42**) and the principal theme associated with the eagles (**H44**) as Gwaihir the Windlord rescues Gandalf from his imprisonment on the summit of Orthanc. The wolves howl as the wizard is borne away, and we hear a brief reference to one of themes that will be associated with the Riders of Rohan:

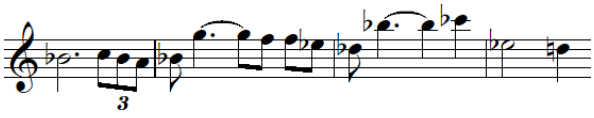
LR35



before the rhythm of Gandalf's horse (not yet identified as Shadowfax) is set against that of the Nazgul and Frodo awakens from his dream. The meaning of his vision is not of course apparent to him (or to the listener) but it will become clear much later when Gandalf tells of his experiences when addressing the Council of Elrond. In the meantime, Frodo is simply reassured by the melody of **LR33** that no harm can come to him while he is under the protection of Tom Bombadil.

A new theme heralds the arrival of day:

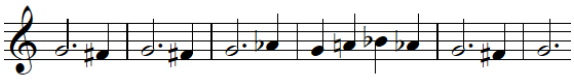
LR36



and the songs of Tom Bombadil and Goldberry blend once again in duet. This time Goldberry allows her **LR32** to extend into a long and free vocalise which absorbs the material of **LR31** and **LR33** before it dies away into a distant echo of **LR36** and the curtain rises on a new scene: the Barrow-downs, shrouded in mist.

The theme of the Wights who are stalking the hobbits (**LR34**) is the sole constituent of the brief Scene Three, rising progressively in a slowly screwed-up chromatic scale until Frodo is captured. Abruptly the texture changes, but the rhythm of **LR34** persists as the voice of the Barrow-wight itself appears, chanting a song designed to render the hobbits unconscious and subservient to its will:

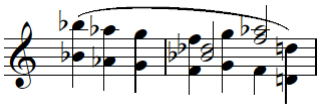
LR37



This theme, representing the powers, ambitions and regrets of the Undead, will return several times during the course of the cycle. Here the theme of the Ring **LR6** rises ominously during the final bars of the song to emphasise the malign character of the singer.

Frodo revives in the tomb of the Wight, and attempts to resist its enchantment, cutting off its hand (**LR1**) but he is unable to escape and is forced to call for aid from Tom Bombadil (**LR30**). The latter arrives in good time and releases the hobbits, banishing the Wight from its barrow for ever. As he bends over the unconscious sleepers to arouse them, the nature of their dreams becomes clear as a new theme represents the realm of Angmar from whence the Wights originated:

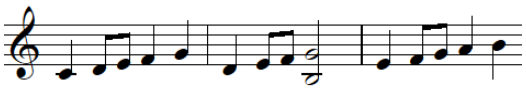
LR38



and Merry screams as he envisions himself as the hapless warrior killed by the "men of Carn Dûm".

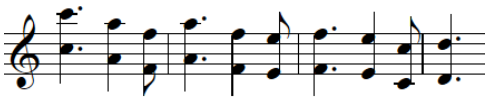
Tom Bombadil revives their spirits, and presents them with the swords which had been laid by them in the barrow (**S193**). As he does so another vision arises, inspired by the stories of the men of Westernesse who forged the blades, and by the prospect of one in particular:

LR39



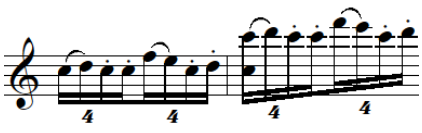
This will of course be Aragorn, the hereditary captain of the Dúnedain and eventual King of the Westlands; but here the vision fades, and is succeeded by the more mundane prospect of hospitality and good cheer at the inn of the Prancing Pony in Bree, a day's journey in front of them. The theme of the inn itself is heard:

LR40



followed almost immediately by that of its "worthy keeper" Barliman Butterbur:

LR41

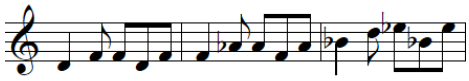


It remains for Frodo to remind the other hobbits of the secrecy of their mission, and of the importance that the name of Baggins should not be mentioned; he himself will be known by the pseudonym of Underhill. At the same time Tom Bombadil, recognising the borders of his realm that he has set for himself, bids them farewell and sees them on their journey with good wishes to the chords of **LR32** rising to a sunlit climax.

THE PRANCING PONY

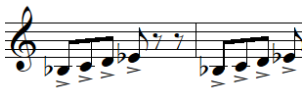
The "merry old inn" announces itself immediately over a rollicking polonaise rhythm, in which **LR40** and **LR41** are supplemented by another sprightly theme associated with good cheer and friendly customers:

LR42



As the hobbits arrive, all three of these jolly phrases jostle for attention; but when Frodo announces his name to the landlord as "Underhill" a momentary hesitation enters Butterbur's manner, although he quickly dismisses it as something that he has forgotten already:

LR43



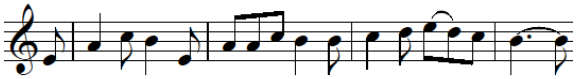
Merry decides that he will go out for a stroll before bed, but the others decide, at Butterbur's invitation, to have a drink in the bar.

A more serious interruption to the general festivities occurs with the entry of a strange man, hooded and cloaked, whose appearance momentarily causes some hesitation in the other customers (a slow and solemn transformation of **LR39**). But this is quickly dismissed, and Frodo ascertains from Butterbur that the stranger's name is Strider although the landlord is called away before he can impart any further information. Strider himself now beckons "Mister Underhill" to join him, and warns him that all the good cheer may not be as innocent as it appears at first glance. Frodo is alarmed to notice that Pippin is now talking to the other customers about Bilbo's farewell party, and fears that he may be about to disclose the existence of the Ring to any interested parties. He jumps up to interrupt, but rapidly runs out of anything so say beyond polite banalities, and is instead persuaded by Bill Ferny, one of the other customers, to sing them a song instead.

The melody of Frodo's song *There is an inn* is not quite as straightforward as it would seem, especially when one considers how often it has been treated as a conventional pub song suitable for general community singing among Tolkien fans. In the first place the number of lines is decidedly odd. The original nursery rhyme on which Tolkien based his verses consists of the usual four lines in couplets, but Tolkien extends this to five lines in each verse with the third and fourth rhyming and a foot shorter

than the others. This in turn means that, unlike a conventional folksong with a verse of sixteen regular bars, *There is an inn* falls naturally into fifteen bars, with an incomplete final line. This might not be altogether unexpected in an English folksong—many of more lyrical of which contain similar rhythmic irregularities—but it marks out the song as far from conventional, and this is confirmed by an abrupt shift in mode as the song begins:

LR44

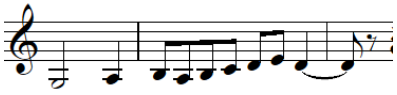


The progress of the fifteen-bar verses, however, is entirely regular in the expected manner for a sung ballad, with the same melody repeated for each verse and no attempt made to change the tune or to alter key—the only variety is offered by a whole series of changes of texture and orchestration illustrative of various elements in the narrative: the cat playing its five-stringed fiddle, the dog laughing at the jokes, the cow bellowing as she dances, or the silvery jangle of the dish and the spoon. The slightly exotic nature of the setting is also emphasised by the continuing jog-trot of the polonaise rhythm which underlines the melody. Towards the end Bill Ferny and some of the customers join in to represent the landlord and the other drinkers, and at the end when the nursery rhyme familiar to all finally arrives, all the customers in the bar join in with gusto.

And then, just as they reach the climax, Frodo jumps in the air and disappears as the Ring slips inadvertently onto his finger. Instantly the atmosphere changes, as the assembled crowd argue with each other about what they have just witnessed and Butterbur attempts to find a rational explanation (**LR42** now forming a hurried *fugato* counterpoint to their exclamations). In the meantime Strider, apparently unconcerned, brusquely addresses Frodo—who has quietly reappeared—by his correct name, and makes an appointment to see him later promising that he may learn something to his advantage. It remains for Frodo to make his apologies to Butterbur for causing such a disturbance, but the latter is now reminded of his earlier remark (**LR43**) and also wishes to have a quiet word with him.

The eruption of **LR44** which opens the following orchestral interlude is equally abruptly interrupted by **LR26** as we are reminded of the continuing menace to the hobbits posed by the Black Riders. The opening of the following scene, the initial conversation between Strider and the hobbits, unsurprisingly focuses on versions of Strider's own themes and those of the Ring and the Black Riders, underpinned in places by the rhythm associated originally with Morgoth (**LR22**). When he proceeds graphically to describe the menace of the Riders, a new theme first appears in the orchestra:

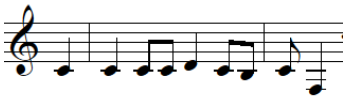
LR 45



When Butterbur arrives with his letter from Gandalf, the music associated with him earlier (**LR40-42** and more particularly the embarrassed and hesitant **LR43**) asserts itself once again; but once he has withdrawn Frodo begins to read Gandalf's letter in a conversation tone over a slow statement of the wizard's own theme (**LR7**).

The letter concludes with the poem about Strider which first identifies him as the bearer of the Sword that was Broken, and the crownless King. This begins with **LR39**, repeated in various differing rhythmic forms, but with the reference to the Sword a new motif emerges—initially in the vocal part, but then in the accompaniment—which resembles in general outline the 'sword' theme from *The Hobbit* but soon assumes its own distinctive profile:

LR 46



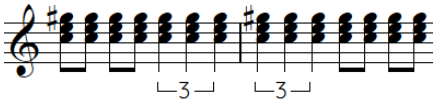
The music of the poem is immediately repeated almost verbatim as Frodo mulls over the meaning of its words, and the themes of **LR25** and **LR7** return as Strider anticipates that they may be able to rejoin forces with Gandalf at Weathertop. The reappearance of Merry, who has seen the Ringwraiths outside in the village (**LR42**), lends greater urgency to the need for their rapid departure from Bree, and **LR26** is succeeded by **LR38** as Strider describes the perils of Eriador which still await them.

FLIGHT TO THE FORD

The prelude to the opening scene, a description of the landscape surrounding the old fortress of Weathertop, also serves as a character portrait of Strider himself; and it opens with a solemn statement of **LR39** before developing into an extended fantasia on the material of **LR45**—a theme which will gradually from this point become associated with his destiny as the ultimate restorer of the Kingdoms of Men and leader of the Fellowship of the Ring. The themes of the Ringwraiths **LR22** and **LR26** menace this statement, and the music fades away with reminiscences of **LR27** as the curtain rises.

The hobbits are disappointed to find no trace of Gandalf at the expected rendezvous, but are reassured to find a stone engraved with markings which imply that he has been there, with **H8** assuming a new form depicting the wizard's command of fire:

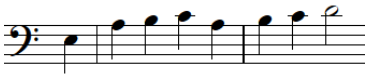
LR47



It is to fire that Strider now turns as a deterrent to the Black Riders, who "fear those who wield it" —and two themes associated with the element return from *Fëanor* (**S24** and **S55**) as he builds a watchfire in the night. As the hobbits gather round to shelter from the surrounding

cold, he sings a song about the Elvenking Gil-galad to lift their spirits:

LR48



This melody will later become closely associated with the alliances between Elves and Men, acting as a theme associated with both Rivendell and with Aragorn himself. The song is of course a substitution in this scene for the original situation in the narrative of *The Fellowship of the Ring* where Strider sings of the meeting of Beren and Lúthien in the forest of Neldoreth; but that meeting, and the words of Aragorn's poem, had already been fully exploited in the setting of that passage in the second evening of *The Silmarillion.* In addition the lengthy poem, if incorporated into the narrative at this point, would have undesirably delayed the movement towards the dramatic climax of the scene. There is however an alternative setting of the poem which could be substituted for the Song of Gil-galad if it were ever so desired (although this would then postpone the appearance of **LR48** to the chapter *The Council of Elrond*). That setting almost entirely employs the music associated with the scene in *Beren and Lúthien* (**S75** to **S83**).

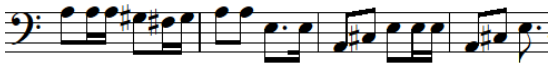
As Strider concludes his song, the hobbit rises and stretch and immediately see the Nazgûl advancing menacingly towards their encampment. In a long passage of increasing tension (with **S24** and **S55** gradually becoming overwhelmed by **LR26** and **LR27**, giving way to **LR16** and **LR22**) Frodo is induced to place the Ring upon his finger (**LR6**) and the full horror of the Ringwraiths is finally revealed (**LR21** beneath a shrieking **LR27**).

Frodo resists to the last, calling upon Elbereth for aid (**S3)** and striking at the feet of the Lord of the Nazgûl. With a loud shriek, the latter falls back but not before he has inflicted a wound on the swooning Frodo which is intended to subdue him ultimately to their will. Frodo wrenches the Ring from his finger, and **LR26** dies down into a reprise of the music descriptive of Weathertop which opened the scene.

When Frodo finally recovers from unconsciousness (to the music previously associated with the hobbits' recovery from the earlier Angmar-inspired attack in **LR38**) Strider explains to the other hobbits that although the Nazgûl have drawn back to await the results of the poison that they have inflicted on Frodo, they will nevertheless attack again unless they flee swiftly. He leads them on into the wilderness, through the same territory that the dwarves and Bilbo had traversed before Scene Three of *An unexpected party*; and the music here is a recapitulation of the interlude there (**H13** interspersed with **H3**) but with the addition of a muttering from the trombones with the motif of the trolls (**H22**) as reminder that we are now in the lands where such perils are to be expected.

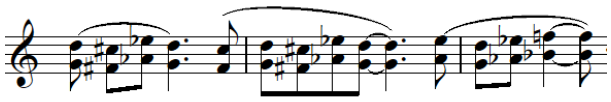
The next scene indeed reveals the same geographical location as *The Hobbit*, with the stone trolls now frozen in position as at the end of that adventure. Sam, standing in front of the petrified statues, sings a comic song in a desperate attempt to rouse the spirits of the slowly failing Frodo:

LR49



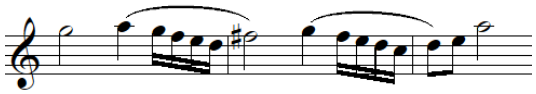
and this song, supported by interjections from Pippin and Merry in the best ballad tradition, proceeds on its merry way with only occasional rude interjections from **H22** to lend it a more menacing aspect. But it is all in vain, as the music of the Ring rises up in the closing bars to smother the merriment, and the orchestra shows us that Frodo's sickness is steadily advancing:

LR50



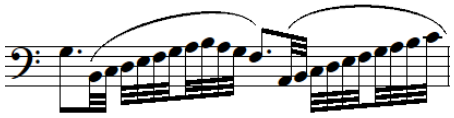
The scene now changes to the lands just to the west of the Ford of Bruinen which affords access to the hidden valley of Rivendell. The sound of approaching hoofbeats at first leads the hobbits to fear pursuit, but the music hints at something less menacing, and Aragorn's theme **LR39** demonstrates his renewed hope and expectation. This is fulfilled as the elf Glorfindel rides onto the scene:

LR51



and this theme is accompanied by a rushing figure illustrating the speed of Asfaloth, his horse:

LR52



Glorfindel explains to Frodo that he has been sent from Rivendell to look for him, since messages have been received there that he is need of guidance since Gandalf has still not returned. He emphasises the necessity for urgency and speed, and when Sam indignantly complains that Frodo stands instead in greater need of rest (**LR50**) he sets the wounded hobbit on his own horse and bids the steed to make all possible speed. Immediately Asfaloth sets out bearing Frodo across the Ford, but the combination of **LR24** with the galloping rhythms of **LR25** indicate that the pursuit of the Nazgûl is close behind.

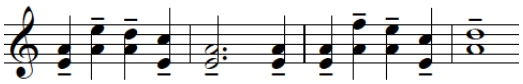
As Frodo reaches the Ford, he turns once again in defiance against the Ringwraiths; but the voices of the Nazgûl, now clearly audible to him, call upon his to follow them to Mordor and to give them the Ring. Frodo once again addresses his call for strength to Elbereth and **S3** is heard as the waters of the river rise to overwhelm the steeds of the Enemy. We are told in the later next chapter of the original book that the waves are here fashioned by Gandalf into the shape of galloping horses; there is no opportunity in the musical chapters for the introduction of this picturesque image, but the notion nevertheless underlies the fact that **LR7** comes roaring in during the final eight bars of the score to underline the reference, before the final unexpected *diminuendo* depicts Frodo's final relapse into unconsciousness.

The Ring goes South

THE COUNCIL OF ELROND

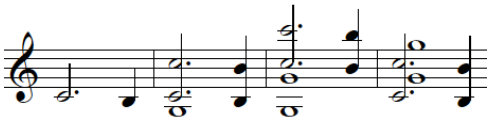
The prelude of this chapter brings the awakening of the sick Frodo in his bed in Rivendell, and the music recalls his illness from the earlier chapter (**LR50**) before Gandalf, who is sitting by his bedside, gives him a swift account of what had transpired since his loss of consciousness at the end of *Flight to the Ford.* But once these preliminaries are out of the way, there are a whole plethora of new and revived themes which emerge as the valley of Rivendell is evoked. In the first place, as Gandalf describes how the flood was raised by Elrond, we hear a theme originally associated in *The Silmarillion* with the hidden city of Gondolin, now employed to describe the similarly secret refuge that is Imladris:

LR53 [S144]



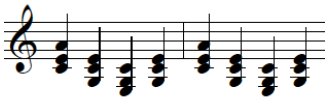
This is interrupted by the hobbit's **LR1** as Sam, Pippin and Merry arrive to escort Frodo to the feast in honour of his recovery; but it returns to form the principal theme as the scene changes to the Hall of Fire, during which it is contrasted by the theme associated with Rivendell in *The Hobbit* which now amasses itself into ever-expanding phrases:

LR54 [H27]



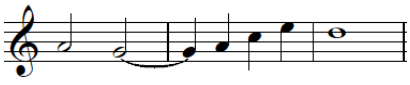
The harp on stage, played by Elrond's daughter Arwen, takes up the arpeggio figurations from *The Hobbit* (**H25b**) and extends them in turn into ever more elaborate variations:

LR55



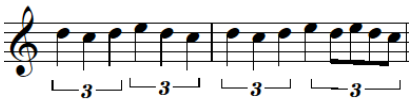
against which **LR54** slowly unwinds before Aragorn advances towards Arwen (**LR39**) and we hear the first intimation of their love for each other in an extended melodic passage which will recur several times in future scenes. Arwen herself, the descendant of Lúthien, takes over one of the themes associated with her forebear in *The Silmarillion*:

LR56 [S77]



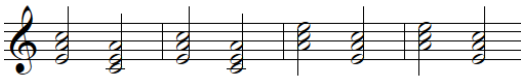
and this is immediately succeeded by the theme associated with Elbereth the kindler of the stars (Arwen's element is defined as that of the evening):

LR57 [S3]



This unspoken love duet is interrupted by a final grandiose statement of **LR53** as Frodo, seated at the feast, turns to his neighbour at the table, a "dwarf of great magnificence":

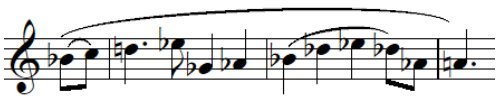
LR58 [S207, H11 and H13]



This transpires to be Glóin, one of the companions of Bilbo on his journey (hints of both **LR1** and **H6**), whose importance as an emissary of the King under the Mountain (**H15**] Frodo recognises immediately. The music grows valedictory as the two exchange compliments and hint at the gravity of the decisions before them, while the orchestra ruminates on the themes associated with the death and funeral of Thorin **(H75** and **H76**).

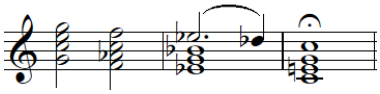
Their conversation is interrupted by Elrond, who now brings Bilbo forward from his concealment in the shadows at the back of the hall, and the music of the Elven **LR55** now combines incongruously with the hobbits' **LR1** before the two finally get down to serious discussion. Bilbo's wish to see the Ring once again, and Frodo's sharp but unexplained reluctance to comply with his request, are set over a continual repetition of **LR11**; but whereas the initial appearance of this theme had led to an ugly confrontation, here any hint of conflict is almost immediately smoothed over as Lindir begins his hymn in praise of Elbereth:

LR59



This song, initially accompanied by harps both on stage and in the orchestra, gathers contributions from the female chorus before it resolves into an uneasy cadence:

LR60



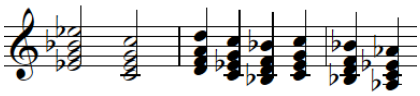
At this point in the original text it was envisioned that Bilbo would rise and sing his "newly-composed" *Lay of Eärendil*, the longest of Tolkien's poems as given in *The Lord of the Rings* (even longer when considered with the extensive revisions published by Christopher Tolkien in *The Treason of Isengard*) and in the context a massive half-hour interruption to the onward progress of the principal narrative. Although I had composed the complete poem as an independent work for voice and

orchestra in 2001 as an adjunct to the original cycle of epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*, it was not until some twenty years later that this had been further revised and expanded to form the Second Triptych of *The War of Wrath* where the original poem framed more explicitly dramatic scenes drawn from the closing chapters of the mythology of the First Age. In this final form the whole of the setting has already been analysed in the *Silmarillion* chapters here (**S190-S203**). In the complete recording of *The Lord of the Rings* the original independent setting of *The Lay of Eärendil* is given in an appendix to the set, in the same manner as Beren's earlier *Lay of Lúthien* (**S75-S83**).

When the narrative continues without the poetic interlude, the scene resumes the following morning after a brief interlude in which **LR54** is counterpointed ominously with **LR6**. Gandalf asks amicably after Frodo's proposed itinerary for the day (**LR10**) but the ringing of bells (**LR55**) summons them instead to the great Council of Elrond, the proceedings of which will constitute the remainder of the extensive chapter.

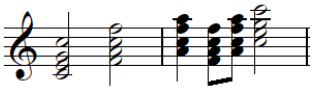
The theme of Gil-galad, now definitively determined as representative of the Great Alliance between Elves and Men (**LR48**), introduces the arrival of Elrond in conjunction with **LR54**. Over the steady tread of **LR55** he in turn proceeds to introduce to each other the members of his council who have not previously met: first the hobbits (**H2**) and then Gimli son of Glóin representing the dwarves (**LR48**) before he turns to the elf Legolas, ambassador for his father Thranduil the Elvenking from *The Hobbit*, who now assumes his father's theme:

LR61 [**H60**]



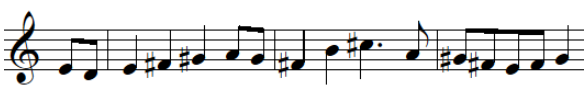
before the arrival of Boromir, who is described at this stage purely as "a man from the South" but whose music immediately characterises him as a scion of the Houses of the Númenórean exiles:

LR62 [**S113**]



This theme, making its first of many significant appearances in *The Lord of the Rings* (it has not been heard at all in *The Hobbit*) is immediately succeeded by a new melody representing the House of the Stewards, of which Boromir is the eldest heir:

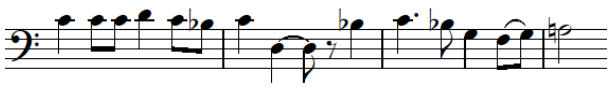
LR63



For the present the first of the series of narratives which comprise the progress of the council is assigned to Glóin, who proceeds first to describe the enterprise of Balin in seeking to re-established the dwarven kingdom of Moria. **H13** underlines the opening of his tale, and this combines with the more recent and grandiose version of the same harmonic progression associated with the dwarves themselves (**LR58**). But his story now moves to the arrival at Erebor of a messenger from Mordor, and the rhythm of **LR25** leaves his audience in no doubt as to the nature of this emissary. A querulous and increasingly agitated figure, an inversion of **LR27**, makes a nagging accompaniment to his urgent enquiries regarding hobbits (**H2**) and the reported response of Dáin (**H73**) does little to appease the interrogator before the music dies away in an ominous counterpoint of **H75** and finally the Ring theme **H32** rising almost wistfully over the description of the "trifle that Sauron fancies."

It is to the restatement of the theme of the Last Alliance (**LR48**) that Elrond begins his response. But almost immediately he is interrupted by Boromir (**LR63**) who reports urgently on the military campaigns in Gondor which he has commanded. The theme of Sauron storms through the orchestra (**S61**, **H34**) before it finally subsides with his account of the distant voice of prophecy heard from the West, which before it reaches a conclusion with its references to *Isildur's Bane* (**H32**) and the *Halfling* (**H2**) has opened with the significant phrase *Seek for the sword that was broken*:

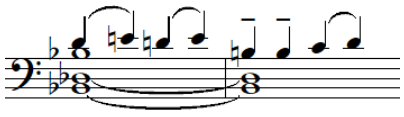
LR64



which, it will be observed, is an almost identical relative of **LR46** already identified with the character of Aragorn. The latter immediately confirms the resemblance as he stakes his claim to the kingship of Gondor (a claim which passes for the time unacknowledged by Boromir), and Gandalf in turn takes up the challenge by nominating Frodo as the Halfling who will resolve the remainder of Boromir's riddle.

As Boromir sees the Ring for the first time, another new theme emerges which will become particularly associated with the Ring itself as a mean to the assumption and control of power. As such it will become especially attached not only to Boromir but also later to his father Denethor as the Ruling Steward of Gondor:

LR65



It may perhaps be noted that this theme, when it appears, is almost invariably stated in a foreign key remote from the context in which it appears. Here this contrasts starkly with the underlying harmonies of the Ring itself (**LR6**) with semitonal clashes of D♮ against D♭, and B♮ against B♭. For the present the struggle is deflected by Galdor, who raises with Gandalf further questions regarding the Ring itself; and he asks whether the opinion of Saruman (**LR19**) has been sought.

Gandalf's response returns to the exposition of material already deployed in his earlier conversations

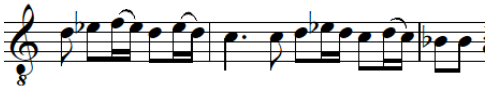
with Bilbo and Frodo, with **LR11** in particular featuring heavily especially in counterpoint with both Gandalf's own **LR7** as well as Saruman's **LR19**. He also mentions that he has turned for assistance to Aragorn as the heir of Isildur (**LR39**) and this in turn leads back to his discovery of the Ring verse at Bag End (**LR21**) which rises to a terrifying climax as he suddenly declaims the words in the Black Speech as heard in the closing scene of *The War of Wrath* when the Ring was originally forged. He concludes the first part of his narrative with a brief description of the role of Gollum (**LR12**) in revealing to Sauron the present whereabouts of the Ring.

It is at this point that Legolas, for the first time at the council, intervenes to report that Gollum has escaped from the custody of the Wood-Elves in Mirkwood where he had been consigned by Gandalf. His own theme **LR61** and Gollum's **LR12** are heard in combination with the music of **H61** representing the Wood-Elves themselves (the sole appearance of this theme in *The Lord of the Rings*) and then the reappearance of **S8** as Elrond ruefully reflects that there is nothing that can now be done about the matter.

Gandalf now turns to the final question raised earlier by Galdor: what is the attitude of Saruman? He reports briefly on his encounter not far from Bree (**LR40**) with his fellow-wizard Radagast (whose affinity with the Eagles is underlined by **H44**) and the offer of advice from Saruman, whose kinship is demonstrated by further reflections of the music associated with the White Council (**LR20**) as well as the themes of Gandalf and Saruman himself. As Gandalf arrives at Isengard, his opening dialogue with Saruman is underpinned by **LR20** as well as earlier variations on the same material.

Saruman's own musical language is quite distinct from anything else in the score of *The Lord of the Rings*, just as his dialogue in the book is decidedly more modern reflecting what Tom Shippey has described as his political pragmatism seen through the distorting medium of Orwellian doublethink. His vocal line is more highly decorated and shaped, a contrast to the usually syllabic construction of most of the other characters, given a veneer of Mozartian respectability and "enlightenment" which stands in stark relief to the diatonic and modal rectitude of his associates. It will be seen later how he contrives to extend this elaboration of the vocal lion to would-be imitators such as Wormtongue, but here it is immediately apparent as he launches into his oratorical address to Gandalf, in a passage which Tolkien himself describes as being "long rehearsed": *The Elder Days are gone, the time of the Elves is over*:

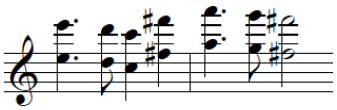
LR66



As his "speech" continues, he at first carefully avoids any mention of the Ring itself, but then it suddenly emerges as a quick rushing arpeggio in the bass (it has assumed this form before) and finally thunders out as one overwhelming discord as his real desire for mastery becomes apparent. Only after Gandalf has declined to lend him his aid does the music associated with the White Council reappear, and then it is solely to lend ironic emphasis to the threat to imprison Gandalf indefinitely until he reveals the information Saruman requires.

As Gwaihir the Windlord arrives to rescue Gandalf from this imprisonment on the summit of Orthanc (**H45**) the music returns us to the vision of Frodo's dream in the house of Tom Bombadil, with Gandalf's narration now lending definition to the previously heard combination of motives; but there is one new addition, as Théoden the King of Rohan presents Gandalf with the horse Shadowfax:

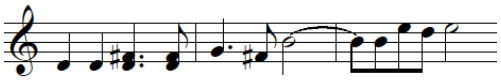
LR67



and it with a final repetition of this theme that Gandalf brings his lengthy narration to an end, with scattered fragments of the Ring theme underlining his final words: "What shall we do with it?"

It is Elrond who first addresses this question (**LR19** and **LR20**) but Glorfindel who proposes two alternative solutions (**S8** overlaid with **LR51**). This combination of purely Elvish motives continues to underline their debate, until Elrond finally draws the inevitable conclusion, that the Ring must be destroyed (**LR6**) and the music subsides into silence (**LR15**). It is now Boromir's turn to offer yet another alternative (**LR63** with an abrupt and ominous reference to Gollum's **LR12**) and a trenchantly heroic apostrophe to the prospect of military victory, with a theme representing his heroism as a defender of his country:

LR68

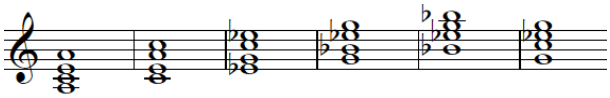


It will be noted that this latter motif ends with an echo of that associated in *The Silmarillion* with Beren as the representative of the mortal House of Bëor (**S62**) and it will become particularly significant when Boromir's own ambitions for military glory come under discussion.

But Elrond denies the possibility of this, and the theme of the White Council now emerges as a motif in opposition to the use of the Ring (**LR20**). Even Glóin's enquiry about the employment of the Elven Rings (**S8** now undermined by **LR6**) is dismissed, and **LR6** remains as a solitary ominous presence as the music dies down again to **LR15** and the midday bell rings.

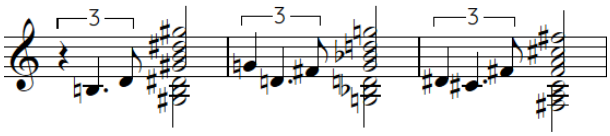
The Ring theme now emerges once again, but now its outlines are smoothed, its appeal more invidious, as it moves modally into a chain of chords:

LR69



and this leads immediately to an uneasily shifting chromatic line as Frodo steps forward reluctantly to assume responsibility for the destruction of the Ring:

LR70

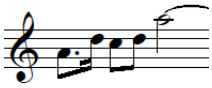


As the hitherto unnoticed Sam steps forward to Frodo's support, we hear the music from the end of *A long-expected party* where Sam first declared his loyalty to his master (**LR28**) and a version of **LR54** as Elrond and the council rise, before the ominous mutterings of **LR15** underpinning a quiet restatement of **LR28** brings this extended chapter to a conclusion after some fifty minutes' of continuous music. The closing cadence is a restatement of the uneasily shifting **LR60**.

FAREWELL TO RIVENDELL

The prelude to this chapter, a brief recapitulation of the music of **LR54** representing Rivendell, begins with a new theme representing Andúril, Aragorn's sword which will itself be introduced following the opening scene when the broken blade is reforged:

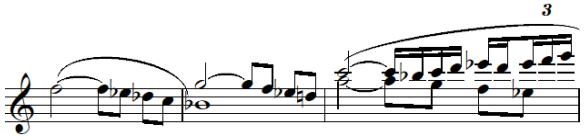
LR71



This brief prelude leads into Elrond's address to the Fellowship, where the Rivendell theme **LR55** underpins a whole succession of previous established motives: **LR54** (Imladris), **LR70** (the Quest itself), **LR28** (Companionship), **LR7** (Gandalf), **LR20** (the White Council, now more specifically identified as the Fellowship of the Ring itself), **LR61** (Legolas), **LR58** (introducing Gimli), **S125** (Mortal men, here represented in the person of Aragorn), **LR39** (Aragorn himself), **LR62** (the Kingdoms of Númenor), **LR71** (Andúril as a symbol of the renewed Kingdom), **LR63** (the House of the Stewards represented by Boromir), and then finally the return of **LR28** and **LR20** as the selection of the Fellowship is completed. All of these various motives are bound together in one continuous texture: thirteen independent themes in a relatively brief section of 64 bars, one of which has not been heard since *The War of Wrath* (the theme of the race of mortal men, represented by **S125**) and will not recur again until the coronation of Aragorn towards the end of the work.

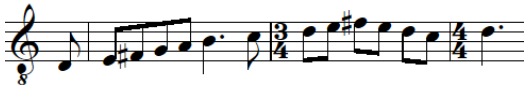
At the end of this complex contrapuntal web, as Frodo and Bilbo are finally left alone, we hear a new version of the Rivendell theme **H25b** which now assumes a more extended and epic manner. It is difficult to describe its function, but it may be viewed as a theme representing the heritage and history of Middle-earth; it originally opened the Second Triptych of *The War of Wrath* as an introduction to the Lay of Eärendil (it also recurs in the setting of the same poem given as an optional appendix to Bilbo in the preceding chapter), but it will also serve at other junctures to represent the vast historical expanse of the realm of Gondor, or the light of Eärendil's star as enshrined in Galadriel's star-glass:

LR72



Here the theme introduces the gifts of Bilbo to Frodo: his sword (**H26**) and the *mithril* chain-mail given to him by Thorin at Erebor (**H72**, enhanced by **LR4** to represent the glittering nature of the garment). Frodo's stammered thanks, and Bilbo's embarrassed acknowledgement, lead to a final quiet statement of **LR20** as a symbol of their companionship before Bilbo is left alone in contemplation of the fireside:

LR73

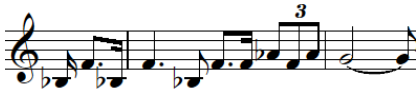


The three verses of his nostalgic rumination finally die away with a final repetition of the melody, and the light of the fire is transmuted into the glow of the anvil in the elven smithies as Andúril is reforged.

Again, the orchestral interlude depicting the re-creation of this iconic and symbolic weapon consist entirely of thematic material already heard. The principal material confirms the nature of the bond between Aragorn and Arwen, with the music heard in *The council of Elrond* as they silently declared their love for one another forming a steady accompaniment to other themes: **S24** and **S55** represent the flames of the smithy while **LR39**, **LR57** and **LR58** rises to ever-increasing heights. Finally the emergence of **LR71** as Aragorn baptises the sword is succeeded by a triumphant and stentorian trombone declamation of **LR64**.

This is introduced by two full orchestral statements of **LR48**, now definitively established as a theme representative of the Last Alliance; and then a succession of chords based on **LR70** as the company is addressed by Elrond as their quest begins. Boromir winds his horn:

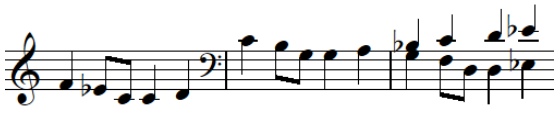
LR74



and brief statement of **LR63** leads to the final passage where Elrond's farewell is accompanied by the voices of Elven maidens from the valley.

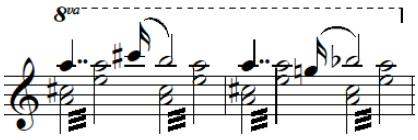
The scene immediately changes to the wilderland of the ruined Elven realm of Eregion, a couple of weeks later as the Fellowship is already well advanced on its journey. It was in Eregion that the One Ring was originally forged (**S106**) but here that association is not further explored, and the music simply describes the desolate landscape (**LR18**). Gandalf explains the options for their future route, suggesting the possibility that the company may seek to pass through Moria:

LR75 [H70]



Boromir's counter-suggestion that the company should journey further southwards is dismissed because of the danger from "the watchful eyes of Saruman" (**LR19**), but the argument is overtaken by a sudden shadow that passes over the moon:

LR76

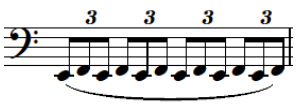


This phrase, which derives thematically from **LR27**, depicts the Nazgul in their new guise, no longer as Black Riders but borne aloft on the wings of Fell Beasts, and takes the form of a simple inversion of the original theme; it will from this point onwards been employed interchangeably with its initial form. Here, its distant sound as borne on the wind is intermixed with the voices of wolves howling (**H42**) and the company now needs no encouragement to seek refuge in the comparative safety of the Mines of Moria (**LR75**). But before they can begin to move they are already under attack (**LR63**, **LR7**) and Gandalf is forced to deploy his repertory of pyrotechnics to set fire to the trees and drive the marauders away (**LR47**) while the chromatic theme of Sauron (**H34**) creeps in the bass. The sudden rout of the wolves, which echoes the defeat of Carcharoth in *Beren and Lúthien*, confirms the wizard's suspicions that "these were no ordinary wolves looking for food in the darkness"—the company is being deliberately attacked. Aragorn (**LR39**) is left to sound a final note of warning, but his theme of **LR45** is clearly seen not to refer (as before) simply to Weathertop, but to his own destiny as seen in his foreknowledge of peril and disaster; and the themes of both Moria (**LR75**) and Gandalf (**LR7**) underline his foreboding as the Fellowship set out for the doors of Moria.

A JOURNEY IN THE DARK

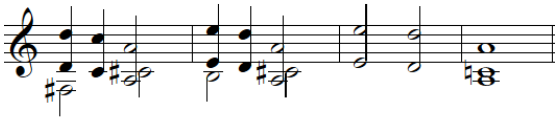
A brief and menacing prelude, throwing several different keys into violent juxtaposition with **LR6**, brings the company to the West Gate of the mines which lead beneath the mountains. An oscillating and uneasy bass line unwinds beneath the opening dialogue:

LR77



and Gandalf's theme is outlined by the bassoons as Gimli the dwarf and Legolas the elf recognise the emblems on the doors as those of Durin (**LR75**) and Fëanor (**S23**, making a solitary appearance in *The Lord of the Rings* at this juncture). Gandalf reads the inscription on the gate to a slightly developed version of **LR58:**

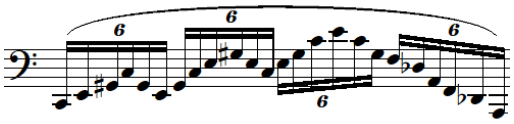
LR78



before **LR77** returns as he confesses that he does not know the password by which the doors can be compelled to open. Various combinations of **LR77** and **LR78** is various keys fail to provide a solution to the riddle, and now the voices of the wolves (**H42**) are once again heard menacingly in the distance.

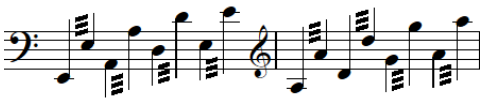
Boromir, with an expression of disgust, throws a stone into the stagnant lake that lies before the gate, and this creates a gentle ripple the spreads out across the surface of the water:

LR79



and this is combined with not only the voices of the wolves but with **LR77** and **LR78** as Gandalf finally seizes on the deceptively simple answer to the riddle. He only has to speak the Elvish word for "friend" and the doors immediately open:

LR80



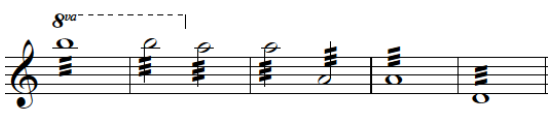
But as he sets his foot inside the opening, the stagnant lake erupts as the "Watcher in the Water" rises to the surface (**LR79** in ever-more violent convolutions over the theme **H30** associated with the orcs in *The Hobbit*, the whole eruption crowned with the theme of Eregion (**S106**) as the holly-trees symbolic of the Elven realm are uprooted and thrown against the doors as they close.

It is at the point in *The Lord of the Rings* that for the first time in the cycle it becomes possible to draw immediate comparisons with treatments of the narrative by other composers. Howard Shore's score for the Peter Jackson films, with its essentially short-breathed cinematic structures, does not furnish any substantial symphonic or atmospheric passages descriptive of landscape which extend beyond a minute or so; while the symphony *The Lord of the Rings* by Johann de Meij consists of a series of movements which are generally portraits of individual characters rather than dramatic sequences. But both of these composers have made very different attempts to match Tolkien's carefully contrived and superbly atmospheric evocation of the ruined city of the dwarves and the mines of Khazad-dûm which deserve to be considered here. Shore has attempted to match the description of the deserted mines with the use of a male choir the sound of which, he asserts in his commentary on the extended edition of the film, is intended to evoke the sound of a mining community. Now presumably this refers to the traditional relationship between English and Welsh mining valleys and the male choirs that have long been associated with these areas; indeed Tolkien himself was familiar from the days of his youth with coal trucks attached to the trains running through Birmingham with inscriptions in the Welsh language on their sides. But unfortunately the intended audience association between male choirs and the mining

industry seems to have become confused in translation, because the male choir here is not the solemn and sonorous sound of the richly lyrical Welsh language but a traditional Maori chanting which reflects rather the culture of New Zealand where the film was actually being made (and where the suggested association between male choirs and mining does not exist). The resulting conflict sounds not only intrusive but actually adds a totally alien element to Tolkien's clear intentions; indeed at one time he had compared the historical context of his dwarves to that of the Jews. In his symphony de Meij comes closer to the author's imagination with an extended journey through the mineworkings leading to a confrontation between Gandalf and the Balrog (excellently conceived) and a concluding lament for the fallen wizard. Here the opening journey is conveyed with a sense of constant footfalls, but unfortunately the regular marching beat seems to conjure up the image of Roman legions rather than weary travellers (not aided by a couple of presumably deliberate quotations from Respighi's *Pines of Rome*), a particularly odd lapse when one reads Tolkien's own description of the irregular sound of the footsteps of the company echoing in the passages and walls.

The regularity of de Meij's approach could not be more sharply contrasted from the treatment of the same narrative description here. The glacial stillness that descends on the music following the closure of the gates on the company is broken only by an almost static chromatic scale that will rise inexorably from the lowest reaches of the orchestra (double bassoon, double basses, double-bass clarinet) at an imperceptible pace extended over several bars for each semitone, and thus falling into the field of an atmospheric effect slowly ratcheting up the harmonic tension rather than any impression of a musical theme. Each of the movements of a semitone is emphasised by a soft drum-beat, but again this is devoid of any rhythm and leaves no marked sense of direction. At the same time we hear the sound from backstage which Tolkien likens to a "mill-wheel churning in the depths" which is here achieved by the rubbing of sandpaper blocks over the surface of a bass drum—again without any sense of regular rhythm. The only thematic material which eventually makes itself heard is that of the dwarves (**LR58**) at first as a solo bassoon line and then harmonised in chains of open fifths which slowly descend, again without any regular sense of rhythm. Only after a couple of minutes is any further thematic material provided, and this is merely whispered: a reference back to the disaster of Durin's Bane which caused the ruin of the kingdom of Khazad-dûm, and which only gradually will become more clearly identified as that of a Balrog of Morgoth:

LR81 [S53]



Now Tolkien provided some considerable historical context for his dwarf-kingdom, and much of this is given to readers in the form of a poem that Gimli recites to the company as they are encamped overnight in one of the deserted halls; but within the scope of this gradually increase of tension and slow development there was no clear point at which this poem could reasonably be inserted into the music. Nevertheless it might well be that, especially in a performance where this chapter was being given in isolation as part of a concert programme, it might be regarded as possible or even desirable to sacrifice the atmospheric effect to provide a greater lyrical outlet for the thematic material; and accordingly I provided an appendix setting Gimli's *Lay of Durin* which could be inserted into the music at this point as an interlude before the following scene (removing much of the orchestral passage). This separate setting consists of material which will be familiar to listeners not only from earlier chapters in *The Lord of the Rings* but also from *The Hobbit* and also in one or two places, such as the references to Nargothrond (**S64**) and Gondolin (**S145**), to *The Silmarillion.* But this setting, unlike the earlier Appendices comprising Aragorn's *Lay of Lúthien* and Bilbo's *Lay of Eärendil*, is largely a new composition which does not derive from earlier settings in the *Silmarillion* scores, and a fuller analysis will therefore be given later in this essay.

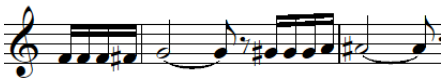
In the meantime the hint at the nature of Durin's Bane has opened the following scene where Gandalf's theme **LR7** emerges in the *pizzicato* strings as he leads them into a guard chamber where they are to rest for the night. The sounds of the mill-wheel in the depths, and the inexorable rise of the chromatic scale in the orchestra, continue throughout the first part of this scene, where Pippin dislodges a stone from the well and lets it drop into the depths. The tenor drum echoes both the precipitous fall and then the unnaturally slow reverberation as it plummets into deep water; and then, after Gandalf's irritated comments, we hear the sound of a distant anvil giving what Tolkien describes as "a signal of some kind" (the presence of two anvils in the score, one nearby in the orchestra and the other at a distance behind the scene, has already been established in the interlude in the previous chapter describing the forging of the sword Andúril). And high above, as the faintest filigree, we hear once again the theme of the Balrog **LR81** as an indication of what "has been disturbed that would better have been left quiet."

As Frodo is left on watch (and the chromatic scale in the orchestra continues further on its rise, now reaching into the treble register) we hear first echoes of the earlier **LR58** before Gollum, trailing the company from a distance, makes his first appearance on the scene. At this point in the story Tolkien makes it clear that the nature of their stalker is unknown (in Jackson's film Gandalf takes the opportunity to give Frodo an extensive lecture on Gollum's motives) but listeners who are familiar with *The Hobbit* will clearly recognise the music associated there with the first appearance of the creature and his startled reaction to the sight of the hobbit's sword Sting. Here this takes its form as seen in **H36** rather than the more developed formulation in **LR12** which will later become its more regularly established version. The only effect of its brief appearance here is to reset the chromatic scale, which drops abruptly down by three octaves to begin once again its gradual ascent as morning (distantly glimpsed through clefts far above) dawns in the following scene.

This opens as before with the combination of Gandalf's surreptitious **LR7** and the more sustained open fifths of Durin's folk **LR58.** As the company now discern in the

growing light the outlined features of Balin's tomb, the more clearly defined version of the Moria theme **(LR75** succeeded by **H13**) emerge before the music subsides back into the ominous mutterings of **LR77.** Aragorn, searching the chamber, uncovers the remnants of the Book of Mazarbul, and the Orc theme **H30** now assumes a more hassled form as his search continues:

LR82

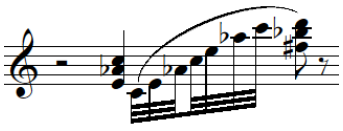


It will be noted that this theme is also a vastly accelerated form of the rising chromatic scale already heard throughout the previous scenes, as well as the theme already associated with Sauron himself as far back as *Beren and Lúthien* (**S61)**; and it will recur during the remainder of this chapter at various speeds.

As Gandalf haltingly spells out the tale of disaster outlined in the dwarvish records (including the killing of Bilbo's companion Óin by the "Watcher in the Water" — **LR79**) the rustling insistence of **LR82** also increases until suddenly there is a violent interruption from the "drums in the deep" to which the Mazarbul document has referred. Now Tolkien here sets a severe challenge for any composer; he describes the sound "as if huge hands were turning the very caverns of Moria into a vast drum." Even with the resources of the modern cinema at his disposal, Howard Shore in his film score declined any attempt to match that description; here I have simply indicated the rhythm of the drumbeats with an instruction *ffff amplified and echoed* and, together with a quotation from Tolkien's text inserted into the full score, left the matter for the executants in any given performance to resolve. It would be ideal if the resultant sound could actually cause the auditorium to reverberate, but this of course might be dangerous to the architectural structure and producers should be content with a sound that is violently percussive and of overwhelming depth rather than explosive quality; it should *not* simply sound like gunfire or artillery. Care should also be taken with the indications in the score which show when the drums should be near at hand, and when more distant; a continuous assault on the eardrums of the audience is not what is sought here, rather an insistent menace which increases or recedes as the struggle for escape continues.

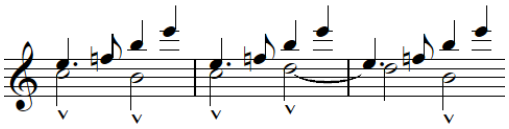
Against the regularity of the deep drumbeats, we also hear the military rattle of a tenor drum and the blast of muted horns on stage. Both of these are carefully notated to be out of alignment with the subterranean drum, progressively moving further away from that pulsation; and at the same **LR82** is offset against flickering figures that illustrate flames rising from the depths:

LR83



It is left for Gandalf to confront the forces that are now advancing towards the company, and as the scene changes to the final climax we hear his own theme **LR7** set in counterpoint against a theme not heard since *The Silmarillion*:

LR84 [**S4**]



whiles the nature of his opponent, a creation of Morgoth during the First Age, becomes apparent as he attempts to seal the tunnel. **LR81** now explodes in the full orchestra (in the same form that it had taken during *The Fall of Gondolin*) as the fleeing Gandalf collapses into the midst of the company and explains his inability to counter the challenge of the unknown "something" that he has sought to confront. The music associated with the Orcs returns as the battle continues, and now the beating of the anvil from the previous scene returns to amplify the "drums in the deep" and the identity of the enemy as a Balrog is confirmed, with Legolas recognising the creature and Gimli saluting it as "Durin's bane". At this moment the tumbling semiquavers of **LR82** slow down to a more menacing and grinding crochet rhythm as the conflict assumes a more monumental aspect.

The iconic confrontation between Gandalf and the Balrog returns the music firmly to the realm of *The Fall of Gondolin*, with repetitions of **LR81** in increasingly frantic rising transpositions and Morgoth's theme set in opposition to that of Gandalf. At the moment when Gandalf falls into the abyss, the underlying chromatics break out briefly in their original agitated form **LR82** before they return to their steady crochet grinding and the flickerings of **LR83** die gradually into the distance. Aragorn, waving Andúril (**LR71**) rouses the horror-stricken company and leads them rapidly out into the sunlight as the curtain falls.

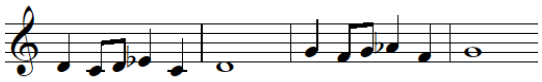
It is at this point in his *Lord of the Rings* symphony that Jan de Meij inserts a funeral march for the fallen Gandalf, which provides the conclusion of his fourth movement; but of course Tolkien's narrative provides no opportunity for such an episode at this relevant juncture, and instead he inserts much later a description of a lament for Gandalf into a scene in Lothlórien. However it seemed to me that de Meij's musical instincts here were incontestably sound, and although there could be no provision made for a funeral lament to end this chapter (it would have been an irretrievably fatal sacrifice of tension in such a dramatic context) there should be just such a threnody which would open the following chapter. It would indeed be ideal if this could be heard immediately after the end of *A journey in the dark*; but, quite apart from the sheer practicability of any necessary scene change after the conclusion of that passage, some interval would probably be advisable to allow the audience to catch their breath. But this explains why the lament for Gandalf is now to be heard before the curtain rises on the next chapter.

THE MIRROR OF GALADRIEL

The lament for the fallen Gandalf is indeed almost a monothematic piece of writing extending over some five

minutes. The opening descending scale has overtones of the theme associated by Gandalf with adventure as far back as *The Hobbit* (**H3**) but it is here reduced almost entirely to the role of an accompaniment underpinning a formal statement of the theme of Gandalf the Grey (which will return in this form on the occasions with the former incarnation of the wizard is recalled, and indeed elsewhere):

LR85 [**LR7**]

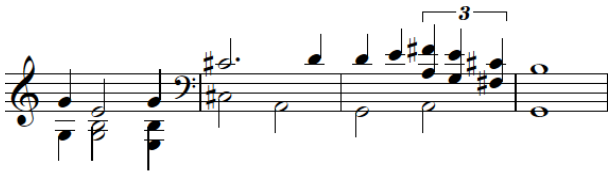


and a momentary contrast is afforded by statements of the theme associated with the White Council, now incorporated in the Fellowship of the Ring itself (**LR20**). But it is nonetheless with further restatements of **LR85** (and its **H3** accompaniment) that the lament fades away and the curtain rises.

Gimli is seen with Frodo walking down from the eastern Gates of Moria, and Frodo hesitates as he seems to hear footsteps behind him **(LR1,** still over the accompaniment derived from **H3**); and **LR12** informs the listener, if still not the protagonists, that these footsteps are those of Gollum. But for the moment Gimli is dismissive of the hobbit's fears (**LR75**) hearing nothing "but the night speech of plant and stone." Indeed this is prescient; for the company have now come to the borders of the Elven realm of Lothlórien.

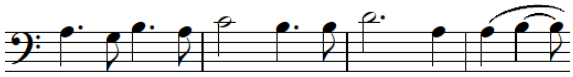
Now whereas in *The Hobbit* and earlier in *The Lord of the Rings* the music associated with the realms governed by the Elves have tended to be remote descendants of the kingdoms encountered in *The Silmarillion* (with the exception of the one cross-reference to Gondolin in the description of Rivendell, **LR53**) in the realisation of Lothlórien we are immediately plunged back into a dominion which is consciously designed and designated as an imitation and reminiscence of the Elder Days. And this is immediately reflected also in the music. Much of the thematic material associated with Lórien stems directly from the unaccompanied choral hymn addressed to the Gates of Summer which launched Scene Nine of *The Fall of Gondolin* immediately before the destruction of the city. The opening phrase of that hymn:

LR86 [S175]



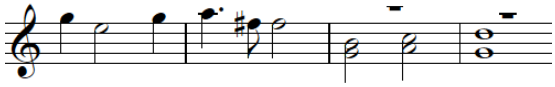
is here given a delicate string and harp filigree accompaniment suggestive of sunlight through woodland leaves, as both Legolas and Aragorn exclaim at the delight of the scenery, and it is only when Aragorn disturbs the idyll with a memory of the "peril that comes behind" (**LR82**) that the mood is disturbed by the cautionary warning of Haldir from amongst the trees. As he steps forward, the string accompaniment dissipates although the music continues to evoke the Hymn to Ilúvatar from *Gondolin*. Haldir leads the company towards the heart of the realm and the hill of Cerin Amroth, and here Aragorn is transfixed by memories of his courtship of Arwen in this very location (**LR39, LR56** and **LR57**) before his final declaration to her of farewell:

LR87 [S90]



The final phrase of this is of course identical to the word *Namarië* first heard delivered by Finrod in *Beren and Lúthien* at the moment of his death, but it will be heard several times further in *The Lord of the Rings* and most notably at the end of the current chapter. Here it returns us to the music of **LR86** and a more elaborate version of the Hymn to Ilúvatar leads to a distant trumpet fanfare from offstage and the scene changes to Caras Galadhon:

LR88

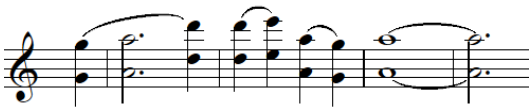


At this point in the music it is possible to insert yet another of the appendices written in conjunction with the score, this one a setting of *The Lay of Nimrodel* assigned to Legolas. The history of this piece is more complex than its companions. The song is sung by Legolas in the book before the Fellowship enter Lórien, and the relationship of the story of Amroth and Nimrodel to the principal action is left decidedly vague (it was only after publication that Tolkien decided to identify Amroth as the son of Celeborn and Galadriel). As such the poem appeared to be peripheral to the main action of the tale, and I had at an early stage omitted it from all my drafts for the text. However in 2019 Legolas lost his later song "To the Sea!" to the character of Eärendil in my setting of *The War of Wrath*, which left the part somewhat unrewarding for the singer who was deprived of any real opportunity for lyrical expansion. Experience of hearing Rhodri Prys Jones in the recording of the complete cycle determined me to introduce such an opportunity to balance the similar lay written for Gimli in the previous chapter, and the *Lay of Nimrodel* was designed to be inserted into the score at this point as an interlude during the change of scene. It would clearly be indefensible dramatically during a staged or theatrical performance, where the central focus in this chapter on the character of Galadriel would be unacceptably diluted; but in staged performances of this single chapter in isolation the nature of this lyrical effusion might well be regarded as a benefit. At all events it is included in the appendix disc for the complete recording and is therefore available for listeners to hear as they wish. The musical material is entirely derived from other passages in the cycle, but a more thorough analysis will be given in due course during this analysis when the appendices are under discussion.

As Celeborn and Galadriel greet the company (we hear a brief reference to **LR28**) their talk turns to the absence of Gandalf (**LR85**) and Aragorn describes his fall in

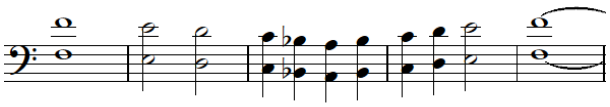
battle with the Balrog to cries to dismay from the company (**LR84**). To a recapitulation of the lament that had launched the chapter, Celeborn offers his assistance to the Fellowship and especially to Frodo (**LR1**), and Galadriel also extends a word of warning where she returns to the music associated with her character in *The War of Wrath*:

LR89 [S186]



and the nature of her concern is underlined by the briefest of references to the theme of the Valar (**S2**) at the suggestion that the quest might fall. She assures them of her protection, with music that returns to the thematic material of Gondolin; and then she rises from her seat and bids Frodo silently to follow her. The following brief orchestral interludes folds her **LR89** into a counterpoint consisting of an inversion of the same theme, an inversion which will assume vital significance later in ths same scene:

LR90



For the moment it is **LR89** which enfolds itself into **LR86** in a passage scored delicately for chamber organ and harp (a unique section of scoring in the cycle, and one which will become associated with Galadriel only at the most psychologically significant moments). She displays for Frodo her mirror, an oracle through which he may perceive "things that were, and things that are, and things that yet may be," and **LR89** steals back in the orchestra as Frodo begins to contemplate the reflections on the surface of the water.

Tolkien's descriptions of Frodo's visions (with further additions given to Sam, altogether omitted here—as also in all the film adaptations) are lengthy and varied, and the sheer difficulty of portraying these on stage led me at any early stage to seek to abridge them to a more straightforward summary of what the author describes as "parts of a great history in which he [Frodo] had become involved." This focuses around the vision of three ships, and the music for the first two of these is drawn directly from my piano rondo *Akallabêth* written back in 1978 before even any plans for *The Silmarillion* had been constructed. But segments from the *Akallabêth* in orchestral form had subsequently been incorporated into *The War of Wrath*, and several of the passages from that score appear here in more or less unaltered guise. The first of the visions relates to events more than three thousand years in the past, as the fleet of the Faithful flee from the destruction Númenor, and the music hearkens back to *The War of Wrath* as **S196** is set against the theme of Ilúvatar as the creator and destroyer of continents (**S1**) and then against the melody heard earlier in association with Eregion, as both the land of the origin and creation of the Rings and a symbol of Middle-earth as the destination of the Exiles (**S106**). The second of Frodo's visions is of events in the near future, with the coming of Aragorn in the ships of the corsairs to the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. The full statement of the theme of Númenor (**LR62**) is set against braying triumphal fanfares and the growling chromatics of Sauron (**S61**) which eventually erupt in fury only to be subdued by the motif of Galadriel herself (**LR89**).

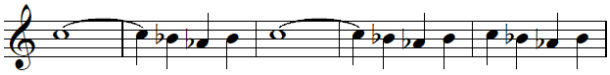
The third of Frodo's visions looks forward to the events at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, when the ship constructed for the Ring-bearers by Círdan the mariner will finally depart into the West. The theme of that ship (**S185**) now appears for the first time in the cycle since *The War of Wrath,* and as it slowly fades into the distance it gives way to material from even earlier in the *Silmarillion* hearkening back to the very creation of the world (**S6**). But at the moment when the vision fades and Frodo prepares to draw away, the theme of Arda itself (**S7**) is interrupted by the slow grinding of Sauron's chromatics (**S61**) as his Eye appears menacingly in the mirror. Frodo is drawn inexorably towards its gaze, and the Ring slips from around his neck (**LR6**) before Galadriel's voice warns him not to touch the water and he rouses himself from his dream.

The music now returns to the present in Lórien (with the sound of the chamber organ) and Galadriel proceeds to a discussion on the fate of her realm and the menace represented to it by the Ring. At that moment she raises her own hand to disclose on it her own Elven Ring, the Ring of Adamant of which she is the keeper, reflected in the light of Eärendil's star above (**S182**) and the theme of the Elves (**S8**) now combines with that of Lothlórien (**LR86**) and Galadriel herself (**LR89**) in unity against the rising menace of **LR6** in the bass below. It is in response to her heartfelt desire to preserve all that is fair in her realm, as well as her willingness to accept the fate that inevitably draws near, that now inspires Frodo to offer to surrender the One Ring to her.

At the moment he makes this offer, the atmosphere of the music, already menaced by **LR6**, darkens further. The chromatic harmonies of Sauron (**S61**) entwine themselves around Galadriel's voice and soon lead into an orchestral declamation of the Ring inscription itself (**LR21**). Galadriel's own theme of **LR89** appears for one solitary moment before it is overwhelmed by its own inversion (**LR90**) and it is this latter form, now firmly underpinned by repeated statements of **LR6**, which rises in increasing transport as she envisions herself enthroned as the Queen of Middle-earth who will hold all of creation in her own thrall. A stentorian statement of **LR89** in its original form underlines this ambition; and then on its second repetition it suddenly fades as she renounces the vision, and the theme of Ilúvatar (**S1**) is softly heard as she frees herself from the temptation represented by the Ring. The music of Lothlórien as heard earlier reasserts itself during the interlude which follows, as the scene returns to Caras Galadhon.

In the following discussion and debate Celeborn comes to appreciate that Aragorn and the Fellowship are in some doubt about the course that they are now to follow after the loss of Gandalf's leadership, and offers to provide them with boats to allow them to proceed on their journey without making any final commitment as to their final destinations. A new theme now appears to represent the river, rising and falling in a whole-tone pattern that will be repeated frequently over the following scenes:

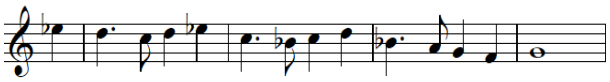
LR91



But for the present it is still the music of Lothlórien which predominates as the company are led to the havens and presented with various supplies: Elven cloaks to lend concealment, rope for emergencies, and the waybread *lembas* to provide nourishment. It is only at the end of this passage that the emphasis shifts back to Boromir (**LR63**) as he contemplates the receding possibilities of military victory over Sauron (**LR68**) and begins to realise the possibilities afforded by the Ring itself (**LR65** over the shadowy harmonies of **LR6**). During the following brief interlude the orchestra outlines the shadow of the vision that had earlier presented itself to him and his brother (**LR67**) and which will now form the basis for his future actions.

In the meantime the scene has changed to the point of embarkation (**LR91**) and the voice of Galadriel herself is heard once again approaching slowly downstream. Her song of regret and hope is accompanied by shadowy echoes of **S185** but then by her despair at the realisation that redemption and restoration may not be available to her: "What ship would bear me ever back across so wide a sea?"

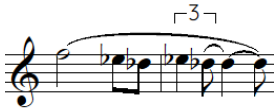
LR92



As repetitions of **S185** resound in the orchestra, elves enter bearing gifts which she presents to the members of the Fellowship, and the music hearkens back not only to the vision in her mirror but to its earlier foreshadowing in the music of creation itself (**S6**). The music of **S7** gives way to that associated with Aragorn and Lúthien (**LR39**, **LR56** and **LR57**) as she presents Aragorn with presents suited to his status as the betrothed of her granddaughter, for which he thanks her fulsomely. She then turns to Frodo and, to the theme representing Eärendil as a star (**S182**) presents him with a crystal phial containing light drawn from that source; and the significance of this moment is emphasised by the return of **LR72**.

The music dies down in repetitions of **LR91** as the moment of farewell approaches. Tolkien himself provided a melody for Galadriel's Quenya verses at this point, dictating the tune to Donald Swann for incorporation into his cycle *The road goes ever on,* but even more remarkably recording himself singing it some fifteen years earlier for a private tape which betrays very little alteration in the imagined setting over a long period of years. It seemed to me inevitable that any setting of this passage must incorporate Tolkien's own thoughts on the matter, clearly so closely bound together in his own mind with the exact words; and the vocal line of the passage which follows closely adheres to the two versions of the music which he recorded or dictated with only minor adjustments of rhythm, melodic line and emphasis. The impressionist accompaniment by the orchestra, despite occasional echoes of **LR91,** is almost totally governed by the descriptions of the scenery given by Tolkien himself and his own musical framework for this. The opening *melisma* for the voice is entirely the author's own creation:

LR93



and the closing echoes of *Namarië* reflect precisely the earlier use of the phrase to represent the notion of farewell which go back to *Beren and Lúthien* and which have already reappeared in the current chapter (**LR87**).

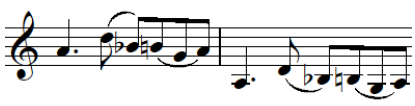
At the end of the extended farewell, as Galadriel's voice fades into the distance in the manner described in Tolkien's text, the orchestra suddenly erupts into the texture (again in the manner described by the author) with outpourings based on **LR91** which slowly die down into gentle murmurings of **LR87**, now reverting to the form originally heard in the *Silmarillion* (**S90**) and eventual silence.

THE BREAKING OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The brief prelude to this chapter immediately takes up the movement of the river **LR91** from the preceding scene, and this is expanded into the significant **LR72** before the curtain rises on Frodo and Sam on the banks of the river at night. Sam (**LR1**) tells Frodo of the log he has seen in the river that seems to be pursuing their boats, and Frodo warns him that he has seen similar things: they are being pursued by Gollum (**LR12**). Aragorn confirms their suspicions, and notes that they will need to increase their pace since he has been unable to capture the creature. The music of **LR91**, which has continued throughout this scene, now builds back up through **LR72** as the boats of the Fellowship pass the Argonath, the Gates of the Kings leading them into the realm of Gondor; and the anthem of Númenor **LR62** is given in its full majesty while the roaring of **LR91** slowly recedes.

The scene changes to the lawn of Parth Galen where the Fellowship lands to determine their future course and plan of action. A new theme is heard, not only to represent the location itself but also—with its disjointed rhythmic pulse—the indecision that haunts the company and Frodo in particular:

LR94



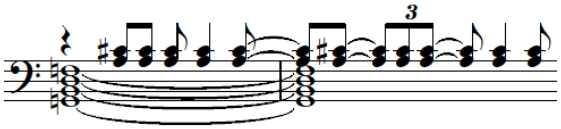
Mutterings of **LR91** continue to haunt Frodo as he pleads for additional delay to allow him to come to a decision, and **LR94** dies away in the orchestra as Aragorn agrees to allow him a further hour for solitary consideration.

The scene changes to a place higher up the hill, where Frodo is lost in memories of the Shire (**LR2**) in a passage which recollects one of the author's own descriptions at an earlier point in the narrative: "He wished with all his heart that he was back there…mowing the lawn, or pottering among the flowers, and that he had never heard of…the Ring." His ruminations are interrupted by the

arrival of Boromir (**LR63**) who encourages him with the thought that the realm of Gondor will not fall (**LR62**) and that its strength will continue to protect Middle-earth (**LR68**). But at the mention of the Ring (a quick flicker of **LR6** in the insidious tones of the celesta) Boromir latches onto its potential as a tool for the defeat of Sauron. Even when Frodo is reluctant to let him have sight again of the treasure (**LR11**) he reverts to his earlier contention, that the Ring has been sent to them as a means of ensuring victory (**LR68**). Although he is initially willing to concede that Aragorn should wield the Ring (**LR39**) he rapidly proposes himself as the leader of the struggle, and the violent contrast of **LR62** with **S61** already heard not only at the passage of the Argonath but also earlier in Frodo's vision in the mirror of Galadriel now comes to the fore. Listeners to who are familiar with the music of the piano rondo *Akallabêth* will also recognise it as an echo of the music during which Sauron in the Second Age had seduced the Númenórean King Ar-Pharazôn with dreams of military conquest.

From this it is an easy step for Boromir to move from his visions of future glory to the evident folly of sending the Ring into Mordor in a forlorn hope of destroying it. The deluded music associated with the *Akallabêth* continues in the orchestra as he grows more insistent, culminating in a jagged syncopated rhythm:

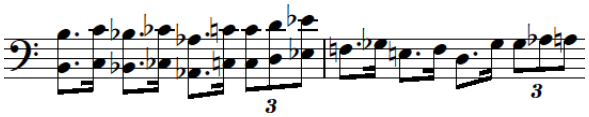
LR 95



which also accompanies Frodo's frantic refusal to yield the Ring to anyone other than himself, to whom the Council had entrusted it. The underlying motive behind Boromir's lust for the Ring becomes ever clearer as the theme of Morgoth surges violently upwards (**S4**) and he attempts to wrest the Ring from Frodo by force. Frodo, in a last desperate attempt to evade this, puts the Ring on his own finger and vanishes (**LR95** plunging into the bass). Boromir is left cursing (**LR11**) before his mind suddenly clears and he calls for Frodo to return; but the fact that his heroic **LR68** is now underpinned by the harmonies of **LR7** gives a strong hint that his repentance is even now not to be trusted. Frodo, still invisible but his voice audible, realises that he must go to Mordor alone without the support of Strider (**LR39**) or even Sam (**LR1**) and the harmonies of **LR7** die into silence as he sets out to fulfil this decision.

The limping hesitations of **LR94** return the scene to the banks of the river, where the debating Fellowship are startled by the reappearance of Boromir who, without revealing everything that has happened, tells them that Frodo has vanished—possibly as long as an hour beforehand (the mutterings of **LR91** again haunt the narration). This news understandably sends the Fellowship into a panic, and Merry and Pippin at once rush off into the woods to look for their cousin:

LR96



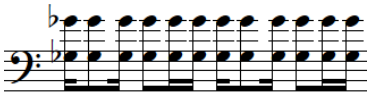
Aragorn in desperation sends Boromir to protect the young hobbits and then calls on Sam to follow him as he searches for Frodo. But Sam remains dubiously by the waterside, and sees one of the boats moving seemingly by itself towards the crossing of the river (**LR91**). Calling out to Frodo to wait for him, he manages to delay his departure and to the return of **LR28** the two hobbits are once again reconciled and set out for Mordor together. But the slow conclusion is disturbed by the distant horn call of **LR74** as Boromir summons aid and the curtain falls.

The treason of Isengard

THE PLAINS AND THE FOREST

The prelude to this chapter opens immediately with the theme associated with the land of Rohan (**LR35**) which is combined with one of the many different rhythms associated with their galloping horses:

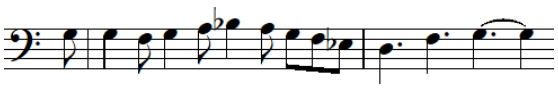
LR97



And as the curtain rises we are plunged back immediately into the scene at the end of *The breaking of the Fellowship* with Pippin and Merry running wildly in search of Frodo (**LR96**). But their search is immediately halted by the sudden appearance of a band of orcs (**LR82**) and an ensuing scuffle before the hobbits are overcome and bound. At this moment Boromir's horn **(LR74**) is heard from offstage (reflecting its sounding at the end of the previous chapter) and Boromir himself now comes fighting onto the scene (**LR63**). But he too is quickly overpowered and a flight of arrows cuts him down as the hobbits are borne away.

Aragorn, who now arrives in answer to the summons of the horn (**LR39**) kneels beside the stricken hero just in time to hear his final words as Boromir confesses his attempt to take the Ring from Frodo and his failure to protect the hobbits. But as he dies he leaves it ambiguous whether Frodo was among the hobbits whom the Orcs captured, leaving Aragorn in an agony of doubt as to his next course of action. Legolas and Gimli now arrive and stand in silence in honour of their fallen comrade. Although they are too are torn between the various courses of action now open to them, they all agree that their first action must be to arrange for the funeral of Boromir; and he is set in a boat together with his arms and horn, which is set loose on the river to be carried over the waterfall of Rauros. All three unite in a song of lament:

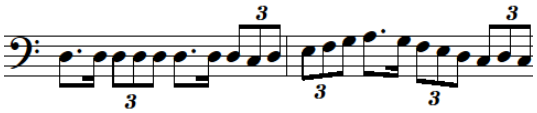
LR98



and this is counterpointed between verses with the echoes of his horn call (**LR74**).

Returning now to the lawn, they notice that the third boat in which the Fellowship had travelled down the river is now missing; and Aragorn correctly concludes that this has been taken by Frodo and Sam for their journey to Mordor (he does not however at this time disclose to the others Boromir's confession that this will have been motivated by his attempt to seize the Ring). He recognises that the Ring has now passed beyond his aid (slowly questing versions of **LR71** underline the moment of his decision), and that the Fellowship's duty now lies in the rescue of Merry and Pippin from the orcs:

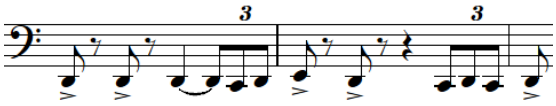
LR99



To persistent repetitions of this theme underpinning that of the Fellowship of the Ring (**LR20)** he proudly proclaims his cry "Forth the Three Hunters!" as the remaining members of the company set out in pursuit.

At this point in the narrative Tolkien continues the tale with a further chapter describing the meeting of the hunters with the Riders of Rohan before returning to the fate of Merry and Pippin, which then occupies the next two chapters, interleaving the progress of the trackers and the tracked in an elaborate series of riddles. This would be extremely difficult to render comprehensible in a dramatic form, as well as dangerously divorcing one musical idiom from another (a consideration that will be discussed further at a later juncture in this analysis). Here the second part of the chapter accordingly advances the historical sequence by turning to the captured hobbits and their escape from the orcs. **LR99** continues to thunder through the orchestra, but now acquires a new bass line; and it will be seen that this reflects the fact that these "fighting Uruk-hai" are under the command not of Sauron but the treacherous Saruman:

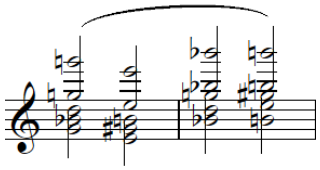
LR100 [LR19]



The scene now disclosed is an orc-camp on the borders of Fangorn Forest, and the orcs are already under attack by the horsemen of Rohan. (In Tolkien's original text we already know that these are under the command of Éomer the nephew of the King, but in this revised order of presentation this information is currently withheld.) The commander of the Uruk-hai, Uglúk, has clearly been given some information regarding the hobbits—they are in possession of "something that is wanted for the war" —and he instructs his lieutenant Grishnákh to keep a close guard on them, and to ensure that they are not killed unless the horsemen break through. In Tolkien's more politically complex narrative, Grishnákh is present as a representative of his master Sauron; in the abridged version given here however his motivation is entirely his own self-interest. And it becomes clear that this is indeed his aim, since he hastily busies himself with searching for the Ring and displays an immediate reaction when Pippin lets slip a reference to Gollum (**LR12**). He scoffs at Merry's warning that such interests are dangerous—"everything you have, and everything you know, will be got out of you in due course"—and he is infuriated by the suggestion that Saruman will take possession of "all that he can find." In a desperate attempt to smuggle his captives out of the camp, he draws his sword to cut their bonds; but the rasp of metal betrays him and he is scythed down by one of the horsemen. The themes of **LR35** and **LR97** associated with the Rohirrim ride roughly over the orcs' **LR99** and **LR100** with the hobbits' sprightly **LR1** skipping over the top.

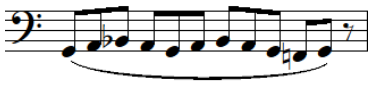
The hobbits lie still and unobserved until the tide of battle has passed, and then realise that their only available option is to seek refuge in Fangorn Forest itself:

LR101 [S150]



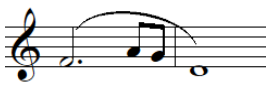
As has been noted, the forests of Middle-earth all have a familial resemblance, and the themes associated with Nan Elmoth in the First Age (**S153** and **S154**) which have already recurred with reference to the Old Forest in the *Tom Bombadil* chapter return here in combination not only with each other but also with the phrase associated with Mirkwood (**H50**). But there is also a new theme, heard initially as a subterranean line beneath the old motif of 'adventure' (**H3**) but gradually becoming increasingly prominent:

LR102



The scene changes into the forest itself, and the hobbits are heard anxiously discussing what it to be done next and comparing the gloom of Fangorn with what Bilbo has told them of Mirkwood (**H50**). As the dappled sunlight peeps through the branches (**LR101**) Pippin remarks upon the unexpectedly revealed beauty of the woodscape, and **LR102** now comes further to the fore as the voice of Treebeard, the guardian of the Forest, sounds from the tree-trunk nearest to them. As he folds them in his arms and turns them round for closer examination, a new theme is heard:

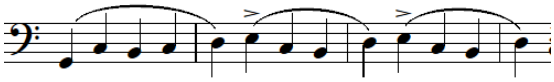
LR103



and the voice of the Ent is heard reminding himself of the need not to jump to hasty conclusions. This theme is counterpointed to that of the hobbits themselves (**H2**) and the persistently returning and slow-moving **LR101** as the puzzled Ent interrogates the equally mystified hobbits about their purposes and their activities. It is only when the name of Gandalf enters the conversation (**H5**)

and we learn of Treebeard's concerns about the purposes of Saruman (**LR19**) and the orcs (**LR82**) that the participants in the conversation establish some commonality of purpose, and the lament for the fall of Gandalf (**LR85**) leads Treebeard to offer the hobbits food and shelter in his dwelling of Wellinghall:

LR104



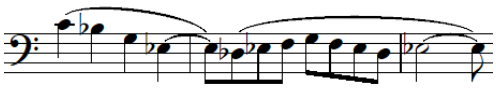
The music for this scene, and the following setting of Treebeard's nostalgic poem *In the willow-meads of Tasarinan*, goes back—as has been noted above—to the very earliest drafts of my music for the cycle in 1967. The distinctive nature of the verse-setting, with its rhythmically declaimed lyrics spoken over a slowly unwinding canonic development of **LR104**, goes back to those very earliest sketches; although the style of the actual setting, with the notated rhythms given increased precision, owes much to my work on the epilogue to *The Children of Húrin* in the early 1980s. The orchestral accompaniment also, beginning with the full range of woodwind colours from double-bass clarinet to the concluding piccolo, but incorporating strings to accompany the spoken words, derives much from the original 1967 sketches. As such this scene is unique within the context of not only *The Lord of the Rings* but the whole of my Tolkien settings. Like the poem itself, with its free rhythmic structure coupled with a total absence of rhyme, it has a uniquely antique mediaeval quality which is perhaps well reflected by this somewhat unusual manner of setting.

THE RIDERS OF ROHAN

The opening bars of this chapter, with the two established themes for the Rohirrim **LR35** and **LR97**, plunge us abruptly back into the more conventional style of the horsemen themselves. But after a mere five bars it is established that we are back with the three hunters, still in pursuit of the captured hobbits (**LR99** and **LR100** galloping along simultaneously). The scene has shifted back in time by a couple of days from the end of the previous chapter; but this is well in accordance with Tolkien's own narrative techniques in the published text of *The Two Towers*, where concurrent events are seldom if ever mentioned in the same chapter or even consecutively. It is only now, for example, that the three pursuers realise that the orcs are taking their captives not to Mordor but to Isengard (**LR19**) when they discover some slain orcs by the trail (the dispute between the orcs which has led to this is omitted from this account, but may be presumed to have happened before Scene Three of the preceding chapter).

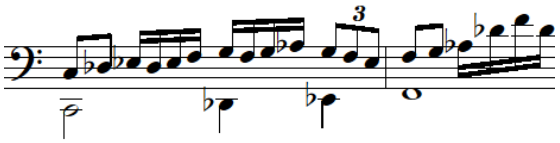
At this point the mists clear to reveal the landscape, and we see for the first time not only the wide expanse of the plains of Rohan but the distant view of the White Mountains on the borders of Gondor. Aragorn hails the sight of his hereditary kingdom with ecstasy **(LR62)** and launches into an apostrophe to the past and future beauties of the land itself:

LR105



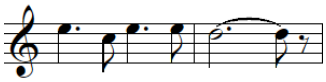
The paean of praise, taking up and developed by the orchestra during the following interlude, slowly dies down as the scene shifts to the grasslands further across the plain:

LR106



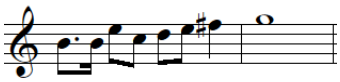
The three hunters realise despondently that the hobbits will by now have been taken by their captors into the forest (**S153** followed by **LR101)** before they see a troop of the Riders of Rohan coming towards them and riding back along the trail (**LR35** and **LR97** from the prelude to the preceding scene). These riders, led by Éomer, now arrive:

LR107



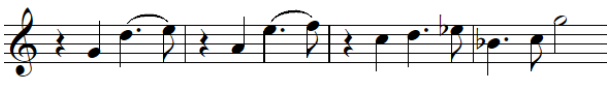
And after initial statements of Éomer's own theme as given here (in combination with Aragorn's **LR39** and the theme of Lórien **LR86** as Éomer remarks on their Elven cloaks) the leader of the Rohirrim identifies himself as the vassal of Théoden the King of Rohan, whose theme is now heard for the first time:

LR108



These themes, together with those associated with the orcs, swirl around and accompany the dialogue as Éomer tells the hunters of their destruction of the orc raiders, but their failure to identify any hobbits among the slain. Aragorn asks for help (**LR71**) and despite some scepticism from his men, Éothain principally, about the very existence of hobbits other than as old legends (**LR1**), Éomer agrees to provide them with horses (**LR20**). But he also warns them that Saruman has now claimed overlordship over Rohan (**LR19**) and that he even has supporters in the court of the King. This is a reference to the King's counsellor Gríma Wormtongue, who is not to appear until the chapter *The King of the Golden Hall* but whose theme is heard here for the first time:

LR109

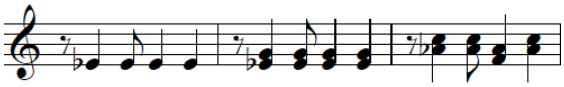


As the Riders prepare to depart the themes associated

with the earlier dialogue continues, with the motives of the pursuit **(LR99** and **LR100**) giving way abruptly to those of the Ents (**S153** and **LR102**) as the scene changes to Treebeard's dwelling at the roots of the mountains in Wellinghall.

The same music continues as Treebeard continues to ruminate on the meaning of the sudden appearance of the hobbits in his realm, and on the intentions of Saruman (**LR19** followed now by **LR20** as on its initial appearance—Treebeard is still of course convinced at this stage that Saruman is an ally and leader of the White Council. When Pippin asks about Saruman's history, Treebeard confesses his ignorance; he thinks (erroneously) that the wizards may have appeared in Middle-earth at the same time as the Númenórean exiles, and the fact that Saruman has taken possession of the old Númenórean fortress of Isengard lends some credibility to this conclusion A new and more sprightly version of the old Númenor theme **LR62** now emerges to underline that belief:

LR110 [LR61]

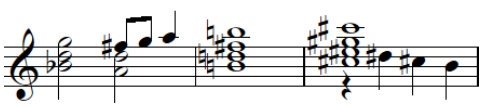


But he soon begins to realise that Saruman's intentions are not as disinterested as he had assumed. The wizard's orcs are cutting down trees in the forest, and creating a desolation of "stump and bramble where once there were singing groves." He determines to put an end to such vandalism, and as **LR110** rings out defiantly we hear behind the scene the voices of the Ents as they are summoned to an Entmoot (**LR102**). Treebeard bottles up his anger—"we must not be hasty"—but the voices of the Ents continue to murmur rebelliously through the forest during the following interlude.

As the scene changes back to the three hunters, who have now arrived at the same location where the hobbits met Treebeard in the previous chapter, the sound of the Ents' voices dies away into the murmuring of the trees, but the atmosphere remains oppressive, with **LR99** and **LR100** continuing to rumble along beneath statements of Saruman's suave **LR19.** And indeed an old man now appears through the woods, whom they take to be the treacherous wizard; and their suspicions are confirmed when they find themselves unable to lift their weapons against him.

The old man's opening words do nothing to reassure them, and the orchestral intonation of the theme associated with the White Council **LR20** is underpinned uneasily with the jittery harmonies associated with Gollum (**LR12).** Even his clear knowledge of their pursuit of the hobbits, and of their current whereabouts, only serves to reinforce their worst fears. By an extreme effort of will they manage to break free of the enchantments laid upon them, and seek to attack the old man; but in a sudden movement he throws aside his cloak and reveals himself not to be Saruman but to be Gandalf, although he is now clad in white:

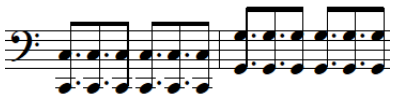
LR111 [LR7, LR55}



This version of Gandalf's theme, with its upwardly thrusting modulation, represents the new incarnation of the wizard as Gandalf the White rather than Gandalf the Grey (**LR55**). Both will continue to appear in the score, at times interchangeably, but the new version **LR111** will invariably be used when the mission of the wizard comes into discussion. And it is this reincarnated version which dominates the textures for the following bars, as Gandalf explains his new role: "Saruman as he should have been."

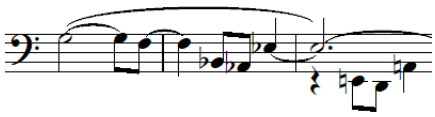
He tells the hunters that the hobbits are now with Treebeard and the Ents (**LR103**), and that their coming to Fangorn has acted as an incentive for the legendary shepherds of the forest to take up arms in their own defence (**LR104**). A shimmering version of **LR101** is heard as he speculates on what they may do; but he recognises that though he may now be Gandalf the White, "black is mightier still." And with those dark thoughts he turns now to more immediate practicalities (**LR20**). Aragorn has promised Éomer that he will come to Edoras (**LR35**, combined with **LR107** and **LR108**) and we now hear also a different rhythm associated with the hoofbeats of the Rohirrim:

LR112



Legolas and Gimli agree eagerly to accompany Aragorn and Gandalf; but before they do so, they are anxious to hear the tale of Gandalf's encounter with the Balrog. The theme of the latter (**LR81**) is now reduced to a more skeletal form

LR113



as Gandalf describes his descent into the abyss of Moria with his enemy. The coilings of **LR113** slowly subside into extinction as he describes in veiled terms the realm of those "nameless things" that dwell in the depths of the earth, and his own passage into death.

At this moment the music returns to the very opening of *The Silmarillion*, the moment of creation when the world first awoke from primaeval chaos. Gandalf has been plunged back to that primal focus, and it is only slowly and by the direct intervention of the One (**S1**) that new life is once again engendered in him. The very action of reincarnation reflects the original genesis in the prelude to *Fëanor*, and the music similarly reflects that sensation. Gandalf goes on to describe how he was rescued from the mountain top by Gwaihir the Windlord (**H44**) and borne by him to Lothlórien (**LR86**) where he is healed and clad in white. He now summons his horse Shadowfax (**LR67**) and the rhythm **LR112** acts as an accompaniment to **LR35** and then insistently **LR108** as Legolas indicates the signs of battle and war in the distance.

THE TWO TOWERS:
A DISCUSSION ON PERFORMING ORDER

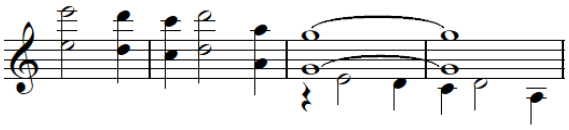
In both the vocal score and full score of these chapters the order of the narrative follows that of Tolkien in the volume *The Two Towers*, continuing with the account of the deeds of the Fellowship of the Ring in their struggle with the "treason of Isengard" before turning to the journey of Sam and Frodo to Mordor given in Book Four. But for the purposes of the recording in 2024-25 it was decided to revert to a more chronological order of presentation, with the three chapters of *The Ring goes east* interspersed with five chapters of *The treason of Isengard.* There were good musical reasons for this decision. In the first place, the setting of Book Four had originally been made in 1969 whilst nearly all of Book Three had been composed some half a century later; and although the earlier score had been heavily revised and in places thoroughly rewritten, it was felt that the inevitably distinct musical idioms would be minimised by enfolding one stylistic period within another. The sacrifice of the interlace also yielded some benefits in the musical evolution of the scores themselves. To take one example, there is the theme associated with Minas Tirith, which in the recording is first heard when Faramir describes to Frodo the ancient halls of the capital in a manner that emphasises its venerability through its employment of mediaeval parallel fifths. When the theme returns somewhat later, as Gandalf and Pippin are riding to the city, the same material is given a fully heroic declamation. But if the scenes are performed in the published order (as in the book) the effect of Faramir's wistful evocation if the theme is inevitably muted and the emotional impact of the moment is lost.

But against such matters should be set the purely practical advantages that accrue from adhering to the author's published order and the employment of interlace for dramatic effect. The latter, for example, is no purely literary consideration; there was never the slightest intention that the events of *Mount Doom*, including the rescue of Frodo from Cirith Ungol, should be reordered chronologically so that the listener to the debate between Gandalf and the Mouth of Sauron at the Black Gate would already be aware that Frodo had escaped, a knowledge that would fatally undermine the suspense of that moment. Moreover from a purely practical viewpoint there is much advantage to be gained from allowing singers of the strenuous leading roles a 'night off' in the middle of a run of performances.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN HALL

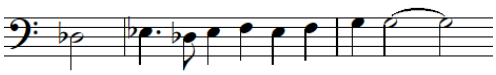
The prelude to this chapter picks up exactly from where *The Riders of Rohan* concluded (another possible argument for interspersing the chapters of *The Black Gate is closed* between the chapters of *The Treason of Isengard*) but within eight bars the furious galloping rhythms have died down and a new and calmer theme makes itself heard:

LR114



And this leads directly into the setting of the old English verse *Where now is the horse and the rider?* which Tolkien assigns at this point to be declaimed by Aragorn:

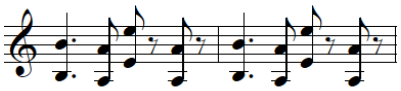
LR115



(It should be noted that Tolkien at this point carefully sidesteps the grammatical consideration as to whether the horse and the rider should be regarded as a single unit employing the verb *is* or as a multiple one employing the verb *are*, by the straightforward expedient of omitting the verb from the sentence altogether. Unfortunately this leaves the vocal rhythm of the line (which subsequently recurs without the words) unclear, and I have had perforce to resolve the issue by the insertion of the single word *is.* This is a rarity in a text where I have generally sought as far as possible to retain the author's original wording and syntax—much more closely than in the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*—in accordance with the much finer tuning of the phraseology that Tolkien applied to the text before publication, the opportunity for which was of course lost in his posthumously published works.)

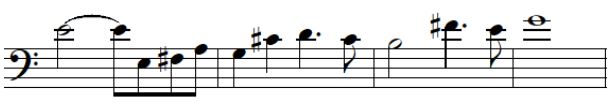
At the end of the verse the music returns quietly to **LR114** and then the rhythms of **LR112** accompany **LR35** as Gandalf and his company approach the gates of Edoras, where they are challenged by Háma and Éothain as the wardens. Aragorn, to his own signature **LR71** and **LR39**, asks anxiously whether Éomer has not already warned the guards of their coming; but the response is that such a warning has indeed been given, but by the King's counsellor Wormtongue (**LR109**) who has charged them not to admit strangers. Gandalf is impatient at this prevarication (**LR67** representing Shadowfax in conjunction with his own White Rider incarnation **LR111**), but Háma excuses himself that as the doorwarden it is his duty to require them to lay aside their weapons before they are admitted to the royal presence:

LR116



Legolas lays aside his bow and arrows given to him by Galadriel, and we hear an extension of **S6** emphasising their supernatural origin:

LR117



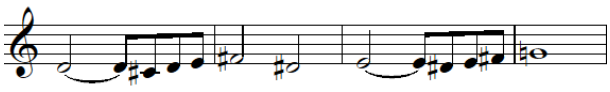
But Aragorn is less content to let anyone else handle the reforged Andúril (**LR71**) and it is not until Gandalf surrenders his own sword (**S146** underling its origins in Gondolin) that he is willing to allow this to happen, to which Háma hastily and superstitiously agrees. But

Gandalf then objects strenuously to any attempt to deprive him of his staff (**LR10**) and eventually persuades a dubious Háma of his peaceable intentions. The melody of **LR115** is followed by **LR114** as the scene changes to the interior of the hall.

The emblematic theme of Rohan **LR35** is heard quietly in the orchestra as Gandalf salutes Théoden, his own identity as the White Rider **LR111** followed and reinforced now by that of the White Council **LR20**; but the response from Théoden (**LR108**) is chilly, and Wormtongue amplifying this (**LR109**) lays stress on the threats to the kingdom already looming without the further menace presaged by the arrival of Gandalf. The latter protests that such a churlish welcome dishonours the reputation of his guests, but the mention of the Elves (**LR86**) and the scathing reference by Wormtongue to the "Sorceress of the Golden Wood" rapidly leads to further acrimonious dispute. Gandalf, in increasing rage (**LR10**) reduces Wormtongue to awestruck terror (**LR109**) and a sudden blast as of lightning splits the atmosphere (**LR47**) as the counsellor falls upon his face.

Gandalf now steps forward and rouses Théoden from his enchantment. A new development of **LR111**, expressive of renewal and regeneration, begins in the orchestra:

LR118

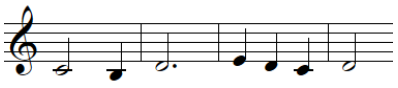


And after a brief reference to the theme of Rohan itself (**LR35**) we are introduced us the King's niece Éowyn who supports him as he rises from his throne:

LR119

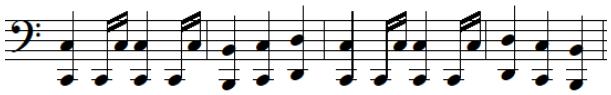
These themes surround the opening words of Gandalf and Théoden, supplemented by that of Éomer (**LR107**) as the King's authority returns (**LR108**). As the old man recovers his strength (**LR114**) Gandalf alludes to the further struggles to come, and the theme of the White Council (**LR20**) leads to the first reference to the menace of Saruman (**LR19**). Éomer now arrives to present the King with his sword, and Théoden raising the borrowed blade launches an apostrophe to the strength of Rohan:

LR120



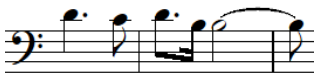
which is underpinned by a new syncopated beat again reminiscent of horsehooves and set in cross-rhythm to the 3/4 march theme above:

LR121



At the climax of this paean Théoden declares his own willingness to go to war and perish heroically if need be in defence of his homeland, and the men respond enthusiastically with a cry of *Forth, Eorlingas!*:

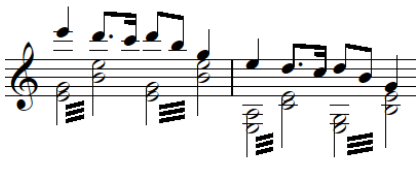
LR122



Háma now reappears with Wormtongue and bearing Théoden's own sword, which has been discovered hidden in the counsellor's rooms. Gandalf steps forward. "Here is a snake," he avers, who cannot safely be left behind but should not be slain either; instead he should be released to make his own way back to Saruman as his true master. Wormtongue's only response is one of contempt as he flees (**LR109**).

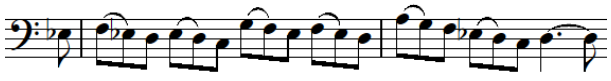
In a gloriously heroic transformation the previously subdued **LR35** now rings out as Éowyn returns (**LR119**) bearing the cup of farewell which she offers both to the King and to Aragorn, as **LR108** leads into a resplendent statement of **LR71**. There is a sudden moment of stillness as her eyes meet those of Aragorn, and he first recognises the desolation and loneliness in her eyes; but immediately the march of **LR120** returns as Théoden declares his intention to set out for war, and agrees to the suggestion of Háma that during his absence Éowyn should rule the Rohirrim in his place. Aragorn reassures Éowyn that they will return in safety (**LR71**) and all join a shout of "Forth, Eorlingas!" **(LR122).** The orchestra bursts out with a new heroic theme which will be associated with the warfare of the Rohirrim throughout the remainder of the score, and this is repeated (in combination with **LR35** and **LR112**) no fewer than sixteen times during the following brief interlude:

LR123



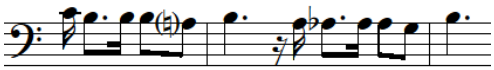
The scene returns to the conclusion of the Entmoot which had begun in the previous chapter (**LR102**). The unaccompanied male voices of the consultations underpin the voice of Quickbeam as he sings his lament over the fallen trees of his homeland:

LR124



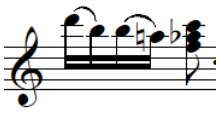
and during this extensive passage (the longest section of unaccompanied vocal writing anywhere in the cycle outside the hymn to Ilúvatar in Scene Nine of *The Fall of Gondolin*) the variations of **LR102** accompany and surround the solo voice. Finally there is an eruption of drum beats as the Ents rouse themselves also for war:

LR125



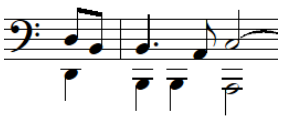
and this march is accompanied by a fragmentary figure flitting between major and minor modes which represents the enchantment and wizardry of Saruman:

LR126



as well as a darker and slower version which will also assume significance later:

LR127



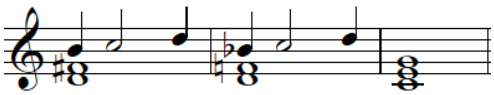
And it is these two themes, associated with those of Fangorn and the Ents, which slowly fade into darkness as Treebeard declares ominously "Night lies over Isengard."

This scene, which concludes Chapter Four of the original book, finally rounds out the adventures of Merry and Pippin (although neither actually sing) and in *The Two Towers* they will not reappear for nearly four full chapters. In this adaptation however their absence from the action will be considerably briefer, as will be seen.

THE JOURNEY TO ISENGARD

This chapter opens with a completely new theme which will recur throughout the first scenes, depicting Helm's Deep and the Battle of the Hornburg:

LR128



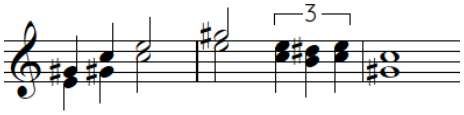
And this will act throughout as a motto binding the short segments of dialogue and action together. However immediately we hear the hoofbeats of the horses, now with two rhythms **LR97** and **LR112** sounding simultaneously. The fanfare of **LR122** is sounded as Gandalf is seen in the distance, riding to summon aid, and calling on Théoden to meet him at Helm's Gate **(LR111** followed immediately by **LR67**). Háma and the more sceptical Éothain remark that Wormtongue would find his riding easy to blame, and **LR109** now assumes a more political significance as a representation of the armed forces ranged against Rohan. Some unspecified while later Ceorl, riding forward, warns that the Riders are doomed; but unexpectedly he finds that Théoden has now recovered from his weaknesses and is leading the horsemen into battle. In another brief encounter after a further passage of time we find Théoden enquiring from Háma regarding Gandalf's activities, and learn that Wormtongue has now been seen riding towards Isengard with a company of orcs. After these brief episodes of scene setting, the action now arrives at Helm's Deep with a full restatement of **LR128.**

The course of the battle which occupies the next scene and the victory which follows during Scene Three, make extensive use of the various themes which have already been established both for the Rohirrim and for the armies of Isengard. **LR99** and **LR100,** in their now well-established symbiotic relationship, accompany the advance of the orcs up the valley while Gimli (**H11**) and Legolas (**LR61**) long for the companionship of warriors from their own peoples. A brief resurgence of **LR128** leads immediately to the theme of Saruman **LR19** riding triumphantly over the rhythms of **LR99** and **LR100,** while Aragorn and Éomer celebrate their reunion with a combination of **LR39** and **LR107** as Aragorn draws his sword (**LR71**), and another statement of **LR128** which acts as a kind of rondo theme drawing all the other material together. The attack of the orcs during the next episode brings the return of thematic motifs from Moria —**LR83** and **H30**—and then **LR128** forms a quieter undertow to the conversation of Aragorn and Éomer as they look forward anxiously to dawn.

But their discussion is suddenly interrupted by a violent eruption of **LR126**, now finally revealing the developments of Saruman's technology as the ramparts beneath their feet are attacked with explosives. The orcs' themes rise in mounting triumph and frenzy, and during the ensuing fight to retain control of the gate of the fortress we see the death in battle of Háma (**LR116)** and then the mounting triumph of the themes of Saruman (**LR19**) and Wormtongue (**LR109**) over that of Théoden (**LR108**). As the scene moves to the interior of the fortress, and **LR128** returns for the final time, Théoden is mourning not only the death of Háma but the expected ruin of his kingdom; but declares that he will not succumb patiently "like a badger in a trap" (**LR118**) but will ride forth to meet his fate valiantly in battle. As he delivers this declaration **LR114** returns, transformed into a triumphant cry of derision and leading back to the heroic **LR35** which had originally introduced the Rohirrim at their first appearance.

The scene changes rapidly back to the exterior of the fortress, where the orcs are continuing to press their assault; but at the appearance of Aragorn above the gate their cries change to taunts of derision, as they call for the "skulking king" to show himself, and the music recalls their jeering song **H43** from *Over hill and under hill*:

LR129



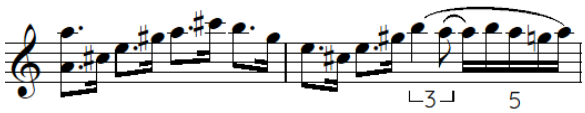
And indeed **H43** in its original form now emerges to cap their mocking chorus. But it is suddenly overwhelmed by a massive orchestral statement of the Rohirrim March (**LR120**) delivered over its usual pattern of syncopated rhythms as the king rides forth to attack. Although we have heard flashes of the complete march melody in the preceding chapter, this is the first time it has been given its full panoply of pomp and circumstance; and is now capped at each cadence with a triumphant series of statements of **LR123.** This triumphant climax also mingles with the themes of Éomer and Théoden to consummate the triumph of the Rohirrim; and it is further crowned with the sudden appearance of **S153** and **S154** as the awakened forests of Fangorn come into view and the trees themselves move to attack the orcs. It is at this point that the family relationship between the ancient woodlands of Middle-earth—Nan Elmoth in *The Silmarillion*, the Old Forest in *Tom Bombadil*, and Fangorn here—is most clearly and immediately aligned.

The Rohirrim immediately attribute the sudden appearance of the trees to the enchantments of Gandalf, but he hastens to disclaim responsibility (**LR101**) and tells the king that if he wishes to know the true nature of his allies, he should accompany the wizard back to Isengard. Théoden is reluctant—"there are not enough men in the Mark, not if they were all gathered together, to assault the stronghold of Saruman"—but Gandalf assures him that there will be no need for fighting; and in answer to a question from Legolas about the fate of the orcs (**H43**) he confesses his ignorance. As the scene changes, the orchestra takes up Aragorn's question from the previous chapter: *Where now is the horse and the rider*? (**LR115**).

The grandeur of the fortress of Orthanc, protected behind the walls of Isengard, is portrayed by the use of the themes associated with the White Council (**LR110**) and Saruman himself (**LR109**); but as the company approach the gates they now discover that all the ramparts lie tumbled in ruin. A frantic reiteration of **LR126** is overwhelmed by **S153** with the rumbling sounds of the Entmoot (**LR102**) as a species of subterranean bass. And then even more unexpectedly those sounds are converted into a dancing parody of a polonaise rhythm underpinning the unmistakable tune of Frodo's song from *The Prancing Pony* "There is an inn" (**LR44**). Pippin and Merry are seen lying in the midst of the ruin, the former relaxed in slumber and the other resting and smoking.

In view of the fact that Pippin is "overcome with weariness" it is left to Merry to welcome the travellers to Isengard and explain that they have been left as door-wardens while Saruman is "within". Gandalf, laughing, enquires whether it was Saruman who had appointed them to this role, but Merry explains solemnly that the matter had "escaped his attention" and that the hobbits were carrying out the instructions of Treebeard, "who has taken over the management of Isengard." All of this banter has been conducted to a light-hearted accompaniment formed from existing motives (including **LR 103**) but now, in an outburst of indignation, Gimli bursts out into protests at the hobbits' apparent unconcern at the appearance of their would-be rescuers, and in his excitement goes back to material derived from his cousin Balin on his first visit to Bag End in *The Hobbit*:

LR130



which appears here complete with its original accompanying **H12**. This passage, which has never before displayed the slightest desire to achieve any significance as a motif, will in fact begin to assume that unwarranted designation much later on.

At present the discussion returns to the current situation, and Merry informs the travellers that they are invited to consult with Treebeard on the "north side" of the circle (**LR103** now assuming increased prominence leading to a statement of **LR101**) and Gandalf and the riders depart to an abridged statement of the Rohirrim March. Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli remain with the hobbits, who now proceed to report what has happened since they had last met.

The lengthy narrative describing the events leading to destruction of Isengard (some eleven pages in the hardback edition of *The Two Towers*) avoids monotony not only in the division of the story between two characters—as in the book—but also with the musical structure being fragmented into a number of thematically distinctive sections. Thus the first section, where Pippin describes life in the orc-camp, combines just eight bars repeating the now-established juxtaposition of **LR99** and **LR100**; then it moves to a different section discussing their meeting with Treebeard and the Ents (five bars combining **S153** and **LR102**) before yet another section describing their decision to march to war (five bars of **LR125**). Then Merry takes over the narration for a more extended description of the Ents' silent vigil outside the moonlit walls (**LR126** and **LR127** framing **LR101**), echoing the ending of the previous chapter for nineteen bars. As Saruman sends his army off to war (**LR109)** the Ents remain silent for a further sixteen bars; but then as they begin their assault Pippin takes up the narrative once again. This variety of approach, maintained throughout, avoids the dangers associated with extensive narrations delivered by a single character in many operatic scores from Wagner onwards.

Pippin's story of the assault on the walls (**LR110**) continues to make use of a patchwork of contrasted themes as the Ents burst into the Ring of Isengard culminating in the near-capture of Saruman by the pursuing Quickbeam (**LR124**). The music associated with Saruman's enchantments (**LR126**) in the Battle of the Hornburg accompanies Merry's description of the sudden fires that erupt beneath the ground, and the ents' marching theme **LR125** bursts out as Pippin describes their infuriated reaction before the music subsides into furious mutterings of **LR110.** And when Merry concludes the story with his account of the flooding of Isengard, isolating the tower of Orthanc in the waters, a rippling movement underpins the same combination of **LR110** and **LR109** which had launched the scene and the narrative is finally brought back to that point.

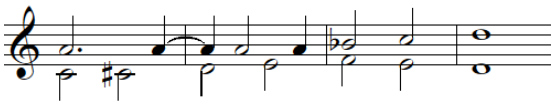
Aragorn is perturbed however by the discovery of a hoard of the hobbits' pipe-weed among the ruins, and suspects that "Wormtongues may be found in other houses than King Théoden's." Here Wormtongue's wily

LR109 is heard in whimsical juxtaposition with the theme of pipe-weed as first encountered in the opening scene if *The Hobbit* (**H4**); but, as will be seen much later, the combination is ominous. In the meantime Gandalf and Théoden return for their conference with Saruman (**S109**) and, as Gandalf observes, this may be dangerous: "A wild beast cornered is not safe to approach." The final orchestral bars underline this warning, as the rising notes of **S109** engender a major third in a chord which changes suddenly and without warning into the minor.

THE VOICE OF SARUMAN

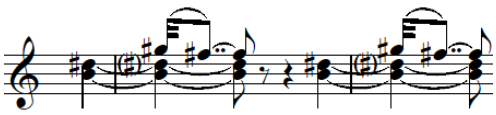
The opening bars, as in the previous chapter, state for the first time a theme which will assume considerable importance for the future throughout the cycle:

LR131



This is the theme that will become that of the *palantíri,* the seeing-stones of Gondor that enable their users to see images of distant objects; one of these is lodged in the fortress of Orthanc, although this is not made apparent for some while. In the meantime this scene follows directly on from the end of the previous chapter, before the doors of Orthanc itself. Gandalf, stepping up to these doors, strikes upon them with his staff enjoining Saruman to come forth. He is answered by Wormtongue (**LR109** brusquely interrupting **LR7**), whom he dismisses contemptuously (**LR110**) before Saruman himself appears:

LR132 [LR3, H6]



As will be seen, Saruman with his politely polished little grace-notes has elevated his style of speech into a precisely honed chip of a theme which he has bequeathed already to the Sackville-Bagginses in the Shire. In this scene its suave exterior will soon be subjected to extreme pressure; but for the present his opening address to Théoden is eloquent to the ultimate degree, with his gently flowing lines designed to appeal to the political persuasion born of pragmatic expediency. As he refers to him effusively as "the thrice-renowned" ("twice" clearly inadequate to his purpose) even the theme of **LR118** to which the king had recovered from his subservience is pressed into use as a luxuriant form of accompaniment. His own **LR109** takes on a more passionate sense of urgency as he emphasises the necessity and benefits of peace.

Éomer attempts to interrupt this torrent of flattery, setting his own **LR107** in opposition to Saruman's **LR132**; and the latter begins to lose its delicate hint of sweet reason with an increasing emphasis on the discordant elements in the harmony. Saruman, controlling his momentary loss of temper, becomes even more supplicatory in his entreaties to the king, with **LR109** merging with **LR118** in an ever-richer succulent harmonic and emotional bath. It takes a real effort of will for Théoden to brusquely reject this appeal; but **LR118** eventually breaks loose into ever-rising repetitions as he recites the crimes committed by Saruman and his forces upon the innocent Rohirrim, finally bursting out into ferocious enunciations of **LR126** as Saruman finally loses his self-control and vents his real contempt for the "House of Eorl." This time it takes him longer to control his temper, but he then turns his attention to Gandalf with ever-richer succulent harmonisations of **LR110** as he recalls their former alliance in the policies of the White Council.

Gandalf's response is one of simple incredulity and indeed ridicule. He declines Saruman's attempts at seduction with contemptuous politeness, making oblique reference to his earlier escape from Orthanc on the back of an eagle (**H44**) in an almost apologetic manner. His own **LR7** combines with Saruman's **LR109** as he makes his own counter-proposal for alliance in opposition to Sauron, providing always that Saruman will forswear his former policies and surrender the tokens of his power as earnest of his goodwill and repentance. Saruman rejects such overtures outright, almost as a jest (**LR10** now jostling with **LR132** in an uneasy partnership); and the theme originally associated with Gandalf's resolution (**H9**) now emerges briefly in the bass. It will gain much greater significance in the following scene.

Gandalf has now reached the final resolution of his attempt to persuade Saruman to listen to reason. **LR109** and **LR110** view with each other in increasingly fervent harmonies, until he reaches the central point. He is no longer Gandalf the Grey, whom Saruman betrayed (**LR85**); he is now Gandalf the White, "who has returned from death" (**LR111** now set in stark and immediate contrast with its former recension). And in a moment of primal reckoning, the theme of the One **(S1**) arises from the bass in threefold repetition as Saruman is expelled "from the Order and from the Council."

As Saruman's staff bursts asunder in his hands, and he crawls away with a cry of defeat (**LR126**) a missile descends from above, to a horror-stricken warning shout from Éomer (**LR127**). Gandalf recognises this as a "parting shot" from Wormtongue, and as Pippin rushes to retrieve the globe of crystal (the merest hint of **H2**), the theme of the *palantír* (**LR131**) is immediately recognisable with its persistent shimmer of vibraphone tone as Gandalf takes custody of the object. This is repeated once again before Treebeard emerges (**LR103**) to enquire about the results of the abortive negotiations with Saruman. He promises to keep the wizard confined within the tower of Orthanc, while Gandalf muses that even if they had forced their way into the stronghold it is unlikely that they would have discovered any "treasure more precious than that which Master Wormtongue threw down to us." In the following orchestral interlude the significance of the scene which we have just witnessed is further emphasised, with **LR85** giving way once again to **LR111** as testimony to Gandalf's resurrection and transformation, and Saruman's **LR109** in one final despairing protest against the condemnation of the Valar (**S1**).

That cry of despair is abruptly truncated as the scene shifts to a camp back on the plains of Rohan, where Merry and Pippin are vainly attempting to sleep on the

uncomfortable ground. We also learn that Pippin is haunted by his brief glimpse into the *palantír* he picked up, and his desire for a further look despite the fact that Gandalf has the stone in close custody "like a hen on an egg." Merry, tired beyond endurance, is totally unsympathetic and immediately falls asleep.

Slowly Pippin rises and creeps towards the sleeping Gandalf, with the persistent rhythm of **H9** now assuming ever-increasing insistence mirroring the nervous thumping of the hobbit's own heart. The hobbit theme **H2,** now forming a duet with itself, merges slowly into Gandalf's **LR85** and an insidious **LR131** as Pippin prises the *palantír* from the sleeping wizard's grasp. Once he has safely abstracted the stone, he sits down to contemplate it (**H2** and **LR131** in a combination over the cardiac rhythm of **H9**). Then he gasps, as the crystal clears and he begins to see visions in its depths. We do not yet know exactly what he perceives, but the motives associated with Sauron beginning with **LR15** and **LR16** leave the listener in no doubt as to its import; and the final menacing appearance of **LR6** brings the hobbit back to consciousness with a piercing scream.

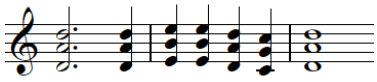
LR6 is combined with **LR85** as Gandalf hurries to the scene, and **LR131** is now given in full force as the rhythm of **H9** continues. When Pippin opens his mouth, the result is shocking. For the voice that emerges is not the high tenor of the young hobbit, but a deep bass some two octaves lower repeating as it by rote the words implanted in his brain by Sauron. How this is practically achieved is left for the producer to realise, but the score indicates that "these notes are to be pre-recorded, if necessary by another (bass) singer and the character should mime to the words." In the audio recording of the score by Volante Opera, Simon Crosby Buttle as producer achieved the semi-visual effect by having the notes sung with amplification by Jasey Hall (who had sung Sauron in the earlier recordings of *Beren and Lúthien* and *The War of Wrath*) while David Fortey as Pippin is heard faintly murmuring the same words at the same time. The contrast with the sound of Pippin's own natural voice a few bars later is even more shocking.

As Pippin now proceeds to describe what he saw in the *palantír* the music returns to that heard previously, but now it is more explicit as the hobbit reports on his vision; and we also hear the voice of the Nazgûl (**LR76**) whom he saw wheeling round the Dark Tower. Then when Sauron himself appears his voice once again speaks through Pippin's mouth with the same horrendous effect, against which the hobbit's feeble evasions make next to no impression. The music becomes almost monothematic as Sauron presses home his mental assault on what he assumes to be a hobbit imprisoned by Saruman (**LR15, LR16** and **LR6** all forming part of a single unchanging texture). The vocal injunctions of the Dark Lord cease, but the thematic texture evolves now into the chant associated with the Ring itself (**LR21**) and this is repeated as Gandalf warns Pippin of Sauron's clear intention to seize him as quickly as possible for interrogation in Mordor. Putting the hobbit to rest for the moment, he turns back in some perplexity to Aragorn and Théoden who have now been roused by the clamour (**LR131** now freed of its **H9** thumping accompaniment).

Aragorn agrees to take charge of the *palantír*, in part as a token of his inheritance from the Kings of Gondor (**LR39**) and the anthem of Númenor **LR62** is heard as Gandalf passes it on to him. The wizard explains that it is perhaps fortunate that he himself was not revealed to Sauron in the stone, but that he will need to remove Pippin from the vicinity before the Enemy realises that he has misread the situation. His own anxiety is underlined by the appearance of a Nazgûl on wings flying over the camp *en route* to Isengard (**LR76**), and he calls for Shadowfax (**LR67**) before he and Pippin hasten away on horseback.

The rhythm of **LR112** now underpins **LR67** and **LR76** as Gandalf and Pippin ride in haste eastward. When Pippin enquires whither they are heading, Gandalf explains that they are bound for the chief city of Gondor, Minas Tirith:

LR133



If the score of *The Two Towers* is played with the chapter *The window on the West* inserted before this point, then this theme will already have been heard when it was introduced by Faramir during his conversation with Frodo and Sam in Henneth Annûn. There it has already been established as a theme associated with the ancient history of the kingdom of Gondor before the days of the Stewards; and it is also heard twice during the following scenes when it describes the distant view of Mount Mindolluin standing above the city of Minas Tirith itself. Its deliberately mediaeval style—the parallel fifths in **LR133** are mirrored by similar intervals moving in contrary motion in the bass—derived from its origins as sketched for a project on King Arthur, but the same theme also appears in the second of my *Three Songs of Faith* without any such significance. In *The Lord of the Rings* it may be seen as symbolising not only Minas Tirith itself but the ancient heritage of Gondor; it will reappear, for example, when Faramir lays down his staff of office as the "last Steward of Gondor" and shortly after to introduce the scene on the slopes of Mindolluin overlooking the city when Aragorn and Gandalf discuss the future destiny of Middle-earth.

At this time the theme appears only once, before the sound of Shadowfax galloping is heard in conjunction with the motive of Gandalf **LR111** as the curtain falls; and the beacons of Gondor are lit summoning aid.

The Ring goes East

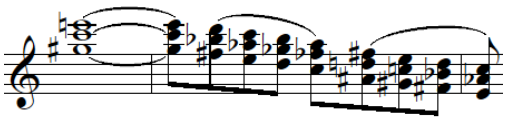
THE BLACK GATE IS CLOSED

The prelude to *The Doom* (then so titled) was the very first section of my connected operatic music written for any Tolkien setting, as far back as the summer of 1968, although it subsequently underwent at least three revisions in the following years before a final and thorough overhaul as recently as 2021. Some parts of the score remained nearly unchanged from its form as established in 1969, although there had already been some regularisation of rhythms and rescoring of the whole (the original score had only one oboe, but included parts for no fewer than six miscellaneous saxophones) made in the late 1990s before the much more sweeping

alterations during the 2021 revision process which incorporated the introduction of many wholly new passages to bring the score into line with the remainder of the cycle.

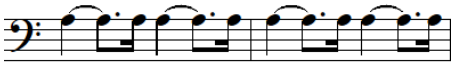
After three preliminary chords, we hear a new chromatic descending theme illustrative of the weary journey of Frodo and Sam towards the land of Mordor:

LR134



This descends onto a long-sustained string *tremolando* out of which emerge two further themes. The second of these is that depicting the hobbits themselves **(H2)** deriving from even earlier sketches written in 1967. But the first, the theme of the Ring, originally assumed a somewhat different form based on a variant of the same double-dotted rhythm, rising in a series of thirds to a final chord of the ninth with an added chromatic alteration at the climax. The Ring theme continued to take this form throughout the early drafts for *The Hobbit* (it remained unaltered in the orchestral suite performed in London in 1971) and was only finally amended to its new chromatically altered form in late 1972, when the original double-dotted rhythm was similarly abandoned. That rhythm does however continue to appear at intervals even in the latest revisions of the score here as a nagging reminder of the power and fascination of the Ring. Indeed it underpins Sam's opening remarks to Frodo as they look out across the marshes from the slopes of the Emyn Muil:

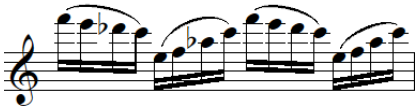
LR135



Before we reach this point, however, we have already also encountered the theme of the Ringwraiths (**LR27**) and the return of the opening chords and **LR134**. But in general the musical structure of the three chapters which constitute *The Ring goes East*, originally composed at a time when the thematic skein of the texture was considerably thinner, is far less closely argued in terms of contrapuntal detail and melodic density than the chapters of *The treason of Isengard* that have preceded it —another very cogent reason for listening to the chapters in the chronological order presented on the recording in preference to the interlaced text of the original book and published scores.

Indeed, apart from isolated references to Gollum (**LR12**, both when talking about the glimpsed eyes that pursue them and the marshy bog at the foot of the cliff face that is impeding their progress) there is no new thematic material at all to be found in the opening scene. It is not until Frodo attempts to clamber down the cliff and thunderclouds roll suddenly in that any new themes are heard, and even then it is merely a version of **LR134** which outlines the fall of hail and rain that obscures their progress:

LR136

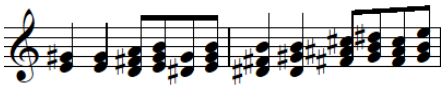


and this figuration, set against the cry of the Nazgûl **LR27** and the theme of the hobbits themselves **H2**, is almost the sole constituent of the remainder of the scene as Sam brings out his rope to retrieve Frodo from the cliff, with only wisps of **LR134** set against Sauron's chromatic **LR16** at occasionally appropriate moments. Sam now ties the rope to a stump, and he and Frodo begin their descent from the Emyn Muil to the accompaniment of the same chords that had opened the scene and a decorated version of **LR134** on celesta and violins.

When they reach the bottom of their descent, Sam is infuriated to realise that will have to abandon their rope as a signal for Gollum, and it is only when he conjures up the name of Galadriel (**LR86**, an entirely new addition to the score in the final 2001 revision) that the rope seemingly untwines itself of its own volition—although Frodo is more inclined to suspect the integrity of Sam's knots. But any argument is immediately forestalled when looking up they see that Gollum is already crawling directly down the cliff-face above, and quickly conceal themselves.

Nearly all of the music for Gollum, both in *The Ring goes East* and *The Hobbit*, was of course fully written in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and I made an early decision during the revision process that, despite some manifest difficulties in the demands of the vocal writing, it would sacrifice the integrity of the characterisation if I made too many alterations to the style of the music written then. There are two principal themes associated with the character—**LR12 (H36)** for the Gollum-creature first encountered by Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, and **H39** for his Sméagol *alter ego* adumbrated by Gandalf in his earlier narration of his history but also already encountered as the more sympathetic character in *The Hobbit* itself. It is the first of these which we hear as Gollum's voice is heard from above as he descends the cliff; and then, when he falls a few feet above the end of the climb and Frodo and Sam rush to seize him, an agitated version of the sword Sting:

LR137 [H26 and **S193]**

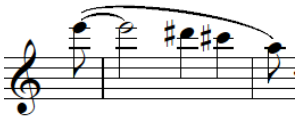


But Frodo lowers his sword as he hears the echo of voices from the past with Gandalf and himself discussing the pity that Gollum deserves (**H39**). (The music here is not quite the same as that heard in *The shadow of the past*, but Tolkien's text too is not precisely identical; perhaps he intended to convey the suspicion that Frodo's recollection was not quite infallible, or alternatively to suggest that he was placing his own interpretation of the conversation.)

Gollum, encouraged by his apparent change of heart, nervously begs for mercy and promises his assistance. But when he learns that the hobbits' destination is

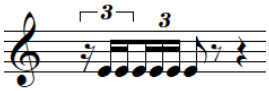
Mordor, he is horrified and tries desperately to dissuade them. Two new themes are heard, one expressing his terror and apprehension as well as his appeals for mercy:

LR138



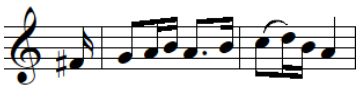
and the other, a rattling rhythmic figure, represents his fear of the torture he has already undergone at the hands of Sauron:

LR139



The scoring of this latter, for strings played with the wood of the bow, deliberately echoes the sound associated in *Beren and Lúthien* with Sauron's torture and interrogation of the hapless Gorlim. Frodo reluctantly agrees to Gollum's request to be allowed a little time for rest (**H39**) but the rattle of **LR139** indicates the treacherous intentions of the wretched creature, who suddenly attempts an escape which fortunately has been anticipated by the hobbits and is quickly intercepted. Frodo tells Sam to bind Gollum with his rope, but it becomes apparent that the very touch of the Elven rope causes suffering to the creature. At the time when this scene was written, the Elvish origins of the rope were somewhat incongruously indicated by the use of the theme associated with the Wood-elves in *The Hobbit* (**H61**) at a time when the vastly expanded musical construction of the Elvish realms in *The Silmarillion* remained entirely unrealised. But when Gollum offers to promise his service "on the Precious" Frodo's implacable reaction returns us to the more developed form of the Ring inscription "One Ring to rule them all" **(LR21**). Gollum gabbles his oath in terror of further torture (**LR138** and **LR139** is close proximity to each other); and his relieved dance when the rope is taken off (**H61**) leads to his one lyrical effusion, when he recalls his riddle of the fish from *The Hobbit* with **H38** as its accompaniment:

LR140

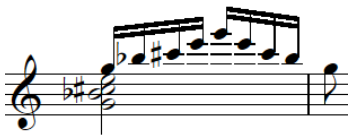


The orchestral interlude which follows develops this material very freely, including an extended cello *cadenza* and leading through Sauron-like chromatics to a contrapuntal web featuring a high solo violin.

While the preceding scene derived closely throughout from the original 1969 score, the following passage of the Dead Marshes was almost entirely reconstructed during the revisions of 2021. Nearly the only elements remaining are the high solo violin depicting the will-o'-the-wisp during the opening lines and the persistent shadowy oscillating woodwind lines which accompanies the action as an unbroken ostinato figuration. In particular, the element of the unquiet warriors preserved beyond death in a state of undead limbo now mirrors the music associated with the similarly spectral Barrow-wight in *Tom Bombadil*, and the chromatically unstable **LR37** rumbles ominously in the lower depths of the orchestra. After Sam has fallen into the water and seen the dead faces beneath the surface, Frodo takes up **LR37** and develops it into an almost catatonic vision of death and stasis as he evokes the nightmarish battle-fields of the Somme and Ypres in one of the most evocatively contemporary of Tolkien's modern allusions. Gollum explains the origin of these preserved corpses, the great battle at the Gates fought some three thousand years before; and **LR82** hints at the involvement of the orcs in a manner that will shortly link to the fanfares of the soldiers at the Black Gate. In the meantime the woodwind flickerings in the orchestra die away as the attention of the orchestra turns to the internal turmoil that is going on in Gollum's mind; **LR12** and **H39** strive with each other for predominance during the following orchestral interlude during which the scene changes to the even more desolate ruined lands produced by many generations of warfare and covered by industrial waste.

The duologue between the two aspects of Gollum's character—the original innocence of Sméagol (**H39**) corrupted by desire for the Ring (**LR12**)—is of course one of the most masterly psychological strokes in *The Lord of the Rings*. It would perhaps have been easy to match this schizophrenic dialogue musically by a continuing development of the contrast between the two themes in the preceding interlude, but even in my original setting I was anxious to avoid too facile a response to Gollum's internal debate, and the original setting of the words was left largely unchanged (including plentiful back-references to **LR135**) with some added references to the 'new' Ring-harmony **LR6.** At the end, when Gollum suddenly resorts to the potential assistance which might be expected from an unexplained 'she', we hear a brief flicker of harmony which harkens back to both *The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit*:

LR141 [S27, H58]

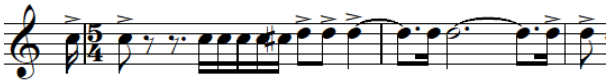


although the significance of this is by no means yet apparent. Sam now rouses Frodo from slumber (variants of **LR134** extend themselves throughout the music) but Gollum is terrified and alarmed by the sudden appearance of a winged Nazgûl (**LR76**) which he believes shows Sauron's knowledge of the whereabouts of the 'Precious'. (In fact this is the Ringwraith despatched by Sauron to Isengard and encountered in the previous chapter, although this is nowhere made clear either in the book or in this adaptation.) The scene ends with a brief recapitulation of Gollum's two themes **LR12** and **H39** both remaining unreconciled.

The final scene of this chapter brings us to the Black Gate at dawn, and **LR82** now develops into a fuller form

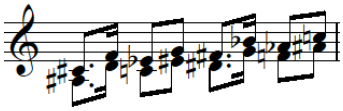
as the trumpets on the ramparts (which will later become more precisely associated with the alliance between Mordor and the southern Haradrim peoples) sound antiphonically between the watchtowers:

LR142



Sam remarks gloomily that they have nowhere further to go, and Gollum smugly observes that he has already tried to tell them this before. But when he understands that Frodo now purposes to enter Mordor, with almost total certainty of capture, he is horrified. Sauron in possession of the Ring will "eat us if he gets it, eat all the world":

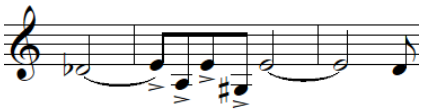
LR143 [H23]



and this theme, expressive of both physical and spiritual hunger, will recur many times from this point onward. Gollum's wailing **LR138** leads to his suggestion that there is another way into Mordor; and Frodo's initial scepticism is undermined by a further flurry of military activity at the Gate itself. From this point the original bald recitative description of the 1969 score gives way to a whole raft of new motifs as Gollum outlines their future course.

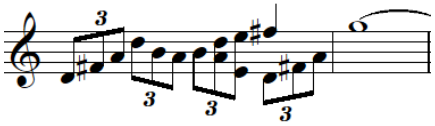
After a brief reference back to **LR134** Gollum tells of a cross-roads in a ring of trees further south:

LR144



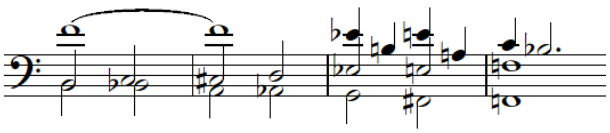
To the right, he tells them, a road goes on down to the river:

LR145



This is the initial germ of the theme later to be associated with Faramir, and is followed by a similarly brief reference to the theme of Boromir (**LR63**) before Gollum proceeds to tell of the road to the left leading up into the mountains:

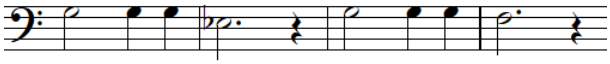
LR146



and the Tower of the Moon, Minas Morgul, which guards it. All of this, he tells them, he knows from tales he heard in the days of his youth; and **LR23**, originally associated with these "tales from the South" and his relationship to his kinsman Déagol, now takes on greater significance as he describes the dangers of the tower that guards the pass. In particular he refers to the "silent watchers" who dwell within Minas Morgul, and **LR26** tells us precisely who these "silent watchers" are. In the meantime all Gollum will add is that the pass leads over the mountains (**LR146**) and through a "dark tunnel" into Mordor. In response to Sam's suspicions he refuses to say if this pass is guarded (**LR134**) and Frodo remains in doubt.

Abruptly a sound of singing breaks out close above their heads as an army of Haradrim march across the stage towards the Black Gate:

LR147



The gate opens to admit them, with trumpets (**LR142**) ringing out to welcome them. Frodo, alarmed by their narrow escape, agrees to follow Gollum's proposed lead; and the latter presses them to leave urgently as **LR134** tumbles down into darkness and the fanfares fade away.

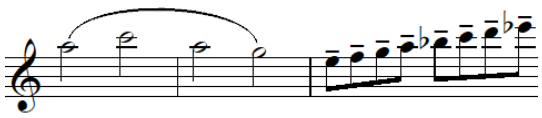
The words given to the Haradrim are not in the original book sung by the armies at all; they are a traditional hobbit-rhyme recited by Sam when he asks whether the southern forces are accompanied by "oliphaunts" (they are not, although the pachyderms do emerge at a later stage in the narrative). This is one of the very few instances in *The Lord of the Rings* text where words are bodily transferred in this manner from one character to another (it was frequently necessary in *The Silmarillion*). Generally, as Tom Shippey has observed, Tolkien's vocabulary and diction are carefully distinguished and tailored between those speaking at any given point; and Christopher Tolkien's analysis of the sketches in *The History of Middle-earth* indicates the extreme care taken by the author in this respect. I must admit that when I wrote the text for this scene back in 1969 I was far from realising precisely how extremely this allocation of idioms had been undertaken; and it seemed quite appropriate to assign a semi-nonsensical animal song to a body of marching soldiers, certainly no more incongruous than *It's a long way to Tipperary.* In retrospect this was almost certainly an error of taste, and in any event it is unlikely that Sauron would have permitted even his allies to take a light-hearted or jocular approach to the imminence of war and battle. But the rather vulgar tune itself, with its crude harmonies, performs a valuable function in characterising the southern armies at several points in the score and was therefore permitted to stand unrevised. In fact it was actually extended, by adding back some lines of the original verse that had been omitted in 1969.

THE WINDOW ON THE WEST

The prelude opens with the theme of Faramir (**LR145**) but this is immediately succeeded by that associated with his brother Boromir (**LR63**) providing a succinct portrait of the two sons of the Steward of Gondor, and their role

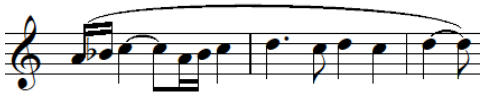
as guardians of the Númenórean province of Ithilien through which the hobbits are now journeying southwards. These two themes are then succeeded by a third, also associated with Faramir:

LR148



All of this material formed part of the original 1969 score (albeit considerably differently treated), but it is followed then immediately by a completely new theme depicting the hobbits resting in the bracken with Frodo asleep:

LR149



A final wisp of **LR148** is interrupted by **LR143** as Sam calls out quietly to Gollum, asking him if he can find go hunting for some food suitable for a hungry hobbit. The latter is quite amenable—"Sméagol always helps" (**LR138**)—but when he shortly returns with two conies and realises that Sam intends to build a fire and stew them, he is seriously alarmed at the prospect that this may attract the attention of enemies.

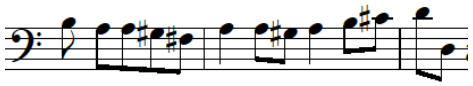
But Gollum is right. No sooner has Sam kindled the flames under his cooking-pot and gone to rouse Frodo from his slumbers than the fire blazes up and catches the bracken alight. The scouting men of Ithilien rapidly seek out the source of the smoke and capture Frodo and Sam (Gollum has hastily sought refuge in the fern). Faramir, leading the scouts, introduces himself (**LR145**) and asks for the hobbits to identify themselves and their errand. Frodo explains briefly that they have set out from Imladris, and the flicker of **LR64** and the mention of the name of Boromir rapidly engages the attention of their captors. This was the first compositional appearance of **LR64** in the original 1968 score, predating its inclusion as **LR46** in the song *Strider* composed some six years later. It was not until sometime in the 1980s that the complete setting of Boromir's riddle, as heard in *The Council of Elrond*, was finally brought to a conclusion.

For the moment however Faramir has no leisure to pursue this matter further, since he is arranging an ambush to attack the men of Haradrim marching to the assistance of Mordor. Echoes of **LR142** are heard as he leaves to complete this task, leaving Mablung and Damrod to guard the hobbits and complain of treachery of the "Southrons." Faramir's voice is heard summoning his men to battle (**LR148**), and the marching song of the Haradrim is heard once again (**LR147**) overshadowed by the noise of ringing swords which Sam likens to the sound of "a thousand smiths all smithying together"). The ambush is brought to a conclusion with the slaughter of the elephant leading the Southron army, and the fanfares of **LR142** die away as Faramir returns to the clearing.

He now explains to the hobbits that Boromir was his brother, and how he has come to the conclusion that he was slain. In a long narrative dominated by variants of **LR63** he tells of hearing the call of Boromir's horn (**LR74**) before he experienced a vision beside the waters of Anduin at dusk when he seemed to see the boat bearing his brother's body (**LR98**) passing down the river to the sea. Frodo confirms that the description would indeed seem to match that of Boromir as they departed, and bids Faramir return to the defence of Minas Tirith with all possible speed. Faramir agrees that they must leave urgently, and that he will escort them to a place of refuge where they may rest (**LR145** in immediate conjunction with **LR148**).

The scene progressively changes as, during their conversation on the march, Faramir correctly identifies that "Isildur's Bane" referenced in Boromir's riddle might well have been a cause for contention in the Fellowship of the Ring (**LR135**) especially since he was well aware of Boromir's ambitions for military glory (**LR68**). But, he emphasises, he "would not take this thing, if it lay by the highway:"

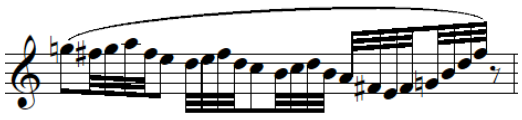
LR150



At this point he indicates that he will need to bind the eyes of the hobbits to protect the location of the refuge; Frodo agrees, but in the meantime Sam has noticed that they are apparently also being observed by someone else following them, and **LR12** correctly identifies this mysterious pursuer as Gollum.

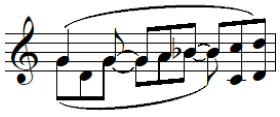
The music depicting the journey along the stream to the falls and cave of Henneth Annûn revolves around the theme of Faramir **LR145** in conjunction with the sound of rushing water:

LR151



and a rising theme which will also recur

LR152

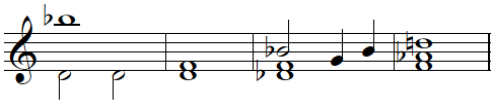


before the light reveals to the unbound eyes of the astonished hobbits the refracted glow of the sunset through the waters which curtain the interior of the cave. As the men enter and settle down for their evening meal the music of **LR149** returns—clearly here reflecting the general notion of rest rather than specifically associated with the hobbits as before. Faramir asks Anborn about the stalker that he too has glimpsed among the trees on their journey (**LR12**) and the latter suggests that it might have been just a squirrel. Faramir, reluctantly persuaded

but also sceptical, turns back to the hobbits (**LR149** again) for further conversation.

At this point we hear for the first time in the cycle a new version of the melody originally associated in *The Silmarillion* with the House of Húrin and Númenor (**S113**) and subsequently in *The Lord of the Rings* with the realms of the Númenórean exiles (**LR62**). It now takes on a new form, translated from its original forthright nature into the minor mode, as a depiction of the same realms in decline, with Gondor being the only survivor and that under threat:

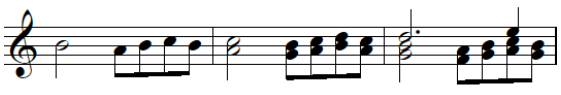
LR153 [LR62}



Although it is Faramir who first introduces this notion of Gondor in decline, we will discover shortly that it reflects the pessimism of his father Denethor about the future of the realm over which he rules as Steward. In the meantime it moves into even bleaker spheres as Faramir talks about the ancient rites of the Dúnedáin, in the theme (**LR133**) which with its mediaeval *organum* evokes the mists of a remote antiquity. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising when Sam shifts the talk to the Elves with reference to the even more venerable music associated with Gondolin and his rapturous evocation of the realm of Lórien (**LR86**). Faramir is captivated by his talk of the beauty of Galadriel, but the conversation soon strays into more dangerous waters as Sam makes reference to Boromir's desire for the Ring (**LR65**) and Faramir's consequent sudden recognition of the exact nature of "Isildur's Bane." **LR75** and **LR7** are suddenly heard in baleful combination as he stands up, drawing his sword; but then with a rueful laugh he rejects the temptation, with a reference back to his earlier statement **LR150** when he had already refused to countenance its use.

He reassures the hobbits of his protection (**H2**) but asks what their intentions are for the Ring; Frodo explains wearily that his task is to destroy it (**LR70**) and collapses exhausted into Faramir's arms (**LR134**). In a long orchestral nocturne the music formerly associated with the waterfall is slowed down and furled in upon itself in a curling counterpoint:

LR154 [LR151]



before the return of **LR149** as Faramir rouses Frodo from sleep regarding another matter on which his counsel is sought. The music of the nocturne **LR154** now leads back to the mediaeval parallel fifths of **LR133** as the scene emerges onto the outside of the cave above the falls and the moon setting over the distant peak of Mindolluin to the west.

Faramir steps up beside Anborn, who has now contrived to find the stalker sought earlier and can definitely confirm that is not a squirrel (**LR12** once again). But Frodo admits that Gollum is their guide and companion, and is only seeking fish to eat (wisps of **LR140** confirm this). Anborn asks his captain whether he should shoot, but Frodo intervenes to ask whether he may go down to him and Faramir agrees if he acts swiftly. The more rapid motion of **LR151** is set against **LR12** as Frodo descends to Gollum by the pool, and lures him onto the land where Anborn is able to seize him. The song of the fish (**LR140**) wails forlornly as the captive is bound, and **LR133** returns as the scene changes back to the cave as before.

Gollum is brought bound before Faramir, but refuses to answer his questions other than to state that he has not been to Henneth Annûn previously and promise never to return. **LR134** is heard as Faramir releases Gollum into Frodo's custody, but he is still unable to discover their destination until Frodo tells him that they are looking for the pass into Mordor which Faramir identifies as Cirith Ungol (**LR146**). He attempts to dissuade Frodo from this course—"there is some dark evil that dwells in the pass"—but admits that their errand is probably doomed in any event. He bids them farewell with "the good will of all good men" and the rising notes of **LR152** leads to a grandiose statement of **LR145** as the curtain falls.

CIRITH UNGOL

The stormy opening prelude of this chapter was written at great speed in less than an hour one freezing winter evening on a London tube journey from Temple to Wimbledon Park, and remained virtually unchanged some fifteen years later when it was incorporated into the depiction of the thunderstorm in Scene Three of *The Children of Húrin*, with only the interpolated references to Gollum's motif included in the original 1969 score omitted. And the only further change made when the passage was restored here was the additional insertion of two statements of the Cirith Ungol theme **LR146** at the outset. The following scenes however were by comparison very substantially overhauled in the 2021-22 revision process, in order to incorporate the multitude of thematic cross-references that were now required and warranted.

As outlined in the analysis of *The Children of Húrin* the principal elements in the prelude consist of a fugal treatment of **S17** and violent outbursts of **S119,** together with interpolated brief references to Gollum **(LR12**). As the curtain rises we hear a slowed-down reference to **LR144** setting the scene at the Cross-roads; and as Gollum leads on the hobbits and tells them that they must now turn eastwards, we hear a fleeting reference to **LR23** with its significance as the theme of the Tower of the Moon. But it is quickly interrupted as, in further flashes of lightning, a statue is seen of an old King of Gondor with its severed head crowned with a circlet of flowers; and the theme of Númenor **LR62** now re-emerges in triumphant mode as Frodo interprets this as an optimistic omen. They turn rapidly away as the storm bursts in full violence, again assuming the same form as that heard in *The Children of Húrin*, as the scene changes to the mountainside above Minas Morgul (**LR23**).

The theme of the Ring **LR7** emerges stealthily in the bass as Gollum leads the hobbits past the gates of the haunted City, but voices rising from within the ramparts now declaim the Ring-verse in the Black Speech as the doors of the fortress open and the armies of Mordor issue forth to war (**LR21**). Three different themes all

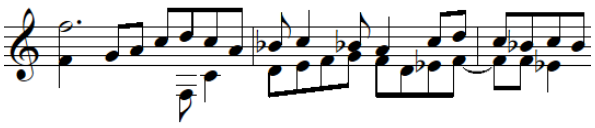
associated with the Ringwraiths are now combined simultaneously—**LR76, LR136** and **LR26**—as the Lord of the Nazgûl leads his forces out to battle; but his advance is halted by his half-sensed perception of the Ring in the vicinity (**LR7**) and the hobbit theme **H2** is heard as Frodo resists the temptation to put the Ring on his finger as he had previously done at Weathertop. With the assistance of Sam he successfully forces his hand back to its normal position, and the thwarted Ringwraith impatiently urges his horse forward into the westlands. The earlier combination of **LR76**, **LR136** and **LR26** gives way once more to the themes of the storm **(S17** and **S119**) and a downward swirl of **LR134** and fading echoes of **LR27** as the marching armies recede.

The following interlude, as the scene changes to the pass higher into the mountains, begins with slower statements of **LR134** and two brief cadenzas for solo viola and celesta respectively to represent the ascent of the 'straight' and 'winding' stairs which lead the way upwards. Gollum's **LR12** is smothered by partial statements of **LR21** and a series of glacially shifting chromatic chords as the light discloses a watchtower high above the pass, and the harmonies of **LR141** underline Sam's disquiet at the sight. Gollum reassures them that all ways are inevitably guarded (**LR148** submerging into **LR134**), but that "hobbits must try some way."

Slow repetitions of **LR146** underpin the muttered conversation between Sam and Frodo, and **H39** returns as Gollum creeps surreptitiously away up the pass while the thoughts of the hobbits drift from the Ring (**LR21**) to memories of the Shire (**H1**) and then, with a sudden start, to **LR12** as Sam realises that Gollum has vanished. Frodo is philosophical about this—"if he's false, he's false"—but Sam's continuing suspicions are underlined as the insistent repetitions of **LR146** return. It is at the suggestion of the latter that Frodo decides that it would be possible for him to sleep "even here" and to ever-richer textures built around **LR149** he lays his head in Sam's lap. Sam at first tries to keep watch, but quickly he too succumbs to weariness.

As the two hobbits sleep a contrapuntally complicated texture unfolds in the orchestra. In the bass the theme **LR28** associated from its earlier appearance with the companionship between Frodo and Sam unwinds slowly, while above various flowing phrases evoke the pastoral themes of the Shire:

LR155

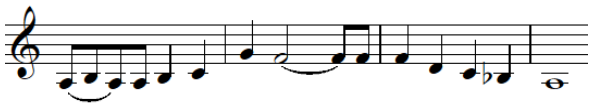


This gentle paragraph is subtly interrupted by the themes **LR12** and **H39** as Gollum returns from his mysterious errand and finds the hobbits trustingly asleep. The music of **LR155** returns as he stretches out his hand towards Frodo in a gentle caress; but at that moment Sam awakes (**H2**) and the moment is lost. Gollum at first is tender towards the hobbits (**LR148**) but when Sam refers to him as a "sneak" he suddenly revolts. He complains of hunger and thirst (**LR143**) but Sam is impervious to this. He awakens Frodo (**LR155** again) and as **LR149** emerges the warmth of the earlier scene comes close to recapture; but it is now overlaid with **LR12** as Gollum rejects any further attempts at reconciliation and leads them on towards the "last lap" before their crossing into Mordor. **H39** is now brusquely banished as a rapid but resolute statement of **LR12** leads speedily to the next scene.

This is initially set outside the entrance to Shelob's Lair, but after a brief initial conversation all three enter the tunnel and all light fades. The music associated with Shelob is of course an exact reflection of that of her ancestor Ungoliant in *Fëanor*, and the opening of the scene mirrors that of Scene Four in the earlier score (**S27**). (The music here was indeed originally written for *Fëanor*, and the version included at this point in the 1969 setting of *The Doom* was considerably different and less complex.) The quasi-fugal development of **S27** makes the nature of the menace clear, even before its exact identity is disclosed, to any listener familiar with *The Silmarillion* and the limping 7/8 rhythm and twelve-tone style are both characteristic—much more so that in the case of the less 'elemental' Mirkwood spiders in *The Hobbit.*

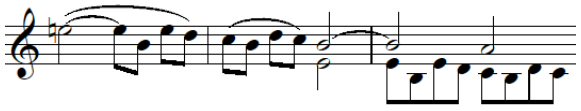
It is only when the hobbits are directly menaced by the monstrous spider that Sam's thoughts turn towards the Star-glass gifted to Frodo by Galadriel as a "light in dark places" **(S182** leading into **LR72**). This overwhelms the violent outbursts of **S27** and immediately a further welter of themes associated with the glass, and its origins in the Star of Eärendil, burst into bloom—firstly Frodo's chant to the star as a symbol of hope:

LR156 [S181]



and then the personal theme of the transfigured Eärendil himself

LR157 [S176]



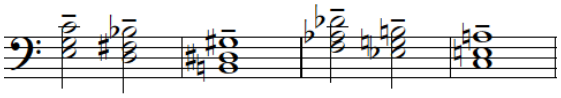
as Frodo advances towards Shelob and drives her back into the shadows. But the respite is only temporary, and the convolutions of **S27** return as Frodo and Sam find themselves trapped by the spider's webs. It is only when Frodo recalls his possession of Sting (**H26**) and its virtues as an Elven blade (**LR86**) that they are able to cut their way free (to echoes of the battle music from *The Fall of Gondolin*).

A scream of **LR146** heralds the emergence of the hobbits from Shelob's Lair back into the light, but their escape is far from assured. Sam is seized from behind by Gollum (**LR12**) who throws his own promise of loyalty (**LR138**) back in the hobbit's face. The music for the following fights, firstly between Sam and Gollum and then between Sam and Shelob, is constructed entirely out of existing motifs (**H2**, **H36, LR141, LR12, H26, LR137, S27, S182, S119, H61** and **LR146**) with even

Sam's intoned invocation to Elbereth bringing a return of the theme associated in *The Silmarillion* with the Valar (**S2**).

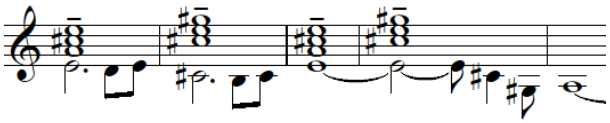
Similarly the music for Sam's lament over the seemingly dead Frodo, and his decision to the take the Ring and fulfil the quest even if this means that he must abandon his master, is totally composed of existing themes and was almost entirely recast from its 1969 original version during the process of revision in 2021. The opening paragraph consists of a complete restatement of the melody **LR28** which epitomises the emotional and spiritual bond between Frodo and Sam, but the latter's outburst of grief is suddenly stilled (**LR15**) by the realisation that his master is dead. The theme of death, not heard since *The Silmarillion*, now returns balefully:

LR158 [S85]



The following return of **LR28** leads Sam back to recollections of the conclusions of the Council of Elrond: firstly **LR69** underlining the need to destroy the Ring, and then **LR70** as he realises that the responsibility to do this has now devolved on him. He composes his master's body, takes the Ring from around his neck, and to a final outburst of **LR28** bids him farewell. And a final orchestral repetition of **LR69** is now accompanied by a new phrase which will recur:

LR159 [LR69]



At this moment, as Sam turns away from Frodo's body, he hears a call from beyond the brow of the pass. Orcs are coming from both directions, roused by the noises and signs of battle. Fragments of orc-themes (mainly variants of **H30**) appear muttering around **H2** as Sam hastily puts on the Ring to become invisible (**H41**), and there is a sudden flurry of **LR141** as the orcs carry the body of their discovered "spy" back into their tunnels.

In the light of lanterns carried by the two orc-captains, Sam is also seen hovering invisibly in the shadows eavesdropping on their conversation. The almost light-hearted banter between the two hardened military veterans—almost entirely unchanged from the version originally composed in 1969—forms a stark and dramatic contrast to the deep tragedy of the preceding scene. The threat of Ungoliant's presence **LR141** which haunts the locality is reduced almost to triviality as Shagrat and Gorbag discuss the presence of Gollum as her "sneak"; and the skipping rhythms associated with the hobbits undermine even the serious intent of Gorbag's warning that the more dangerous of the intruders remains not only uncaptured but undetected. It is only when Shagrat reminds his fellow-officer of their firm injunctions that all captives are to retained for examination by Lugburz (the orcs' name for the Dark Tower) and Gorbag's casual dismissal of their prisoner as "nothing but carrion now" that we are told that Frodo is not dead after all; Shelob would not have killed a victim that she intended to eat, since "she doesn't suck cold blood." Sam is silently horrified by this discovery, but Gorbag regards the situation as a humorous enhancement of the situation; and Shagrat remarks that he will ensure that their captive is meanwhile imprisoned in the topmost chamber of the tower. Sam attempts to rush after the captains as they enter their subterranean gate, but he is too late and collapses unconscious outside the closed doors while the orcs are heard carousing piratically within.

The War of the Ring

MINAS TIRITH

The music for this section of the *Lord of the Rings* cycle was almost entirely composed during the period 2021-22 when the final work on the whole was undertaken (only *The ride of the Rohirrim* and the prelude to *The Black Gate opens* existed in earlier orchestral sketches, and even the latter was substantially revised); but of course it makes plentiful use of already written thematic material, now combined into new contrapuntal passages and juxtapositions.

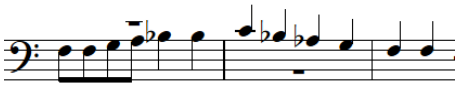
The action of the cycle returns to the war in the west, and the ride of Gandalf and Pippin to the Gondorian fortress of Minas Tirith. The music returns the listener similarly to the conclusion of the chapter *The voice of Saruman*, with a literal orchestral repetition of the final section of that composition shorn of the vocal parts heard previously. As the curtain rises and the day dawns Gandalf rides to the gates of the city, a fully declaimed statement of **LR133** suggests the iconic scene in the opening of *The Return of the King* where the beacons of Gondor are fired as a request for aid. This episode, given a superlatively cinematic treatment in the Peter Jackson film with the camera soaring panoramically high above the mountains, would be more or less impossible to realise in a theatrical context; but here the archaic majesty of the theme itself goes some way to provide a similar sense of perspective; and the unexpectedly abrupt conclusion of Howard Shore's soaring interlude in the film (where admittedly the commitment of the Rohirrim to supply the requested aid remains in doubt) is avoided, as the mediaeval harmonies give way to the themes of Shadowfax (**LR67**) and Gandalf the White (**LR111**) superimposed over the sound of galloping hoofbeats (**LR112**). All of these themes continue as the guards salute Gandalf by his Elvish title of Mithrandir, and he calls upon them to let him pass as his errand to Denethor as Steward of Gondor is urgent. As he warns them that "you have come to the end of the Gondor you have known" the opening of the Númenor theme **LR62** is heard and in its closing bars it is overlaid with **LR65** as Gandalf and Pippin enter the city.

Before the come before Denethor, Gandalf whispers some urgent injunctions to Pippin, warning him that the Steward is not like Théoden (**LR108**) "a kindly old man." After a warning statement of **LR68** hinting at Denethor's military ambitions, the theme of Boromir as

the heir who incorporates those ambitions is repeated twice (**LR63**) before the doors to the Hall of the Stewards open and Gandalf and Pippin are permitted to enter (the orchestra recalls Aragorn's apostrophe to the glory of Gondor heard originally at his first distant vision of the White Mountains (**LR105**).This music continues as Gandalf hails Denethor by his full titles, and advises him that he comes with "tidings and counsel."

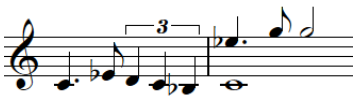
Denethor's response is dour and bitter as he pointedly responds with the use of Gandalf's theme in its 'Grey' (**LR85**) rather than its 'White' version. And the reason for his gloom is immediately apparent: he has already heard of the death of his son and heir (**LR98**)—a fact that is known to the audience thanks to Faramir's earlier narration, but not to the supposedly omniscient wizard, who is indeed left at somewhat of a loss for suitable words. It is left to Pippin to supply these, as he kneels before the aged Denethor and swears allegiance to him in "payment of his debt" (**LR133** is solemnly declaimed by the orchestra):

LR160



and towards the end of the administration of this oath, a new theme appears beneath the repetitions of **LR65** which will represent the loyalty imposed upon all subjects of the realm of Gondor:

LR161



which will apply not only to Pippin himself, but later to Beregond and Imrahil as representatives of the armed might of the land. At the end of the oath this combines with the hobbits' **H2** as Pippin rises from his knees.

Denethor's first injunction to his new vassal is to tell him the full tale of Boromir's heroic death (**LR63**); but Gandalf swiftly intervenes, the 'white' version of his theme **LR111** now overriding the earlier 'grey' version **LR85** as he describes his actions at Isengard and his overthrow of Saruman (**LR109** overwhelmed as before by **S1**). But Denethor seems oddly unimpressed by this—"I know already sufficient of these deeds for my own counsel"—and **LR131** makes it clear that the source of this knowledge is his own possession of a *palantír.* Gandalf immediately becomes suspicious, fearing that Denethor like Saruman may have been corrupted by Sauron through his use of a seeing stone; but Denethor adamantly declares that he and no other man is the ruler of Gondor as its steward (**LR65**) "unless the King should come again." He now in his turn takes up Faramir's depressed minor-key version of the Númenor theme (**LR153**) adopting a defiant tone in the fact of any rival, and it is left to Gandalf to make use of Aragorn's theme **LR39** to emphasise that the wizard is himself also in the role of a steward for the whole of Middle-earth. Angry reiterations of **LR7** and **LR11** compete with **LR65** as Gandalf, sweeping Pippin before him, strides angrily from the hall and the orchestra takes up Aragorn's hymn to Gondor **LR105** as the scene changes to the walls of Minas Tirith.

Here Pippin is discovered with Beregond, the captain of the Steward's guard, looking out across the plains of the Pelennor Fields towards the Cross-roads (**LR144**) and the pass of Cirith Ungol.(**LR146**). It is from that direction and the city of Minas Morgul (**LR23**), explains Beregond, that of late there have emerged Black Riders (**LR26**) and he is startled to learn that Pippin has already encountered these creatures of darkness (**LR25** now emerges as a sinister undercurrent in the bass). But he remains optimistic; the Lord Denethor, Beregond declares, sees far (**LR131**) and has even been able to search out the mind of the Enemy **(LR7** and **LR16** rumbling in uneasy alliance). But this hopeful mood is shattered by the cry of a Nazgûl from the air **(LR76**) which Pippin immediately recognises as the distant voice of a dreaded Ringwraith, and to the sombre tones of **LR26** Beregond admits his fears that Minas Tirith may indeed fall. As the shadow passes, Pippin (**H2**) regains some good cheer and Beregond explains that the exploits of Faramir in Ithilien (**LR145**) still provide some prospects for victory even within the constrained field of operations through which he is forced to manoeuvre. The melody of Gondor's restoration returns like a message of forlorn hope (**LR105**) as Beregond leaves Pippin to watch.

After a while Gandalf joins the hobbit on the ramparts, and the music associated with him following his fall in Moria conveys the sense of exhaustion which afflicts even the wizard. He warns Pippin that he will be called to fulfil his duties at sunrise on the following day (**LR161**) and then, suddenly recollecting himself, realises that there will be no dawn as the darkness spreads from Mordor. The 'grey' version of his theme **LR85** dies away into silence.

THE PASSING OF THE GREY COMPANY

The prelude takes up the melody of Aragorn's *Where now is the horse and the rider?* **(LR115**) extended it in repeated phrases and wrapping itself around Aragorn's own theme **LR39** to illustrate the claimant to the crown of Gondor preparing himself to take up his responsibility and assume his destiny, as he will indeed do by the conclusion of this chapter. In the meantime the scene has returned to the kingdom of Rohan, and the time immediately following the departure of Gandalf and Pippin (and hence a couple of days before the events portrayed in the preceding chapter). This is yet another example of Tolkien's practice of 'interlace'—chronologically shifting the events of individual chapters not only to increase the narrative tension (with characters in one scene not aware of events elsewhere, even when the audience are), but also to ensure a continuity of mood and emotion which works superbly in support of a unified musical and harmonic structure.

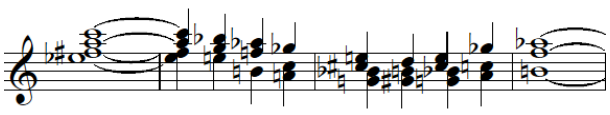
The gathering of the forces of the west as they prepare to ride to the aid of Gondor (as in Tolkien's original text, there is never the slightest suspicion that the Rohirrim will not honour their oath), is described in a series of relatively short scenes which bring the return of a whole series of established themes. Firstly Aragorn outlines his

intention to ride himself to Minas Tirith with the King (**LR20, LR108, LR115, LR67**) and then Éothain enters in haste (**LR118**) to announce that further horsemen are now coming up behind them (**LR39**). Éomer challenges them (**LR107** over **LR112**) and as they identify themselves as Aragorn's kinsman Halbarad and Elrond's twin sons Elladan and Elrohir, the whole of the *Strider* song as heard originally in *The Prancing Pony* is repeated as they make their entrance. Théoden welcomes them (**LR118**) and then he and Éomer pass from the stage as we hear once again the march of the Rohirrim (**LR120,** complete with its triumphal flourish **LR123**). Elladan now conveys to Aragorn a message from his father Elrond (**LR48**), warning him that if he is in haste, he should "remember the Paths of the Dead" (**LR37**, the theme already associated with the dead armies of bygone Ages). A quiet restatement of **LR48** leads into the following scene, which takes place the following morning.

Legolas, Gimli and Merry discuss the absence of Aragorn, who has isolated himself with Halbarad in "a high chamber" but has apparently not slept (**LR39** once again at full length). Théoden and his court now enter (**LR120** and **LR123** in combination as before) and Merry seizes the opportunity to pledge his loyalty to the king in an action that mirrors that of Pippin the previous chapter. But whereas Pippin's oath in both its wording and musical syntax is dictated by Denethor, here Merry employs the melody associated with the Shire (**H1**) in a form that almost exactly replicates Bilbo's song at the end of *The Hobbit* and Théoden cheerfully adopts the same idiom when he adopts him in a paternal fashion. Éomer interrupts them to point out the absence of Aragorn (**LR107** over **LR120** and **LR112**) and the latter now appears (**LR39**) to enquire of Théoden when he expects to arrive at Minas Tirith for the succour of Gondor. On learning that this may be several days yet, he advises the king that the need for haste compels him to seek a faster route through the Paths of the Dead. The ominously chromatic **LR37** jars beneath **LR39** as assures Éomer that this is not the fatal course of action that the latter fears (the theme of Númenor **LR62** now rising over the continuation of **LR37**) and that the two of theme will meet again "though all the hosts of Mordor lay between." Théoden reluctantly accepts his resolve (**LR108**) before once again leaving (**LR120** and **LR123** as before).

When Aragorn remains alone with Legolas and Gimli he informs them of the reason for his sudden decision to change his plans. He has looked in the Stone of Orthanc (**LR131**) and, having wrested control of the *palantír* from Sauron, he has been able to discern a new and unexpected danger that clearly threatens Gondor:

LR162



This is the theme representing the Corsairs of Umbar, renegade Númenóreans now allied to the forces of the Haradrim and hence associates of Mordor, whose ships threaten the southern coasts of Gondor. The origin of these peoples in Númenor is indicated by brief disjuncted references to the opening phrase of **LR62** which then assumes greater dominance as Aragorn accepts that in the absence of any other help he has to take on the burden of foiling any seaborne invasion himself; and it is for that reason that he is compelled to take the Paths of the Dead. For, he recalls, Malbeth the Seer had long before prophesied that the renegade warriors of Erech who had broken their promises to fight against Sauron, and whose undead spirits were now awaiting the call of the heir of Isildur, would fulfil that oath and finally achieve rest. The oscillating music associated with the dead in the Dead Marshes surrounds the words of Malbeth as quoted by Aragorn, and the melody of the Barrow-wight (another representative of the unquiet dead) is now heard at full length (**LR37**). Legolas, who as an immortal Elf has no fear of the mortal dead, at once agrees to accompany him (**LR61**) and Gimli, once he is assured that "the forgotten people will not have forgotten how to fight" (**H11**) more reluctantly assents to the proposal. To increasingly heroic statements of the theme associated with the *palantír* **LR131** over an accelerated **LR37** Aragorn bids them to follow him to the Stone of Erech.

At that moment **LR35** proclaims the arrival of Éowyn (**LR108** at once succeeded by **LR119**), horrified by her discovery of Aragorn's apparently suicidal intentions. At first her **LR119** contends with his **LR39** as she attempts to dissuade him from his course; and then, as her own desperation to escape from the claustrophobic atmosphere of her uncle's court becomes apparent, he attempts to recall her to a sense of patriotic and personal loyalty and duty (increasingly passionate statements of **LR120).** She has, he contends, no "errand to the South."

At this point in the original text Tolkien significantly changes her mode of address to Aragorn. In an appendix on the subject of translation in *The Lord of the Rings* he explains his reasoning for this: "The Westron tongue made in the pronouns of the second person…a distinction, independent of number, between 'familiar' and 'deferential forms." He then proceeds to expand this in a footnote:

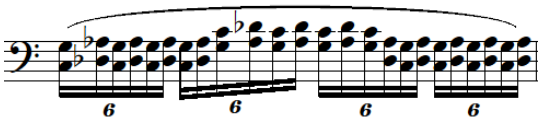
> In one or two places an attempt has been made to hint at these distinctions by an inconsistent use of *thou.* Since this pronoun is now unusual and archaic it is employed mainly to represent the use of ceremonious language; but a change from *you* to *thou, thee* is sometimes meant to show, there being no other means of doing this, a significant change from the deferential, or between men and women normal, forms to the familiar.

This is exactly such a point in the original narrative. Until this moment Éowyn has always addressed Aragorn formally, in the proper manner to be adopted towards honoured strangers; now abruptly she shifts to the 'familiar' terminology in use between intimate friends and lovers (comparisons may be drawn with contemporary French and German usage, although in both the modern languages the distinctions nowadays are less clear-cut than in previous generations). And I have endeavoured to emphasise the grammatical 'change of gear' (both here and at two later points in the dialogue) by a corresponding alteration in orchestral technique. Throughout most of *The Lord of the Rings* (and indeed the remainder of my Tolkien cycle) the use of orchestral strings has conformed to standard romantic practice, with multiple desks of players on each orchestral line; but where Tolkien has suddenly and dramatically changed to the more intimate mode, I have mirrored this by reducing the orchestral strings down to single players as in the manner of a chamber ensemble. And that is what

happens here, as Éowyn in both her words and the language she employs to express them, declares her love for Aragorn. His inability to respond to such a statement in similar terms is immediately apparent in a minor-key outburst of **LR39** as he abruptly departs from the hall leaving Éowyn in despair (**LR123**).

The orchestral interlude which follows brings to the fore the danger threatening Gondor which Aragorn seeks to avert. The musical material **LR162** derives from a piece entitled *Umbar* which I wrote for solo organ in 2015 or so (but omits the latter part of the work which utilised material from the earlier keyboard version of the *Akallabêth*). As the light grows again to disclose the entrance to the Paths of the Dead, Aragorn summons the spirits of the Oathbreakers to follow him to the Stone of Erech, and an offstage chorus intones the melody **LR37** over isolated wisps of drifting woodwind which once again echo the atmosphere of the Dead Marshes:

LR163



As the Grey Company pass through the Paths of the Dead, Legolas comments that the dead are now indeed following them as insubstantial ghosts, and Elladan agrees that they have been summoned. Aragorn challenges them: "Oathbreakers, why have ye come?" (note once again the significant use of an archaic second person pronoun, this time employing the more 'deferential' form), and the King of the Dead (a counter-tenor or mezzo-soprano singer) gives a chilling response: "To fulfil our oath, and have peace."

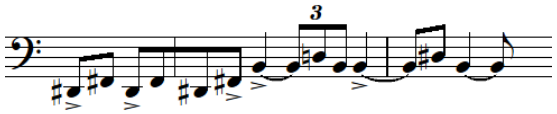
To the striding melody originally associated with Gil-galad, and now affirming the status of the former Elvenking with the last alliance between Elves and Men now in the process of a final renewal, Aragorn declares his demands: that the host of the oathbreakers should follow him to Pelargir at the mouth of the Anduin, and should "clean [the land] of the servants of Sauron." With these words Halbarad unfurls the banner of the Kings of the Númenórean realms, as Aragorn establishes his claim as the heir of Isildur to the crown of Gondor; and the curtain falls in an anticipation of triumph.

THE SIEGE OF GONDOR

The prelude to this chapter, *The ride of the Rohirrim*, was one of a pair of male-choir settings of verses from *The Lord of the Rings* written in the 1970s, both drawing upon poems attributed to bards from Rohan and entitled *Songs of the Mark.* This setting has been left almost entirely unchanged in the final version of the cycle. It is notable also as one of the only two passages within *The Lord of the Rings* to make narrative use of the chorus in the manner of *The Silmarillion*, taking form as a heroic ballad sung in after ages by the Rohirrim themselves (as in the original book).

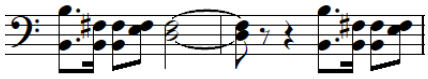
The male voices are divided into two sections, the full chorus in the foreground and a distant semi-chorus echoing from behind the scenes. The horns of the Rohirrim accompany the opening phrases:

LR164



and the rhythms of **LR112** already established for the galloping horses of the Rohirrim underlie another heroic fanfare:

LR165



while the distant semi-chorus echo the narrative to phrases drawn from **LR114.** At the words "Forth rode the King" the theme of Rohan (**LR35**) reappears to introduce the hoofbeats of **LR112** which combine with **LR164** and **LR114** before their echoes, imitated by the two choral bodies, sink into silence as the curtain rises on the battlements of Minas Tirith.

Here Gandalf, to trenchant reiterations of **LR85**, reassures the anxious Beregond that Théoden will stand by the old alliance between Rohan and Gondor (**LR118**); but Imrahil notes that the armies of Mordor are still advancing, led by the Lord of the Ringwraiths (**LR26**), and that the retreating Faramir (**LR145**) is under threat. Gandalf hurries away to counter this new menace (**LR67** now added to the mix), and finally escorts Faramir into the city (the music associated with him at Henneth Annûn allied with **LR65** as he hurries to meet with his father.

Faramir's own **LR145** now merges with other themes associated with his brother (**LR63** and the Ring (**LR6**) as he and his father argue about the wisdom or otherwise of his actions in Ithilien, and his decision to allow Frodo to proceed to Mordor. But finally Denethor concedes that "such words are vain" (**H2**) and turns his attention to the garrison at Osgiliath (**LR144**). Despite Faramir's attempts to reinforce it (**LR146**) and his pessimism about the prospects of success, Denethor despatches him with scorn to strengthen the defences (**LR23**). In the succeeding interlude the orchestra depicts the desperate battle which ensues, with the themes associated with the Ringwraiths (**LR76**, **LR26** and **LR7**) growing to overwhelming dominance. When the lights rise again some time later, Denethor's anxious enquiries about the fate of Faramir confirm his fears about the prospects of defeat. We now hear him take over Faramir's version of the Númenor melody associated with Gondor in decline (**LR153**) which mutterings of the heroic **LR145** do little to dispel. Gandalf reports that the Lord of Nazgûl (**LR26**) has now personally taken over command of the vanguard forces of Mordor. He reports the prophecy regarding this enemy, that he cannot be slain by the hand of any man, and the theme of Glorfindel (**LR51**) soars over those of the Elves (**S8**) as a reminder that in the histories of Middle-earth it is Glorfindel who is recorded as making his prediction. At this moment the doors of the chamber fly open, and the theme of 'heroic deeds' **LR68** sounds out with bitter irony as the body of the mortally wounded Faramir is brought in from the battlefield. **LR65** is plunged into despair, and **LR145** too is submerged between the triumph of the Ringwraiths

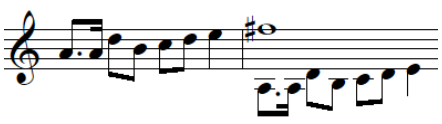
(**LR76, LR26** and **LR7** as before) during the following orchestral interlude.

A few hours later, Pippin is trying to console Denethor, who remain grieving over his wounded son and heir as the theme of the downfall of Gondor now enters into his soul (**LR153**). "The fool's hope has failed," he declares to an ironic echo of Saruman's theme (**LR19**); "the Enemy has found it," he continues (**LR65** and **LR6** in grinding combination), and the following **LR131** discloses the source of his information from his visions in the *palantír.* The theme of **LR153** now becomes more stormy as Ingold reports that the outer circles of the City are burning, and the archaic **LR133** now returns to haunt the Steward as he contemplates the idea of suicide for both himself and his son; **LR65** combines with the fire motifs **(S24** and **S55)** as he talks of the self-immolation practiced by the ancient "heathen kings." Turning to Pippin, with **LR153** even more inconsolable than before, he issues instructions for the preparation of his funeral pyre (**LR133**) and the return of **LR161** in the bass emphasises the duty laid on the hobbit as his vassal to obey his commands. Pippin flees in horror, his **H2** rising frantically above **S24** as he attempts to persuade the Steward's servants to "bring no fire to this place, while Faramir lives." Beregond now arrives, **LR144** accompanying him as at his first appearance in *Minas Tirith*; but **LR161** once again rises to emphasise the compulsion he feels to obey the Steward's orders. Pippin frantically tries to override his scruples with the observation that "you have a madman to deal with, not a lord" before he runs in desperate search of Gandalf and the threat of disaster looms ever closer.

The scene changes to the gate of Minas Tirith under close siege by the Lord of the Nazgûl, now revealed as the former Witch-king of Angmar from earlier in the Third Age. The themes of **LR15** and **LR16**, originally heard at the opening of *The Shadow of the Past* as dimly hinted menaces of time and suspense, now rises to diabolically overwhelming heights as the Witch-king rides forward (**LR27**) and declaims in the Black Speech the words inscribed on the Ring (**LR21** roaring out over **LR6**). At his final words the gates of the City fall in ruin and he rides triumphantly into Minas Tirith **(LR76, LR26** and **LR6** once again in deafening combination).

Gandalf alone stands to confront him (**LR85** in its 'grey'form transforming into its 'white' version **LR111**) and as he attempts to banish the Ringwraith he summons all the might of the Valar to his aid (**S1,** as in his confrontation with Saruman at Isengard). But the Witch-king dismisses him contemptuously (**LR16** and **LR27** accumulating force as they lead into **LR26**) and he raises his sword to strike the wizard down. At that crucial moment an absolute silence descends (**LR15**) and in the distance the horns of the Rohirrim are heard as they ride to the relief of the siege; Théoden's theme of **LR108** now winds in on itself with increasing excitement

LR166 [LR108]

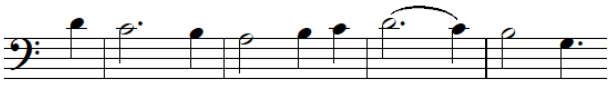


as the Witch-king wheels to meet this new challenge (**LR123**) and repetitions of **LR166** die away into more distant mutterings of the antiphonal timpani (**LR15**).

PELENNOR FIELDS

The horn calls of **LR166**, now screwed up to a full tone higher (in live performances it is recommended that the players should switch to different instruments crooked in a higher key), launch the course of the battle itself; but the male choir of the Rohirrim immediately take up their description of the scene with a unison declamation derived from **LR114**:

LR167

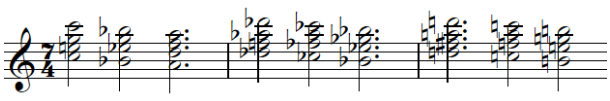


which is projected simultaneously over an augmented version of the rhythm **LR112** and the Rohirrim march **LE121,** the paragraph being rounded out with a triumphant statement of **LR35.** When the offstage horn calls **LR166** return, the accompanying figure **LR112** returns to its original (unaugmented) speed, and the whole process of chorus and horns is repeated before Théoden and his army appear through the mists which cover the battle scene.

Théoden summons his forces to battle to a stentorian declaration of **LR120** over the original rhythm **LR121** and occasional interjections of **LR123.** The chorus join him as the Rohirrim throw themselves into struggle with the Haradrim and the oliphaunts (**LR147**), and the backstage horns **LR166** are now challenged by the Southron trumpets **LR142.**

In the book (and in Peter Jackon's film) the king is killed when his horse falls on him following the descent of the Lord of the Nazgûl (**LR108** overwhelmed by **LR123** and **LR76** with **LR26** following); this would clearly be impractical in theatrical terms, and the stage directions here indicate that he is pierced by a spear. But reverting immediately to the original narrative, Éowyn in male disguise stands forth to defend her kinsman (**LR119** now rising above **LR136** with **LR35** and **LR108** swirling about her defiant words. The Witch-king's response to her challenge thematically echoes his reply to Gandalf in the previous chapter, and in their further exchanges Éowyn now strips her male disguise from her and recalls the prophecy of Glorfindel regarding the doom of her opponent:

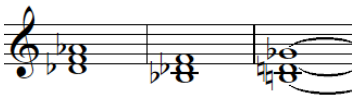
LR168



This unexpected turn of events reduces the Nazgûl to a stupefied silence as various themes associated with the Rohirrim (**LR119**, **LR26**, **LR108**, **LR118**) jostle for attention; then, summoning all his powers (**LR76**, **LR26**, **LR136**) he strikes once again at Éowyn only to be deflected as Merry stabs him in the back of the leg (the trumpets add **H2** to the thematic mix) and then Éowyn drives down her sword between his crown and mantle (**LR123** and **LR76**) and the extended phrase associated from the start with the Black Riders **LR26** dies away in repeated echoes of **LR27**.

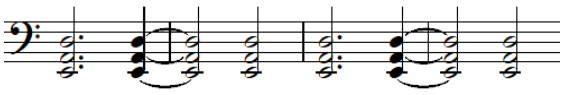
Merry crawls towards the fallen king on the ground, and Théoden bids him farewell to the accompaniment of a series of chromatically altered chords which will return when his sacrifice is recalled and honoured:

LR169



And this is accompanied by a funereal rhythm derived from **LR112**:

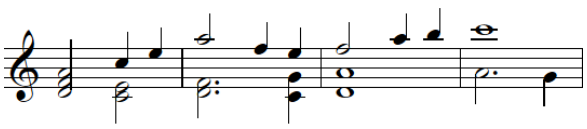
LR170



He calls for Éomer (**LR107**) who is to "be King after me" and asks Merry to bid farewell to Éowyn (**LR119**) unaware that she lies unconscious by his side. Merry attempts to reply (**H2**) but is interrupted by an outburst of **LR35** and **LR97** as Éomer now arrives. Théoden lives long enough to proclaim him as his successor before he succumbs to his wounds (**LR158**) and Éomer pronounces a threnody over him (**LR169,** accompanied by heroic statements of **LR107** and **LR108** before an impassioned outburst of **LR119** accompanies his horrified recognition of his apparently dead sister by the side of the king and his increasingly desperate cries of "Death!" (over grinding repetitions of **LR170**) are taken up by the other Riders to an outburst of **LR35** and **LR97** as they charge vengefully into battle.

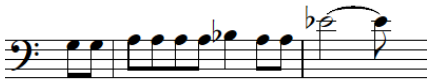
The sounds of their horncalls and hoofbeats (**LR166** and **LR112**) now brings a return of **LR167** as the narrative chorus recite a roster of the heroes who died on that day. This interlude leads to a change of scene as the location returns to the pyre of Denethor constructed at the end of the previous chapter as Gandalf, summoned desperately by Pippin, arrives to halt the steward's attempt at self-immolation (**LR65** again in an unholy alliance with **LR133**). As Gandalf challenges Denethor, **LR111** is brushed aside by **LR65** as the steward contemptuously rebuts his intervention. Here again Tolkien reverts to the use of the 'familiar' version of the second person pronoun, here intending deliberately to portray Denethor's contempt for the wizard whom he is now convinced is seeking to undermine and supersede him. And, as before, this sudden grammatical shift is accompanied by a sudden reduction of the string forces to solo instrumentalists, **LR65** suddenly exposed in isolation from its surrounding textures. Faramir's theme **LR145** now takes on a more lyrical form:

LR171



as Gandalf raises his unconscious form from the pyre, and it is echoed in this form by the solos strings as Denethor despite his madness recognises his genuine affection for his despised heir. **LR153** is slowly intoned as he enquires pathetically why his dying son should not join his father in death; but to the stern sounds of **LR133** (with **LR65** rising in ever-increasing discord with the mediaeval harmonies) Gandalf denies his right to make such a decision. Denethor now stands in sudden wrath, and reveals in his hand the *palantír* (**LR131**) which he had previously concealed. To statements of the 'Strider' theme **LR38** he contemptuously dismisses the intrigues of Gandalf to supplant him on the throne of Gondor by this "Ranger of the North." Indeed, he goes further, as **LR131** underlines the further information he has gained from his possession of the Seeing Stone. "Thy hope is but ignorance," he declares (note the repeated ironic use of the 'familiar' second person singular); "you may triumph on the field for a day":

LR172



"But", he continues, "against the power that now arises there is no victory." Abruptly, as **LR162** emerges in the orchestra, we realise that he has seen the same threat to Gondor that had been envisioned by Aragorn in *The Passing of the Grey Company* a couple of chapters earlier. He also sees a fleet of ships from Umbar now passing up the Anduin towards Minas Tirith. At this point the theme of the *palantír* **LR162** is heard with a new bass line deriving from the theme associated with the dead oathbreakers **LR37**; the attentive listener will be aware of the fact that the ships are now crewed by the people of the Grey Company rather than the Corsairs of Umbar, but this irony is lost on the participants in events in the book (the reference is removed altogether from the Jackson film, where the seizure of the ships has already been shown in the extended version or cut altogether in the theatrical print). A point, indeed, where music can make explicit a subtlety which other mediums cannot.

But for the present Denethor is resolutely determined on death, and to an increasingly frenzied recapitulation of the music from the previous chapter (**LR65**, **S24, S55** and **LR161**) he lays himself down amid the flames. In the book Tolkien informs us that anybody who later looked into the *palantír* would see "only two aged hands withering in flame"; the music here again makes that reference clear, with **LR162** sounding triumphantly out before the sudden collapse to the ominous antiphonal timpani drumbeats **LR15** which now accompany the choral narrative as they sing of the heroes buried beside the blood-red river as the scene changes once more back to the battlefield.

Imrahil stands by the gate of Minas Tirith as the men of the Rohirrim approach bearing the bodies of Théoden and Éowyn (**LR108** and **LR119** followed by a conjunction of **LR35** and **LR118**). He is astonished to realise that a woman has joined the riders who have arrived to succour Gondor, and even more surprised to determine that she still lives although she is severely wounded. He instructs that she should be taken urgently to the Houses of Healing. To a simultaneous statement of the funereal version of **LR170** and the battlefield rhythm of **LR112** underpinning **H2**, Merry too now approaches

the city and is found by Pippin. Music familiar from *The Hobbit* is heard as the two kinsmen are reunited, with **H19** assuming greater prominence as Pippin leads Merry also to the Houses of Healing.

The sounds of battle (**LR35** and **LR112**, over the continuing horn calls of **LR166**) are now challenged ever more vociferously by the forces of Mordor and the trumpets of the Haradrim (**LR142**) and the armies from Minas Morgul also join in the assault (**LR23**). But now too are seen the approaching ships of the Corsairs of Umbar (**LR162**); and Éomer, still leading the charge of the Rohirrim, raises his voice in defiance against the prospect of inevitable defeat:

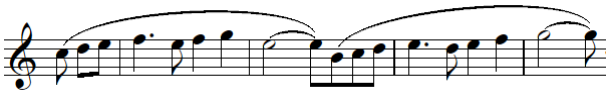
Out of doubt, out of dark,
to the day's rising
I rode singing in the sun,
sword unsheathing.

And then miraculously he perceives that the ships are filled not with the seamen of the Corsairs but with new allies led by Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli—the vision of triumph that Frodo had seen in the Mirror of Galadriel, now brought to consummation. But where in its earlier appearance the Númenórean theme **LR62** has been overshadowed by the chromatic harmonies associated with Sauron in the bass (the same form originally given to the music in the *Akallabêth*) now the sinister undertow is given a new resolution in the theme of the passage of the Paths of the Dead **LR37** as well as the appearance of the theme of the Last Alliance **LR48** as Aragorn strides triumphantly onto the field to assure Éomer of the support he had promised. The original triumphant major version of the Númenórean kingdoms in exile (**LR62**) rings out as the two comrades ride in search of victory and vengeance for those who have already fallen in the battle.

THE HOUSES OF HEALING

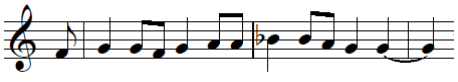
After the fury and tumult of the previous chapter, the opening scene of *The Houses of Healing* is a haven of tranquillity and peace. It opens with an extended violin solo evoking calm and stillness, suspended at first over a sustained octave and then over an oscillating open fifth, avoiding any suspicion of either major or minor key:

LR173



Watching over the beds of the fatally wounded Faramir, Éowyn and Merry we encounter the "old wife" Ioreth and the silent Gandalf. Ioreth weeps over the fate of the patients whom she is unable either to succour or to cure, and laments that continued absence of a King from Gondor: "The hands of a king are the hands of a healer, and so the rightful king could ever be known":

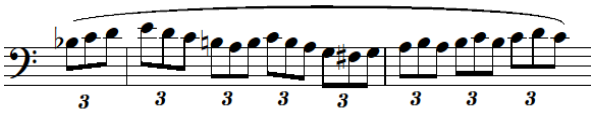
LR174



Gandalf comforts here, and assures her that there is hope in her words; it may indeed be true that a king has returned to Gondor. But she will not be consoled; "all I hope is that those murdering devils do not come to this House and trouble the sick."

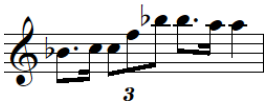
At this point Éomer and Imrahil enter in haste, seeking respectively for Éowyn and Faramir and accompanied by their own themes **LR107** and **LR161** together with a new faster figure also associated with the Houses of Healing:

LR175



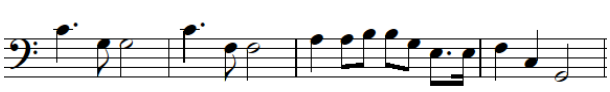
and this theme continues under the motifs associated with Éowyn and Faramir themselves (**LR119** and **LR145**) before the sorrow of both Gondor and Rohan at the loss of their lords is identified with the Númenórean **LR62** now plunged back into its 'minor' mode. It is Imrahil who suggests that they should send for Aragorn, but he has already been summoned (**LR39**) and now arrives, although he demurs at the suggestion of any additional claim and proposes that Imrahil (**LR145** again, now definitively associated with the prince's specific loyalty) should rule the city "until Faramir awakes." His specific concern now is the healing of the sick, reinforced by Gandalf's reiteration of Ioreth's prophetic words **LR174**. Aragorn, looking on Faramir, asks Ioreth whether the Houses hold any stock of the herb *athelas*:

LR176



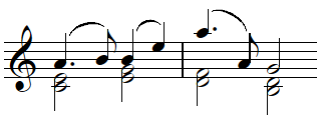
Ioreth is unable to respond to his question immediately, and goes to seek an answer from the Herb Master. In the meantime Aragorn contemplates the sickness of Faramir (with **LR39** intertwining with **LR145** and **LR65** in a troubled counterpoint) and lamenting that he had not been there sooner. The Herb Master now enters to tell him that the Houses of Healing do not keep supplies of *athelas* (**LR176**) although he is able to recall a "rhyme of the old times" concerning the virtues of the herb:

LR177



and the accompaniment to this will become a major thematic motive representing the notion of healing both physical and spiritual:

LR178

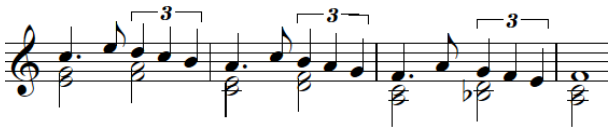


As Aragorn crushes the herb into a bowl and holds it before the face of Faramir, the extended melody **LR173** reappears, now transferred from the original solo violin to the full string section, as the steward slowly awakens from his dream. His very first words are to recognise Aragorn as the king, leaving Ioreth to ecstatically recall her own words **LR174** as Aragorn turns his attention to Éowyn (**LR39**).

The richer string tone of **LR173** now rises to greater heights in combination with **LR119** as Aragorn summons Éowyn to awaken. With an injunction to Éomer to "call her" (**LR176**) he leaves the brother and sister to console each other on the death of the king their uncle (**LR107** and **LR119** interwoven now with **LR175**) and the funereal tones of **LR169** and **LR170** underpin their lament for the fallen. Éomer's attempts however to revive his sister's spirits (**LR108** combined with **LR119** and **LR35**) are rebuffed, as she confesses she still sees no hope for the future.

LR173 now reaches its full panoply as Aragorn restores Merry to consciousness (with **LR178** soaring over the textures) and the music returns once again to the sphere of *The Hobbit* (**H19**). As Pippin light-heartedly arranges for his kinsman to be supplied with material comforts, Merry also asks to see Gimli and Legolas again; and as they enter they encounter Imrahil in a passage which combines the outline of **LR161** with the progression of **LR61**:

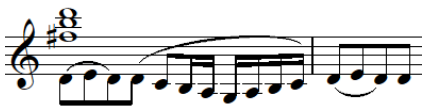
LR179



Here Legolas immediately recognises the distant relationship between himself and the Prince of Dol Amroth with his reputed Elvish ancestry dating back to the people of Nimrodel (the music also reflects that of *The Lay of Nimrodel* which Legolas had sung in Lothlórien; although omitted from the final text of *The Mirror of Galadriel*, it was included in the complete recording of the cycle as an appendix). Here it is succeeded by Legolas's own **LR61,** now accompanied by **LR175**, and then by Aragorn's **LR39** as he relays the message that Imrahil is called urgently to council with Éomer on the field outside the city. The pair summoned now depart, leaving Gimli and Legolas alone with the hobbits.

The music now suddenly reverts to *The War of Wrath* as Legolas tells of his first encounter with the Sea and the longings awakened in him by the call of the gulls. His somewhat later song about this experience *To the sea!* was transferred in that score to Eärendil, but here the music of its opening section **S195** is repeated by the orchestra as an accompaniment to his narrative, with the same figurations as before:

LR180



and this culminates in an outburst on **S32** representing the sea itself and **S49** the banishment of the Elves from the Blessed Realm (including, it is to be supposed, the ancestors of Legolas himself, although this is nowhere explicitly stated by Tolkien). But underpinning this climax there is a new element, as **S185** (now heard for the first time since *The Mirror of Galadriel*) implies that the banishment may no longer be permanent—as indeed will shortly become apparent.

His apostrophe however is quickly interrupted by Gimli, who explains how it was at this arrival on the coasts of the Sea at Pelargir that the Grey Company had first encountered the ships of the Corsairs of Umbar (**LR162**) and how the panic-stricken sailors had immediately abandoned their vessels. The music of the Last Alliance **LR48** then accompanies Legolas's description of Aragorn's dismissal of the armies of the Dead, and how those forces had dispersed into the mists (**LR37** and **LR163**, the latter gradually slowing down in pace and leading to a solemn statement of the theme associated with Aragorn's sword Andúril (**LR71**) and a chillingly aggrandised version of **LR37** before the solo violin melody of **LR173** returns to close the scene and the action moves to Aragorn's tent on the Pelennor Fields.

The opening section of this scene consists of an extensive address by Gandalf in which he outlines the current situation in the struggle with Sauron, his plans for future strategy, and his aspirations for the future in the event of a victorious outcome. As such it interweaves many different themes in a complex web of allusions (by no means all enumerated here) developing from a literal quotation from the last words of Denethor: "You may triumph on the field, for a day. But against the power than now arises there is no victory (**LR172** accompanied by **LR131**). He accepts that, if Sauron recovers the Ring, all is lost (**LR21**); but if they are able to destroy it, he will fall (**S7**). Such a result will not however be final:

> *Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron is himself but an emissary. Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, so that those who live after us may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.*

This is the central philosophical and political hub of the whole of Tolkien's world and mythology (it is altogether omitted from Jackson's adaptation although Gandalf is elsewhere credited with some alternative motivations). Here its significance is underlined with a complete restatement of the theme associated with the White Council and the Fellowship of the Ring **LR20**, with the motif of Gandalf the Grey **LR85** now expanded and developed into that of Gandalf the White **LR111** as the harbinger of the New Age.

As his discourse turns towards future strategy, the cosmic scope of Gandalf's plans is emphasised by the return of the theme of the Elder King **S1** by which he had stripped Saruman of his powers; and the hustling combination of **LR15** and **LR6** which has been heard so often in the past now recurs as Gandalf envisions the uneasy suspicions in Sauron's mind. Having confirmed with Aragorn that the latter has already wrested control of the *palantír* away from the Dark Lord (**LR131**), Gandalf explains to the anxious Éomer that Sauron will hope and expect disputes to arise among the leaders of

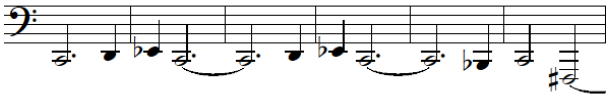
the West for possession of the Ring which he will assume is currently held by Aragorn. They may hope to exploit that uncertainty, which will only have been reinforced by his recent military defeat. To a culminating statement of **LR39** in full regal mode, he proposes that they must continue the strategy of Aragorn to "push Sauron to his last throw" by taking the battle into the realm of Mordor itself. The music of **LR45**, not heard since *The Plains and the Forest* and now clearly identified as a theme describing Aragorn's destiny, underlines Gandalf's words as he recognises that the attack on Sauron may well be doomed to failure but that it is the only way in which hope for a New Age may be preserved.

In an exact echo of Gandalf's words, Aragorn commits himself to the continuing pursuit of that policy, as **LR20** underlines and is supported by Elladan and Elrohir on behalf of their father Elrond. In his turn Éomer commits the Rohirrim to the continuation of their alliance (**LR107**) and Imrahil acknowledges his loyalty to Aragorn (**LR161** underpinning **LR111**). At the same time the latter recognises the folly of seeking to directly challenge the Dark Lord in war (**LR16**); but Gandalf reassures his doubts, and the theme **LR45** now associated with Aragorn's destiny assumes an ever more affirmative aspect. As the final cadences of this are capped with enthusiastic repetitions of the Andúril motif **LR71** the chapter ends—one of the relatively few in the cycle to end in positive and *fortissimo* affirmation.

THE BLACK GATE OPENS

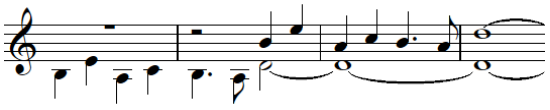
That affirmation is of short duration, as the single scene of the following chapter (which it is anticipated will in theatrical presentations follow without a break) immediately plunges the listener back into the blackest realms of despair. The prelude to the scene was originally sketched and orchestrated in the early 1970s, but very substantially revised in 2021-22 to reflect the later-written thematic material incorporated into the existing framework. After initial grumbling subterranean statements of Sauron's own theme **LR16** we are confronted with a motion the motif **S67** associated in *Beren and Lúthien* with his daunting and sorcery:

LR181



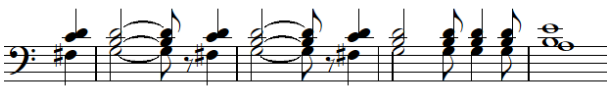
and this is quickly joined by a slow-moving repetition of the theme of the Ring itself (**LR6**). As the curtain rises to disclose the gloomy wasteland before the Black Gate, the music subsides back to **LR16** and distant trumpets sound a fanfare which will rapidly become associated with the restored kingdom of Gondor:

LR182



And the significance of this challenge is underlined the proclamation of three heralds who proclaim the title of "the King of Gondor" in their demands for surrender:

LR183



Thunder rumbles from behind the mountains as the Gate opens, and to the parley emerges a mysterious emissary who declares himself to be "the mouth of Sauron." His music—inevitably—is an exact mirror image of that of his master as familiar from his role as the servant of Morgoth in *Beren and Lúthien*, and his version of **LR181** imitates the jagged rhythms and harmonies of his master's utterances in that score. He dismisses with contempt Aragorn's claim to a regal title (**LR71**), although he cannot meet his gaze which he regards as a threat; and he treats Gandalf's 'white' form of his theme (**LR111**) with equal disdain. Instead he offers to show them tokens demonstrating the hopelessness of their cause.

The jagged version of **LR181 (**in its **S88** form) accompanies his mocking description as he displays to the dismayed captains Sam's sword (**H26**), a cloak of Lórien (**LR86**) and Frodo's *mithril* mail shirt (**H72**) and in response to Pippin's wail of despair and grief emphasises that the fate of the "spy" depends upon the willingness of the West to comply with Sauron's terms—both **H1** and **H32** confirm his deep knowledge of the origins and intentions of their designs.

Gandalf defiantly rejects capitulation (**LR111**) and, as with his confrontations with Saruman and the Witch-king, calls the power of the Elder King (**S1**) to his aid. He succeeds in wresting the tokens from the cowering Mouth of Sauron (**LR76** and **LR136**) but the trumpets of the Haradrim (**LR142**) sound as the Gate opens and the armies of Mordor pour forth (**S16**, **S58**, **S35**, **H30, H42** all recurring) until Pippin's cry alerts them to the arrival of the Eagles in a passage which precisely echoes the experience of Bilbo in the Battle of the Five Armies during *The Hobbit* (**H44**). But a troll in the army of Mordor casts a stone at him (**H22**) and as the hobbit falls to the ground unconscious the music abruptly halts in mid-flow:

> *even as* [his thought] *fluttered away…it laughed a little within him as it fled, almost gay it seemed to be casting off at last all doubt and are and fear…and then* [it] *fled far away and his eyes saw no more.*

The musical progress will not resume until the beginning of the next chapter but one, when a literal recapitulation of the same thematic material will show "what happens next." This was a technique employed by Wagner when he divided his original one-act score for *The flying Dutchman* into three Acts, but as far as I am aware has never been imitated since in any operatic literature.

The End of the Third Age

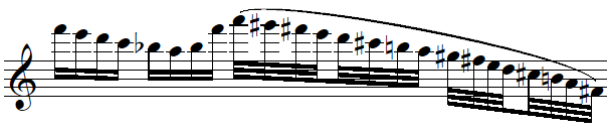
MOUNT DOOM

This massive chapter comprises three whole chapters of Tolkien's original tale—the whole of Frodo and Sam's experiences in Mordor—but the book contains many lengthy descriptions of landscape and hopeless journeying which can be treated musically with perhaps

a greater degree of immediacy, as well as episodes (such as the capture of the hobbits by a squadron of orcs, from whom they escape with perhaps convenient ease, or the Watchers in the Tower of Cirith Ungol, whose power is immediately dissipated by the light of the star-glass) which can easily be omitted or condensed without doing violence to the whole impact of the narrative. The whole of the opening for example, including the significant passage where Sam finds himself tempted to assume for his own the power of the Ring, is devoid of any dialogue that would lends itself to musical setting. Instead we simply see Sam slowly rouse himself from unconsciousness (the theme associated with Frodo's 'death' **LR158** in a jarring juxtaposition with the hobbits' **H2**) with a murmured "I'm coming, Mister Frodo" and a gently breathed echo of his lament over his master **LR28**.

As he makes his cautious entry into Mordor, sounds of conflict are heard from the Tower of Cirith Ungol, with a shrill echo of **H2** extended with reference to **S61** and **LR134**. The reason for this dispute is ownership of Frodo's valuable *mithril* coat, as **H72** and **LR4** make clear; and Sam charges towards the gate of the Tower when he brought up suddenly by two great crouching figures within its portals, remnants of the old watchtower in the days of Númenor (**LR23**, recalling Gollum's "old tales from the South"). The light of the star-glass **S182** dissipates the power of these stone watchers, but set off an alarm bell high in the Tower. Sam's cry of defiance is abruptly halted when he observes the bodies of slain orcs strewn all around (**LR146**) and he remains puzzled by this until the orc Snaga appears down the stairs of the Tower (**H72** and **LR4** once again in union, now challenged by **H26** as Sam draws his sword. With a shriek of terror Snaga retreats back up the stairs once again, and Sam is reassured by the terror evidently inspired by the Elven-blade *Sting*. But then there is a sudden scream from above:

LR184



This motif, based on **LR141**, had previously been heard when Sam discovered that Frodo was paralysed and not dead at the end of *Cirith Ungol*; and its appearance here is equally galvanising, as Sam charges up the Tower to find out the source of the cry, even if he suspects that Frodo might now really have been killed. **LR83** and **H30**, a combination of orc-motifs familiar from Moria, return as the scene changes to the top of the Tower.

Here we find Shagrat, commanding his slave Snaga to return down the Tower or suffer the same penalty as his fellow Radbug, who has just had his eyes squeezed out (**LR184**) for his failure to obey the same order, after which he will be sent to Shelob for punishment (**S27**) when reinforcements arrive. Snaga is oblivious to these threats (**LR83**), observing tartly that Shagrat himself will be dead before then at all events, since he alone is responsible for the fighting with his attempt to seize the *mithril* shirt (**H72** and **LR4** once again) and his unwillingness to heed Gorbag's warning that the more dangerous of the intruders was still at liberty. Even if Shagrat were a Nazgûl, Snaga declares (**LR26**), he's "not going down." Shagrat, infuriated by his defiance, makes a lunge at him but is distracted by an unexpected stroke from the supposedly dead Gorbag, and has to despatch his rival captain first, by which time Snaga has disappeared. Then, taking Frodo's mail, he makes his own escape down the stairs, pushing past Sam's ineffectual strokes with his sword and making his getaway. Sam remains alone at the top of the Tower (**LR23**), now unchallenged but still no nearer to finding his master. Despair overwhelms him as he sinks down on the topmost stair (**LR158**) and he begins to sing in a quiet voice.

This "song of the prisoner" was written as an independent setting as long ago as 1972, and is heard here largely in its original form. But in the intervening period it had of course found its way into the score of *Beren and Lúthien*, where it had been employed to fill a *lacuna* at a crucial point in Tolkien's narrative poem, with a couple of minor alterations. Here Sam's original reference to "merry finches" (as opposed to Lúthien's "nightingales") as the birds whose singing reminds him of his home is restored; and more significantly the reference to the melody of the Shire (**H1**) returns to underpin the vocal line of the first verse. After a return of **LR158** at the beginning of the second stanza, Sam's courage begins to return, and **S91** rings out triumphantly at his words

Beyond all towers strong and high,
beyond all mountains steep

before the return of Galadriel's *Namarië* theme (**S90**) and a quietly resigned **LR158** return—as in the *Beren and Lúthien* context. Here however the conclusion is gently disrupted, first by the distant echo of Frodo's voice as he tries to echo Sam's **S91**, and then by the sound of the Ring rising in a sinister manner from the depths (**LR6**).

Snaga appears to seek out the origin of the voices he has heard singing, and to see what Frodo is "up to." In so doing he discloses to Sam the cell in which Frodo has been imprisoned, and as he raises his whip to silence the captive Sam charges at him with sword in hand (**H72**, **LR4** and **H26** in combination as before). Snaga takes refuge in flight, but Sam's only concern is to succour Frodo (fast and powerful statements of **H2, H3** and **H19** gradually dying down as the enfeebled Frodo replies). "Was it you?" he asks about the singing that aroused him (**S91**) and Sam reassures him that his rescue is indeed no dream.

H2 and **H19** assume a more resolute form as Sam tries to arouse Frodo to the need for escape, but **H2** is immediately shadowed by **LR6** as Frodo realises that his Ring has been taken by the servants of the Enemy. Even if the Elves may be able to flee over the sea (**S1** followed by **S8**), there will be no prospect of escape for those who remain in Middle-earth, and the imperious **S7** underlines the impact of his fear. The themes of Morgoth rise (**S4**) and descend (**S15**) darkly in the orchestra as he discovers that Sam has after all saved the Ring, only to be immediately succeeded by the demand that it should be at once restored to his possession. Sam's tentative suggestion that Frodo might be willing to share it "if it's too great a burden" leads to a furious outburst in music that recollects Boromir's attempt to seize the Ring at Parth Galen (**LR95**) and Frodo's immediate realisation of what Sam has achieved for him (**LR28**). In a broken voice he confesses that he is nearly entirely now in the power of the Ring (**LR6** now in the same celesta

arpeggio form that it had taken during the temptation of both Bilbo and Boromir), and Sam with an attempt at brusque encouragement (**LR11**) changes the atmosphere with his proposal to disguise the two hobbits as orcs for their dangerous journey into Mordor. As he leaves in his endeavours to find suitable attire, Frodo looks after him wistfully to a final echo of **S91** and a more heroic combination of **H2, H3** and **H19** as before.

And once again, as in *The Hobbit* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, we are led out into the wilderness by a solo violin intonation of **H11**; but whereas before in the latter instance this material had led to the semi-jocular episode with the stone trolls, it is here darkened further by the restated combination of **H2** and **H158** as at the opening of the chapter as the hobbits succumb to the lack of water in the barren landscape. In the dry gully where they ae hiding, Sam's forlorn invocation of the memory of Lothlórien and Galadriel (**LR86**) falls away into a forbidding silence.

This is abruptly disturbed by the appearance of two orcs into the gully, a sniffer and a soldier on the track of the intruders—even though they make it clear they are far from certain what precisely they are looking for. Both the orcs are accompanied by nagging repetitions of **LR**82, but whereas the sharp-toned sniffer has a grumbling posse of trombones the hulking soldier is characterised by shrill muted trumpets. Both are scornful of their companion's inferior tracking skills, although they are able to unite behind a contempt for the 'sneak' Gollum who has befuddled the trail (**LR12**). However when the sniffer proposes to abandon the pursuit, the soldier threatens him with punishment from the Nazgûl (**LR26**) who has now taken command of the Tower. In the following dispute the tracker casually kills the soldier and flees, leaving the two hobbits still cowering in concealment (**LR83**).

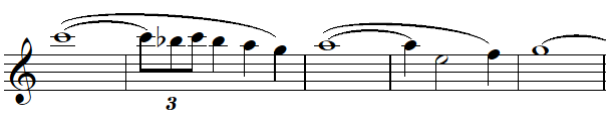
Sam is positively ebullient at this unexpected outcome, but Frodo is more pessimistic, **H2** shadowed by **LR6** as he wonders how long it will be before they are "really captured." **LR72** steals quietly into the orchestra as he asks Sam to take possession of the star-glass and his sword (**H26**), realising that in future he will not be his "part to strike any blow again." With that pacific resolution he lays down to sleep (**LR149** beginning quietly and gradually accumulating strength).

The following scene, deriving from a slightly earlier passage in the book, is one of Tolkien's moments of eucatastrophe, as Sam looks into the sky and sees far above the light of the Star of Eärendil:

> The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. For like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach…Now, for a moment, his own fate, and even his master's, ceased to trouble him.

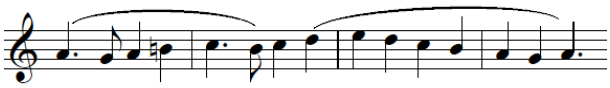
At this point the music dwindles down to a delicate repetition in harp and celesta of the theme associated with Eärendil as a star in *The War of Wrath* (**S182**) delivered at different speeds also by the glockenspiel as an accompaniment to a solo violin:

LR185 [S21]



This return of the theme of the Two Trees emphasises the source from which the light in the Star-glass ultimately is descended; and it forms part of a string trio that delicately outlines on solo viola the full melody first heard in *The War of Wrath* at the moment when the star itself was first revealed to the Elves exiled in Middle-earth:

LR186



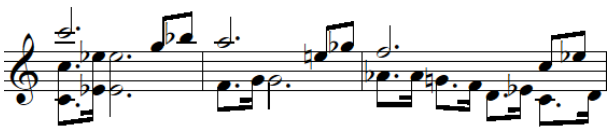
and the trio of strings finally die down into silence as a solo cello ruminates on **LR185**.

All that remains as the day dawns is the sound of a statospheric piccolo and a subterranean double-bassoon moving in contrary motion to the Sauronian chromatics of **LR16** while the distant challenge of the forces of Gondor **LR182** is borne on the wind. The music now shifts even further back in time, to the elemental forces of the earth itself as heard initially at the end of the prelude to *Fëanor*: **S**7 rises slowly up in ever-more anguished terms as Frodo sees himself "naked in the dark" with "nothing between me and the Ring of Fire". As he rouses himself to crawl up the base of the mountain, the extreme registers of piccolo and double-bassoon re-assert themselves until the voice of Gollum is suddenly heard (**LR12**) as he flings himself onto Frodo in a frenzied attempt to seize the Ring. The music here echoes his earlier similar assault when he first encountered the hobbits below the cliffs of the Emyn Muil, but the resistance he encounters from Frodo is now far more desperate. **LR137** now gives way to **LR21** as he openly threatens Gollum that if he attempts ever again to attack him, he will himself "be cast into the Fire of Doom"; and Sam joins his resistance, urging his master to go on and leave Gollum for him to deal with. We now enter truly elemental realms as the theme of Ilúvatar **S1** is delivered with a harmonisation built from the notes of the Ring itself (**LR6**) and then with furious versions of Morgoth's theme in both its original form and its inversion (**S4** and **S15**, echoing also Boromir's attempt to take the Ring). Sam is left to deal with Gollum (**LR95** and **LR12**) but finds himself unable to kill him as the music abruptly recalls the wretched creature's near-repentance on the stairs of Cirith Ungol (**LR155**). Finally, as Sam turns away in disgust, **LR149** is heard briefly before **LR12** and **H39** return as Gollum turns to shadow the hobbits to the bitter end.

Total darkness descends as the hobbits enter the cleft leading to the Crack of Doom in the centre of the mountain, and all that can be heard is a slow gloomy restatement of the harmonies of the Ring itself **LR6** which gradually builds until it reaches maximum force before giving way to the theme associated with elemental Fire (**S24**) gathering excitement and acceleration as the flames below the volcano begin to awaken. Sam calls through the darkness, and Frodo is now seen standing on the brink of the chasm. **LR6** (in changing keys) rises up over **S35** thundering below as Frodo almost in exaltation asserts his right to the Ring and his refusal to destroy it. As he triumphantly places it upon his finger he vanishes (**H41**) and the theme of Ilúvatar **S1** rising from below contends in vain against the torrents of fire that now rain down on the scene and the agony of the earth itself **S7**.

Gollum now reappears, and the repetitions of **S1** continue to reverberate below as he launches himself in a frantic attack on Frodo:

LR187 [LR12 and **H2]**

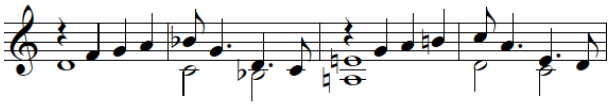


and significantly it is only **S1** which remains as he bites the Ring from Frodo's finger and claims it for his own.

The destruction of the Ring as Gollum falls into the fire, and the eruption of the volcanic Mount Doom, bring a furious concatenation of a whole host of themes associated with the Ring and its destiny: after Ilúvatar **S1** we hear in rapid succession **LR6** representing the Ring itself, accompanied by the Ringwraiths' flight in **LR136**, the inscription on the Ring itself **LR21**, and then the themes of the Nazgûl as, responding to Sauron's desperate summons, they arrive at the mountain only to be consumed in the flames (**LR76** followed by **LR136** dying into quiescence). The end of this sequence, with **LR6** evaporating into high piccolo trills, echoes the similar passage at the fall of Númenor in the *Akallabêth* when Sauron's spirit was dispersed into the wind.

By contrast the revival of the catatonic Frodo, to the joy of Sam, brings a huge orchestral outburst on the melody of **LR28**, and it is this theme which will dominate the remainder of the chapter. But first Frodo and Sam have to recognise the role of Gollum in the destruction of the Ring, and **H39** is restated several times before it become subsumed into the forgiving textures of **LR155**. Then, as Sam seemingly changes the subject to the quest itself, we hear another completely new theme:

LR188



This represents the notion of the Story, the tale that will continue after all those involved are dead and have passed themselves into the mists of legend. Sam envisages a "story of Nine-fingered Frodo and the Ring of Doom" and looks forward to hearing it told; he does not "want to give up yet."

"Maybe not, Sam," replies his master; "but it's how things are in the world." The notes of the Ring theme now rise again in the orchestra, but now in the form that they had taken at the end of the Council of Elrond (**LR69**) as Frodo is reconciled to the end of his quest and his death (**LR159**) in Sam's companionship. As they sink unconscious into each other's arms, **LR28** builds once again to a cathartic climax, before **LR159** reasserts itself quietly as a final resolution.

THE FIELD OF CORMALLEN

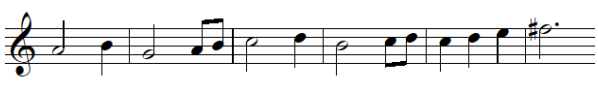
The scene returns to that at the end of the chapter *The Black Gate opens* with, as has already been noted, a literal repetition of the last 34 bars of that section of the score (only the choral parts representing the forces of Mordor are missing, and that is for purely practical considerations). At the moment when Pippin is felled by a troll, however, and collapses into unconsciousness, the music now continues as Gandalf raises his voice above the uproar of **LR76** and **LR136** calling on the men of the West to stand firm in the face of doom. And an abridged version of the downfall of Mount Doom from the previous chapter, suitably distanced, confirms the validity of his description.

This time, as the piccolo trills die away into extinction, the theme of Gwaihir **H44** returns as the great eagle alights next to Gandalf on the field of victory. As he offers to bear the wizard to rescue the Ring-bearer and his companion, the music previously associated with rescue by the eagles in *The Hobbit* (both **H45** and **H46**) combine with both Gandalf's **LR7** and the hobbits' **H2** in a more sustained passage depicting the rescue of Frodo and Sam from the slopes of Mount Doom in an orchestral interlude.

As that interlude dies away the scene changes back to the gardens of the Houses of Healing in Minas Tirith, some little while earlier (another example of Tolkien's literary interlace technique, here adopted wholesale from the order of the narration in the book). In the gardens (**LR173**, again with solo violin) Faramir is lost in quiet contemplation when the Herb-master arrives (**LR178**) accompanying Éowyn who, he explains, is dissatisfied with her continued isolation, deprived either of news or participation in events. Her own theme **LR119** combines with **LR173** as Faramir offers to change her room so that she can look eastward to the field where the captains of the West have gone (**LR39**). But the mingling of **LR119** and **LR173** grows now more impassioned as he declares his admiration for her beauty, and the theme associated with *athelas* associates this admiration with the idea of healing (**LR176**). She remains cold to his protestations (**LR133** now sounding ominously beneath the textures) and turns away to look out eastward over the battlements (**LR35** over the rhythms of **LR112**).

We have now arrived at the same point in time as the arrival of the captains of the West before the Black Gate, and beginning of the ascent of Mount Doom by the hobbits, as the distant fanfares of **LR182** confirm; and this time we hear also the summons of the heralds (**LR183**) as they issue their challenge to Sauron. Both Éowyn and Faramir recognise that they stand and "await the stroke of doom." The music associated with Sauron'a final gesture of defiance in *Beren and Lúthien* returns (**S92**) and leads to a distant echo of the passage heard earlier at the downfall of Mount Doom with **S1** leading to **S7** before the collapse of the realm of Mordor. In the silence Faramir compares the situation to the downfall of Númenor (**S1** in steady progression) and Éowyn draws closer to him in apprehension and fear. But Faramir is more optimistic, and **LR145** rises in waves of surging ecstasy as he declares that "I do not believe that any darkness with endure!" culminating in a triumphant statement of **LR148** and then **LR35** leading to Éowyn's response **LR119** and a new theme at her assertion "I will be a shield-maiden no longer:"

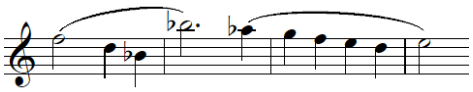
LR189



and her final declaration of love (**LR148**).

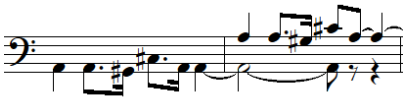
This theme now combines with **LR35** as a consummation of the passion between Faramir and Éowyn, surmounted by a new theme that will shortly be identified as the hymn of triumph *Sing and be glad* proclaimed by the eagle flying over Minas Tirith:

LR190



and this combination of themes, including **LR189** as a central trio, constitutes a sort of triumphal march which acts as an interlude during the scene change back to the Field of Cormallen where Frodo and Sam have been brought by the eagles to the camp of the captains of the West. As the joyous explosion dies down we hear first the sounds of the men gathered to welcome the heroes: "*Aglar ni Pheriannath!* Long live the Halflings!":

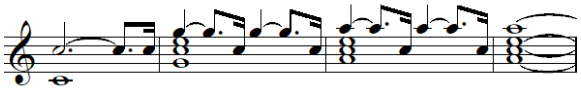
LR191



and these exclamations and acclamations grow steadily more excited as the hobbits are brought in procession to the captains headed by Aragorn and Gandalf. The music associated with the House of the Stewards (and here more generally identified with Gondor, in advance of its renewed significance in the next chapter) rises in pitch and fervour as the acclamations of the crowd intensify.

At the climax, as the key shifts abruptly upwards, new fanfare themes are heard

LR192



as there steps forward a minstrel who addresses the throng. He is here, he declares, to extol the praises of the heroes and tell of their prowess and "sing of Frodo of the Nine Fingers and the Ring of Doom" (**LR188**) and, in a sudden outburst of sheer happiness **H1** emerges in its full splendour as Sam declares in bliss that "all my wishes have come true!" With a final exhortation to praise (**LR192**) the minstrel rouses the assembled masses to a final cry of triumph rising to a prolonged and resounding top C.

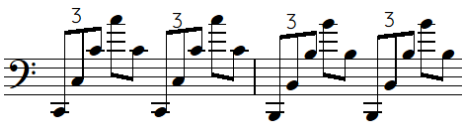
Following this climax may be found necessary in live performances to take an interval for recovery at this point; but in fact there is much to be said for continuing without a break into the next chapter, opening as it does with the most extreme contrast of a single offstage voice.

THE STEWARD AND THE KING

The whole of this chapter *The Steward and the King*, extending from the *Song of the Eagle* (written in 1969) to the wedding of Aragorn and Arwen, is condensed in the Peter Jackson film to a single scene of some five minutes in which only Aragorn's speech in Quenya is actually delivered in the actual words written by Tolkien. In the 'musical chapter' we not only hear the song of the Eagle developed as part of the coronation scene itself, and the return of the wedding music from *The Fall of Gondolin* now transfigured in the same manner that Frodo describes in his summons to blessing on the night (his speech on the subject concludes the scene); but we also hear the lengthy philosophical debate between Gandalf and Aragorn regarding the future development of the world and of the realm of Men in particular. And the discovery on the mountain of the scion of the Tree returns us musically past the era of Gondolin to the second scene of *Fëanor*, with the theme associated with the Two Trees finally reappearing after its age-long absence (all of this omitted entirely by Jackson) as part of a complete structure lasting nearly half an hour. The structure of this scene perhaps serves particularly well to illustrate the degree of complexity involved, where musical material written as far back as 1969 is developed and merged with other and later themes to form a newly unified structure.

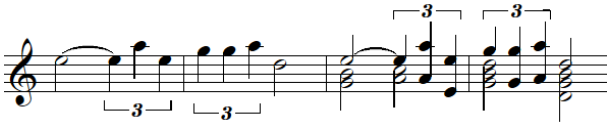
The opening 1969 *Song of the Eagle* stands almost alone in all of the *Lord of the Rings* material, in that it initially had no thematic cross-references to the rest of the cycle (although the opening bars were later developed as part of the earlier passage leading to the scene on the Field of Cormallen **LR190**). At first we hear only the sound of a solo voice (either soprano or tenor) behind the scenes, but when the second verse of the song is launched it now acquires a harp accompaniment:

LR193



which will subsequently recur. And immediately after it reaches its climax, now scored with the addition of a chorus behind the scenes, we are presented with some new material associated with the proclamation of Aragorn's title before the Gates of Mordor a couple of hours earlier (**LR182**). This is turn leads to a coronation procession where other themes associated with Gondor are presented in combinations with the theme of Aragorn himself (**LR39**) and the theme of Lúthien from *Beren and Lúthien*, which has already been adopted by Arwen herself during her appearance in Rivendell during *The Fellowship of the Ring* (**LR56**). These two themes are interwoven with each other here, as they were then; but they are then further presented in counterpoint with the Gondorian march originally associated with Boromir (**LR62**), the opening bars of the *Song of the Eagle* (**LR190**), and the 'Gates of Mordor' fanfare (**LR182**). Over all this appears an entirely new theme, which will later become associated with the new Kingdom:

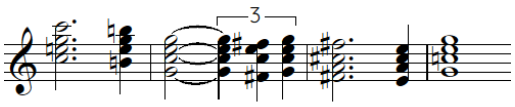
LR194



The entry of Gandalf (**LR7**) and the hobbits (**H2**) brings back their own motifs as originally sketched back in 1967, and heard here almost exactly in the same form as then; over which Ioreth chats busily to her companion, explaining her own part in proceedings and introducing her own musical material from *The Houses of Healing* (**LR174**).

Faramir steps forward to surrender his staff of office; the solemn theme **LR133** brings a suitably mediaeval and ceremonial tone to the proceedings. He then, after his title has been restored to him by Aragorn, sets out a long description of the latter's heritage and rights to the kingship. At this point a positive phantasmagoria of thematic references erupts: no fewer than eleven previously heard thematic motives concentrated into a contrapuntal web extending over a mere 27 bars—including the theme of Arda itself (**S7**) originating from appearances in *The Silmarillion.* And it is to *The Fall of Gondolin* that Aragorn now turns as he sings the words of Elendil on his arrival in Middle-Earth: singing in Quenya, while the chorus murmurs the Westron/English translation in the background and the orchestra turns to the theme of Men as the Second Children of Ilúvatar (**S42**), taking the form it assumed in the closing section of Scene Seven of *The Fall of Gondolin* describing the union of Tuor and Idril:

LR195



The final section of the coronation itself turns back to the mediaeval ceremonial of the Minas Tirith theme **LR133**, now combined in harmonic union with that of Gandalf **LR7** and yet another appearance of the hobbit material originally written in 1972 but heard most recently in the *Lord of the Rings* when Sam rescued Frodo from the Tower of Cirith Ungol (**H2, H3** and **H19**). And, as Gandalf sets the crown on Aragorn's head, he simultaneously reveals himself as the Emissary of the Valar with the theme of Ilúvatar himself (**S1**) appearing soaring above the texture and looking back to the very opening of *Fëanor* and the creation of the world. The triumphant return of the Song of the Eagle (**LR190**) then brings the scene to a close, evoking the sound of an organ (although the church organ finds no place anywhere in either of the cycles based on *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*).

The music now introduced from *The Fall of Gondolin*, however, continues to make its presence felt during the second scene of the chapter, where Gandalf and Aragorn on the mountain top of Mindolluin contemplate the future history of Middle-earth. After the mediaeval harmonies of the Minas Tirith theme **LR133**, now transformed into a higher and more mysterious sphere (with counterpoints derived from the Númenor theme **LR62** familiar from both *The Silmarillion* and *Akallabêth*) Gandalf contemplates the coming of the Fourth Age in music already associated with the Mission of the Istari **LR20**; but when Aragorn raises the question of his own mortality, the music veers back to the themes of the Second Children of Ilúvatar as heard in Scene Seven of *The Fall of Gondolin*; and it is to this source that the musical development now turns (**LR195**). As in the original *Gondolin* appearance, where the theme of the Two Trees (dating back to *Fëanor*) gradually emerged from the texture, so here the same material now gains in triumph as Aragorn discovers the sapling of the Tree of Gondor (**S21**); and the closing phrases of his apostrophe to the new sign of hope acts as an apotheosis to the love duet between Tuor and Idril in the earlier work. At this point, Tolkien's text tells us, when the old Tree is uprooted it is laid to rest in Rath Dínen; here, as a symbol of the healing which the new Tree brings, the violin melody **LR173** associated with the Houses of Healing is heard for the last time before a quiet brass echo of the Mindolluin theme **LR133**.

And the links between the music of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* are established even more securely in the third scene of the chapter, which constitutes in effect an extended wedding procession for Aragorn and Arwen. It is heralded by Glorfindel blowing his trumpet, both motives already established in his earlier appearances during *Flight to the Ford* and *The Council of Elrond* (**LR51** and **LR52**) and then moves into other already-heard musical material which in Rivendell had already foreshadowed the union of the couple—employing Aragorn's 'Strider' theme **LR39** (based on the song written in 1971) in conjunction with the 'Lúthien' theme which Arwen appropriated from his ancestress, who had herself originally introduced in her hymn of praise to the nightingales in *Beren and Lúthien* where the name 'Tinúviel' which Aragorn applied to Arwen made its original appearance (**LR56**). The sound of near and distant bells also echoes the wedding march from *The Fall of Gondolin*, but now the atmosphere of the music is nocturnal rather than illuminated by the glittering light of day. When the principal theme from the central section of the *Gondolin* wedding march (**S173**) does appear in full orchestral panoply, it settles over the whole of the ending of the scene as an illustration of Frodo's words to Gandalf as Arwen enters the City. This is not a triumphal wedding march, but a celebration of the evening which is however not devoid of hope; and as the procession ascends into the citadel of the city, the three sets of bells—small, medium and large—familiar from *The Fall of Gondolin* are enhanced by a halo of reverberation from celesta, harp harmonics and vibraphone (**S174**)

HOMEWARD BOUND

In the prelude here the two completely new themes introduced in the preceding chapter **LR193** and **LR194** are now heard in combination with **LR182** as a symbol of the newly reunited Númenórean kingdoms, and are followed immediately by the theme of Strider **LR39** who under his new title as King Elessar is now the embodiment of this union.

Frodo now enters to bid farewell to the newly installed king and queen, and **H2** is heard as he laments the fact that Bilbo alone of the household of Elrond was unable to travel to celebrate the wedding; the patterns of **H25b** associated with Rivendell now take over from those of **LR193** in the accompaniment. Arwen recognises his concern (**LR56**) but reminds him that Bilbo possessed the Ring longer than he did (**S3**) and that all that had been accomplished by means of it is now passing away. Aragorn advises him that the court will shortly be

departing for Rohan in any event, to bear the body of King Théoden back to its rest in the Mark (**LR112** leading into the solemn tones of **LR169** and **LR170**).

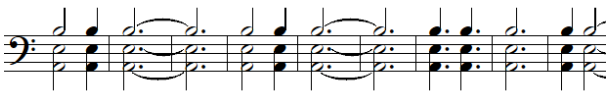
It is at this juncture that Arwen softly but decisively intervenes. To a full statement of the theme **S10**, associated in *The Silmarillion* with the awakening of the Elves and later with the kingdom of Doriath (ruled over by her ancestor Thingol), she offers Frodo a potential release for any lingering burden he may feel from his own possession of the Ring. She herself will no longer be taking ship into the West when her father departs (**LR194**) but Frodo may take up her place when the time comes, and if he feels the need of it. In the meantime she gives him a jewel to wear in memory of this promise and of "Elfstone and Evenstar with whom your life has been woven."

This transformation of **S10** will prove to be highly significant in the later chapter *The Grey Havens*, when its purely specific reference to Doriath is once again transmuted back to a more general incarnation of Elvish immortality. Frodo is not of course being offered such immortality, but an escape from the sorrows of the world in which he may be healed. The theme has not been previously heard at all in the course of *The Lord of the Rings*, a contrast indeed to its ubiquity in sections of *The Silmarillion*, and its return here serves both to bring the narrative full circle and to begin the process of rounding out the musical structure—the beginning of an extended coda, as it were. At present we only hear it in a solitary statement echoing that to which it made its first appearance in *Fëanor*, but it will later be transformed.

In the meantime the music returns back to the opening of the chapter, with **LR182** and **LR194** in counterpoint with each other over the returning figuration of **LR193** before the scene changes to Rohan for the funeral rites of Théoden. As before **LR169** and **LR170** are superimposed one on the other, the rhythm of the riders' hoofbeats at odds with the steady tread of the pallbearers; and the distant and approaching chorus paraphrases the words of Éomer on Pelennor Fields:

> *Out of doubt, out of dark, to the day's rising*
> *he rode singing in the sun, sword unsheathing.*

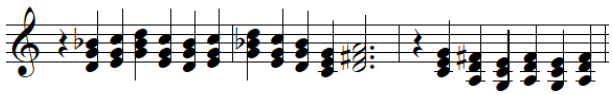
LR 196



As the words take on the melodic outline of **LR169** Merry approaches the grave and bids his last farewell to the king. And as **LR169** slowly fades into the distance, Éomer steps forward to announce the betrothal of Faramir and Éowyn. His own theme **LR107** rapidly cedes pride of place to the couple's **LR119** and **LR148** and the Rohirric **LR35** before the march theme **LR120** and the new melody associated with the love of Faramir and Éowyn **LR189** combine with the steady rhythmic pulse of **LR121** and a broadly climactic statement of **LR123**, now heard for the last time as a celebration of the renewed alliance between Gondor and Rohan.

As this dies away a new version of **LR102** emerges quietly in a solemn chordal statement. This represents not only the 'Treegarth of Orthanc' which the Ents have now established at Isengard, but also the new world order which is emerging at the beginning of the Fourth Age of Middle-earth. It is characterised by the uneasy rhythmic pulse associated with the Ents, but its slower and more solemn incarnation gives the whole theme a grave and poised solemnity:

LR197

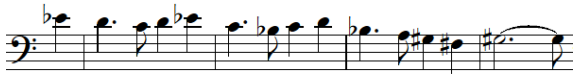


Treebeard welcomes Gandalf to his newly established realm, but Gandalf is also anxious to learn news of Saruman imprisoned in the tower of Orthanc under the guardianship of the Ents. It is left to Treebeard somewhat shamefacedly to admit that he has allowed the wizard his liberty following the downfall of Sauron, since his capacity to work evil was now at an end. Gandalf is philosophical about this leniency, but is anxious to ensure that the tower should be restored to Aragorn as the King of Gondor; and Quickbeam, who has the keys (**LR124**) hands them back accordingly. Aragorn laments that this brings a final end to the Fellowship of the Ring (**LR20**) but hopes that at least Legolas and Gimli will return to Gondor before long. To this both agree, and Legolas adds that although he will "walk in the woods of Ithilien, and bless it for a while" he now will eventually take passage over the sea to the Undying Lands (**LR180,** followed by **S32** and **S39**).

The links to the music of *The Silmarillion* continue as Treebeard now bids farewell to Celeborn and Galadriel: "The world is changing: I feel it in the water, I feel it in the earth, and I smell it in the air." The solemn statement of **LR197** leads to the music of **LR86** with its echoes of *The Fall of Gondolin* **S175** still more pronounced as Galadriel refers back to the First Age and the willow-meads of Tasarinan, before she bids the old Ent a final farewell (**S90**). After a brief and fond farewell to Aragorn (and a final return of **LR182** and **LR194** combined with **LR193**) she and Celeborn depart (**S175** now in combination with **S186**) and Aragorn bids them farewell with a final display of the *palantír* in his raised hand (**LR131**, also now making its final appearance) and a full statement of the melody of Númenor (**LR62**) now reverting to the full majesty it had originally displayed at its foundation in Scene Eight of *The War of Wrath.*

And, as at that appearance, it is skewed suddenly in its final cadence into the theme of Eregion (**S206**), which also is now given at full length as Gandalf, Celeborn, Galadriel and the hobbits now enter the lands west of the Misty Mountains and overtake Saruman and Wormtongue, who are seeking a way out of the newly re-established Númenórean kingdom. Galadriel is pleased by the encounter, for it gives Saruman another chance to offer repentance; but Saruman is scornful both of her proffered assistance and her pretensions. She too, he scornfully declares, has lost all her hope for the future in the same manner as he has. "What ship would bear you ever back, across so wide a sea?" he snarls, in a viciously distorted version of her own line **LR92**:

LR198



He even takes the new 'white' version of Gandalf's motif **LR111** and combines it with **LR132** and **LR109** as he declines any further debate and moves off, leaving Gandalf (**LR20**) to observe ruefully that he remains unconvinced that Saruman's capacity for "mischief in a small mean way" is exhausted.

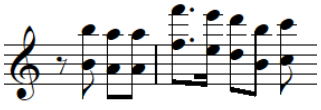
The arrival of the diminished company back at Rivendell takes place to another homecoming in the interlude which had introduced the location in *The Hobbit* and a leisurely series of statements of **H29** by the woodwind. Bilbo comes to greet them as they arrive (**H2**) and then proceeds absent-mindedly to ask Frodo what he has done with "my ring…that you took away?" (**LR11**). Frodo's placatory response that he "lost" it elicits only an expression of poignant regret; the aged Bilbo has lost even his capacity for desire and memory, with only his wish for peace and rest remaining. As he leads them down into the valley, the return of **H77** dies slowly away into the distance.

THE SCOURING OF THE SHIRE

As Frodo and his companions leave Rivendell and prepare to return to the Shire, the opening scene of this chapter comprises a complete orchestral restatement of the Hymn to Elbereth heard originally in *The Council of Elrond* (**LR59**). During the earlier section Elrond is heard advising Frodo that he need not make early plans to return, as he and Bilbo will be coming to the Shire in the autumn; and the music swells to an ecstatic climax while the scene changes to the Brandywine Bridge on the eastern borders of the Shire a few weeks later.

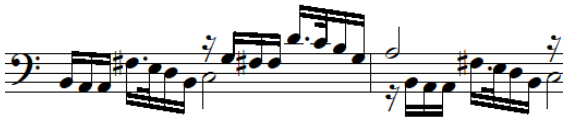
But the closing cadence of the Hymn **LR60** is now shadowed both harmonically and by a jarring alarm call on a backstage trumpet which startlingly recalls one of the principal orc-themes **S16.** And although the thematic material confirms that the travellers have indeed returned to the Shire, the shading of the harmonies now lays additional emphasis on the torrent of downward scales that underpin **LR1**, along with a newfound spikiness in the orchestration with an increasing use of pinched string *pizzicato.* The voice of Hob Hayward is heard denying entrance to the travellers, until the shouted responses of Sam and Merry bring a group of nervous and obviously frightened hobbits to the other side of the gate. Although Hob Hayward recognises Merry (**LR5**) a sinisterly crawling **LR17** undermines his deference; and in accordance with the orders of their 'chief' Lotho Sackville-Baggins (the orchestra inserting a sly reference to the downward chromatic scale that has accompanied Ham Gamgee's recitation of Frodo's pedigree in the opening chapter) he is reluctant to admit the hobbits. Merry and Pippin now climb the gates, and disturb the slumbers of the chief's "Big Man":

LR199



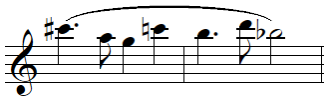
This is Bill Ferny, a refugee from Bree who has found new fields for his talents in the lucrative pastures of the Shire; and the theme is a startling transformation of the motifs associated with the Sackville-Bagginses and Saruman, and ultimately deriving from Bilbo's well-meaning and innocuous *Good morning!* (**H6**), to a social interaction at the very opposite end of the scale. But Ferny is no match for a group of fearless hobbits bearing swords, and at Merry's instructions he opens the gate and flees quickly in the night, his bullying theme now reduced to a startled scamper:

LR200



Merry now turns to more immediate matters, the need of the travellers for food and shelter. Hob in response relays even more alarming news; rules prohibit the offer of any hospitality, and even though there is no scarcity of food, most of it is taken away by the ruffians and never seen again. The first mention of these newly promulgated prohibitions brings a twisted but as yet unexplained line:

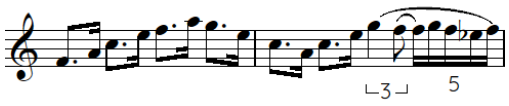
LR201



This, as will be seen in the next scene, is the theme of Sharkey, the shadowy figure who has taken over the real management of the Shire. In the meantime it is left to Pippin to lament the lack of welcome (**LR1**) and the curtain falls ruefully on the music associated with the Shire in the very first chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* (**LR2**).

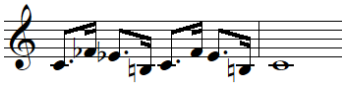
This is however abruptly curtailed as the scene changes to the village of Bywater, with Bag End in the distance. **LR201** winds its sinister way over whispers of **LR200** as a group of ruffians disperse as the four travellers approach. Sam recognises them as associates of Bill Ferny, while Merry likens them to some that he encountered at Isengard (**S16** once again recalls the orc-themes suggested by their ancestry). Frodo in sorrow speaks of Lotho Sackville-Baggins (**LR3**) and of their need to rescue him despite the startled objections of Merry (**LR201**). In increasing excitement the latter outlines his proposals for resistance, and **H10** is heard (in the same terms as Bilbo's welcome to the dwarves in *The Hobbit*) superimposed over **H12** and with a flourish at the end:

LR202 [LR130]



This is immediately followed by the return of **LR44** from *The Prancing Pony* – no less than Frodo's song *There is an inn* – in a new rhythmic pattern which combines it with elements of **H200**:

LR203



to restore the bullying **LR199** back to its initial roots in Bilbo's *Good morning!* **(H6)** and bring the cycle full circle.

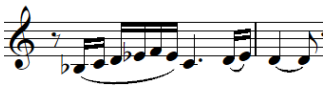
For the moment however plans for resistance are interrupted as Ted Sandyman emerges, and **LR203** is immediately overlaid by the orcish **S16** as he mocks the travellers and threatens them with the displeasure of Sharkey. **LR201** is heard now in a full-on aggressive mode, and in the bass we hear the opening notes of **LR19** to hint at the identity of this shadowy character with Saruman. For the present Pippin and Sam dismiss his threats and, when he blows an alarm to summon help (**S16**) Merry winds his horn in a fierce rallying call that harkens back to his role as an esquire of Rohan (**LR108**).

This summons brings a host of hobbits together in the main street of Bywater, led by Farmer Cotton in a riot of rejoicing dominated by **LR202, H12** and **LR203** continuing into its original **LR44** tune. Farmer Cotton in response to Frodo's question describes the activities of Sharkey (**LR201** once again with **LR19** beneath) before the hobbits scatter in mock-flight at the approach of a band of the ruffians, who advance down the street banging on doors (**H1** with a sudden climax of **LR199** as Bill Ferny steps out into the limelight.

As before it is Merry who intercepts him (**H2** with muttered imprecations of **LR200**), and when Ferny ignores his warnings he is shot by concealed archers (**LR3**), with Farmer Cotton merely commenting that the hobbits "needed the call" (**LR203** now combined with **H12**). Sam however is more despondent, seeing parallels between the desolation of Mordor and the ruined landscape of the Shire, the music recalling his despair at the opening of the chapter *Mount Doom* with the same jarring combination of **H2** and **LR158;** and this juxtaposition continues as Frodo reflects that Saruman was tricked by the deceits of Mordor every much as Lotho.

But the appearance of Saruman at the door of Bag End suddenly reveals the true nature of the mysterious Sharkey who has so despoiled the Shire:

LR204



and the original version of **LR19** leads immediately to the theme associated with the White Council **LR20** to underline Saruman's unaltered pretensions to power and dominion. He rejoices at the discomfiture of Frodo (**LR201**) but the latter, summoning the full force of **LR20** in his own turn, condemns him to exile. This apparent mercy appals the hobbits (**H2** and **LR200**) who mutter resentfully that the wizard is "a villain and a murderer" and ask half-anxiously after the whereabouts of Lotho Sackville-Baggins. Saruman draws himself up majestically, defying their anger and prophesying that anyone who strikes him "shall be accursed" (**LR20** now in its turn followed by **LR19,** thus reversing the wizard's previous order of priorities).

Frodo dismisses his threats (**H2** now riding triumphantly over **LR132**), and commands Saruman to depart "by the speediest way" (**L19** now in isolation). The latter summons Wormtongue (**L109**) to follow him; but as they pass Frodo he draws a hidden knife and attempts to stab the hobbit (**LR126**). The blade turns and snaps on the hidden *mithril* mail (**H72** and **LR4**) but Frodo prevents Sam from taking any further action against Saruman, declaring in music of nobility (both **LR19** and **LR20** now reunited) that the hobbits should refrain from taking any action against a being of such a mighty order. Saruman rising to his feet (and now accompanied by a quiet echo of **LR20**) acknowledges the moral superiority of his rival, but reflects ruefully on the cruelty of his mercy. To the subdued combination of **H2** and **LR132** he observes that Frodo will reap neither health nor long life; but that is none of his doing. And when Frodo offers to reprieve Wormtongue (**LR109**) Saruman is still quick to intervene when Frodo describes him as harmless. With increasing relish he describes how Wormtongue has killed Lotho, and implies that he has also eaten him (an unholy melange of **LR109**, **LR132**, **H2** and **LR200** underpins this grisly narrative). In increasing despair Wormtongue complains that Saruman "told me to" (**LR109**) and, when Saruman spurns him (**LR19** soaring triumphantly over the discordant **LR201** below) he rises suddenly and cuts the wizard's throat (**LR126**) before himself succumbing to the arrows of the hobbits.

Saruman is, as Tom Shippey has pointed out, the most *modern* character in the whole of *The Lord of the Rings*: a definitively twentieth-century figure as opposed to, say, the idealised late nineteenth-century Victorian Diamond Jubilee Shire of the Hobbits. As such his musical language is inevitably different from anything else in either *The Silmarillion* or *The Lord of the Rings.* His elegant use of the language and rounded periods of the Enlightenment are reflected in a slightly florid baroque style; but it is not the natural elegance of Voltaire, but the cultivated double-speak of the Orwellian demagogue, and the baroque style is that of Stravinskian neo-classicism rather than Mozartian *cantilena* (**LR66** and **LR204**). There are moments, too, when he allows his cultivated style to slip—either in moments of anger and tension, or when he is trying to daunt the hobbits with the threat of his latent power—and at these moments the elegant decoration of his vocal line suddenly reverts to a more brutally syllabic style which is noted even by his listeners—"they shuddered at the change". Wormtongue too, the creature of Saruman, adopts his more florid style of delivery when addressing Théoden in Edoras, and it is only later that he reverts to a more natural line when he is driven by a sense of increasing servility and desperation. At the end of *The Scouring of the Shire*, when Saruman is reduced to a sense of futility and despondency by Frodo's proffered mercy, his vocal line shrinks in an almost Oedipal fashion; but this is no *lux fact est*. Saurman's own aspiring theme is now inexorably and grotesquely corrupted by the chromatically distorted 'Sharkey' theme heard earlier in the chapter; and as he vents his frustration on Wormtongue, the one object left on which he can still exercise coercion, and the latter cuts his throat, the themes of Isengard are heard for one last time clattering to the ground in ruin.

But that, as Tolkien shows in a very late addition to the

book, is not quite the end of the story. It is clear that Saruman still has one remaining option; he can return his body to the One, in the hope that he may be reincarnated in a new bodily form, as has already happened to Gandalf earlier in the drama. But whereas Gandalf, in his own narration of his spiritual journey, has made it clear that his voyage involved a return to the primordial chaos before Creation—the very opening of *Fëanor* in *The Silmarillion*—Saruman in his pride and wilfulness is not willing to abase himself so far. He seeks for salvation from the Valar, and the shadow that rises from his dead body makes itself manifest in the music heard somewhat later in the same passage of *Fëanor*, when the Valar themselves have already come into being (**S1**). Without that basal structure the shadow of Saruman is simply dissipated by the wind, at the same moment when Gandalf's new incarnation as the White Rider had come into being. All that is left is dust—"fragments of skin"—which are left to scatter with the last remnants of the Isengard musical material **LR126**, which are themselves the isolated fragments of the original Arda theme **S7** from the *Fëanor* prelude.

THE GREY HAVENS

This episode originated in the song *The Sea Bell* written in the early 1970s and was then expanded and completed in vocal score during the following years. However I always regarded the final segment (from Gandalf's words "Go in peace") as unsatisfactory, and when I was orchestrating the piece in 2001 I took the opportunity to compose a new ending drawing on material from similar scenes in *The Silmarillion*. The whole score was then subjected to yet further substantial amendment during the final stages of the revision of the cycle.

Nonetheless the opening of the final chapter, *The Grey Havens*, still consists of an abridged setting of Tolkien's poem *The Sea Bell* which he described in his introduction of *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* as "Frodo's Dreme". The music here is an extensive restatement of the theme associated with the Awakening of the Elves first heard in *Fëanor*, but as has been noted this does not reappear in *The Lord of the Rings* until Arwen introduces it in *Homeward Bound* as her gift to Frodo—his right to take her place on the last ship departing for Valinor, and so seek healing for his wounds. The same extended melody has been extensively heard throughout *The Silmarillion*—a complete restatement of the material concludes the First Triptych of *The War of Wrath* with the ruin of Doriath—but now, at the end of the Third Age, it is shrunken and diminished with an unsteady triplet rhythm underpinning its normal progress (**S10**). The fact that it is counterpointed with Arwen's own theme of healing (**S194**) indicates that Frodo himself is uneasy and unhappy with the solution it suggests, and that he seeks and requires something more. When he sees the dark caves under the cliff edges, the sudden emergence in the bass of the themes associated with Sauron and the Ring (**LR15** and **LR16**) gives some indication of the reasons for his uneasiness. Nonetheless it is this extended Elvish melody, shorn of its Doriath implications, which dominates the first part of the opening scene, in contrast to the more straightforward presentation of the theme of the Elvish ship offering passage **S185** (first heard in the Second Triptych of *The War of Wrath*, hinted at during *The Mirror of Galadriel* and Legolas's apostrophes to the sea) which now assumes a clearer predominance. The following scenes—Frodo's lapse into despair, the final parting of Sam and himself in the woods, the passage to the Grey Havens themselves, and the boarding of the ship—are almost entirely built around this same material, with extensive statements of the Arwen-Doriath melody counterpointed and juxtaposed with material from earlier chapters in the score: Frodo's statement of the walking song (**LR14**), the hymn of the Elves to Elbereth (**S2**—both from *The Return of the Shadow*), the music associated with Elrond and Rivendell (**H25** and **H29**), and the decision of Frodo to accept the burden of the Ring (**LR70** from *The Council of Elrond*), the dialogue between Frodo and Sam after the Ring's destruction (**LR69** and **LR159** from *Mount Doom*), and Galadriel's farewell (**S90** from *The Mirror of Galadriel* and—before that—*Beren and Lúthien*).

The arrival of Gandalf at the Grey Havens (his own theme **LR7** now hardly hinted at in the harmonies) leads the listener almost entirely back into the territory of *The Silmarillion.* The theme of the last ship **S185** gives way to the music associated with the Night of Nought (**S6** heard originally in the prelude to *Fëanor*) and then to the theme of Arda itself **(S7** from the same passage). We hear for one final time the theme of the Valar **S2**, again in the same form that it assumed in the *Fëanor* prelude, before an offstage chorus sing the wavering melody associated with Galadriel's creation of the Stars (**S3**), and this in turn leads to a full restatement of the material from the epilogue to *The War of Wrath* (**S209**) which Sam himself conjured up in his description of the Elves sailing over the seas in the opening scene of *The Shadow of the Past*. This is indeed almost the sole reference in these closing pages to any substantial passages in the score of *The Lord of the Rings*; as the ship sails into the Uttermost West, it is the music of *The Silmarillion* cycle which brings the whole structure to a close: the music associated with the lament for Númenor (in *The Fall of Gondolin* and *The War of Wrath*), and even one solitary reference to the theme of the Silmarils themselves (**S26**)—the one appearance of this in the whole of *The Lord of the Rings.* But the final theme is that of Ilúvatar himself, the One, the very same theme that launched *The Silmarillion* and now brings a final conclusion (**S1**). Those who wish to observe such niceties may perhaps further observe that the shift in tonalities over the whole movement from the opening of *Fëanor* (C to D) to the final chord of *The Grey Havens* (E♭). Then compare this progression with the opening chords of *The Fall of Gondolin*, where the same sequence (albeit transposed) is displayed in just two bars.

At the time when the scores were written, the return in the final pages of *The Lord of the Rings* to the thematic material of *The Silmarillion* might have well seemed like a purely musical decision made for the sake of symphonic unity. But the recent publication of the collected Tolkien poems have perhaps clarified the manner in which Tolkien's description of the passage to Valinor in the closing pages of *The Grey Havens* (in itself a very late addition to the text made shortly before publication) echoes the wording of his poem *Vestr am Haf* (later to be recycled as *Bilbo's last song*) probably written in the 1930s, before the publication of either *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings* but at a time when the writing of *The Silmarillion* was reaching completion.

4

CONCLUSION

TOWARDS AN EVOLUTIONARY ANALYSIS

While the music for my cycle of epic scenes from *The Silmarillion* displayed a slow evolution of thematic material—from the densely chromatic opening chords of *Fëanor* to the multiplicity of motifs associated with the Valar, the Eldar, Men and the other populations of Tolkien's Middle-earth—that for the parallel cycle of musical chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* depends to a very large degree on the assumption that the motifs of *The Silmarillion* are taken for granted as a background to the dramatic development, and only slowly reveal new musical facets as the action develops. It might therefore makes more sense to treat the various thematic elements in the chapters of *The Lord of the Rings* in the context of their initial appearances in *The* Silmarillion; the alternative involves the very real danger that certain passages, such as the 'last debate' or the coronation of Aragorn, with their close contrapuntal intersplicing of a whole variety of individual themes, might degenerate into a complex mathematical series of numbered themes which would not only bewilder but convey an entirely incorrect formal structure to a freely evolving musical tapestry. And the most comprehensive manner to avoid this, therefore, would be to treat the thematic structure of both the *Silmarillion* and *Lord of the Rings* works in terms of the peoples, locations and events they describe.

While the opening prelude of *Fëanor*, derived in turn from my third symphony *Ainulindalë,* laid out for the hearer a whole series of brief (and not so brief) themes depicting the creation of the Valar and their functions, the very more realistic nature of *The Lord of the Rings* inevitably means that the mythological element is distanced. The theme representing Ilúvatar through the medium of his vicegerent the Elder King, which opens the musical development of *Fëanor* (**S1**) and is a constant presence throughout *The Silmarillion*, does not even make the shadow of an appearance until the opening music itself returns to describe the resurrection of Gandalf as the White Wizard in *The Riders of Rohan.* It is clear however from the music here that it is the intervention of Ilúvatar himself that provides the impetus for the action, with even the densely chromatic opening chords making a solitary appearance; and thereafter the same theme will return at climactic moments of crisis, as when Gandalf reveals his power to break Saruman's staff (in *The Voice of Saruman*), during his dispute about his mission with Denethor (in *Minas Tirith*) or in the passage where he overpowers the Mouth of Sauron (in *The Black Gate opens*). It makes its final almost ghostly appearance immediately following the death of Saruman, when the wraith of the slain wizard makes an appeal for the clemency of the Valar, and is dissolved by the wind blowing from the west (in the closing bars of *The Scouring of the Shire*). In *The Silmarillion* there also evolves a second demonstration of the power of Ilúvatar in references to the Downfall of Númenor, where the original theme evolves a much more violent tone, and this also reappears in *The Lord of the Rings* with reference to the defeat of Sauron both in the Downfall of Númenor and in the overthrow of the realm of Mordor itself; so that when Faramir, beholding the latter from a distance (in *The Field of Cormallen*), says that it reminds him of Númenor, that resemblance is not only a simple verbal reference but a musical one as well.

It may be noted here, as an example of the intricate cross-referencing of motifs that occurs in the score, that the underlying rhythm (which will also recur) is that found in the closing section of *The Fall of Gondolin* and again at the end of the *Akallabêth* where it specifically refers to the downfall of Númenor.

Other themes for the Valar as heard in the prelude to *Fëanor* also emerge during the course of the action. The theme associated with Elbereth (**S3**) has already in *The Silmarilllion* been subjected to considerable development, especially when it was taken up by Lúthien in her song addressed to Elbereth at her first appearance. In recurs in *The Lord of the Rings* both in its original form and in its Elvish adaptation, and of course it is stated prominently as the hobbits come upon the wandering Elves in Woody End, who not only employ Elbereth's own theme but also that of the Valar as a whole which had preceded its appearance in the *Fëanor* prelude.

This melody (**S2**) also will recur, as the Elves make their way to the Grey Havens at the end of the work, but otherwise its appearances—so essential a part of the music in *The Silmarillion* and especially *The War of Wrath*—are rare in *The Lord of the Rings*, where the Valar as a body have no real dramatic presence. But Lúthien's adaptation of Elbereth's theme returns with the appearance of Arwen (in *The Council of Elrond*) and thereafter recurs regularly whenever her love for Aragorn comes into consideration, even during such stormy passages as the reforging of the sword Anduril (in *Farewell to Rivendell*):

This combination of themes of course reaches an apotheosis in the arrival of Arwen in Minas Tirith for her wedding to Aragorn (in *The Steward and the King*) but here it is supplemented by two new themes related to the couple. The first of these is the onstage trumpet fanfare before the Black Gate when Aragorn first reveals his regal status (**LR182**); the second is a more delicate counterpoint to it which first attains real prominence as the new King and Queen of Gondor receive Frodo at the beginning of *Homeward Bound* (**LR194**).

In fact this counterpoint of the Arwen and Elessar themes has been prefigured in the slightly earlier scene of Aragorn's coronation, but in the welter of thematic references there is easily overlooked. It is here fully revealed, and Arwen's more yielding segment of the theme soon detaches itself as a representation of the jewel that she gives to Frodo and which therefore continues to be heard independently thereafter in *The Grey Havens*.

The theme of Morgoth (**S4**), the next to emerge in the *Fëanor* prelude, makes its presence felt throughout *The Lord of the Rings* although its use is frequently appropriated by Morgoth's vassals—not only Sauron himself, but also the Balrog and the Black Riders—in the same manner that it had already been employed in *The*

Silmarillion. It remains its usual implacable and baleful self on each of its appearances. Sauron's serpentine series of semitonal chromatics (**S61**) however, which as one would expect in *The Lord of the Rings* assume greater significance, undergo a series of metamorphoses. At the beginning of *The Shadow of the Past* they first appear almost as an elaboration of a stereophonic ticking of a two sets of timpani tuned an augmented fourth apart (the standard configuration of much of Morgoth's music) which recurs throughout the score (**LR15**). At first it appears merely to indicate the ticking of a clock, or the slow passage of time; but then it returns as Gandalf places the Ring in Frodo's fireplace, with a sense of ominous doom as the words on the Ring are slowly disclosed. It will return again in the closing bars of the chapter, as a doom-laden commentary on the commitment of Sam to Frodo's service. And it persistently recurs during the Council of Elrond, as the debate turns to the destruction of the Ring, and again during later passages culminating in a furious battery of percussive sound as the Lord of the Nazgul rides forward during the siege of Minas Tirith, trampling on the bodies of the slain.

As a timpanic rhythm, of course, this returning motif is closely allied to the phrase "I am the Elder King" hammered out in the opening bars of *The Children of Húrin* (**S35**) and it is no surprise that this too will return, firstly in association with the Black Riders and then at other appropriately Sauronic moments.

Another percussive idea associated with Morgoth, which was also heard in *The Silmarillion*, are the rising hammered chromatics on a repeated chord of the augmented fourth, which in fact had its origins in the music I provided for the Orcs in *The Hobbit* in the early 1970s (**H30**). It returns time and again in *The Lord of the Rings* whenever the Orcs appear, and reaches it apotheosis in the argument between the two tracking Orcs in the chapter *Mount Doom*, when it forms the only element in the orchestral commentary.

And, as in *The Hobbit*, this reiterated figure (which occurs at both a fast and a slow speed) also generates an upward whiplash chord which emphasises the Orcs as a fighting force (**LR83**. It first appears in this form in *A journey in the dark* but then represents the armies of the Orcs at Helm's Deep, Minas Tirith, the Black Gate and in the Tower of Cirith Ungol. On the first of these appearances it gives birth to another rippling theme based on the same intervals, that associated with the Watcher in the Water (**LR79**).

The most important of this family of themes is of course that associated with the Ring itself, which had originally appeared in *The Hobbit* (H32) but had found its way into *The Silmarillion* where it was associated specifically with the machinations and enchantments of Sauron (**S68**). It recurs in every one of the chapters of *The Lord of the Rings*, either as a representation of the physical manifestation of the Ring itself or as an ominous threat underpinning all the actions of the characters. Indeed its first shadowy appearance is entirely unexplained and apparently unmotivated, when Ham Gamgee in the very opening scene refers to Bilbo's unnatural longevity and youthfulness—the result of his possession of the Ring, although nobody in the drama yet realises the fact (**LR6**). Even Gandalf and Bilbo in the following scene when they discuss Bilbo's intended surprise for his guests are entirely innocent of its nature, and it is not until Bilbo when making his farewell speech puts his hand into his pocket that the theme returns, this time not even clearly defined but reduced to its bare harmonic structure.

Once it has established itself in Bilbo's consciousness however, it rapidly asserts itself and at the beginning of the following scene as he hesitates over whether to leave the Ring for Frodo or put it in its pocket, the theme in its original form winds over itself contrapuntally and at different speeds. The harmonic structure of the Ring reappears in the next chapter, *The Shadow of the Past*, underpinning the vocal line as Gandalf reads the inscription on the Ring, already familiar from *The Silmarillion* (**S98**) and *The* Hobbit (**H35**) but now given its definitive form.

The final musical motive from the *Fëanor* prelude, that identified with Arda as the created realm of Middle-Earth (**S7**), recurs of course incessantly throughout *The Silmarillion.* As a depiction of the primaeval planet it has inevitably less significance in *The Lord of the Rings*; but its opening phrase, with its distinctive fall from the major to the subdominant minor, has already figured in the piano rondo *Akallabêth* in connection with the fall of Númenor as well as the destruction of one of the Silmarils in *The War of Wrath*; and this isolated phrase returns at another planet-changing climax, the final destruction of the Ring in the fires of Mount Doom. It occurs again as a symbol of triumph when Faramir refers to Aragorn as "victorious"; but before then it has already undergone a major transmutation based on its symbolism as an element of the earth itself. As they prepare to march on Isengard, the Ents gather strength from their roots in the ground to generate a rhythmic variation on the same chord progression; and at the end of *The King of the Golden Hall*, this is suddenly revealed, as they contemplate the tower of Orthanc by moonlight, as a high fluttering figuration on flutes and celesta (**LR126**). It now becomes a theme associated with the enchantments of technology and magic—it sparks off an explosion as Saruman's forces demolish the walls at Helm's Deep, and then becomes attached to the destructive forces associated with the Lord of the Nazgul. Nevertheless its prime function is to illustrate the machinations of Saruman himself.

In the context of this analysis of the thematic material on an evolutionary basis, readers should also note the article from Amon Hen *included above at the beginning of the section on* The Children of Húrin. *Written in 1982 as work on the epic scenes was just commencing, it serves as a summary of the compositional approach that was adopted thereafter (including during the revision of scores such as* The Hobbit *which had been written at an earlier date).*

5

APPENDICES

Epigraph: UNFINISHED TALES

This is an abridged setting of the poem *The Cottage of Lost Play* that Tolkien wrote at the same time as he was composing an introductory chapter to his *Book of Lost Tales*, designed as a framework for his legendarium in its first incarnation. This chapter, describing the journey of the voyager Eriol to the Undying Lands where he encounters the Elves who proceed to tell him the 'lost tales' which were eventually to constitute the body of *The Silmarillion*, was totally removed from later versions of the narrative. However in the very final stages when I was assembling the music for the complete cycles, it seemed appropriate to give a setting for the whole which would lend the narratives context; and it was Phil Walsh who pointed me in the direction of the poem *You and me and the Cottage of Lost Play* which existed in a number of variants and had been included by Christopher Tolkien in the first volume of his *History of Middle-earth.* The text of the poem is largely drawn not from Tolkien's original version but a later revision apparently dating from the 1920s with some even later amendments incorporated, and it set for two voices representing the man and woman of the dream-like narrative.

The prelude opens with a quiet orchestral introduction representing the notion of dreams:

App1

And the tenor solo who enters shortly after with the first line of the poem brings a new counterpoint:

App2

These two themes are developed progressively as the mezzo-soprano enters to describe the journey of the dreaming couple from their "little tucked-up beds in drowsy summer nights" into the realm of sleep, and **App1** soars as they join their voices in duet.

We now hear the theme of **S7** as the dreaming couple enter into the realm of Arda in music that anticipates the imagined journey of Frodo in the final chapter of *The Lord of the Rings*. The orchestra slowly outlines the theme to be associated with Vairë as the mistress of dreams (**S6**) and a solo flute rises in ecstatic trills as the mezzo-soprano sings of the voices of nightingales. As the dreaming couple move towards the "Little House of Play" the music again closely echoes the experience of Frodo in *The Grey Havens.*

The entry of the dreaming couple into the garden of the cottage brings a lightening of tone with a delicately inflected version of Frodo's poem in the Prancing Pony: "There is an inn, a merry old inn" (**LR44**) which scampers gleefully around the voices as they describe their child-like memories and visions. This however slowly evaporates as **App1** returns, at first on the orchestra and then more balefully as the dreamers lament their inability any longer to capture their youthful rapture.

The autobiographical nature of the poem—which given its date clearly reflects Tolkien's feelings towards his wife Edith—should not preclude a more universal application of the central idea of the poem: that the dreams of youth prove evanescent and transitory. As such it reflects and anticipates not only the nostalgic epilogue to *The War of Wrath* but also provides a link, as has been shown, to Frodo's own "dreme" as in the final chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* he mourns his own lost visions of paradise.

This epigraph thus clearly has musical and narrative links to both the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion* and the musical chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* without finding any clear position in the course of either than dramatic or musical narrative, and may thus be regarded as lying somewhat outside the cycles as a whole. But it does have resonances within them as well.

UNNUMBERED TEARS

As explained in the introduction, this triptych of scenes was written only in the final stages of the work on the recording of *The Lord of the Rings* in 2025. It was at that time that Simon Crosby Buttle pointed out a major omission from the body of legends included in the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion.* The central tragedy of the disastrous Battle of Unnumbered Tears, treated in considerable detail by Tolkien in both *The Grey Annals* and *Narn i Chîn Húrin*, is referenced at several points in both the text and music of the epic scenes, but is at no point actually described although its history is essential to the stories of both *The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin.* I was consequently convinced to write one further triptych of scenes: the first detailing the aftermath of the Dagor Bragollach (described in *Beren and Lúthien*) and the second and third covering the childhood of Túrin and outlining the events that underlie and precede the opening scenes of *The Children of Húrin.*

The thematic material for this triptych is, as might be expected, closely derived from that already found in the existing cycle of epic scenes; but some of its combinations are entirely new, and others provide a valuable bridge spanning various versions of themes already established elsewhere. The orchestral prelude, for example, begins with overlapping statements of the theme **S112** descriptive of the saga of the *Narn i Chîn Húrin*, and interweaves this with **S145** and **S152** to establish the location of the opening scene as the Hidden City of Gondolin. When the narrative chorus enters to introduce the characters of Húrin and Huor as the heirs of the House of Hador, we hear hints of the theme **S113** which will eventually become the motif associated in *The War of Wrath* and *The Lord of the Rings* with the Kingdom of Númenor and its realms in exile; but here the narrative moves quickly to describe the assault on the Edain by Morgoth's orcs (**S61** and **S16** in rapid

conjunction) and the rescue of the heirs by Ulmo who sends a mist to conceal them (the music echoing his appearance to Tuor in Scene Four of *The Fall of Gondolin*) and the eagles who bear them away to the city (**S102**) in music that, in differing orchestral guise, will later accompany the similar journey to Gondolin undertaken by Tuor and Voronwë. Here **S146** proclaims their arrival at Turgon's court and their sojourn there under his protection.

The first solo voice in the triptych to be heard is that of Húrin, asking permission of Turgon to leave the hidden City and return to their own people; this is underlined by the rhythmic pattern later to be associated with the folk of Brethil (**S130**) and a complete statement of **S113** in the bass. Húrin underlines his request by his observation that the two brothers have no memory of their journey to the city, and therefore no certain knowledge of its location (**S102**) and Turgon, recognising the force of that argument, consents to break his law (fully stated in his earlier confrontation with Eöl, but which will not be heard until Scene Three of *The Fall of Gondolin*) that "no one who knows the way hither shall depart."

THE LAY OF LEITHIAN

It was originally intended in the version of the text prepared in the 1970s that Aragorn should sing *The Lay of Leithian* under Weathertop during the opening scene of *Flight to the Ford.* However when the text was adopted for use in Scene Three of *Beren and Lúthien* as part of the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*, Sam's song of Gil-glad (from the same chapter of *The Fellowship of the Ring*) was substituted as in the current full score.

The revised version clearly has major advantages, in that the dramatic action leading to the attack by the Ringwraiths in maintained; and the melody of Aragorn's new narrative is later taken up into the score as a motive associated both with himself and his adopted home in Rivendell. As such it is definitely to be preferred to the original intention; but for those who wish to revert to the author's original, this version of *The Lay of Leithian*, adapted from material in both *Beren and Lúthien* and *The War of Wrath*, may be substituted; and the opening and closing of this appendix are accordingly tailored to allow for this to be done as part of the continuing musical fabric of the chapter.

The thematic material in the solo version of the scene inevitably reproduces closely that of the setting in *Beren and Lúthien*, with only minor amendments to accommodate charges in the order of events in the poetic version and more substantial transpositions to allow for the conversion from choral to solo voice. But in the final section of the 'love scene', where the long choral phrases which describe the union of the lovers would defeat the best breath-control of any singer, the opening melody in transferred into the form it took during *The War of Wrath* where Melian foresaw the coming of Beren to Doriath and the changes to the destiny of the world that would follow from this. After that revision the music reverts to *Beren and Lúthien* for the final verse, which reproduces the dying choral fall of the epilogue from that work leading to a quietly contemplative conclusion—this linking back to the action of *Flight to the Ford* where the music of the chapter will be taken up once again by Merry.

For a full thematic analysis of this appendix the reader is referred to the relevant passages on pages 15-17.

THE LAY OF EÄRENDIL

Bilbo's ballad *The Lay of Eärendil* is the longest single poem in *The Lord of the Rings*, and in the original draft texts from the 1970s it was intended that it should be incorporated into the opening scene of what was later to become the musical chapter *The Council of Elrond.* However in the intervening period the poem had been extracted by myself as a potential conclusion to the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*, since it incorporated a narrative describing the end of the legends; and for the same reason it was later taken up and more fully developed in *The War of Wrath.* There is however no reason—apart from sheer length—why it should not be inserted into the music for *The Council of Elrond* at the appropriate juncture, following on from the cadence at the conclusion of Scene Two of that chapter (where the original Act was intended to end).

The text now contains additional material in its narration, the provenance of which is fully discussed by Christopher Tolkien in the relevant chapter of his *History of Middle-earth* and is also included by Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull in the supplementary volume of their authoritative edition of *The Lord of the Rings.* This does help to elucidate some puzzling elements in the original *Fellowship of the Ring* text, but I have retained some of the wording found there which had already been included in earlier sketches.

The music for *The lay of Eärendil* in this solo form is an almost exact reproduction of that included in the Second Triptych of *The War of Wrath*, with the exclusion of the dramatic episodes introduced there and only minor adjustments to the vocal lines—as one would indeed expect, given that the solo version here was written before that in the epic scenes and indeed formed the basis for its construction.

For a full thematic analysis of this appendix the reader is referred to the relevant passages on pages 36-39.

THE LAY OF DURIN

Gimli's poem was never intended to form part of even my original massive treatment of *The Lord of the Rings* as sketched in the early 1970s. It was too lengthy for its context, and it drastically held up the gradual escalation of tension that forms part of the whole passage through Moria leading to Gandalf's fall in battle with the Balrog. However it is a superlative piece of verse in its own right, and in the aftermath of the completion of the revised score it was suggested to me that it deserved a place in my treatment of the text. I have accordingly prepared this setting, which could perhaps be incorporated into the score as a chant sung by Gimli as the passage of the Fellowship through Moria begins. If this were to be done, Gandalf's opening line would be transferred in the manner shown in the alternative given in the first bars.

App3

THE LAY OF NIMRODEL

Just as with Gimli's *Lay of Durin*, Legolas's song about Nimrodel and Amroth was never intended to constitute

part of the complete *Lord of the Rings* cycle even in its originally massive thirteen-evening form; it would simply have held up the transition from the lament for Gandalf which launches the chapter to the principal scenes in Lothlórien which follow. However in the intervening period before I returned to the completion of the *Lord of the Rings* the character of Legolas had also lost his other principal song *To the Sea!* (which had been transferred to Eärendil in the text for *The War of Wrath*). To restore Legolas's earlier ballad therefore seemed a suitable counterweight to Gimli's earlier narrative, and this somewhat abridged setting of *The Lay of Nimrodel* was therefore composed as an appendix to the *Lord of the Rings* score. It is written in such a manner that it could be inserted into the orchestral interlude before the transition to Scene Two in *The Mirror of Galadriel,* although this would certainly not be recommended in dramatic performances.

App4

THE QUEST OF EREBOR

When setting *The Lay of Durin* it became apparent to me that more mileage could be obtained from the music written for *The Hobbit* in the context of *The Lord of the Rings*, and that this could furnish material for a treatment of the largely comedic narrative by Gandalf given in the *Unfinished Tales* as part of a scene set in Minas Tirith following the coronation of Aragorn. This would also form an amusing appendix to the score of *The Hobbit* itself. It is purely in terms of such a comic interlude that the scene ('largely told in flashback') is presented here.

Although the interlude could be presented in *The Lord of the Rings* as an interpolation between *The Steward and the King* and *Homeward Bound*, it is perhaps more appropriately to be regarded as a vinculum between *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* itself rather than as an integral part of the latter.

ARAGORN AND ARWEN

The tale of Aragorn and Arwen was always regarded by Tolkien as the most essential part of his extensive Appendices to *The Lord of the Rings*, and indeed in the first British paperback edition of the work it was the only part of the Appendices included in the printed text. As such it seemed important that at least the closing pages of the legend should be included in any setting of *The Lord of the Rings* which aimed at a satisfactory dramatic whole. My intention was to treat the text as the basis for an entirely independent work for piano solo, which should stand in relation to the musical chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* in the same way as the piano rondo *Akallabêth* does to the epic scenes from *The Silmarillion.*

However after the completion of the piano work, in itself a substantial composition, it became apparent that relatively little additional expansion was required to produce a more dramatic treatment of the deaths of Aragorn and Arwen, set 'historically' over a century after the conclusion of *The Lord of the Rings* itself. And such an expansion could also extend to the re-introduction of the narrative chorus from *The Silmarillion* which had been entirely absent from *The Lord of the Rings*, providing a musical summation and conclusion not only to the latter but to my entire cycle of work on Tolkien's texts.

6

DISCORD RESPONSES

Preface
SHADOW-BRIDE

It should be noted that when my setting of *Shadow-bride* was originally written it had no intended connection at all with any part of *The Silmarillion*, which indeed at that time remained unpublished. It was composed as an independent song, commissioned by Sheila Searchfield and Myra Ricketts for joint performance by them in a recital at the Greenwich Festival where it was first performed. Nor indeed was I aware at that time of any possible link with the story of Eöl and Aredhel, which at the time was equally totally unknown.

The story itself is one of the oldest elements in the whole Tolkien legendarium (Christopher Tolkien comments that it may well even have predated the *Book of Lost Tales*) but long remained very fragmentary and shadowy, certainly at the time the original version of the poem was written in the 1930s. At that stage the arrival of Maeglin in Gondolin was the only firmly established element, and Eöl and Aredhel (or their predecessors in the sketched material) appear to have remained behind in Nan Elmoth after their son left. That would indeed parallel the tale of the poem, where the dark Elf entraps the Lady who thereafter remains in his netherworld; but there are also elements here of resemblance to the Greek myth of Hades and Persephone (although Hades immobilised as a petrified statue would then be a novel element). It shares the same nightmarish Gothic qualities of other Tolkien poems of that era such as *The Mewlips* (but that also was substantially revised subsequently) and anticipates such verses as the Barrow-wight's chant in *Tom Bombadil.* (The latter in my music for *The Lord of the Rings* generates a whole raft of entirely different thematic materials of a more complex chromatic nature, although it was co-incidentally composed at much the same time.)

I don't recall who first suggested that the poem paralleled the Maeglin chapter of the published *Silmarillion*, but that resemblance was certainly in my mind when I penned the relevant passages in *The Fall of Gondolin* in the late 1980s. The eldritch piano harmonies which suggested the owls perched upon the statue in the first verse of the song (and their bass inversion in the third verse where the couple now dwell beneath the ground) were reflected in the orchestration, and the solo role given to the viola in the song was retained when Maeglin hesitates in the face of his father's ultimatum to return with him to Nan Elmoth, abandoning Aredhel in Gondolin. Similarly the nightmarish waltz rhythms which accompany the dance of the spectral couple in the song reappear as the mother and son are fleeing from Eöl's pursuit at the beginning of Scene Three (now overlaying other themes associated earlier with Aredhel's ride from Gondolin). But to look for more precise resemblances between the song and the epic scenes would be futile; the song remains distinct from the originally unrelated context in which its music later found a place.

I will not pursue here the relationship of the music to its surrounding themes in Scenes Two and Three of *The Fall of Gondolin*, other than to remark the family resemblance between the opening descending chords and one of the themes associated with Rivendell, which had already featured in my music for *The Hobbit* (especially in the final scene). Apart from setting the song into a generally Elvish context, it has no other significance. Similarly the themes of Nan Elmoth, as a representative of the primeval forests of Middle-earth and their later depictions in the Old Forest and Fangorn, lie outside the realm of this discussion. Nor will I enter here into the muddy and tangled realms of 'psychic vampirism' where one character in a relationship is dominated emotionally by another; this appears to be a peculiarly twentieth century psychological concept, deriving ultimately from Bram Stoker's view of Dracula as an insidious seducer rather than a straightforward sexual assailant.

It is interesting to note that Hammond and Scull, in their comprehensive edition of Tolkien's collected poems, ascribe the original version of the verse to 1936 or thereabouts, at which time the version of the story of Eöl and his captured wife was certainly that, while she had sent her son Maeglin to Gondolin she remained herself with her husband—as is specifically stated in the poem. On the other hand Hammond and Scull, neither in their collected edition nor in their earlier edition of the 1962 *Bombadil* poems, mention the parallels with the Gondolin story.

Finally, the use of "walked" instead of "dwelt" in the setting of the opening line is a straightforward error. The line was correct in my original manuscript, as far as I recall from the recording of the first performance (the tape was unfortunately wiped by accident; the manuscript is in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth). It seems to have been corrupted when the written copy was transferred to computer in the 1990s; it makes nonsense of the immediately-following lines which stress the immobility of the man. I think the substitution of the word "darkness" for "twilight" in the second verse might well have been deliberate—it gives a stronger consonantal impetus to the rhythm; but it has no real advantage over the original, and I would suggest that future performances should restore the author's original wording in both instances—and also any further reprints of the song. (As always in such cases, I would refer in exculpation to my essay *In Tolkien's own words* where I explain that such minor alterations may either be deliberate or accidental. I suspect these were the latter.)

Fëanor

Prelude

The construction of the opening chords centred on C and D constitutes my 'depiction of chaos'—the primeval space from which creation evolves. Haydn in his famous oratorio *The Creation* wrote what was once described by an academic critic as a "very un-chaotic fugue" at this point. Some fifty years or more earlier, the obscure French baroque composer Jean-Féry Rebel was even

more extreme in his prelude to *The Elements* where he has his orchestra playing all the notes of a diatonic scale (that is, of one key) simultaneously; but I was totally unaware of Rebel's experiment when in the late 1970s I wrote these bars for my projected *Ainulindalë* symphony. Here I took a single note in the double-basses, followed it with a chord of major thirds in the cellos (divided into three parts), then a chord of minor thirds in the violas (also in three parts), a chord of the diatonic whole-tone scale for second violins (in six parts), and finally all the notes of the chromatic scale for first violins (in twelve parts); so each addition to the chord simultaneously grows more dissonant and at the same time weakens by one-half, with all the strings muted to blur the outlines further. This was then contradicted by varying the dynamics in each part, so the one chord after another assumes greater prominence before the whole morass disentangles itself and sinks back to the original single note which too dies away into silence. That was as close to a depiction of chaos as I could imagine; but it can be seen that in reality it is, like Haydn, totally un-chaotic. The whole process is then repeated a tone higher, at a quicker speed and slightly louder; something is beginning to happen. And finally the music rises by a further degree and the first theme actually emerges.

I remember quite clearly when I originally imagined the rising trombone theme representing Ilúvatar which is the first outlined melody heard in the prelude to *Fëanor* and the *Ainulindalë* symphony. I was attending a concert with Pendyrus Male Choir at the Aldeburgh Festival which included in the programme the Liszt *Requiem* with its parts for brass, and hearing the trombones rehearsing their phrases backstage with a beauty and roundness of tone which was quite foreign to the more brassy and forward style of trombone playing prevalent in the early 1970s. The rising fifths and fourths of the theme and the triplet descent to the final note came immediately into focus. The remainder of the exposition of the symphony, which became the prelude to *Fëanor* some seven or eight years later, was I recall largely improvised at the piano, including the melody associated with the Valar with its chromatic vagueness boldly proclaimed by the brass and then amplified by the solidly romantic combination of horns and strings in the best Tchaikovsky fashion.

The remainder of the exposition sets out the other themes associated with the Valar; and indeed these associations were already clear in my mind even when they were purely intended to form part of the symphonic structure, without any of the dramatic function they were later to assume. It is for that reason, for example, that the portraits of the Valar which follow omit any reference to Mandos—whose characteristic chords only emerged when I was working on the music for the body of the work—and the theme of Yavanna, which later became transformed into the principal motif for the Two Trees, remains in a slightly hesitant and less rhythmically precise outline. Melkor however does make a brief appearance, in a slightly unlikely counterpoint with Elbereth; the idea of Vairë as the weaver of dreams, which is to return when passage from Middle-earth to the Undying Lands becomes an element in the action as well as elsewhere, follows; and the exposition of the symphony concludes with a long meditation of the theme of Eä, the creation of the world itself—a plangent theme with its shift from major to minor which will return throughout not only *The Silmarillion* but also in *The Lord of the Rings,* where it is associated with astronomical or earth-shattering events such as the destruction of the Ring or the Downfall of Númenor—and Manwë himself as the Elder King takes up the theme of Ilúvatar from the opening to bring the prelude to a sonorous conclusion.

The 'Eä section' brings the first example within the cycle of a theme founded on what could be described as an 'acrostic' basis (there are several others later). This takes advantage of the fact that many of Tolkien's names can be translated into purely musical phrases, in much the same way as earlier composers such as Bach and Shostakovich made acrostics out of their own initials as a sort of signature inserted into their scores: BACH and DSCH. In this case the acrostic is relatively straightforward, a palimpsest on the word ARDA where R is interpreted not as D (using French terminology for the note Re) but as 'aw' which translates in sol-fa notation as A♭: thus, A-A♭-D-A. This is heard initially both as the melodic outline of the motif and also as its harmonic basis, modally fluctuating between minor and major. These acrostic motifs frequently act as a skeleton on which more elaborate melodies may be constructed (and incidentally bring advantages of familial resemblance between similar names, an important element in Tolkien's linguistic structure).

But here the bare bones of the theme are simply subjected to some transposition into different and rising keys, counterposed with the final triplet section of the 'Ilúvatar' theme—a combination which will recur with some frequency. This same passage for example, much later, will provide the basis for Frodo's terrifying vision of the Ring of Fire on Mount Doom; and the Arda theme itself invariably provides a point of climactic crux in the music wherever it recurs—even in quieter passages. I should observe that the coincidental similarity of the first three notes to the equally imposing theme from John Williams's *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is misleading, since my first use of the theme in the *Ainulindalë* symphony arose before the film was released over two years later (the dated manuscript in the National Library of Wales confirms this).

That at any rate is the musical construction of the *Fëanor* prelude, but the various themes themselves will rapidly become fragmented and further developed to assume additional dramatic significance. The opening depiction of chaos, with increasingly closer intervals piled recklessly one on top of another, gives rise to various degrees of harmonic tension—open fifths, fourths, thirds major and minor, and seconds giving way to semitonal clusters—all of which serve to colour and harmonise the thematic and melodic material itself. Thus the Elder King remains implacably on one single note, while Melkor attempting to imitate this finds his line inevitably drifting away from that one note by semi-tonal degrees, and Sauron's enchantments involve chains of minor thirds which give rise to semi-tonal clashes. Elves and Men in their turn make use of other elements in this chain of chords, and clashes between two different harmonic systems are not uncommon as the action proceeds. Of this there is as yet little evidence, with the themes being largely stated in uncompromising terms and harmonised appropriately.

The original manuscript score of the symphony gave fairly precise directions as to which passage of the text was being illustrated in each section; but in this 'exposition' leading to the revelation of Arda, this does

not extend beyond the first four paragraphs, with the themes for each individual Valar stated in isolation and not yet reaching any synthesis. All of the material is therefore open and ripe for future development, and will continue to expand and evolve throughout the complete Tolkien cycle; the music for Vairë, for example, will return after Gandalf has sung his final words at the Grey Havens, and the theme of Ilúvatar will recur in the very final bars of the whole.

It would however be dangerous to regard the exposition from the symphony which constitutes the prelude to *Fëanor* as in any way musically or dramatically representative of the *Ainulindalë* as a whole. In the first place, the exposition excludes any references to the Children of Ilúvatar, Elves and Men, which constitute the second and third 'movements' of the symphony (and the word 'movement' should also here be used with caution, as the music evolves in a continuous span of around half an hour); and although other parts of the symphony do make a reappearance later in the *Silmarillion* cycle, there is quite a lot that does not, or at any rate not in the form found in the symphony itself. The whole conclusion for example, combining all the thematic material in a whirlwind contrapuntal conclusion leading to the return of the opening chords, is missing altogether from the cycle. The exposition-prelude here is purely a statement of the various themes associated with the Valar and the creation of Arda, and its later development is generally quite different.

Similarly I should point out that the music did not have any specific 'programme' in mind, although if the prelude is played with the curtain up on the stage I would certainly anticipate some such interpretation on the part of the producer. More specific incidents (deriving from Chapter One of the *Quenta* rather than the *Ainulindalë* itself) such as the destruction of the Lamps by Melkor and the initial kindling of the two Trees were not intended to be represented in the symphony itself, which simply laid out the themes of the Valar and their inter-reactions with each other. The destruction of the Lamps (an event in the prehistory of Middle-earth preceding the awakening of the Elves) is indeed not portrayed anywhere in my cycle; it would need a major cataclysmic outburst in the orchestra! Indeed in the exposition of the symphony which constitutes the prelude heard here, Melkor's theme is comparatively harmonious when it combines with the music of Elbereth; it does not become disruptive or malevolent until the beginning of Scene Two (which similarly returns to music drawn from later in the symphony).

Scene One

While the prelude to *Fëanor* more or less exactly reproduced the music for the *Ainulindalë* as found in my Third Symphony, the music for the first scene allows for some further development of the symphonic material in accordance with the dramatic developments which are being depicted on the stage. But again nearly all the thematic material derives from the symphony, and in particular the second section of that work where the orchestra depicts the evolution and awakening of the Elves as the First Children of Ilúvatar. Indeed the whole extended passage following "And as blue light flickered" is a fairly literal quotation from the symphony, with the addition of a choral counterpoint in the opening bars and the elimination of the organ which introduces the 'elven' material (where it is substituted by the woodwind and brass). Before that point however there are two additional sections, dominated respectively by the themes of Manwë and Elbereth, and these also include and introduce new material including one theme that is entirely novel to the *Silmarillion* cycle and did not appear at all in the symphony. This is the first appearance of the theme which will become the motif representing Angband as the stronghold of Morgoth; it makes an appearance in the choral line at the words "high in the North as a challenge to Morgoth"—even though the character of Morgoth has not yet been formally introduced (that will wait until the second scene). But the theme of the Elder King, the vicegerent of Ilúvatar, is heard immediately on the entry of the male chorus who thunder out the declaration of Manwë in harmonic intervals that are firmly bound within the chains of open fourths and fifths which characterise that theme. This only softens with the quiet anticipation of the theme associated with the Elves whose advent is foreseen, but the grandiose open fourths and fifths soon return before the music shifts into the more translucent music associated with Elbereth.

That music is also derived from the passage in the *Ainulindalë* symphony which followed there immediately after the statement of the theme associated with the Valar, and was placed in opposition to the initial appearance of the theme that will later become associated with Morgoth. Here that appearance of the latter is delayed, and the choral description of the creation of the stars by Elbereth is derived from an early sketch which I wrote in the 1970s for a projected operatic setting of Yeats's play *At the Hawk's Well* which never progressed any further than the opening bars, with their shifting female voices in open fourths and fifths following on seamlessly from the Manwë harmonies in the preceding section. The appearance of the initial version of the Angband theme, already noted, leads to the solid chords which herald the awakening of the Elves.

That theme is here heard in exactly the same harmonic and orchestral form that it took in the *Ainulindalë* symphony, but it had originated from an earlier appearance in my setting of *The Sea Bell*, the passage in question written in the summer of 1971 and at the time composed as a stark and bare series of chords in the piano. The evolution of this theme, from its appearance here to its incarnation as the Kingdom of Doriath (its reworking as the prelude to Scene Four in *Beren and Lúthien*, and its appearance as the principal theme in the semi-independent *Daeron* for flute and piano), followed by its adoption by Arwen as a symbol of her Elvish heritage and her bequeathal of her place on the last ship to Frodo, finally returning to *The Sea Bell* as a symbol of Frodo's despair of ever finding rest, is far too substantial a topic to be comprehensively explored at this stage. As the discussion develops, however, we will find ourselves returning time and again to this passage.

However, following the unaccompanied choral description of the Elves and their vision of the stars, the same music does now form the basis for the final section of the scene; firstly it gently underpins the arpeggios in the celesta and harp glissandos depicting the spangled skies above the waters of Awakening, and then it expands lyrically as an illustration of the singing of the Elves in praise of their newly discovered world. But it is quite

abruptly cut off, as a new menace arises to threaten the peace and bliss.

There was one change in wording made in this scene after the completion of the manuscript. In my original score (now in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth) I had referred to the Elves as the "Firstborn of God". At that stage I was deliberately attempting to avoid the use of nomenclature and terminology (such as *Eru* or *Ilúvatar*) which would have been unfamiliar to Tolkien readers accustomed exclusively to such names as were found in *The Lord of the Rings*—similar substitutions are to be found throughout the texts as set (at least until *The War of Wrath* where, returning to the matter many years later, the general usage of those names had become better established). But although Christopher Tolkien did not comment on my use of "God" for the original "Ilúvatar" at this point, Renée Vink pointed out many years later that the substitution was not precisely correct or desirable; although Tolkien had sometimes referred to the Valar as "Gods" in his earlier texts such as *The Book of Lost Tales*, he had always explicitly avoided the term when describing the One. She was of course entirely correct, but I was then saddled with a different problem since Tolkien's original wording did not fit with the rhythm of the choral part that I had written. I therefore made some minor adjustment to the notation and substituted the wording "the One" which was clearly justified by Tolkien's similar use of the term in Appendix I to *The Lord of the Rings* describing the destruction of Númenor.

Discussion has been raised regarding the ideal size of the chorus in these "choral dramas" to which any answer must perforce be vague. There are a few dramatic situations in the *Silmarillion* where I do specify numbers of individual voices (for example when the men of Brethil come from the forest in pursuit of Niënor) which are mirrored in places in *The Lord of the Rings* (the Rohirrim with Imrahil on Éowyn's entry into Minas Tirith, the three heralds before the Black Gate) but by and large I have left such considerations in the hands of the producer, director and conductor. Wagner was similarly unclear in his usually precise directions, with the exception of the *Ring* where his instructions for specific numbers of vassals to sing assigned lines in Act Two of *Götterdämmerung* clearly envisage 24 men plus an unspecified contingent of women. In Act Three he reduces his vassals, except for various isolated interjections, to individual lines for specified numbers of singers; but these instructions are almost never observed in performance, even by conductors such as Goodall or Solti who are usually fastidious over such matters. Fürtwängler in his La Scala live recording does follow the letter of the score in Act Three (this may have been however the result of economic necessity in post-war 1950 Milan) and the old 1930s 78s of excerpts omit some of the solo lines and transfer one other to the baritone singing Günther, although Act Two has earlier been given with full chorus throughout. Whether that reflects period practice or not is unclear.

In my own scores I would suggest that the more declamatory passages, such as the opening phrases in Scene One here, would normally need a large and stentorian body of singers; but that other sections, especially those such as the end of Scene Two or the 'love scene' in *Beren and Lúthien*, would be better served by the lighter texture of a smaller chamber contingent. I would however hesitate to be more specific, since Holst gives very precise instructions on similar lines in his *Choral Symphony* which have invariably been consistently ignored in every recording of the work I have ever heard (Sir Adrian Boult, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Sir Andrew Davis—and I have never ever managed to hear a live performance of the symphony at all). Performers should be prepared to be adaptable, and the composer to accept the results.

The question has also been raised as to whom precisely the term 'Unseen Voices' should be presumed to refer. Clearly the opening words are those of the Valar (Mandos on behalf of Manwë in Tolkien, although clearly musically assigned to Manwë himself here), but later they are purely descriptive and narrative; later again they will occasionally become characters in the action, as in Scene Five of *Beren and Lúthien.* It is probably best to regard them as a moveable feast, dependent entirely on the context.

The use of the term 'triptych' to describe each of the 'Acts' is, as has been correctly surmised, simply an attempt to avoid raising operatic expectations which might be suggested by the use of the more traditional terminology. I can hardly claim to be consistent in its use myself, frequently referring to 'Act Two' or some such phraseology both in oral and written discussions; but it does have one additional advantage—of drawing attention to the threefold nature of each of the three individual sections, with a prologue and epilogue in each evening. Whether this is regarded is symbolic or not is for the listener to decide, but it was not intended to be so. I do like the nomenclature 'choral drama' which originated I believe with Rutland Boughton as a description of the segments of his Arthurian cycle from 1910 onwards; he and his librettist Reginald Buckley wrote a fairly substantial monograph to explain their notion of the term, a fascinating if decidedly verbosely-argued rarity of which I own a second-hand copy acquired many years ago. But then Boughton never lived to hear his complete five-drama cycle staged even when it was brought to a conclusion in 1945, and indeed the last two evenings remain unperformed to this day.

Scene Two

As the music suddenly enters the realm of Morgoth, the interval of the minor second becomes much more prominent as a harmonic element. It is odd that this extreme dissonance was hardly ever employed even by the romantic composers in the nineteenth century without rapidly resolving into the nearest consonant interval, as one hears in Mendelssohn or even Wagner. It was not until the twentieth century and the advent of atonality and expressionism which fractured the whole system of tonal harmonies that composers began to experiment with these extremes of discord—most notably Bartók in *Bluebeard's Castle* where the discord is shrilled out insistently to depict blood and later more subtly the manner in which clouds begin to overshadow Bluebeard's realm. Strauss similarly at much the same time employed the harmony to accompany the Nurse's nightmare vision of the Empress fatally drinking the Water of Life in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. But its use to depict Morgoth (and later Sauron) is almost inevitable, given the evolutionary nature of the harmony I discussed in the context of the *Fëanor* prelude: "the Elder King

remains implacably on one single note, while Melkor attempting to imitate this finds his line inevitably drifting away from that one note by semi-tonal degrees, and Sauron's enchantments involve chains of minor thirds which give rise to semi-tonal clashes."

Here Morgoth's theme, thrusting boldly upwards on a solo horn from its initial note via a semitonal rise to the upper octave, then lands simultaneously both on the upper octave and the note a semitone below. At the same time a second horn begins the same progress until all four horns are simultaneously sounding both semitones in a struggle with each other. Flutes and vibraphone join in the fun by isolating first one of the semitones and then the other. All of this is actually another return to the material of the *Ainulindalë* symphony, but the choral contribution from the text of the *Valaquenta* is entirely new and eventually takes over in a tortuous depiction of the decline of Morgoth into darkness, with the vocal lines fragmenting progressively by semitones until we reach a whole cluster of clashing harmonies, in a similar style to Ligeti in his choral music from the 1960s made famous through its use at the uncovering of the monolith in the film of *2001.* This miasma is only dispersed with the creation of the orcs, depicted by a sudden upward rush of the original Morgoth theme and an explosion of themes associated with storm and the orcs themselves.

Tolkien's whole dilemma, of how the orcs actually came into being when Morgoth was denied the ability to create, is of necessity completely side-stepped in this version of the story. Instead we move immediately to the decision of the Valar to rescue the Elves from the shadow of Melkor; first the theme of Ilúvatar as the male choir proclaims the counsel of the One, and then a fragmented version of the Valar's melody as the female choir summons them to take up residence in the Undying Lands. The passage ends with the very first fleeting appearance of Mandos, with his alternating chords hovering between major and minor (like so many of the Valarin themes) and the rising whole-tone phrase which will later become associated with resurrection and revival most notably in *Beren and Lúthien.*

In this passage, and indeed in Scene One, a query has been raised regarding my use of the term 'the Singers' in places where Tolkien refers to 'the Quendi'. I avoided the use of the Elvish word, as in several other instances throughout the cycle, because it was not used by the author in *The Lord of the Rings* and might therefore I felt be obscure to even Tolkien aficionados. (Much later, when it came to the text for *The War of Wrath*, I allowed myself a greater freedom in this regard.) A straightforward translation of the term as 'the Elves' was I felt not sufficiently atmospheric, especially in a context where that word had already been extensively used; the more literally correct 'the Speakers' was rejected as sounding too conventional and down-to-earth. The phrase 'the Singers' was chosen because Tolkien himself had used it in reference to the Lindar, and in view of the fact that the various races and divisions of the Elves had been almost totally disregarded in the course of the narrative itself as employed in the epic scenes (the Vanyar, for example, are similarly ignored in the construction of the text, although Indis does make a brief and tangential appearance in the choral narration of Scene Three).

The music for the Two Trees and the Noontide of the Blessed Realm which follows is almost entirely a development from the music first heard in the prelude and associated there with Yavanna. Although the role of the Vala herself does not feature in the epic scenes (where her dialogue later on is taken over by Elbereth) this musical aspect of her presence becomes extremely important throughout the cycle, not only in the *Silmarillion* but in the prospect of the Trees themselves as a symbol of hope and renewal—they will dominate, for example, the discussion between Aragorn and Gandalf on Mount Mindolluin following the coronation scene, and the distant voice of Elbereth will be heard singing the same melody in welcoming the Ring-Bearers to Valinor at the end of *The Grey Havens.* But at no time later in the cycle is the melodic interweaving of the trees expressed so extensively as in this passage, with the same theme intertwined with itself in a manner that is not quite fugal but has an air of stately nobility.

Scene Three

When many moons ago I was studying composition with David Wynne, one of the two precepts that he firmly dinned into me was the absolute need for a composer to be self-critical and identify weaknesses in his/her works before they saw the light of day, at a time when they could be silently amended or corrected. There are of course considerable dangers in this sort of approach—some composers can be so self-critical that they actually suppress or destroy more than they publish, such as Dukas or Duparc, or indulge in a bonfire of music which they later come to regard as being in an obsolete style, such as Tippett or Orff. But I *have* found over the years that a healthy dose of scepticism towards one's own output can stand one in good stead, especially when as in later years I have become a reviewer and critic dealing in my turn with the output of other composers. (By the way, the second of David Wynne's two precepts, the dictum derived from Stravinsky that all music should be capable of being self-explanatory without any need for analysis or further description, I have always totally disregarded as the arrant and evident nonsense that it is.)

Nevertheless I generally prefer to leave my music reviewer's hat and notebook parked firmly in the basement when I am asked to pass any comment on my own compositions, assuming that I should rightly have exercised my critical faculties on the writing before I allowed it to see 'the light of day' in publication or performance. But if I were placed in that position, I might perhaps have identified the opening section of this scene, with its choral narrative, as one of the musically 'less interesting' sections of any of the *Silmarillion* scores. It was clearly necessary to explain and elucidate the necessary background to the creation by the Elves of the Great Jewels, and the impact of their family discords on their subsequent history; and the simplest way of achieving this aim was to write largely homophonic choral narratives for the singers, accompanied by a web of accompaniment in which piano and harp arpeggiations feature prominently. Only occasionally, as in the phrase "he called her by her names" is there any element of heightening of the emotional or harmonic intensity. But then some listeners have specifically singled out this section as one of their favourite passages in the cycle, with the excitement of the new themes associated with the princes of the Noldor and Fëanor in particular providing a spur to the dramatic development. So after

all it appears that the functional aims of this passage may have been achieved; and the cursory nature of the historical survey engenders its own impetus, although readers of the book may prefer Tolkien's own much more leisurely pace especially when one considers his extensive writings on the tragedy of Finwë and Miriel (largely unknown and unpublished at the time I wrote this 'epic scene'; it only later appeared in print in *Morgoth's Ring*).

There are however a number of distinct strands in the narrative. Following on from the 'death' of Miriel the music describes the remarriage of Finwë extolling the virtues of his sons by Indis, and the early growth and development of Fëanor's creations culminating in his manufacture of gems and finally the Silmarils themselves. The latter is illustrated in music that glitters with light and air in the form of tuned percussion with the vibraphone prominently to the fore—textures that have before that point been rare in the orchestral tapestry of the sound—and the theme of the Silmarils only gradually emerges from this web, based as it is on the contrasting movement of a rising fifth and a descending minor scale which results at the end of each phrase in a bruising discordant element which leads inexorably onwards to the next statement of the theme in a higher key a fourth higher.

This finally evolving melodic fragment then forms the basis for an extended symphonic movement describing the Silmarils themselves, which brings the Triptych to an end. As it proceeds it draws into its ambit a number of themes which have been established earlier: not only Ilúvatar and Arda, appropriately when such cosmic considerations are in play, but also the theme of the Two Trees as the source of the light within the jewels and then the contrasting predictions of Elbereth and Mandos regarding the fate of the Silmarils and the earth itself with which they are bound. In the closing bars the themes of the Trees, the Silmarils and the Elves themselves are stated simultaneously in a manner which at once heightens the tension between them and resolves it. But the discordant intervals which are inherent in the thematic accompaniment still remain hanging in the air, as a continuing question mark over the future; the final concord is fragile, preparing the listener for the conflict which is to erupt in the Second Triptych as the drama finally gets into its stride.

A number of queries have been raised about my simplification and amalgamation of the family relationships among the princes of the Noldor, in particular the conflation of Finrod son of Finwë in Tolkien's earlier manuscripts (later renamed Finarfin) with Inglor son of Finrod (later himself confusingly renamed Finrod). This is of course only one of the omissions and rearrangements made in order to make the situation simpler for those unfamiliar with the complicated and shifting genealogy of Tolkien's manuscripts, but is probably best reviewed in a discussion at the end of *Fëanor*, particularly in view of the alterations actually made to the musical and dramatic structure at various stages of the composition itself (with new roles assigned at various junctures to Maedhros and Olwë). The conflation of Mandos with Lórien was more straightforward, a simple wish to identify one realm as the 'abode of death' without entering into necessarily lengthy and complicated explanations (although Lórien as a location reappears in *The War of Wrath*).

One further word however about the 'Silmaril theme' itself: the fact that it modulates twice into a higher key during in its span gives it an air of soaring aspiration and a distinctive character, but at the same time it makes it very difficult for an individual voice to deliver the whole theme in a single line or breath. In fact I think the first time this happens, significantly, comes in Scene Four of *Beren and Lúthien* when Beren delivers the words "And when we meet again my hand shall hold a Silmaril from Morgoth's crown" in a phrase extending from low C up to a high sustained F—which takes quite a bit of sheer technique, and nerves of steel to boot. And the dissonances which conclude each segment of the phrase and propel it into the new and higher key also come into their own when Maedhros and Maglor seize the remaining Silmarils in *The War of Wrath* only to find that their hands are "scorched and withered" as a pair of timpani thunder out the viciously emphasised minor seconds. These sorts of transmutations will continue throughout the cycle.

Scene Four

It is in this scene that the score of the *Silmarillion* cycle finally achieves the operatic milieu which it has been seeking to establish, with the first appearance of individual voices and characters. But at first the music remains resolutely founded in the narrative of the chorus, and the dramatic vignettes apparently remain as isolated moments in the musical whole. In particular the two brief episodes where the voice of Melkor is heard as a prompting voice in the ears of respectively Fingolfin and Fëanor serve to split the principal action arising from the dispute between the princes of the Noldor and the attempts by Melkor to sow discord as a means of gaining possession of the Silmarils.

The music opens with a brief prelude in which the rustling strings act as a sort of 'rumour machine' spreading the lies of Melkor among the restless Noldor. In the background, and occasionally emerging through the textures, can be heard the themes associated with Melkor and the Silmarils as the underlying cause of the Elvish discontent. The first solo voice heard in the whole of the cycle is indeed the subtle insinuation of Melkor that the Valar are deliberately holding the Elves prisoners in their realm to allow the emergence of Men in Middle-earth to supplant them in due course. The rustling strings theme (originally heard at the outset of Scene Two) now rise to an almost frenzied climax as Fëanor assumes the leadership of the faction among the Noldor who wish to return to Middle-earth. And so the principal action begins.

This is actually launched by Fingolfin, who is seen standing before his father Finwë as High King and protesting against the actions of Fëanor inciting rebellion against the Valar. It is he that first launches the implied threat of violence in support of his arguments—"two sons at least thou hast to honour thy words"—but it is Fëanor who converts these into reality by drawing his sword on his brother in actions motivated at once by political motivation and by jealousy of his half-brother's attempt to 'usurp' his influence over their father. The themes of Fingolfin and Fëanor are of course prominent throughout this scene, but the opening statements of the latter are already admixed with elements from Morgoth's

theme, especially the semi-tonal rise which launches the upward surge of both motifs. One of these, given a distorted shape in a 5/8 syncopated rhythm, makes it first appearance as Fëanor brings out his weapon; it will reappear several times later on, invariably at a time when the malign influence of Melkor/Morgoth is asserting itself.

The response of Mandos brings us back to the appearance of his theme at the end of Scene Three, when he predicted the ultimate fate of the Silmarils. Its uneasy shift between modes, with its semitonal oscillation between A natural (as the fifth of the chord of D minor) and A flat (as the third of the chord of F minor) but all suspended over a sustained F natural, will finally assume its major significance as Mandos pronounces his Doom in Scene Eight; but its dramatic potential, noted by others, is already in evidence. For, while the pedal in the bass underlines the firmness of purpose of Manwë as the Elder King, the semi-tonal shift in the higher notes has elements of Morgoth. The tension between the two tolling chords is only resolved with the emollient appearance of Fingolfin's theme promising to forgive his brother when the time comes. The brief final scene, as Morgoth seeks to further suborn Fëanor and thereby discloses his own lust for the Silmarils, contrasts the themes of Morgoth himself and Fëanor in the expected manner, but the theme of the Silmarils themselves (with its persistent and nagging minor second in the second bar) is lent additional point by the insinuating liquidities of the vibraphone. This instrumental colouration, already hinted at during the forging of the jewels by Fëanor, will become even more insistent later in the scores.

Discussion of the role and psychology of Fëanor himself, as the principal progenitor of the whole of this part of the cycle, is probably best postponed until a more rounded assessment becomes possible in the light of his actions especially in Scene Six. But it should be noted that his participation in the events of Scene Four are almost entirely a response to his surroundings: possessiveness towards the Silmarils as his own particular creation, love for his father and jealousy of any suspected rival who may come between what he regards as their special relationship, and pride when he fails to respond to Fingolfin's proffered gesture of reconciliation. It is also noteworthy that at the moment when the malice of Melkor is "revealed" the music is overwhelmed by the rustling themes of rumour heard at the very beginning of the scene, now rising to a tumultuous uproar. The exact nature of Melkor's machinations however remains deliberately obscure; Tolkien provides an extensive explanation of these, but the lack of any dialogue (apart from Melkor's brief opening words) means that it is not readily possible to explore these in any depth; so they perforce have to be taken on trust, until Fëanor himself provides a more expansive and reasoned exegesis during his address to the Noldor in Scene Six.

A query has been raised regarding the final words of this scene. In the published *Silmarillion* Fëanor does order Melkor to be gone from his "gate" but the sentence then goes on to state that he shut his "doors" (in any event the phrase is slightly different and more extended in the *Annals of Aman* version published in *Morgoth's Ring*). I therefore elided the two phrases so that Fëanor now in the score bids Melkor to be gone from his "door". The original version still to be found in the on-line libretto is therefore in error, although that printed in the CD booklet is correct.

By the way, the observation has been made over the years that the absence of any solo singers from the whole of the first 'act' of *Fëanor* is unique in operatic literature. Not so. I am sure there must be other instances, but the first Act of Massenet's late (and posthumously performed) opera *Amadis* does something very similar. Not that I had even heard of the Massenet work when I wrote *Fëanor*—it was simply an inevitable consequence of the manner in which the dramatic narrative evolved.

Scene Five

This is of course the central section of the score of *Fëanor*, and also the longest and most discursive. But in the final analysis it really consists of one single extended scene before and after the destruction of the Two Trees, preceded in turn by an somewhat shorter (but still substantial) interlude depicting the encounter between Morgoth and Ungoliant. These two principal constituent elements are however strongly distinguished in both their dramatic content (the interlude being heavily dominated by the chorus, the following scene focusing much more on individual singers) and their musical styles. It is therefore sensible to consider these two elements independently.

The encounter between Morgoth and Ungoliant brings the most self-consciously *modern* music in the whole of the cycle, at least until we reach the culminating battle in *The War of Wrath.* It opens with a fugal treatment of a theme, representing the spiderish nature of Ungoliant, which contains all twelve semi-tones of the chromatic scale and therefore essential lacks any harmonic centre or key. In fact, although similar ideas were used by Liszt (to represent Faust in his study in the *Faust Symphony*) and Strauss (for the section marked *Science* in his tone-poem *Also sprach Zarathustra*) the principle of 'dodecaphony' was evolved by Schoenberg for his 'atonal' system of composition. Here the manner in which the scale is constructed brings a series of rising chords of the diminished seventh (long associated with devilry in music) which also makes it somewhat easier for the chorus to pitch their entries into the music—inaccuracy of singing is almost endemic in many performances of 'atonal' scores. The rising and falling scales in the strings slowly and inexorably build to a climax, underpinned by the progressively rising diminished seventh chords in the horns and then the chorus. After that the dissonant seconds of Morgoth's theme almost sound like a resolution. The whole of the remainder of the scene then combines these two representative elements in an unholy alliance as they forge their plans; and only the brief hint, as they ascend to the mountain top overlooking the plains of Valinor and see the distant seas far away, of a theme associated later with the sea itself, brings any sort of harmonic centre to the music.

The fugal structure of this interlude raises the vexed question of repetition in music, especially when combined with an upward transposition of the pitch at each reiteration of a phrase to raise dramatic and harmonic tension—a compositional technique as old as the hills. Alan Bush used to insist that while one such repetition was permissible, after the second statement of the material it should be further developed or

transformed, although the strict application of this dictum would have deprived us of many of the most stupendous rhetorical climaxes in Wagner and Bruckner. On the other hand modern minimalists have raised the principle of repetition to a structural practice where the sudden change of texture or harmony after multiple reiterations of a phrase can assume cataclysmic proportions. In *The Children of Húrin* written in the early 1980s I experimented with some elements of this minimalist style (although this was some time before such composers as Glass or Adams became fashionable, let alone established) but I did—as in the passage under discussion here—elaborate and add to the textures as they evolved, so that the reiterations become a foundation on which the music is based rather than the whole rationale of it. But the question will raise its head again at later points in the cycle, as well as in *The Lord of the Rings* and—more particularly—in *The Hobbit.*

The thunderous declamation of the theme of the Valar by the full orchestra 'raises the curtain' on the principal action of the scene, but this soon dies down into the themes associated with the various houses of the Elves as Fëanor and Fingolfin are reconciled before the throne of the Elder King. This, one of the few moments in the whole score when Fëanor is granted any momentary respite of brief quiet reflection, is the still centre of the scene and leads to a quiet recapitulation of the music associated in Scene Two with the Two Trees—which are now enshrined in a halo of tuned percussion as their light blends in a golden radiance. The choral parts here are probably if anything more difficult than in the preceding interlude, asking as they do for a prolonged high A from the sopranos suspended over the whole texture. Sustained As in this register are not uncommon in choral music—there is a notorious example in Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*—but they tend to be employed for loud climaxes, not as here *pianissimo*—although again there is a precedent in Holst's *Planets* where the sopranos are required to sustain a high G quietly from offstage in *Neptune.* But then any choir who attempts *Fëanor* is, I very much fear, going to need to be prepared for almost any challenge!

The following narrative passage in which the chorus describe the destruction of the Two Trees is a concatenation of the two distinct realms—Morgoth and Ungoliant with their atonal themes and violently discordant harmonies, and the themes of Valinor and the Two Trees struggling against and finally succumbing to the onslaught. The pair of timpani in the male-choir section of the narrative were written with the intention that the two sets of players should be placed at opposite ends of the orchestra pit—similar effects have been employed symphonically over the years, including Nielsen's Fourth, Walton's First, and more recently John Pickard's Fifth (with three sets of timpani involved laid out stereophonically). The main problem with this technique (quite apart from the sheer logistical difficulties of arrangement for the percussion section) is that the native resonance of the drums tends to blur the contrasts between the antiphonally arranged instruments, and the results are often consequently more impressive in studio recordings than in the concert hall. It hasn't stopped me using the effect, not only here and in *Beren and Lúthien*, but also in *The Lord of the Rings* where it makes an initial appearance in the prelude to *The shadow of the past* but returns regularly at moments of tension. It can be contrived well in the recording, but I suspect in the opera house—and especially confined to the orchestra pit—it will tend to be less evident. This is a technical problem I am happy to bequeath to performers to resolve.

Following the destruction of the Trees and the silence that falls a solitary theme emerges, firstly on the English horn and then even more ethereally on the piccolo, each time accompanied by the eerie sounds of strings in harmonics playing *glissando*, a technique much beloved of composers of scores for horror movies but which can also possess an eerie sense of stillness. This theme will dominate the remainder of this Triptych, and its lament for the loss of innocence and tranquillity will rise to impassioned heights as the music proceeds. At this stage it accompanies the plea of Elbereth (taking over the role of Yavanna in the original text) for Fëanor to surrender the Silmarils so that the light of the Trees may be revived, and Fëanor's despair and ultimate refusal to do so. The voice of Morgoth in his ear, whispering that the jewels are not safe in the realm of the Valar, brings a more resolute statement of the Loss theme, now declamatory and proud in the brass. Mandos's chords return for his fateful words "Thou hast spoken"—the Valar of Death is the only one present who knows what news will now be brought.

In the original published *Silmarillion* that news—of the death of Finwë at the hands of Morgoth and the theft of the Silmarils—was confined to a brief passage of reported narration, and in the absence of any better alternative was perforce consigned to the chorus as a rapid sort of recitative over a sustained harmonic basis deriving from the earlier timpani duet. But it was immediately apparent to me, when the later version of the story was published in *Morgoth's Ring* with Maedhros's dramatic and urgent narrative of the events, that this version of the text was infinitely preferable to the original and, while preserving the harmonic undertow of my earlier setting the revised section of the score was substituted. (This explains the rather peculiar nature of the rehearsal markings in this passage.) Only the concluding bars, leading to Fëanor's curse on Morgoth (whom he now designates as the Black Foe of the World), remain from the original work on this section of the score. The reiterations of Fëanor's own theme are about to plunge directly into a massive orchestral statement of the lament (which we will continue to dub the Loss theme) which will launch the tirade that constitutes Scene Six of the score.

Scene Six

This scene is essentially one continuous aria for the tenor soloist singing Fëanor, with just a couple of brief interruptions during its course which extends for around a quarter of an hour of an increasingly political and emotional harangue. As such it is uniquely more difficult for the singer than any other passage in either the *Silmarillion* or *The Lord of the Rings* cycles, and the problems are increased by the manner in which the soloist is asked to move from an initially lyrical and rhapsodic idiom to a more heroic and eventually overwhelmingly strenuous manner of address. The whole scene is launched, inevitably, by the Loss theme which arose out of the destruction of the Trees in the previous scene; and this theme continues to underpin the

opening of Fëanor's oration to the Elves of his following in their torchlit vigil. This actual description of the scene inevitably recalls to mind the elaborately staged ceremonies associated with Nuremberg, Hitler and the Nazi Party in the 1930s and it is startling to note that many of the elements in the narrative were in fact already written before even the dawn of the 1920s and the emergence of fascism in Italy. But the actual progress of the demagogic address, beginning from a gently nostalgic reminiscence of a supposed past 'golden age' overlaid with bitterness at its destruction and rising to an increasing frenzy of desire for vengeance and eventual domination, is very typical of the style of some of the dictators of that historical period (always excepting Stalin with his horror of public orations and speeches). There is even the element of falsity behind the rhetoric; Fëanor is conjuring up the image of an early Edenic peace by the waters of Cuivienen, an entirely fictitious memory in his particular case since he and his sons were born and bred entirely in the Blessed Realm.

The music which he employs to evoke this pre-Valinorean paradise is, of course, an almost exact replica of the symphonic development of the awakening of the Elves heard at the end of Scene One, but with his cries of "Come away!" echoed by the brass he soon moves into a higher gear with his passionate declaration "Fair shall the end be". Literally into a higher gear, that is: the expansive lyrical phrase opens on a high B flat and maintains a level of ecstatic elevation which would try the talents even of a standard operatic tenor, let alone the heroic voice which is clearly required for a singer in the final pages of this scene. There are precedents for this kind of writing—the Emperor in Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten* has to cope with similar demands in what has been cruelly called the sound of "a *heldentenor* bleeding from the lungs" by one critic (I think it was Rodney Milnes in *Opera* magazine back in the 1970s). Blood may not be required, but nerves of steel definitely are, even though the scene may not be quite as overwhelmingly demanding of sheer volume as the forging scene in Wagner's *Siegfried* which generally may be regarded as close to an impossibility for most tenors. Simon Crosby Buttle manages it under studio conditions, but I am sure he would be most reluctant to risk singing it in a live performance even were it not for the additional top C♯ on the final chord which he originally added as a joke and which I so eagerly adopted (as an alternative for the most foolhardy of exponents!).

But then, given the nature of the tirade which Fëanor unleashes here, what else is there to do? He leads his seven sons in a startlingly savage declamation of their Oath, shifting rhythm almost from bar to bar and accompanied only by the two sets of timpani which had featured so prominently in Scene Five of the score. The text of the Oath exists in a whole multitude of versions to be found in Tolkien's various manuscripts, but even the final revision (published in *Morgoth's Ring* and not therefore available at the time I was writing the music) maintains a deliberately primitive style of declamation laid out in poetic form. In the published form of *The Silmarillion* Christopher Tolkien deliberately refrained from selecting any one version of the Oath, although he did then quote a later revision of it in *Beren and Lúthien*; and all except the final revision omit the appeal to Ilúvatar as witness which clearly was always intended to be part of the whole, since Maglor and Maedhros refer to it at the end of their pursuit of the Silmarils (in text which I included in *The War of Wrath*). I wanted to use the most primitive and barbaric tone of the text, and therefore here adopted the version given in *The Book of Lost Tales* with one or two minor re-touchings. The Oath itself is launched, and its end is consummated, in a rising and falling chromatic scale which owes part of its structure to Morgoth's creeping semitones and is suspended over entirely foreign harmonies; this motto not only will bring the score of *Fëanor* to an end, but will return right through the cycle until the aforementioned scene between Maglor and Maedhros where it will form a nagging *ostinato* beneath their arguments.

The intervention of the Elder King into this orgy of vengeful hubris can of course only serve to inflame the situation further. Until this point Fëanor's ambitions have been clearly defined: to avenge the killing of his father, to recover the Silmarils, and to establish a new realm in Middle-earth free from the Valar. But now he moves further. The soaring melodic line heard originally at the phrase "Fair shall the end be" and echoed when during the Oath he referred to mortal Men "who in after days on earth shall dwell" now finally emerges as the theme of Men as the Second Children of Ilúvatar and Fëanor's determination that the newcomers shall not oust the Elves from their position of power. In the original text he actually states this earlier in his diatribe, in a passage which I omitted because it seemed anticlimactic when it interrupted the movement of his argument towards the taking of the Oath. But now he brutally amplifies it, with a declaration that the Elves will take over the responsibility for the future of all of the Earth, and power over all of creation, in a manner that will astonish the Valar themselves. The orchestra bubbles and seethes, with the motifs of Fire that always tend to flicker around Fëanor rising to an ecstasy of passion. After his screamed farewell there is nothing left but the theme of the Oath.

How much of this rhetoric is real, and how much is feigned, designed to arouse the passions of his audience? Tolkien leaves little doubt that it is intentional, since he goes on to state that Fëanor is reluctant to allow any time for further consideration or reflection and indeed spurs the Noldor on to more precipitate action (the same impatience that will shortly engender the Kinslaying). In musical terms it makes little difference. Fëanor is determined to rouse the Elves to resistance and defiance, regardless of whether his arguments are valid or not. But the manner in which his oration is constructed, beginning from almost tentative and reasoned beginnings, allows the singer to build up a steady increase of tension as he gathers momentum and passion in a fashion that permits light and shade and hopefully avoids fatigue on the part of either the performer or listener.

Returning to the revisions Tolkien made to the text in the late 1950s version published in *Morgoth's Ring*, it is perhaps worthwhile at this point to consider the nature of those changed passages. Excluding the vastly expanded treatment of Finwë and Miriel which figure in Scene Three, these almost exclusively focus on the events in the Second Triptych of these epic scenes. The narrative by Maedhros of the death of Finwë has been discussed under Scene Five, but there is also some dialogue between Morgoth and Ungoliant which I might perhaps have included in my later revision of the score. I chose not to do so for two reasons. Firstly I wished the sound of Morgoth's voice in full declamatory mode to be heard

first on the words "Do as I bid" rather than during his spiteful haggling with the reluctant Ungoliant; and I further wished to avoid over-use of the distorted and modulated sounds that I had imagined for the giant spider in the later Thieves' Quarrel, bearing in mind Tolkien's own frequent injunctions against ruining effects by anticipation. I also had my doubts about some of the alterations Tolkien made to his narrative in the late 1950s, including his total recasting of the narrative regarding the destruction of the Two Trees (now assigned exclusively to Ungoliant) in the context of his 'round world' version of the myth where the Sun and Moon were already in existence. But when he came to revise Appendix A to *The Lord of the Rings* in the mid-1960s he had clearly and definitively reverted to the statement that Morgoth destroyed the Trees, and allowed the conversion of the Earth to a round world at the Fall of Númenor to stand. It seems clear from this that he had subsequently changed his mind about at least some elements in the 1950s revision; and it is doubtless for that reason that Christopher Tolkien allowed the earlier narrative to stand in his published edition of *The Silmarillion.*

Scene Seven

The monothematic prelude to this scene was one of the earliest sections of the score to be written—it certainly predates the use of the same theme during Scene Five—and as far as I recall was sketched in a single session. It is self-evidently one of the closest approaches to the techniques of minimalism in any part of the score, with its two-bar iteration continuing on for some three minutes without any modulation or harmonic variation. It was however written at a time when the music of the American minimalists—Glass, Reich, Adams—was little known in Europe, and the idea of the repeated phrase derived not from those sources but from Holst's much earlier *Beni Mora*, where the final movement of the orchestral suite similarly features an unchanging *ostinato* melodic pattern. And its basis is, like the theme of Arda (discussed earlier in the context of the *Prelude*), based entirely on an acrostic. This one derives from Tolkien's Sindarin word *aearon*, which transcribes musically to A [repeated]-E-A-Re(=D)-[E]—a lapping and insistent phrase which evoked to my mind immediately the gentle rolling of waves on a seashore. Now "Aear[e]" is never (as far as I can now ascertain) used by Tolkien as a place-name; but it is found as the final word of the hymn *A Elbereth Gilthoniel*, where *aearon* is furnished with a literal translation (provided by Tolkien himself in *The road goes ever on*) of "the Great Ocean." Highly appropriate for a miniature tone-poem intended to depict the ships riding at anchor in the Haven of the Swans.

Those who refer to the original manuscript copy of the score in the National Library of Wales will also note that the character who disputes possession of these ships with Fëanor is not named as Olwë but as Finrod. That alteration was deliberate, intended to simplify the question of casting when the character of Finrod as a tenor in *Beren and Lúthien* was already established, and when I fully expected that the lyric tenor singing that role would form a contrast to the more Wagnerian tones of the heroic tenor singing Fëanor. Once that doubled casting was abandoned during the course of the recording, there was no reason at all to make the substitution of Finrod for Tolkien's original nomenclature, and Olwë was accordingly returned to his role as the King of Alqualondë—and his music had throughout always been closely based on the themes of the prelude to Scene Six, and not on Finrod's themes as heard in Scene Three. The choral narrative surrounding the brief dialogue between him and Fëanor is derived of course entirely from the published *Silmarillion*, as Tolkien's later 1950s versions of the text gave out at this point (with the single exception of the Thieves' Quarrel which had been removed to Scene Nine).

The music for the battle at the Havens and the storm roused by Ulmo and Ossë are dominated by two striding rhythms rising and falling in contrary patters of three beats against two. Underpinning the Kinslaying itself we also hear the rising seconds associated with Morgoth (and earlier with Fëanor's assault on Fingolfin). This is generally fairly straightforward depictive music of the kind associated over many musical generations with storms and thunder—rising and falling chromatic scales, trills, and so on—but the 'AEARe' motto continues to sound throughout and even hangs on as a slightly querulous pendant at the very end after the storm has abated. It then leads immediately into the next scene with the theme of the Oath stealing quietly in with the muted brass. More evils are afoot. Of course, I have always expected that the stage would be veiled in darkness as the storm arises, with the new set only revealed as the music for the next scene begins with the choral narrative entry. Whether the veil or gauze curtain would be employed for projections would be a matter for the producer; but the sounds of wind and thunder are precisely notated at specific points in the full score, as an integral part of the overall orchestral texture.

Storms on land or at sea are of course part and parcel of many operatic scores, but until the nineteenth century they tended to be purely descriptive illustrations of the physical phenomena of thunder, lightning, rain and so on: familiar examples abound from Vivaldi, Haydn, Beethoven, Weber, Rossini, Rimsky-Korsakov. But Berlioz (in his Royal Hunt and Storm in *The Trojans*) and Wagner (in the prelude to Act One of *Die Walkúre*) made a major feature of counterpointing these elements with thematic material relevant to the action, and their initiative probably reached a culmination in Strauss's *Alpine Symphony* where the whole recapitulation of the symphonic material is almost totally submerged beneath the extraordinary violence of the illustrative writing describing an Alpine thunderstorm enveloping the climbers on their return from the summit. The storm in *Fëanor* certainly includes a number of dramatically important thematic references—the Kinslaying, Ulmo—but its conclusion comes with a welter of repetitions of the 'AEARe' figure as noted. And this passage, depicting the Sea rising "in wrath against the slayers", was later taken up and subsumed in an abridged form into my 2001 setting of *The Lay of Eärendil* (which was intended to synthesise elements of the whole *Silmarillion* score into a suitable format for concert presentations). From there it later found its way back into the cycle as a whole, where it appears at the end of Scene Four of *The War of Wrath.* There it serendipitously reflects the "winds of wrath" that drive Eärendil back to Middle-earth at the end of his first attempted voyage to Valinor.

Scene Eight

Just as Scene Six centred around the lengthy address of Fëanor, the greater part of this scene is devoted to the delivery of the Curse of Mandos. Indeed, the text for this prophecy is taken almost without abridgement or alteration from Tolkien's text as given in *The Silmarillion*—a version which was never subjected to any later revision. The opening bars, depicting the barren and frozen wastelands of the north, consist purely of introductory narration from the chorus accompanied initially by a quietly implacable progression of the grinding discords of the Oath.

The whole of Mandos's pronouncement of impending doom revolves around the alternation of the same two chords (D minor and F major revolving over a sustained F) already associated with him, with occasional themes superimposed on them in an almost semi-detached manner. This means that the alternating chords which will later become definitively identified as the theme of 'treason' emerge from Mandos's chordal shifts almost inevitably and imperceptibly. His references back to the themes of the Kinslaying, and his prophecy of the coming of the race of Men who will supersede the Elves, allow for some momentary respite from the unremitting delivery of the Curse itself; but the menace remains even in the quieter passages, and the stentorian declarations of doom—"the Dispossessed shall they be for ever" or "slain ye may be, and slain ye shall be"—stand out in stark relief as the iterated tread of the underpinning chords ceases momentarily.

Simon Crosby Buttle has commented on the manner in which he approached his performance of Scene Six, and in particular his search for elements of light and shade that could be discovered in the music itself. I know also that Julian Boyce was concerned in his delivery of the Prophecy that he should make as much as possible of the occasional quieter moments: the veiled references to treachery and treason, and the chilling postlude where the rebellious Elves are threatened not only with violent death but with 'fading' in the face of the advent of Men as the "younger race that cometh after." The menace is all the more telling for being muted, with the massed strings reduced to insidiously chromatic solo lines.

The response of Fëanor to this further threat from the Valar is unsurprisingly defiant, and resumes the attitude that he adopted at the end of Scene Six: "We will go on." But he adds a new dimension to this defiance in his final declaration regarding the future reputation of the rebellious Noldor in song and legend. We are all too familiar with politicians in speeches referring to "bad times" and impending disasters (never admitted to be of their own creation) but even the most rampant of twentieth century demagogues has never, so far as I am aware, actually come out with a statement which effectively says "we know we are all going to die, but we will still not go quietly." Here Tolkien moves outside any suspicion of allegory into politically virgin territory, although later in *The Lord of the Rings* Théoden will say much the same sort of thing as he rides forth to battle—a declaration which, as Tolkien observed in a letter, lies totally outside the field of modern or contemporary thought or philosophy. It is perhaps not so surprising that even the Elder King is duly impressed, although his understanding of the thought processes of other entities might elsewhere be regarded with some caution—he guilelessly imagined that Melkor had genuinely reformed, for example. After this realisation, and the dismissal by Mandos of any suggestion that ultimately good results can redeem evil actions, the music dies down into quiet restatements of the theme associated with the shores of Middle-earth which had been previously heard just before the appearance of Mandos.

It is perhaps worthy of note that in this scene all the solo sung roles are those of the Valar, with the single exception of Fëanor's relatively brief statement of defiance. It might therefore be an appropriate moment to consider the question of amplification applied to the voices of the Valar, especially since this matter has aroused criticism from some reviewers on the grounds that is either unoperatic or unnecessary. It is certainly worth considering these points.

In terms of the technique being "unoperatic" composers since the nineteenth century have called for amplification of voices both off and on stage, with Wagner in the *Ring* specifying that not only the Dragon in *Siegfried* but also the Valkyries riding in the air should sing through a "Sprachrohr" (a primitive sort of loud-hailer which was the only appropriate acoustic device available at the time). He certainly took the whole question seriously enough to give instructions in his score that a smaller and less powerful size of "Sprachrohr" should be employed when the Dragon was dying. Modern operatic productions make no bones whatsoever about making use of modern amplification in these instances, and similar effects demanded by other composers on occasions. So really there is nothing in the matter which is actually unidiomatic.

The question therefore remains of "necessity." It would of course have been quite feasible to write the music in such a manner that the voices of the Valar could carry across the footlights (or the recording studio) without any need for amplification, if singers of sufficient weight and power were available. But this would nevertheless have required careful handling to ensure that the voices were both suitably audible and distinct, pulling back the orchestra at points which really should be climactic. Wagner again provides an example, this time a less happy one, when in the final scenes of *Tristan and Isolde* he sometimes has to abruptly reduce the orchestra to allow an offstage voice—King Mark, Melot, Brangaene—to be heard during the struggle for possession of the castle. Each time the sudden interruption of the excited orchestration means that tension falls abruptly away, and has to be built back up again; and this is particularly noticeable if the voices are at any distance when the whole volume level is totally disrupted (an example of such inappropriately judged balances can be heard at this point in the Karajan studio recording). Vaughan Williams in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is similarly forced to such expedients when Apollyon confronts the Pilgrim in the Valley of Desolation, and as I discovered in a live performance in Gloucester Cathedral in 2024 this simply fails to come off satisfactorily in a natural acoustic; national critics seated at the rear of the nave complained of the inaudibility of the voices. Sir Adrian Boult in his live London performance in 1971 (which I also attended), and again in his 1972 studio recording, resorted quite sensibly to very impressive amplification which maintains the dramatic tension ideally. It was indeed experience of this passage in London which directly inspired my use of the

technique at the opening of *The Children of Húrin*, and then in subsequent episodes of the cycle.

The amplification does not of course demand to be all of the same type. Whereas in *Húrin* and elsewhere Morgoth must be overwhelmingly omnipresent and baleful, in *Beren* he becomes more conversational and even displays an unexpected degree of sentimentality. Mandos and Ulmo should sound less supremely forceful, but still displaying a halo of reverence; while the Elder King and Elbereth are even more ethereal in sound, and set at a somewhat greater distance. Simon in his production for the recordings has admirably realised the different perspectives involved (which also leave his Fëanor sounding lonelier and more isolated in his more natural 'live concert' acoustic) in a manner which I would hope to see replicated in live performances. If Boult could manage it in 1971, we can surely do even better today.

Scene Nine and Epilogue

I cannot at this late time, nearly forty years later, remember at all how I came to conceive of the technique for conveying the four-part "Voices of Ungoliant" in the opening of this scene. I had, and still have, a fervent and totally irrational dislike of spiders, and have never sought to investigate their anatomical arrangements in any detail (Tolkien seems to have had a similarly cavalier attitude when describing those of Shelob); but I do recall some dim memory of multiple mouths or spiracles or some such appendages which could perhaps generate more than one note simultaneously. The four parts could then be employed in a thoroughly discordant manner, mirroring the harmonies of Ungoliant's former master Morgoth; and I had always specified that the voices should be further subjected to electronic treatment designed to give them a more alien and metallic feel, although beyond a general feeling for the desirable sound I had no idea precisely how this could be done. In the event Simon's solution in this recording is precisely what I had in mind, although I still have no comprehension of the actual techniques employed. It works, I think, for the two speeches that Ungoliant has in this scene; but it is very much a one-trick pony, whose persistent employment would certainly outwear its welcome over any extended period. It was indeed partly for that reason that I afterwards decided against retrospectively introducing the earlier dialogue between Morgoth and Ungoliant into Scene Four (it had of course not been available to me at the time of the original composition), and this allows the passage a unique flavour in the context of the cycle as a whole. It also serves to concentrate the listener's attention to the one critical moment when Ungoliant vocally reflects the thematic construction of the score, with her ironic reference back to Morgoth's earlier words "Yea, with both hands." Morgoth's responses, unchanged and implacable, are of course an exact reflection of his earlier material in Scene Four (which will also return later in the cycle).

The theme for the Balrogs, first heard here, is a whirlwind descent through multiple octaves which I originally imagined and sketched for use in the Moria scene when I was initially working on *The Lord of the Rings* during the 1970s; it combines perfectly well in combat with the rising and falling themes of Ungoliant herself as well as the upthrusting Morgoth, although (not wishing to anticipate the dramatically far larger and more significant combat at the end of the scene) I have truncated the actual conflict between the two characters to a very brief interlude. This leads almost immediately into the theme associated with the shores of Middle-earth as heard at the end of the previous scene, as we return to the narrative of the exiled Noldor.

Once again I made an alteration in the original score here, although this was only undertaken when revising the score in the late 1990s. In the manuscript version Maedhros, deprived of his narrative in Scene Five, was only to be heard as part of the ensemble delivering the Oath, and his words here were accordingly assigned to Fingolfin, whose concern was for the transport of his brother Finrod in the remaining ships. Once Maedhros was established as a more substantial role, it made sense to re-invest him with his original dialogue at this point; but at the same time to have made the consequent amendment, that his concern should be for his friend Fingon, fell foul of the law of diminishing returns, by introducing yet another complication into the genealogy of the Noldor as well as a further character who would have had no further part to play in any later stages of the cycle. The changes, and the inconsistency with which they have been made, have engendered some well-merited criticism; but at the same time, while conceding this, I find it hard to see what alternatives remained that would not have involved some detailed explanation that in turn would have diverted attention from the onward plunge of the tragic *dénouement.*

That *dénouement*, as Fëanor finally consummates his flight from political reality and sets fire to the ships that should have been employed to transport Fingolfin, Finrod and their followers to Middle-earth, is underlined by a persistent *ostinato* figure which will feature as a representation of fire not only throughout *The Silmarillion* but into *The Lord of the Rings* as well. It is purely illustrative—the flickering of flames—and serves equally well for Aragorn's fire under Weathertop, the smithy where Narsil is being forged, or the pyre of Denethor in Minas Tirith. It lacks a central tonal signature, oscillating uneasily between major and minor modes, but rising steadily in pitch as the flames grow higher. Overriding this the principal themes of the narrative stand out in sharp relief, including a return of the 'Arda' theme from the Prelude to launch the epilogue "at the first rising of the moon."

Tolkien's own narrative of the death of Fëanor is, I find, strangely unsatisfactory as a resolution of this arc of the story. Indeed it seems almost to have been considered as an afterthought, not included at all in any completed section of the *Book of Lost Tales* narrative, and only later introduced because of the necessity of removing the character from the conduct of the future wars that had already been so fully described elsewhere. What was much more impressive was the description of the confrontation between Fingolfin and Morgoth following the Battle of Sudden Flame, with the air of elemental conflict that seemed somehow lacking in the idea that Fëanor would simply be overwhelmed by a force of Balrogs (already in danger of becoming a 'plot device' that Tolkien would progressively whittle down over the years, reducing their numbers with each repetition). So Fëanor's theme rises through the fiery textures with increasing shrillness and desperation, as the themes of Morgoth surge upwards and he finally expires

as the theme of the Oath plunges into the depths as its upper octaves are progressively stripped away.

That does not mean that the actual stage production of this epilogue, which in its purely orchestral nature serves (in conjunction with the prologue) to frame the action as a whole, should be regarded as set in stone. I have already referred on a number of occasions to my desire that the singers who take on the solo roles should allow themselves a degree of freedom of interpretation and expression, so that they are real participants in bringing the music and the drama to life; and it would be churlish and indeed foolish to deny such freedom also to those who are responsible for the staging and designs should be less free to give their own expression to the works—although I would expect them to adhere to the tenor and intention of the drama as I have created it, and not attempt to extend the field of their interpretation beyond that. I cannot conceive for example that an ironic or satirical approach to the scores could ever be justified, but the stage directions themselves are certainly open to amendment and indeed alteration in places. For example, the stage direction that "the sons of Fëanor, who have witnessed the conflict, turn away with an air of menace" in the final bars, was only introduced at the suggestion of Simon Crosby Buttle as a link forward to the reappearance of the sons in *The War of Wrath*; but the fact that this gesture coincides with a final statement of the Oath is a most serendipitous coincidence.

And thus ends the first evening of the *Silmarillion* cycle, like Wagner's *Rheingold* a work in which the entire action centres around immortal beings and ordinary mortals are significant by their absence. And again, in a further unintended parallel with Wagner, the next evening will begin with concentration on a burgeoning love story.

Beren and Lúthien

Prologue

After the bold declaration by the unaccompanied male chorus, the depiction of the Battle of Sudden Flame here was derived from music which I had originally contrived for the Battle of the Five Armies in *The Hobbit* back in 1972, with its rising scales contrasted against a persistent bass line which progresses slowly upwards in an inexorable series of modulations. (It was then, much later, transferred back to the score of *The Hobbit* when I came to reconstruct the missing passages from the original manuscript—which included the whole of the Battle itself.) This depiction of the surging fires and struggling armies constitutes much of the prelude to *Beren and Lúthien*—perhaps an odd way in which to begin what is essentially a love story, but essential if the context is to be understood by an audience unfamiliar with the overall legendarium. Only in the final pages do three thematic references emerge: the melodic arch already in *Fëanor* associated with the descendants of Finwë and Indis, and now linked exclusively to the character of Finrod Felagund, and two other themes associated with the prowess of Beren son of Barahir in the battle. For the sake of brevity, and on the principle of eliminating marginal characters from the narrative, Barahir's deeds in the battle are here assigned to his son. Of these two themes, one should perhaps be noted because (once again) of its acrostic origins: the rising motto on the notes B-E-Re(=D)-E. This will not only become associated with Beren himself (reiterated at various speeds as a furiously scurrying *allegro molto*, and later as a slowly extended high violin towards the end of the love scene) but later form a theme which will appear in *The Lord of the Rings* as Boromir, the distant descendant of Beren's lineage, revives the idea of military prowess in establishing the realm of Gondor in opposition to Sauron (Beren's foe, to be encountered later in the action here). In that later form it acquires a further extension with a theme linked to that for Húrin, since the House of Hador too forms a progenitor to the later Houses of the Kings and the Stewards.

The unaccompanied choral opening brings inevitably some anticipated performance problems. In past eras composers either relied on choirs having a sizeable component of singers with perfect pitch who would be able to enter without preparation on any particular note, or on a continuo instrument such as an organ or harpsichord who would give the choristers their notes before they began. Once large amateur choirs began to be the norm in the nineteenth century, composers usually ensured that the orchestra would provide at least an opening chord before the choral entry at the beginning of any work, if not an introductory phrase. But of course any such expedient at the opening of *Beren and Lúthien* would detract disastrously from the effect of the startling unaccompanied declamation by the male voices. This means that the choristers will not only have to be given their opening note well before the curtain actually rises, but that they will then need to remember it; or that they will be provided with the note by earpieces or some other such mechanical devices. But at all event the element of surprise must be maintained.

Nor, once the opening phase has been negotiated, do matters become much easier for the singers. The chromatic nature of the music associated with Sauron, and the persistent upward tendency of the orchestral battle accompaniment, render the maintenance of the pitch through the various key changes a matter of some hazard. One can easily imagine the sense of relief in the chorus as the tonality reaches a sense of stability as the music shifts into the interlude before the opening scene.

Several commentators, beginning with Chris Seaman in the *Tolkien Music List*, have commented (not unfavourably) on my simplification of the narrative by substituting Beren for Barahir as the mortal who rescues Finrod during the battle and receives his ring as a token of future aid and assistance. Indeed the question might well be raised as to why Tolkien himself did not make this change, which does have the evident advantage of emphasising the personal nature of Finrod's obligation rather than a less obligatory genealogical commitment. The answer I think lies in the process of the evolution of Tolkien's narrative. Originally in the version of the story given in the *Book of Lost Tales* the whole 'Nargothrond element'—including Finrod, his ring, and his oath—is missing entirely; it only enters in the late 1920s in *The Lay of Leithian*, and is further expanded in the 1950s revision where the identity of Gorlim's interrogator is now changed from Morgoth to Sauron. It is clearly this later version that Tolkien had in mind when he inserted a footnote into Appendix One of *The Lord of the Rings* regarding "the ring that Felagund of Nargothrond gave to Barahir, and Beren recovered at great peril." The latter

phrase refers of course to the now further elaborated story where the ring is taken by an anonymous orc-captain who seeks to purloin it as booty of his own—an element which would have extended the dramatic action fatally at a point where the rapid arrival of Beren in Doriath is musically essential. And once that story is abandoned, there is no reason to retain the 'Barahir element' either; indeed it remains unclear why Beren is not specifically mentioned in the *Grey Annals* as being present during the Dagor Bragollach, when according to the Tale of Years he would have been 23 years old (although in the revised *Lay of Leithian* he does appear to be enumerated by name as one of Barahir's twelve companions). By comparison with several later abridgements made to the story (such as Lúthien's successive imprisonment in Menegroth and Nargothrond) this elision seemed to be evidently reasonable.

Scene One

The mutterings of the theme associated with the Battle of Sudden Flame, interrupted by the other rhythmic motif associated with Beren, die down into a new theme now appearing for the first time as the chorus describes how Finrod returns to his realm of Nargothrond. The material heard here will reappear not only later in *Beren* but throughout the Second Triptych of *The Children of Húrin* where the fall and destruction of the city and its realm is described. (It also makes a brief reappearance in *The Lay of Durin* in the form found in the appendix to *The Lord of the Rings* score, where Gimli makes a brief reference to the kingdom.) But for the present the principal attention of the narrative shifts to Sauron as the lieutenant of Morgoth, and his search for the missing outlaw Beren.

Now the themes associated with Sauron heard here go back a very long way indeed, back to the earliest sketches for my Tolkien cycle written in c1967. The crawling chromatics (which have been briefly anticipated in the Prologue) now curl around themselves at differing speeds, one of the statements being twice the speed of the other so that the two only coincide at intervals of twelve bars. The scoring, with the rattling of the wood of their bows on the string instruments, is underlined by percussive effects, and these soon give way to more sinister harmonies consisting of piled-up thirds both major and minor (and both simultaneously). This theme, which will eventually become that of the One Ring, first appeared during early revisions of *The Hobbit* in 1972 (it was not present in the version of the theme found in the original 1969-70 *The Black Gate is closed* or the orchestral suite *Over Hill and Under Hill* performed in 1971) and is immensely valuable both as a melodic outline in its own right and as a chord which underpins the texture and invariably conveys a sense of evil; it might perhaps be analysed as a chord of the thirteenth with an added major/minor juxtaposition, but that would not be anything more than a functional description. Here it is relatively innocent by comparison with its later appearances (as Frodo approaches the fires of *Mount Doom* it dominates the whole orchestra with overwhelming force), as it portrays the enchantments that Sauron has woven to deceive the hapless captive Gorlim with the suspicion that his wife is being held captive awaiting only his co-operation to obtain her release.

Now it is known that when Tolkien came to revise his poem *The Lay of Leithian* in the years following completion of *The Lord of the Rings* (when the whole of this passage reached its final narrative form, with the substitution of Sauron for Morgoth as the interrogator), he also prepared a prose version of the text. This prose version, although it was far from incomplete, did encompass the whole of this opening scene although it remains unpublished and was not even included in Christopher Tolkien's one-volume edition of *Beren and Lúthien*. But back in the early 1990s I had asked Christopher to check over the text I had prepared for the scene, following the published material in *The Silmarillion* and *The Lays of Beleriand*; and in his response Christopher provided me with some extracts from the unpublished prose version for the purposes of comparison. Unfortunately shortly afterwards my briefcase containing my copy of his letter was stolen and never recovered, so that I cannot now recall with precision the differences noted between my prose version of the text and Tolkien's own; but I do remember that I incorporated one or two passages of the latter into my own, and by reference to my original drafts and comparison with the final version as set I can conclude that some apparently startling phrases (such as "and lie with her" with its explicit sexual innuendo) derived from Tolkien's own edition of the tale. The final version as set was sent to Christopher Tolkien for his approval.

The daunting of Gorlim is accompanied by a new theme, rising viciously in an upward third on the trombones and then repeated before a plunge downwards. This was in origin a tune I wrote for a setting of Laurence Housman's poem *The colour of his hair* which subsequently emerged as one of my two *Songs of Protest*; but it takes on a whole new dimension in this passage, and will recur again during the even more elemental conflict between Sauron and Finrod in Scene Six of *Beren*. And thereafter too. The significance of the Housman text is of no relevance here, and indeed when more recently I came to employ the same text in my *De profundis* I wrote a completely new melody for the poem. The nearest we come in *The Silmarillion* to the original song is in the appearance of Gorlim as a wraith in the next scene—and even here the melody is shadowed and underlined by the presence of Sauron's diminished-second harmonisations, which are totally absent in the original setting. There are also heard two other new themes: one, a yearning series of rising and falling octaves, is used to represent Gorlim himself, and will return in the following scene, while a more pliant theme representing Eilinel is restricted in its use to this scene alone.

I deliberately make no specifications in the score as to how much amplification is to be added to Sauron's voice; but I always imagined that there would some electronic manipulation of the sound, to convey not only the sense of villainy but also to ensure that the words permeated through some fairly heavy orchestration. The overall weight of the scoring is not as massive as with Morgoth, and some elements—such as the aforementioned stringed instruments being struck with the wood of the bow rather than the hair—have a deliberately grotesque effect; but in general, I make suitable allowances for the director and/or sound producer to allow their

imaginations free rein in their efforts to covey character. Different productions will inevitably demand different solutions, and in any event the available technology will also change from one generation to the next. For example, it is certainly possible nowadays to take greater advantage of microphone placement in live performance than was the case even in the 1990s ago when the score was written. And the scope for imaginative 'sound effects' is today almost limitless. Such techniques also allow for the voice of Gorlim to sound suitably overawed, powerless in the face of such overweening menace.

Scene Two

Here, as in the previous scene, a song originally written for a totally different context is dragooned into service as a basis for much of the thematic development. In this case the melody originated in a draft theme written in the late 1960s as the basis for an extended introit for a choral *Requiem* which never even reached beyond half-way towards completion. Some years later I took up the abandoned theme and expanded it for a vocal setting of Ralph Hodgson's poem *The mystery*, and indeed the treatment here of Beren's soliloquy is very close to that song setting (the original later found its way into my cycle *Mysteries of Time* and has been recorded twice in that form). But now in *Beren and Lúthien* it is not only given a more elaborate accompaniment on its initial appearance but also becomes more elevated after he swears his oath of vengeance following the appearance of Gorlim; in this latter version it is declaimed in augmentation over an agitated accompaniment consisting of repeated reiterations of the acrostically-derived theme associated with Beren in the Prologue: B-E-Re-E. The theme is then taken up by the chorus in a form which brings us briefly back to its origins in the *Requiem* fragment before it dissolves into the sound of the wailing wind.

The central section of this structure revolves around the theme associated with Gorlim's enchantment in the preceding scene, as has been noted; but there is a third element here, which forms a prelude to the action and also returns as the chorus describes the appearance of his apparition. This is an entirely new theme, and once again it is acrostic in its derivation: Te-A-Re-A-E-La-Ut representing the letters of TARn AELUin and forming the thematic outline B-A-D-A-E-A-C with some melodic adjustments to the octaves. The theme is repeated several times across the choral narrative, with only minor alteration to the harmonies—as for example, the tang of Sauron's minor seconds as the chorus refers to the blood dripping from the beaks of the carrion birds perched in the trees. The same theme returns at the end of Gorlim's apparition, reduced to a bleak echo in the lower strings, and this in turn leads to yet another new theme preceding and accompanying Beren's oath of vengeance, which will also return much later when he appeals to Finrod for assistance is achieving his sworn goal in the oath which he in turn has taken to Thingol. Finally it should be noted that Gorlim's rendering of his melody, although it departs from its original rhythms in its central section, is underpinned throughout by his own theme with its characteristic octave leaps from Scene One.

Again, this was one of the scenes where I exchanged correspondence with Christopher Tolkien regarding the construction of the libretto and incorporated phrases from his father's unpublished prose version of the tale with which his son and executor kindly provided me. Certainly some of the phraseology in the choral narrative preceding the appearance of Gorlim derives from this material, although in the absence of the missing papers I can no longer identify these with precision other than to note that they do not seem to have been adapted from either *The Silmarillion* or *The Lay of Leithian* as published in *The Lays of Beleriand.* I think that in this instance I may have made additions, amendments and alterations, to the text during the actual course of composition since my original typescript of the libretto corresponded much more closely to the published material than the words which were eventually incorporated into the score. Inevitably however with the disappearance of Beren's father Barahir altogether from the narrative in earlier scenes, the oath of vengeance which Beren now swears is for the death of his companion Gorlim, rather than more generally for his father and his other comrades.

Scene Three

While the structure of the first two scenes of *Beren and Lúthien* has been fairly straightforward, constructed around a number of recurring melodic outlines, the lengthy *Love Scene* which constitutes Scene Three—one of the central scenes of Tolkien's mythology as well as of *The Silmarillion*—has a much more complex construction, in the form of an extended rondo surrounding a series of vignette episodes all of which will in turn give rise to later developments.

The opening section describing the journey of Beren from Dorthonion to Doriath was written much later than the remainder of the scene, and consists an opening section deriving from his oath of vengeance heard at the end of Scene Two leading into an extended description of the spiders and other monsters lurking in the Mountains of Terror—a passage of narrative that was always left carefully and surprisingly imprecise in all of Tolkien's reworkings of the legend up to and including the 1950s, although he clearly intended the episode to be sufficiently important to refer to it by a citation in *The Lord of the Rings*. Here the opportunity is taken to revisit the music associated with Ungoliant in *Fëanor*, complete with a brief reference to the same fugal elements before her main theme is thundered out by the trombones. This then forms a sudden and complete contrast to the music of the remainder of the love scene itself, opening with an extended flute cadenza in free rhythm representing the piping of Daeron from the trees. I distinctly remember sketching this during a particularly boring speech as a Wales TUC Conference in Llandudno, which I was attending as a delegate in the 1980s; and that I completed the whole passage, more or less exactly as it now stands, in the course of some half-an-hour address from some local dignitary. The same material later appeared in the central section of my flute-and-piano *Daeron* (to which I shall return when discussing Scene Four). I knew I had caught the atmosphere I was after when shortly afterwards I played the synthesised version of the passage to an elderly neighbour in my mother's sheltered housing accommodation in Lydney, and the lady in question dissolved into floods of tears.

While the music heard in earlier scenes of *Beren* has often been derived from material written at an earlier date (not all of it originally with the *Silmarillion* in mind) the thematic construction from this point onwards until the very end of the scene is almost entirely new and original to this section of the score. The flute cadenza leads to the first statement of the 'rondo' theme, which will return time and again during the scene in the honoured classical tradition. These reprises are always associated with the words of the recitation of this section of the legend delivered by Aragorn under Weathertop to an audience of uncomprehending hobbits (and indeed a readership of uncomprehending listeners, none of whom at the time of publication would have been familiar with any elements of the story). Aragorn's song forms a narrative framework, with its modal folk-like setting often considerably transformed but always (hopefully) recognisable. In its first appearance the unaccompanied choral soprano line is accompanied by a half-hummed descending scale in the basses, which produces some occasionally unexpected clashes of harmony lending the whole scene a sense of tonal detachment; and indeed, in the epilogue to the whole of *Beren and Lúthien*, that sense of other-worldliness will eventually be enhanced. Here it leads into the first of the vignettes drawn from *The Lay of Leithian*—which formal analysis of the rondo would insist should be termed an 'episode'—a setting of Lúthien's Elvish song from the revised version of the *Lay* which was inexplicably omitted from Christopher Tolkien's single-volume edition of *Beren and Lúthien* although it can be found in the third volume of his *History of Middle-earth.* This appearance of Lúthien not only brings a brief return of some material familiar from *Fëanor* such as the themes associated with Elbereth as kindler of the stars and the Elves as the First Children of Ilúvatar, but two completely new ideas as well. One of these is an extended melody which begins here in specific association with Lúthien herself, but will in due course assume a wider application in the musical chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* when it becomes associated with Arwen as the descendant of Lúthien and indeed in some ways the reincarnation of her fate, as she herself ruefully recognises. Before that, and indeed underpinning the whole of the song, we hear another brief tag, and this remains specific to Lúthien herself with its constant repetition of the notes D-C-B♭-E♭. This (despite appearances) is not another acrostic, but it will eventually combine to form a partnership with Beren's acrostic theme already cited.

And indeed Beren's sudden eruption into the idyllic scene is heralded by an abrupt statement of this acrostic theme which interrupts the ecstatically quietly floated final note of Lúthien's song. This leads to the first restatement of the rondo theme, now with added orchestral and choral ornamentation and an additional rhythmic bounce as Beren appears; but it soon dies down into a greater sense of mystery and quietness as Lúthien eludes him and escapes into the trees. At the same time the rondo theme loses its original triple-time rhythm and settles down into a more static common time. This leads to Beren's first episode, where he laments his loneliness in the absence of his love—a new theme characterised by a rising series of thirds which reaches a climax over increasingly elaborate orchestral decoration before in its turn dying back to a brief recollection of the flute cadenza which had launched the scene.

The onstage flute dominates the next section of the score, forming a brisk counterpoint to the rondo theme as Lúthien launches into her dance and entices Beren to follow her into the woods. Tolkien himself was fairly succinct in his narrative description of this episode, but fortunately an earlier draft of his text was preserved and employed by C S Lewis in his commentary on the work published in *The Lays of Beleriand*, and it is this earlier version which provides some of the text for Lúthien here. The action recedes into the middle distance, with the flute onstage juxtaposed and contrasted with the flute in the orchestra, before the rondo theme once again appears with the onset of winter, now slow and melancholy as the leaves fall.

Beren's search for Lúthien in the barren woodlands introduces another new theme which will later provide the basis for further variations in its own right, but here the chorus take up that melody as a backing for his own solo apostrophe to the dead woods in winter. The return of spring brings back the rondo theme, now in increasing excitement, and Beren's capture of the fleeing Lúthien is graphically portrayed by chorus and orchestra. The flute cadenza now returns, set in juxtaposition on stage against the recapitulation of Beren's earlier episode in the orchestra. Many composers, in creating this sort of contrapuntal texture where one theme is set in contrast against another, will carefully craft their material so that the combination when finally achieved has a sense of inevitability. I have to confess that this was decidedly not the case here, where the circumstances under which the two melodic elements were conceived were completely independent. The flute cadenza had to be somewhat transformed, not only slowed down but also melodically altered, to provide a satisfactory counterpoint to the orchestral melody; but the difference in characterisation from the nature of its original unaccompanied presentation means that the relatively minor discrepancies hopefully go unnoticed.

The final return of the rondo theme, now slowed down to an ecstatic state of tranquillity, is extended in long slow choral lines which rely on the singers to 'stagger' their breathing to avoid any break in the melodic line—a feat difficult to ensure with a smaller chorus, but more feasible with a larger body of singers. In the meantime the elaborate string figurations which had accompanied the previous section continue at the same pace, interweaving with chords on woodwind and celesta; and above them all float the two brief motifs already associated with Beren and Lúthien themselves, extended into long phrases in the upper reaches of the violins. These long phrases eventually themselves expand into a direct quotation of the melody heard at the end of Beren's 'aria' in Scene Two (originating in the song setting *The Mystery*), material which will be heard just once again towards the end of the story, after the Quest of the Silmaril has been achieved. The final chord is left in a state of some suspension, failing to resolve downwards to the expected conclusion and settling a tone above. The story has clearly not reached a conclusion.

This broken resolution does however bring the 'love scene' to an end; and indeed the scene can be viewed in some ways as a semi-detached part of the score which could be performed in isolation. With that in mind I did arrange in the late 1990s a version of the scene for two solo singers, flute, chorus, piano duet and string quintet. This was originally designed as a 'sampler' which

hopefully would attract the attention of amateur choral societies—an objective which, despite an extensive advertising campaign, it quite failed to achieve. More recently I have returned to the music again, this time in the context of *The Lord of the Rings.* Since, in the scene under Weathertop, Aragorn's song of Beren and Lúthien had already been thoroughly explored in the scene under discussion, I had substituted for his use Sam's song of Gil-galad from earlier in the chapter *A knife in the dark.* However it seemed that it might be of interest to listeners to hear how the song might have fitted into the musical chapter *Flight to the Ford*, if I had proceeded back in the 1970s with my original plans for an operatic cycle on *The Lord of the Rings*; and I therefore 'reconstructed' the song from existing materials (not only the scene here, but also from *The War of Wrath*) to slot into the Weathertop scene at the appropriate point. As such it is included in the Appendix disc to *The Lord of the Rings,* although the fact that the Gil-galad material now forms such an integral part of the later score—as well as the sheer length of the Beren setting which would hold up the action for ten minutes or more just as the narrative is driving towards a climax—would make such a substitution less than desirable for any normal performance.

Scene Four

The prelude to Scene Four was one of the first sections of the score of *Beren and Lúthien* to be written, and indeed was in existence before *The Fall of Gondolin* (which had preceded it in the process of composition) was completed. Those familiar with my piece *Daeron* for flute and piano, which was written to fulfil a commission for a work for performance in the late 1980s, will immediately recognise the complete statement of the theme associated with the Elven-kingdoms in general and Doriath in particular, with the elaboration and variation on the melody that are found in the writing for *Daeron*. And indeed the chamber work also anticipates the end of this scene, where the music is repeated in a desolate fashion describing the exile and despair of the minstrel—here underpinning the dialogue between Thingol and Melian as they look to the future of their kingdom with foreboding.

I had left the composition of *Beren and Lúthien* until last in my originally conceived four-part *Silmarillion* cycle, largely because I was anticipating the publication of Tolkien's revised prose version of the first part of the story which hopefully would have provided additional material for the opening chapters. When I did eventually begin work on the score, having concluded that no such substantial materials would become immediately available, I started on this scene as being the one passage in the original published version which contained an accessible and continuous section of dialogue. I may well have allowed this approach to condition my estimate of the speeds at which the narrative should flow, but the very nature of the writing in the 1977 *Silmarillion* text has a stately and formal nature to it which is quite distinct from the more conversational style of the early chapters of *The Fall of Gondolin*, let alone the aggressive disputes of *The Children of Húrin.* Thingol indeed cloaks his real feelings and motivations beneath a surface civility that rapidly begins to crumble, as the constraints placed upon him by his oath not to harm Beren (the precise nature of which is never specified or verbally formulated by Tolkien) begin to suggest an alternative course of action which will hopefully (from his viewpoint) result in the same fatal results.

Listeners may also discern a distinction in the approach to the role of Melian. When I wrote the part here in the early 1990s I had in mind a definitely contralto voice, a sort of Earth-mother and source of deep wisdom as exemplified by the role of Erda in Wagner's *Ring.* When I returned to the character in *The War of Wrath*, and with Helen Jarmany already cast in the part in the earlier story, the situation in which the Maia finds herself, with her realm under threat and her husband's very life in jeopardy, gave her a much more active role not only in her final despair but also earlier in her dialogues with Galadriel where her desperate attempts to discover the truth are foiled and her sense of foreboding is deepened. The evolution of the musical style reflects this, and the actual written range of the vocal line rises accordingly. Thingol on the other hand remains largely unchanged between his actions in *Beren* and his dialogue in *The War of Wrath* (indeed the latter pre-dates the former in terms of the historical narrative!) and his sense of measured self-regard and self-importance continues to constitute the very fibre of his being. I was however determined that the sense of pride evident in his actions should never spill over into self-seeking aggrandisement, as it does in some of his motivation in the narrative of the *Book of Lost Tales* which, as Christopher Tolkien observes in his commentary, does much harm in undermining his stature and his significance.

By comparison the characterisations of Beren and Lúthien (although the latter is strangely silent after her initial contribution and brusque rebuff) are relatively straightforward. Beren's bold challenge to Thingol is clearly not pre-meditated, and therefore should not be seen as a gesture of defiance in the face of overwhelming force; it is provoked by Thingol's contemptuous dismissal of his service to Finrod on the battlefield (a provocation even more strongly justified as, in this adaptation, it is he himself who has rendered that service), and his contemptuous laugh at Thingol's demand for a Silmaril as a bride-price clearly indicates that he understands only too well the Elvenking's underlying motives. Thingol is not really seeking a Silmaril to possess, after all. He is simply using the demand as a device to free himself from an awkward situation and dispose of an unwanted suitor for his daughter's hand, with not the slightest expectation that Beren will succeed—as he himself freely acknowledges in his comments at the end of the scene. But Beren's response, with his bold attachment of his own motif to that of the Silmaril in rising fourths culminating in a ringing sustained top F, suddenly focuses on the real possibility of success even when this seems unlikely; and the complex web of conflicting orchestral threads which follows that declaration emphasises the confused emotions that underlie the situation as Beren departs.

There is little doubt that the earlier parts of this scene benefit from a more urgent delivery in moving towards this climactic confrontation, as well as allowing the singers time to inflect their dialogue with a great engagement, as a contrast of this recording with the earlier synthesised set from 1997 will readily confirm.

But at the same time the sense of frustration and decay in the final dialogue between Thingol and Melian remains palpable, and indeed looks forward to their even more pessimistic conclusions during their conversation in Scene Two of *The War of Wrath.* It is a pity that room could not be found in the *Silmarillion* cycle for a treatment of their initial encounter and their blissful earlier careers, but the absence of any dialogue or indeed suitable opportunity to incorporate such material militated against any such possibility—as similarly with the tale of Fingon and Maedhros, or the first encounter between Finrod and Bëor, or a number of other episodes in the mythology which had perforce to be omitted in their entirety. I was however very pleased to be able to return to the relationship between Thingol and Melian during *The War of Wrath*, adding more substance to that union that was possible in the one short scene here.

I have been asked whether there was any significance in my assigning the role of Beren to a baritone, while the leading male protagonists in the other parts of the *Silmarillion* were allocated to tenors. The answer is: not really. Indeed I cannot recall any time when I was other than convinced that the part should be taken by a high-ranging lyric baritone, on the lines of such singers as John Noble and John Carol Case both of whom I heard frequently in performance in the 1960s and 1970s (the latter sang in my school performance of the Bach *St Matthew Passion*). Julian Boyce, with his ease of projection into the upper register, fits the requirements perfectly; but in point of fact, apart from some occasional low excursions, much of the part could be comfortably sung by a tenor. Such roles are not really that uncommon in the repertory: the tenor part of Siegmund in Wagner's *Ring*, and the title role in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* (also described as a tenor by the composer) are frequently assigned to high baritones in the opera house, and composers have also been known to adjust similarly written roles for individual singers, as with the lead male roles in Massenet's *Werther* and Spontini's *La Vestale*, both of which have also been recorded at different times with baritone and tenor protagonists. (Adam Klein in his operatic treatment of *The Lay of Leithian* makes Beren a tenor, and indeed sings the role himself; I was sent many years ago a draft scenario for a *Beren* opera where the part was given to a counter-tenor. Incidentally I am amused to see that a Google AI 'overview' of Klein's work is bizarrely coupled to a synopsis of the action of my own *Fall of Gondolin* together with a quotation from Jeroen Bakker's review of the latter!) Julian's main complaint during rehearsals and recording in 2018-19 was my persistent habit of assigning him a high note immediately following a page turn, where it was best calculated to take him by surprise. He has echoed such complaints on several occasions since.

Scene Five

After the arcane and byzantine political machinations of Scene Four, the conflicts of Scene Five ought to be relatively straightforward; but of course, this being Tolkien, they are not. In the first place Finrod recognises his obligation to fulfil his oath to Beren; but he is not able to enforce his commands on his own people, who are at once menaced and seduced by the oath of the Sons of Fëanor now resident in his halls of Nargothrond, and who repeat the words of that oath in the same phrases as before in Scene Six of *Fëanor*; but that oath has now become cast in stone and ossified as the result of years of meditation and evolution, so that its accompaniment has expanded from a solitary pair of timpani to a full orchestral panoply of sound and declamation not by nine solo male voices but a full-scale operatic chorus including women. (This is the last time in the cycle when we hear the music of the oath in its entirety; when it returns during the closing stages of *The War of Wrath* it will be broken, fragmented back to its original bare bones, and fail even to reach its hysterical conclusion.)

It would of course have been possible in purely dramatic terms at this juncture to have given the oath declaimed (as in Tolkien's original text) by Celegorm alone; but quite apart from the fact that this might have proved anti-climactic after the version heard in *Fëanor* there is the purely musical consideration that, as was pointed out to me many years ago by Alan Bush, it is never a good idea when repeating a passage with revised orchestration to make the recapitulation less impressive than the original (he sorrowfully cited Beethoven's *Spring Sonata* as an example). Additionally there is the practical consideration of adding another soloist to the roster of performers: especially when the soloist in question would have nothing else to do, since the remainder of his actions and motivations had already been pruned from the narrative. Full chorus and orchestra certainly add an element of grandeur and ritual to the version of the oath heard earlier.

Before we reach this massive declaration of opposition from the people of Nargothrond (a remarkably fickle bunch, who seem even in Tolkien's original texts to change their minds with astonishing rapidity and facility from one day to the next) we now find out what has actually happened to the Silmarils, last seen in Scene Nine of *Fëanor* when Morgoth claimed them in the teeth of the attempt by Ungoliant to devour them. In the text of *The Silmarillion* there is no mystery about their fate; they have been placed by Morgoth in his Iron Crown, and are guarded with all the strength at his command. In the poetic version of the *Lay of Leithian* the reader is informed of this during an interpolated passage following Thingol's demand for one as a bride-price for his daughter. But in the context of this cycle of epic scenes, the situation is only now belatedly disclosed by the narrative of Finrod—with the music of the Silmarils themselves stripped of their lush orchestral textures and decorated with spiky percussive effects.

This may well be a suitable juncture at which to consider the vexed question of breaks between discs in the recording. Since all of the *Silmarillion* evenings were divided into three sets of triptychs (triple scenes) each, and those triptychs were designed to play without a break, there were immediately problems when it came to fitting the recordings onto a pair of CDs. In some cases—*Fëanor* and *The Children of Húrin*—it was just possible to fit two complete triptychs onto a single CD, even though this resulted in a wide discrepancy in the duration of each of the pair of discs. With *The Fall of Gondolin* and *The War of Wrath* it was necessary to break the Second Triptych between scenes; even though this resulted in a disruption in the flow of the music which was always intended to be continuous, the dramatic flow was not seriously damaged. But in the case of *Beren and Lúthien* there was no obvious place to break the music except during the general pause following the revolt of

the people of Nargothrond against their king, but before Beren confirms his own loyalty and the two of them leave on their quest. This is of course both musical and dramatic nonsense, but it is difficult to see where else the break could have been made since the music flows directly from the end of Scene Five into Scene Six without any natural pause. This was of course fairly standard practice in the days of vinyl when operas had to be crammed onto LPs without very much choice in the matter of either musical or narrative continuity, but it can of course be circumvented by listeners who stream the recordings digitally. In the case of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* the individual chapters are generally somewhat shorter, and it has proved possible to arrange the recordings in such a way that only one of the thirty chapters in *The Lord of the Rings* actually has to split between two CDs; and that exception is *The Council of Elrond*, in any event the longest single chapter in the cycle. There are, I know, those who hanker for a recording of my Tolkien works on vinyl; I make no comment on that proposal, other than to suggest that they try to find any practical way of laying out the music onto LP sides which would not destroy either the musical or the dramatic flow of the works themselves.

Scene Six

This scene, treating of the whole of the captivity of Beren and his rescue by Lúthien from the dungeons of Sauron, is the longest single dramatic entity in the whole of *Beren and Lúthien*, and divides naturally into four 'quadrants' which are isolated from each other by the passage of time and changes in the individual characters involved in each segment of the scene. Each of these quadrants has its own internal musical unity, and it is therefore best to consider each in isolation both in terms of the narration and the formal structure.

After a brief interlude (which derives originally from the development section in my third symphony *Ainlindalë*), the first quadrant concerns the appearance of Beren and Finrod, disguised as orcs, before Sauron who seeks to interrogate them regarding events in Doriath and Nargothrond. Their responses, at the same evasive and suspiciously well-informed, arouse his suspicions and he strips their disguises from them in a duel of enchantment where Finrod's attempts to thwart him are undermined by the sense of guilt that arises from the earlier actions of the Noldor, and in particular the Kinslaying encountered in Scene Seven of *Fëanor.* This duel is accompanied by a heavily revised setting of a song melody that I originally wrote for an entirely different purpose, a folk-like ballad treating the poem by A E Housman which he wrote as a protest against the trial and imprisonment of Oscar Wilde (see further the discussion of this in Scene Two). The original song already contained a substantial volume of acidic harmonisation, as indeed befitted the subject; and here the vitriolic content is drastically increased with Sauron's own harmonic minor seconds heavily accented in every beat. Indeed during the second verse of the song setting, the chorus cuts loose altogether from the melodic line and the orchestra shatters into a wall of percussion sound including both thunder and wind machines as Sauron overbears Finrod and casts him and Beren into his dungeons.

The second quadrant, taking place presumably some considerable time later, finds Beren and Finrod still in their imprisonment and Beren now contemplating revealing all to Sauron in an attempt to save his companion's life. Finrod disabuses him of that notion, since he knows that Sauron's vengeance will be even more extreme if he learns the real identity of his prisoners, let alone the nature of their quest. But their voices are overheard, and Sauron now gleefully rejoices that he can take advantage of the Elvenking's resistance to inflict further and harsher torment on him while at the same time realising that Beren's continued life has no more advantage. He releases one of his wolves to devour Beren, but Finrod breaks his bonds and although he kills the wolf he is himself mortally injured. The musical treatment here closely mirrors the course of the narrative, but the theme associated with the wolf (which originally was written for the attack of the wargs in *The Hobbit* back in the early 1970s) will of course reappear when the wolf Carcharoth appears in the very next scene; and as Finrod dies and bids farewell to Beren, we also hear the musical phrase *Namarië* which I had already used in Galadriel's lament in Lothlórien in a version of the poem written in 1972 and which in turn derived from Tolkien's own singing of the word in his personal tape recording from 1952 (which he later sang to Donald Swann, who transcribed it for his setting of Galadriel's poem in *The road goes ever on* in the 1960s).

This phrase associated with *Namarië* now reappears in the song during which Lúthien discovers Beren in his imprisonment, to accompany the words "I will not say the day is one, nor bid the stars *farewell*". Its appearance here, and indeed the appearance of the song itself, certainly demand further explanation; and this was provided in the programme note which I wrote for *In western lands* when it first appeared on record back in 2017, which was also reprinted in the published score and which is repeated in full here:

> In *The Lord of the Rings* Sam sings *In Western lands* as he searches for Frodo in the Tower of Cirith Ungol. The same poem was also set by Donald Swann in his Tolkien cycle *The Road goes ever on* but his setting is very different. While Swann, taking his cue from Tolkien's description of Sam's "simple tune", provided a straightforward setting of the lyric, I have approached it from a more dramatic viewpoint. At the end of his setting, Swann repeated the closing line; I have followed Tolkien's own instruction that Sam recommences his song at the line "Beyond all towers strong and high" and then breaks off as he seems to hear a response from far above. When I came to set Tolkien's *Beren and Lúthien* as part of *The Silmarillion*, I was confronted by a rather peculiar *lacuna* in Tolkien's poem. He describes Lúthien searching for Beren in the Tower of Sauron and singing a song to which he responds—exactly the same situation, in fact, that Tolkien later incorporated into *The Lord of the Rings*—but curiously, although Tolkien provides lengthy lyrics for most other points in his narrative, he does not do so here. I took the cue from the similar dramatic context to incorporate the song *In Western lands* into the operatic text at this point, only making one minor change to substitute Lúthien's "nightingales" for Sam's more bucolic "merry finches" in the first verse (and removing a musical reference to the Shire). The *Namarië* now refers specifically to the death of the Elvenking Finrod which immediately precedes this scene, and the series of descending chords which opens the song was taken up into the body of the work as the theme of Death which pursues the characters.

Following the confrontation between the semi-divine Lúthien and her fellow Maia Sauron, we reach Sauron's

own moment of glory as he proclaims his own nihilistic creed which he imposes as what Tolkien terms a "blasphemy" on all his servants. This is an apotheosis of the harmonic outline originally heard back in Scene One when it described his enchantments and the illusions he spun to entrap Gorlim—in reality a chromatically altered chord of the ninth with a flattened fifth and the final ninth heard in both a flattened and natural form a semitone apart which echoes both Morgoth's and Sauron's own harmony. That harmonic clash is now heard both as a simultaneous discord, and as a thematic melody proclaimed simultaneously at three different speeds: a fast figuration in the accompaniment, a slow and solemn declamation from Sauron himself, and a glacial progression moving from one tonality to the next which underpins the passage as a whole. Later this theme will emerge in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* as the motif of the One Ring itself, the Ring of Power which will rule the world. Here it is surrounded by a frantic declamation of Sauron's own chromatic movement, finally evaporating into the wind as he flees in defeat; and this too will reappear in *The Lord of the Rings* during the passage in *The Field of Cormallen* when Faramir and Éowyn behold from afar the downfall of Mordor.

Incidentally, it might be pertinent at this point to take notice of one example where the use of musical themes in a setting such as this can provide an additional dimension which is simply unavailable to any writer who restricts themself to the written word. When, in *The Hobbit*, Bilbo picks up his unidentified ring from the ground without any more idea of its significance than the reader, the music immediately informs the listener both of the origins of this treasure—with Sauron's theme underpinning the textures in the bass—and its purpose of enchantment—as the Ring theme is spelt out first by the woodwind and then finally combined into its full chordal disharmony at the climax. All of this immediately underlines the dramatically crucial importance of the moment. But the reader of *The Hobbit* would remain totally unaware of this, were it not for an authorial intervention of the kind that Tolkien later came to resent: "It was a turning point in his career, though he did not know it." By the time he came to write the preface to *The Lord of the Rings* he was in a position to take the importance of the Ring for granted, and it is assumed to be of significance even before the reader understands how this might be. Such ironic contrapuntal employment of musical themes has of course a long history—one famous example comes in Wagner, where Alberich's son Hagen joyfully welcomes Siegfried to his halls as the orchestra blares out the theme associated with his father's curse—but it can still prove remarkably effective. I do it again when the *palantír* theme appears orchestrally while Denethor is arguing with Gandalf about what he suspects to be the latter's motives; the listener realises and understands the dangerous significance of the source of his information, even if Gandalf does not.

The final quadrant of this lengthy scene comes with the love duet between Beren and Lúthien, drawn entirely from a combination of the verses in the *Lay of Leithian* and a paraphrase of Huan's address to the couple from *The Silmarillion.* It is the second of the three duets between the pair—the first is the 'love scene' of their first meeting, and the third is the 'death scene' as Beren lies mortally wounded. It consists formally of two statements of the principal theme, one for her and one for him, followed by a dialogue and concluding with an orchestral recapitulation of the same principal theme at her final words.

The elimination of Huan from the narrative here has occasioned much comment over the years, despite my laconic attempt at exculpation in the preface to the published score: "singing dogs, not generally being found in this all too mortal world, can find no place in the context of dramatic staging." This has been amplified more recently by Simon Crosby Buttle: "to set [Huan] up requires not only back story, but a meeting with the Sons of Fëanor (adding characters who would only appear this once and may need explaining themselves) and the comedy of an opera singer crawling around just for one important act at the end. By assigning that act/dialogue to Lúthien she becomes more active in her own story, and you eliminate what could be upwards of thirty minutes of run time. It's not what is in the book, but it is its own thing." And the force of these arguments was acknowledged by Chris Seeman of the *Tolkien Music List* in his review of the recording: "it would be difficult for a human actor to credibly impersonate a dog on stage while conveying the gravitas of that character's words!...While there is an obvious logistical need to shift these words to a different character (and Lúthien is the only one on hand to deliver them), I felt this actually enhanced Lúthien's agency, allowing her to speak for herself rather than being spoken for—which is consistent with the initiative she takes elsewhere in the canonical tale."

Scene Seven

The central two scenes of *Beren and Lúthien*, both dramatically and lyrically, lie in the meeting of the lovers in the Forest of Neldoreth, and Lúthien's confrontation with Morgoth in the halls of Angband. And while the remainder of the tale underwent very considerable alteration and substantial revision, these two scenes go back to the original versions of the story as published in the *Book of Lost Tales.* It therefore seemed appropriate in the prelude to this scene to include one of Tolkien's earlier poems on the subject of Middle-earth, a sonnet that was originally intended to depict the abandoned Elvish city of Kôr but which could with fairly minor abridgement and rewording be employed to convey an impression of the impregnable fortress of Angband where Morgoth is guarding the Silmarils (albeit at the cost of destroying the sonnet rhyming structure). Indeed the only required amendment of consequence was to change the colour of the city's walls from white to black. The music constitutes a full-length statement of the material associated with Melkor in the opening chapters of *Fëanor*, which will recur in both *The Children of Húrin* and *The War of Wrath* but which only once figures briefly in the score for *The Lord of the Rings*, when Gandalf refers to the overthrow of the Dark Lord at the end of the Second Age as an event of extreme antiquity.

Here the theme gives way to a new wide-ranging woodwind figure which is once again acrostic in origin (using the word *Anfauglith* as its template) which will not recur later in the cycle although it does have a family resemblance to the motif associated with the character Sméagol (as opposed to Gollum) in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.* Here it serves merely to introduce the

music for Carcharoth (the wolf theme originally devised for *The Hobbit* and already heard in Scene Six) and Lúthien as she subdues the guardian of the doors.

The following dialogue between Morgoth and Lúthien (Beren conspicuously lurking well out of harm's way) not surprisingly makes elaborate use of the themes already established for both characters; but since this is the one point in the cycle where we see an unexpectedly 'human' side to Morgoth, it also causes two new elements to appear. The first of these is apparent almost immediately, a declamation of sheer physical and mental power which derives originally from the music written in 1969 for *The Lord of the Rings* to accompany the inscription on the "one Ring to rule them all." Here the Ring is not yet created (indeed its creation will form the final climax of *The War of Wrath*) but it may be held to stand for the idea of supernatural control over the physical world, as exemplified in the powers of both Morgoth and later of his servant Sauron.

Once he has stripped from Lúthien her physical disguise, Morgoth now proceeds to reveal a new undertow to his motivation: sheer physical lust for the body of his prisoner. This is not totally unanticipated—Sauron in the previous scene has already referred to his master's desire for "that white body"—but the overwhelming nature of his passion is evidenced from the fact that he has never previously seen her. His own motifs, always previously thrusting violently upwards in the brass, suddenly melt into the liquid tones of a solo violin, and his music settles down into a slow and even sentimental waltz rhythm as he recollects the bliss of Valinor from which he has been banished. But even this saccharine tone is undermined by a resolutely striding 4/4 rhythm in the vocal line, and the middle section finds itself transformed into a menacing undercurrent of the earlier 'Ring' theme before it returns in an even more cloying form. After which nothing is left for Lúthien to do but to dance.

Her dance is of course a transformation and amplification of the themes heard earlier in Scene Three when she was enticing Beren; but the middle section is something different again. The music here was originally written back in 1974 for the opening chapter of *The Lord of the Rings,* where it was given the defiantly hobbit-like direction of *Tempo di Springle-Ring*. When my work on that cycle was abandoned, it seemed a shame to lose this dance movement and I seized on the opportunity to allow it to be heard in this context. Which leaves now the slightly awkward situation that much the same music is to be found in two decidedly different situations in the course of my complete cycle of musical works based on Tolkien.

The explanation for this, as indeed for the earlier duplication of the song *In Western lands*, is imagined as a historical reminiscence by the hobbits of earlier legendary material with which they are already familiar. We are actually told in *The Lord of the Rings* that Sam has heard the complete story of *Beren and Lúthien* in Rivendell (if not from Bilbo earlier), and it therefore seems appropriate that he might repeat the song in the Tower of Cirith Ungol, merely adding his own gloss to the material by the addition of the 'Shire melody' as a counterpoint to the melody in the opening verse. Similarly it would not seem totally implausible that the rustic inhabitants of the Shire might still remember the Elvish melody of Lúthien's dance and incorporate it into their celebrations in a suitably bucolic fashion with heavily accented syncopated rhythms on the offbeats. The same comment may also be added for the dwarves, who have clearly heard Lúthien's song before Mandos (Scene Nine) in putative Elvish recitals, and in *The Hobbit* adapt the musical material for their own *The wind was on the withered heath*, admixing it with other material representing Smaug and the Lonely Mountain.

In case this may sound devious (and indeed it is admittedly contrived after the fact) I can only plead that in real life both written and musical material is often preserved over extended periods of time only to re-emerge in startling different contexts and variations. Latin, Greek and mediaeval poetry have frequently influenced later European practitioners, and re-castings of ancient mythical material in the twentieth century have been legion including C S Lewis in *Till we have faces*, Mary Renault in her Theseus and Alexander novels, T H White in *The once and future King* and more recently Stephen Fry in a whole tetralogy of Greek myths. In the musical field, classical themes by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov have all been seized upon and exploited by later arrangers to provide the outline material for pop tunes and disco repertory—even if one discounts other rearrangements of Mozart by Waldo de los Rios or Barber by William Orbit which adhere even more closely to the original material (not, it might be added, to the advantage of either the original or the adaptation). Even so, it does happen.

The narrative following Lúthien's dance derives almost exclusively from existing thematic material, including the return of the 'Silmaril theme' now in the almost naked tones of the vibraphone (this has been included in earlier presentations of the motif, but is now stripped of all ornamentation) and the frantic trumpets of the Orc themes as Beren and Lúthien make their escape. In all versions of Tolkien's narrative they are here rescued by Gwaihir and the Eagles, a real problem in terms of stage representation; the manner in which their flight is effected here during the orchestral interlude will be discussed in the context of the following scene.

Scene Eight

Indeed the music for the Eagles as heard in the interlude here is an almost exact reproduction of the music written for the similar rescue scene in *The Hobbit* which was composed originally in 1970, and revised a couple of years later. The Eagles are kept strictly offstage here (not an option so readily available in the context of *The Hobbit*) as indeed they are during their later brief appearance in *The Fall of Gondolin*, but their music is always given dramatic significance both in the *Silmarillion* and *Lord of the Rings* cycles even at the risk of obtruding from their musical context. It is never entirely identical—here it is accompanied by a skirling woodwind accompaniment—but the differences are generally minimal.

The following lengthy duet between Beren and Lúthien also largely draws on pre-existing material, but the origins of this are more wide-ranging. Indeed the principal melody of Beren's valedictory address to life and nature had already been employed in two earlier songs: firstly my setting of Swinburne's *The lover at sunrise* (which also included the melodic line given to

the solo cello preceding the vocal entry), and then the third of my *Three songs of faith*, a setting of Bunyan which provided much of the later contrapuntal development of the theme. The progress of this melody is only briefly interrupted by Beren's gloomy vision of a realm of "dusk and smoke" when the accompaniment evokes the melody associated with Angband in the prelude to the preceding scene.

Lúthien's response changes the mood. Her initial address to Beren rises over a repetition of her own motif as heard in Scene Three, now richly harmonised and changing in both tonality and force as it modulates from one key to another. As she sings of her willingness to follow her beloved beyond the realms of death, we suddenly hear the version of the pendant to the Mandos theme which preceded the appearance of the Two Trees in Scene Two of *Fëanor* but which has never been heard since; it will now take over and dominate the musical whole-tone modulations, raising them higher and progressively to new heights until the original material of the shifting Lúthien motif emerges in even more resplendent form. All of this is surrounded and interwoven by a new theme (which will recur not only in Scene Nine but also, as already noted, in *The Hobbit*) which I had previously employed both as a motto theme in my first symphony *The mists of time* and also at three significant junctures in my church opera *The dialogues of Óisin and Saint Patric.* It seemed to me that it deserved yet another outing (and it is now given a more extended melodic development), but it has no further significance than that.

As Lúthien's transports rise to ever greater heights (finally soaring to a high B♭), Beren launches a new melodic phrase at the words *Though all to ruin fell the world.* This too had already been composed in 1981, when the same words had been introduced into *The Children of Húrin* by the chorus to celebrate the marriage of Túrin and Niënor. Now, some fifteen years later, Beren and Lúthien are given the opportunity to reclaim their original lines. Here it is given the full-scale treatment, and the original quasi-fugal writing in *The Children of Húrin* is simplified for the two voices, although as in the earlier version they enter into unison for their final line before the orchestra surges back in with the melody from the *Three songs of faith*. This, as far as I recall, was the final passage of the original four-part *Silmarillion* cycle to be completed in 1996; the remainder of the score, including the following scenes, had at that stage been written already.

The entry of Thingol, Melian and their court finds the themes for the Elvenking and his Queen superimposed and interwoven with the melodic material which had concluded the initial encounter between Beren and Lúthien in Scene Three. The theme of the Silmaril too reappears fleetingly before the motif of Death—heard back in the Second Triptych, but not since—now makes its menacing reappearance as Beren succumbs to his wounds.

Of course in all the versions of the narrative as written by Tolkien, Beren does *not* succumb to his injuries at this point; he recovers to marry Lúthien and engender a son, and it is only later in the wolf-hunt for Carcaroth that he receives the wound that ends his life. But the full-length poetic version of the legend included in *The Lays of Beleriand* has already abruptly terminated by this point, and the verses in this scene have been imported bodily from an earlier passage in *The Lay of Leithian.* There is therefore almost no available dialogue to cover the further development of the story. Aragorn, telling the story to the hobbits under Weathertop, merely observes laconically that "Beren was slain by the Wolf that came from the gates of Angband" without specifying on which occasion this occurred, and the fact that Beren finds himself engaged in mortal combat with the wolf twice in the space of a mere three pages or so in the foreshortened narrative of the published *Silmarillion* brings a suspicion of unnecessary duplication (not for the first or last time in the story). And the prospect of any attempt to render on stage a combat between a monstrous wolf and a wolfhound, however that might be contrived, would inevitably teeter on the brink of unintended comedy - as can be clearly witnessed in most attempts made by directors to deal with the physical realisation of the Dragon in Wagner's *Siegfried.* It therefore seemed infinitely preferable as well as expedient to simply excise this second conflict, and leave the matter of how the Silmaril came to be in Thingol's possession during *The War of Wrath* deliberately imprecise.

Scene Nine and Epilogue

As noted, the whole of this passage was written, or at least fully sketched, some considerable time before the earlier parts of this Triptych. Indeed the opening interlude developing the theme of Mandos in a slow progression was written at much the same time as similar passages in *Fëanor*; and it was in this context that the rising whole-tone phrase which Lúthien introduced in the preceding scene as symbolic of resurrection first originated. (For some time this sketched material remained in this fragmentary form, ending at the choral entry.) The theme associated with the Valar, also from *Fëanor*, has not been previously heard at all in *Beren and Lúthien* but now returns at full length as the chorus describes "those that wait" who "sit in the shadow of their thought." We are suddenly removed from the natural to the supernatural world, and the material of this opening section consists entirely of material from *Fëanor*.

The central section of the scene is of course Lúthien's address to Mandos which persuades the implacable Vala to restore her beloved to life, at the cost of her surrender of her own immortality. It must be one of the most frustrating of all the *lacunae* in Tolkien's legendarium that he made no attempt to write the verses that would have embodied this plea, but probably he balked at the sheer difficulty of satisfactorily conveying what he describes as "the song most fair that ever in words was woven, and the song most sorrowful that ever the world shall hear." But like the song that Lúthien sings to find Beren in Tol Sirion, this was musically a moment that could not be simply ducked.

The textual situation was partly resolved, as I have explained previously, by resorting to what Christopher Tolkien describes as a "mysterious" passage notated by his father as "from the end of the poem." What begins as an apparent versification of the prose passage in *The Silmarillion* text (itself an abridgement) suddenly and unexpectedly turns into a passage enclosed in inverted commas as if intended to convey speech, but with absolutely no indication of whom it is intended to be understood is speaking. The words themselves do not

appear to bear much resemblance to the content of Lúthien's song as described in the *Silmarillion*, but there is no alternative if we are to make use of Tolkien's own words; and, as always in the cycle of epic scenes, I was always concerned to do this wherever possible. The melodic material, taking up and developing the themes introduced by Lúthien herself in the preceding scene, at least attempts to convey the urgency of her plea and her wishes for the lovers, even if the words themselves may seem to head in a somewhat different and more mystical direction. Some of the phrases derive from my earlier work on *The Hobbit*, where they formed part of the dwarves' song *The wind was on the withered heath*, but of course at the time when I was writing this scene I had no idea that the earlier version would ever achieve performance; and one can regard the version of the song sung in Béorn's house six thousand years later as a distant recollection by the dwarves of a famous tune that had long passed into the mists of memory (rather like the hobbits' Springle-Ring earlier). After all Tolkien himself in *The Silmarillion* states that the song is "sung still in Valinor" and so had a presumably surviving oral tradition within the realm of Middle-earth.

It might however be of interest here to point out the rising phrase associated with Beren's return to life which follows Lúthien's song. It does not recur at any point elsewhere in my Tolkien works—either *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*—until the passage in the appendix *Aragorn and Arwen* where Arwen pleads with Aragorn not to lay down his life. At this moment the rising phrase from this scene reappears; she is apparently hoping that, as with their ancestors, Mandos will relent and allow them to be united by restoring her beloved to an earthly existence. But this hope is frustrated, and her cries of "Estel, Estel!" are declaimed to this same rising theme against the implacable theme of Death in the orchestra (it can also be heard in the piano version of the phrase in *The passing of Arwen*). The ironic resemblance between the situations is intentional, although almost inevitably likely to escape notice.

Following this it only remains to note the obvious fact that the epilogue returns us to the melody of Aragorn's ballad under Weathertop, as heard in Scene Three. The story of Beren and Lúthien has passed into mythology and memory, and is now placed in a legendary context which in turns fades into nothingness, even the orchestra falling silent as the final lines vanish with the distant female chorus. It was always my intention, from the earliest sketches for the work, that it would end in this way; indeed, once the decision had been made to introduce Aragorn's song into Scene Three, the employment of its final verse in the epilogue was inevitable.

Interlude
DAERON

Daeron was originally extracted from the score of (at that time still unfinished) *Beren and Lúthien* in the late 1980s when I was asked to write a piece for a young flautist in his late teens, who was just about to commence studies at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama but was already demonstrating an extraordinarily high degree of accomplishment. It was first performed by him at a school concert in the summer of 1991, just before he left to go on holiday with friends to Spain where he was killed in a car crash. I had missed the school concert, since it took place when I was working in Chelmsford and unable to get back to South Wales; I had consoled myself that I would be able to hear it when he returned from his holiday, when we were indeed intending to record the piece. The work remained otherwise unperformed until it was taken up by Nicola Loften for performance on the CD *Akallabêth* in 2016; there it was selected as a suitable chamber piece which could be practicably included in a recital that centred around other Tolkien works. It seems to have subsequently established itself as something of a favourite with many listeners.

In fact it consists very basically of two full repetitions of the long-spun melody associated with Doriath, in exactly the same forms and setting that they receive in Scene Four of *Beren and Lúthien* where they form the prelude and postlude to the action. The middle section of the work combines the opening flute flourishes from Scene Three of the same work followed by a brief fantasia on a theme derived from my earlier flute sonata. There I had, some time earlier, decided to jettison the rather conventional final movement altogether; and therefore found myself with some otherwise unemployed material. When later I came to orchestrate the work (in the case of the outer sections simply reinstating the textures from *Beren and Lúthien* itself) I once again jettisoned the imported 'sonata' material, leaving a short tone poem that entirely reflects its *Silmarillion* subject matter.

The association of the flute with Daeron goes back of course to Tolkien's original description of the minstrel's 'pipe' although I am not sure that he ever actually designates the instrument as a flute rather than a reed. The recapitulation of the principal theme not only mirrors the final words of the scene - where a spell of silence falls on the woods—but also Tolkien's later narrative of the exile of Daeron himself, which could find no place in the substantive scenes of the *Silmarillion* cycle. In order that its significance should not be missed, I ensured that the relevant portion of the text was prefaced to the score in its published version and in the booklet accompanying the recording.

The Children of Húrin

Prologue

As I have l already described on several occasions (it is after all an amusing story) this was the very first part of the *Silmarillion* cycle to be written, and formed the basis for the recording that I made back in 1981 with Jim Meaker in an attempt to demonstrate to Rayner Unwin (and through him Christopher Tolkien) the ideas I had for the musical approach to the score. However much of the material in this Prologue derived from themes I had already written and developed at some length in my third symphony *Ainulindalë,* including the opening 'Morgoth motif' which in the context of the cycle as a whole has already been fully established in both *Fëanor* and *Beren and Lúthien.* Indeed the whole context of Morgoth's opening remarks exactly reflects his music in the former score. Similarly the climbing theme which here represents the idea of the "circles of the world" also reflects a passage in the symphony, in *Fëanor* and in *Beren and Lúthien*, although on its previous appearances

its significance has not been fully realised.

Musically there are two newly prominent motifs. The first is a brief fanfare-like theme representing both Húrin and his family—it will later become a principal motif for his son Túrin—which is entirely new to the cycle. The second is the theme associated with Morgoth's curse on the children of Húrin. This was heard, once and briefly, during Scene Two of *Fëanor*, but here it assumes a principal role in the action, not only in its interruptions of Morgoth's rumbling minor-second harmony, but also in extended rising imitations as Húrin is isolated on the pillar from which he will be forced to act as an unwilling witness to all the remainder of the action as Morgoth's curse is progressively and inexorably consummated.

This isolation of Húrin above the action, a principal element in the original story, is perhaps more easily achieved in a staged performance - where the character can be isolated on his pillar throughout - than in the novelistic convention of Tolkien's own narrative, where the mutely suffering Húrin can be totally forgotten over the extended periods of the action. It was only in the later *Wanderings of Húrin* that Tolkien was finally able to give vent to the father's feelings of frustration and impotence after the earlier events were all concluded, and there his often intemperate reactions may well alienate the sympathies of readers rather than engaging their compassion. There was of course no room in the cycle of epic scenes for the closely argued plotting of the *Wanderings*—presumably for the same reason, Christopher Tolkien largely omitted this section of the story from the published text of *The Silmarillion*—so the isolation of the solitary figure above the action is perhaps the most effective way in which the audience's perspective can be guided.

This means of course that the role has to be assigned to an actor rather than a singer. The sheer stamina required to remain, often motionless, on top of a pillar, is something that can perhaps be expected of ascetic Byzantine saints but not of the more mortal and fleshly operatic baritone or bass. Movement artists are perhaps better physically equipped for such an arduous ordeal, but may not have the required vocal projection to deliver the text which is vitally required both before and after their imprisonment. The passages in question must therefore be assigned to an individual who can encompass both aspects; and if at the same time they can reduce the listener to tears in their heart-rending final moments of the Epilogue, so much the better. In the Prologue all that is required is heroic defiance gradually broken down by the realisation of overwhelming force.

The appearance of the themes associated with the sword Anglachel, as Morgoth breaks an otherwise unidentified and unspecified sword before Húrin's eyes, may also be noted; but in the event the significance of these motifs does not become apparent until the second scene of the action. Similarly, as Morgoth's curse sinks down into the orchestra, Morwen's theme emerges gently in the strings in preparation for her own appearance in the following scene.

There is one other feature of overwhelming importance: Morgoth's opening words "I am the Elder King." Apart from its demonstration of the Enemy's overwhelming and vindictive pride, the rhythm of the words has already been heard in both preceding episodes of the cycle in connection with the might of the renegade Vala; but throughout *The Children of Húrin* it will take on additional significance as the symbol of the inexorable tread of the consummation of the curse, until at the end of Scene Nine it will take over and totally dominate the whole of the orchestra as Túrin realises the nature of the doom from which he has been so desperate to escape. It will later assume a similar sinister function in *The Lord of the Rings* where it will become associated both with Sauron and with his servants the Nazgûl.

Scene One

The appearance of the theme associated with Morwen at the end of the Prologue leads immediately to a statement of the motif of Húrin, now transformed by the chorus into a phrase that will recur regularly as a representation of the *Narn*—the narrative of the legend through the later poem that will be made of its tragic events. As the Easterlings enter the realm of Hithlum to despoil its people, the motif of Morgoth becomes a scrambled eruption of overlapping phrases before we encounter the lengthy theme associated initially with the People of Hador (equally important in both *The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin*), which will then assume even greater significance in *The War of Wrath* as the realm of Númenor founded by the Edain and then in *The Lord of the Rings* the realms in exile founded in Arnor and Gondor and their decline.

This theme did not originate in the music written for any of my Tolkien works, although it was certainly in existence by 1968 when I made use of it in a primitive version for the first of my *Three Early Songs*, a setting of a satirical patriotic poem dating from the early years of the First World War. But it was far too good a tune to be confined to such a trivial purpose, and by the time I came to write my piano rondo *Akallabêth* a decade later it had become the principal theme of a work devoted to the narrative of Númenor. After that it became an essential element in the whole texture of my Tolkien cycles, and indeed gives rise in due course to a minor-key version representing the decline of the Númenórean realms in exile which features in *The Lord of the Rings*, introduced initially by Faramir in the course of his pessimistic narrative in *The window on the west.* Here it is heard largely in fragmentary form, as the people of Hador are already fractured by defeat in battle; and after its initial statement before the dialogue between Túrin and his mother even begins, it is not heard in its complete version at all. Instead it is interwoven with elements of the Doriath music familiar from *Beren and Lúthien* as Morwen contemplates the prospect of sending her son into exile.

The only interruption to their dialogue comes with the choral interjection, imported from somewhat later in Tolkien's original text (although its precise location within the narrative remains unclear), describing the machinations of Morgoth with which the listener has already become forcefully acquainted in the previous scene. This again is a theme which has become familiar from *Beren and Lúthien*—it formed the principal material for the opening of Scene Seven set in Angband—although it can be traced back to an initial appearance in *Fëanor* where it describes the creation of the stars by Elbereth as a challenge to Morgoth. It will return later in the saga of Túrin, at the beginning of Scene Eight as the web of destiny begins to tighten around the hapless hero.

The final lament of Morwen, an aria in all but name, becomes a closed musical form developing her own theme into an extended lyrical line over a repeating almost minimalist figuration; only at the end does it explode into a more dramatic form as the themes associated with Morgoth and the Curse erupt and are set against the motif associated with Húrin and now with Túrin, and a nagging triplet figure derived from the last three notes of Morwen's own theme. This last will continue into the opening of the next scene where it becomes a semiquaver iteration underpinning the whole of the action up to and including the death of Saeros—it is the memory of his 'deserted' and 'abandoned' mother which will haunt all of Túrin's actions in Doriath.

Scene Two

The abridgement of the earlier chapters of Tolkien's narrative are perhaps at their most extensive and drastic in this scene, which spans several years and some 75 pages of the story as related in Christopher Tolkien's one-volume edition. Elements such as Túrin's sojourn among the outlaws, his relationship with the petty-dwarf Mîm, and his establishment with Beleg of the realm of the Bow and the Sword, are all totally omitted from the version of the tale here. It is of course also the point at which Tolkien's own version of the text becomes most fragmentary, with only isolated passages of dialogue which are sometimes left without the context they clearly required. (Indeed some of these discussions and debates were bodily transferred to the much later conversation between Gwindor and Túrin in Nargothrond with very little need for alteration.) Even when episodes such as Túrin's banishment from Doriath are presented, additional complications such as the involvement of the elf-maiden Nellas, and the trial *in absentia* before Thingol and Melian, are almost entirely omitted and occasional passages of dialogue and action bodily transferred to the characters of Beleg and Mablung. These considerations were largely practical. It seemed to me that the essential elements in the 'Túrin saga' came later in the career of the hero, and that Tolkien's admittedly illuminating and splendidly-conceived account of his earlier actions simply held up the crucial development of Morgoth's curse. I regret the loss of some fine passages of writing—and even more so the superbly written debate between Húrin and Morwen before his departure for battle (it was only much later that I would return to this passage for the interpolated supplementary triptych *Unnumbered Tears*)—but something had to be sacrificed in an attempt to bring the drama within reasonable bounds.

Be that as it may, even the dispute between Saeros and Túrin which sets the whole disastrous action into motion had to be heavily abridged. Christopher Tolkien did at one stage suggest that I might revert to his father's earlier version of the story where the sarcastic counsellor was inadvertently slain during their dispute at the feast in Menegroth rather than following the ambush in the forest the following day (he provided me with some then-unpublished earlier texts which were only later to appear in *The Book of Lost Tales* and *The Lays of Beleriand*) but I wished to make musical use of the notion of the chase through the woods and its fatal consequence, so Saeros's mocking of Túrin's mother was simply included in the course of his assault on the already bitter young man. (Indeed the vocal part here could simply have been omitted—and it was, in the first manuscript vocal score.)

The result of this drastic foreshortening is to lay much greater emphasis on the narrative function of the chorus than in any scene of the cycle since the First Triptych of *Fëanor.* Even the birth of Niënor, the departure of Túrin for Doriath and his arrival there, is consigned to the 'unseen voices' and the themes of the music too derive almost entirely from the material already associated with that Hidden Realm; both Mablung and Beleg take their principal motifs from detached arms of that melody. Against this the narrative of the quarrel with Saeros and its fatal consequences is delineated with no further thematic additions, and the hunt through the forest does no more than combine the existing materials with Morgoth's rising theme ("orc-work in the woods"). When the dialogue resumes, with the brief confrontation between Mablung and Túrin, it is accompanied entirely by their own motifs and, as Túrin turns scornfully away, the theme of Morgoth's curse and a new chord sequence depicting the shadow that "lies on his heart".

Immediately following Túrin's departure, Mablung steps into the role of Thingol in Tolkien's original narrative and the lengthy description of his debate with the newly arrived Beleg (some eight pages in the single-volume edition) is heavily abridged with much of the material again consigned to a brief narrative chorus, including the capture of Túrin by the orcs which in the single-volume edition will not actually occur for nearly a further fifty pages. This leaves only the presentation of the sword Anglachel to Beleg and the departure of the latter in search of Túrin to be covered in the remaining pages of the scene, which culminates in an almost complete recapitulation of the Doriath theme in the guise it originally assumed in the opening scene of *Fëanor.*

In the original manuscript of this scene Mablung had not only stepped into the shoes of Thingol, but had adopted his prerogative as the bestower both of judgement and gifts. It was only when we came to record the work that it was correctly objected that this created an unnecessary discrepancy with the role played by Thingol in *Beren and Lúthien*; and I therefore adapted the text at the two relevant points, so that Mablung is now acting as the mouthpiece of the King rather than in his own right.

Scene Three

The full statement of the Doriath theme which had concluded Scene Two is abruptly interrupted just before it reaches it climax with a blast on the trombones which launches the storm sequence which will permeate the whole of the first part of Scene Three. This music was originally written back in 1969 as part of my very first full-length exploration of Tolkien in my operatic treatment of *The Lord of the Rings*, and indeed it remains in that form even in its latest revision as the prelude to the musical chapter *Cirith Ungol*—with only the references to Gollum's motif (already present in the original) excised for its appearance here in a First-Age context. Thunderstorms are thunderstorms, I suppose; but one could also argue that (as in much of Tolkien's writing) extreme weather conditions are often the result of the malign influence of darker Powers such as Sauron (in *Cirith Ungol*) or Morgoth (in *The Children of Húrin*) although similar musical patterns will recur when Ulmo

conjures a tempest in *The Fall of Gondolin.*

In terms of the text, it is particularly frustrating that at this juncture in the tale—when the dramatic action of the epic scenes expands—Tolkien's final reworking of the narrative becomes increasingly sketchy, with most of the wording in the one-volume published edition deriving from the same sources at those in *The Silmarillion.* There are considerably more expanded versions of the text to be found in *The Book of Lost Tales* and even more so in the poetic *Children of Húrin*, but of course neither of these were published at the time when I was constructing the libretto for this musical setting; and both would in any event have required significant revision and rewording if they were to be employed in this context. Accordingly the words given to the soloists, and the continuing emphasis on the narrative chorus to supply essential details of the development of events, derive entirely from Christopher Tolkien's 1977 *Silmarillion* edition.

The appearance of Gwindor, the elf of Nargothrond who has escaped from captivity in Angband, is of course given a substantial back-history in that *Silmarillion* text, but that of necessity has to be omitted here (it is however referenced briefly in the interpolated supplementary triptych *Unnumbered Tales*). Nevertheless his appearance does introduce a pair of new themes. The motif associated with Nargothrond itself (which was afterwards back-inserted into the relevant scenes in *Beren and Lúthien*) was originally written for an abortive 'rock opera' which arose as a potential project during the mid-1970s but never developed far beyond the stage of initial planning. The other, a more extended lyrical theme for Gwindor himself, derives from an early draft for a setting of Quickbeam's lament which was abandoned after the opening lines and bears no resemblance to the version now to be heard in *The King of the Golden Hall* (which arises as a development of the themes associated with the Entmoot). This latter melodic phrase combines with fragmentary sections of Beleg's theme (in its turn arising from a limb of the extended 'Doriath' theme), and the figurations associated with the Orcs parallel similar passages in *Fëanor* and *Beren and Lúthien.*

The narrative chorus assumes the greater part of the dramatic function during the description of the rescue of Túrin from the orc-camp, and existing material from earlier scenes is now combined with anticipations of the *Cirith Ungol* thunderstorm. But at the moment when Túrin realises that he has killed his friend and companion, a whole new concatenation of contrapuntal textures suddenly erupts; Beleg's own theme is set against the thunderstorm figurations with the theme of Morgoth's curse shrieking on stratospheric trumpets over the whole orchestra, and the thudding rhythms of "I am the Elder King" leaving the listener in no doubt as to the manipulation of Morgoth himself in the turn of events. The stage direction is that Húrin at this point should rise from his point of vantage and seek to engage with the action, but whether this would be practicable in terms of staging (and indeed dramatically effective) might be more problematic. At any rate the suggestion, that he should not remain indifferent to the agony of his son, is clearly present in the music as the storm slowly dies down.

The final scene, all passion spent, is a simple dialogue between Túrin and Gwindor which recapitulates earlier material. At the end the "I am the Elder King" rhythm, blared out by the full orchestra, gradually fades away into a sustained discord in which the notes of Túrin's own theme are picked out tentatively by the *pizzicato* strings, and the final note on the double-basses is left growling discontentedly on its own. At the time I wrote this scene the later-published passages in *The Book of Lost Tales* and *The Lays of Beleriand* describing the healing of Túrin by the waters of Ivrin, and his dialogue there with Gwindor, were not available; but it may perhaps be considered that the desolate ending of this opening triptych is more appropriate to the tragedy than any interpolated consolatory passages might have been.

Scene Four

I have mentioned in my discussion of the last scene that the figuration representing Nargothrond (which forms the bass line underpinning the opening dialogue between Gwindor and Túrin) had originated in sketches for a rock opera *Golden*, an abortive project from the mid-1970s; and I will return to this matter when considering the prelude to Scene Seven. But the opening chorus scored here for unaccompanied female elven voices both on and off stage also derived from the *Golden* material, as did the stalwart chordal writing which accompanies Gwindor's opening words. The actual dialogue here was not written by Tolkien for this scene, but for an earlier episode where Túrin discusses military strategy with Beleg (during the omitted description of the Kingdom of the Bow and Sword), and only merges into the later debate between Gwindor and Túrin at a later stage in the conversation; but it might be observed that the conjunction appears to be entirely natural in this context. Christopher Tolkien in *Unfinished Tales* had already published a whole sheaf of dialogues for the Nargothrond scenes, and he incorporated these into his one-volume *The Children of Húrin* in much the same way as I had already done in my text for these epic scenes. At this point indeed Tolkien's extensive writing in the alliterative lay on the subject comes to a conclusion, and the Nargothrond scenes in the *Book of Lost Tales* text omit much that later assumed importance. Fortunately the *Unfinished Tales* dialogues furnish plentiful text for musical setting and indeed render a connected description of the tangled web of relationships between Túrin, Gwindor and Finduilas possible.

The scene as a whole divides neatly into four quadrants, each set some months apart, which feature discussions between the individual parties. The first of these, between Gwindor and Túrin, culminates in an impassioned declaration of defiance by Túrin which brings for the fore the theme already associated in *Fëanor* with Men as the Second Children of Ilúvatar. The appearance of this chromatic melody is invariably employed at significant moments in the narrative, and here it serves to underline the differences in heroism between the struggles of Men with their limited life-span when contrasted with immortality of the Elves. The central section of this defiant statement brings back the more straightforwardly forthright theme associated with the Children of Húrin, forming a brief triple-section aria structure that rounds out the first quadrant on a heroic tone before the return of the offstage and onstage unaccompanied choral voices.

The second quadrant, a kind of miniature 'love duet' for Túrin and Finduilas, centres around a quasi-pastoral

accompaniment where Túrin recalls his childhood memories, with a brief middle section where Finduilas questions his identity (we hear reminiscences of both Húrin's theme as well as the Nargothrond motifs). The concluding defiant statement by Túrin brings in a new heroic ascending striding scale which will not only recur at significant moments later in his career but will eventually evolve into one of the principal themes to be associated with Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings.* The concluding defiant high B♭ leads back into yet another statement of the wordless choral voices as a further passage of time is indicated.

The third quadrant, although it begins with an expression of the anxieties of Túrin about his friend, focuses on the character of Gwindor and the music almost entirely reflects this with a recapitulation of his music from the first quadrant only briefly interrupted by the chordal sequence depicting Túrin's 'shadow'. After a briefer choral interlude (now reduced only to the final phrases of its full form) this material continues and develops as he outlines his concerns regarding her welfare to Finduilas. Her response constitutes a full-blown operatic aria, where the opening choral statement is heard both in full and then in an abridged recapitulation rising to an impassioned climax; the central section here is also wide-ranging, taking in not only the pastoral undulations of her earlier duet with Túrin but also the themes previously associated with Angband and the destiny of mortal men. At the climax of her concluding phrase, the chorus comes thundering back in with the words of Ulmo from one of Tolkien's fragments of sketched dialogue declaimed to the harmonies of the principal melody already heard. And finally the theme of Morgoth's curse surges back for the brief final scene where Finduilas addresses Túrin by his newly-revealed name and he in turn remonstrates with Gwindor for breaching his desire for secrecy.

The complex structure of the scene, with its four quasi-symphonic movements linked by recurring thematic material, forms to a certain extent an almost self-contained musical interlude within the whole in a manner that differentiates it from other scenes which split into individual quadrants—such as the sixth scene of *Beren and Lúthien*, the ninth scene of *The Children of Húrin* or the second scene of *The War of Wrath*, all of which combine much more disparate thematic and scenic elements. But it is the lengthy melodic arch of the opening wordless chorus which provides the principal material which binds the whole together, and this will only recur as a brief reminiscence once or twice later in the cycle.

Scene Five

By comparison with the previous scene, the musical construction of the depiction of the fall of Nargothrond is simplicity itself. The score falls into two distinct sections: an opening choral narrative describing the Battle of Tumhalad (not actually named in the text here) and the brief confrontation between Túrin and the Dragon before the gates of the sacked stronghold. The music for the battle derives almost entirely from material heard earlier describing the ravages of the orcs in Beleriand, the themes associated with Túrin himself (including the martial theme heard in Scene Four which he will later bequeath to Aragorn) and Gwindor, whose death is briefly referenced without the dialogue which Tolkien provided for the terse description of the battle in *The Silmarillion.* The only new material is the downward-plunging theme associated with Glaurung as the oldest of the race of Dragons, and this consists straightforwardly of Morgoth's upwardly thrusting motif (heard as far back as the prelude to *Fëanor*) simply inverted and similarly coming to a violent conclusion on the interval of a major second.

All the other themes for Glaurung—the rhythms associated with the phrase "I am the Elder King" prominent—are identical to those of his creator and master. Tolkien himself describes Glaurung as speaking by virtue of the "evil spirit that is in him". Similarly when he confronts Túrin (their dialogue given in *The Silmarillion* although not ever incorporated into the full-length *Narn* text) the thematic references relate entirely to already familiar material—Beleg, Gwindor, Morwen—as the taunting Dragon confronts Túrin with the names of those whom he has apparently betrayed and abandoned. A curling theme which has already appeared in the description of the dragon's appearance at Tumhalad now forms a persistent *ostinato* in the bass, repeated obsessively as Túrin confronts his own deeds "in a mirror distorted by malice" and loathes the reflection that he sees. This repetition will continue to underline the next scene, as Morwen and Niënor set out in search of him.

Scene Six

If the construction of Scene Five falls into two basic sections, the same may be said for the scene here describing the arrival of Niënor in Nargothrond. The opening section of Tolkien's narrative, where Morwen confronts Thingol and Melian about their apparent abandonment of Túrin and her determination to seek true tidings of him, which is covered in full detail in the text of the *Narn*, had perforce to be abandoned in the context of these epic scenes; and we immediately confront Morwen after her departure from Doriath with Mablung sent to guard and protect her, and the discovery of Niënor who has concealed herself among the scouting party. All of this is briefly summarised by the narrative chorus in a brief opening paragraph declaimed over the persistent *ostinato* continuing unabated from the previous scene.

The confrontation between Morwen and her daughter, the former attempting to persuade the latter to return to Doriath with Mablung and her failure to enforce her will, serves to introduce the character of Niënor, stubborn and wilful to match the determination of her mother. Indeed Mablung himself comments upon the foolhardiness of Húrin's family, describing them as fey and lamenting their resulting practice of bringing ill fate upon others with whom they are involved. The use of the word "fey" is always significant in Tolkien—he employs it not merely to indicate an obsessive lack of good sense but a madness devoted to death if necessary; and he uses it both to describe Fëanor burning the ships at Losgar, as well as the cavalry charge of Éomer at the Pelennor Fields.

The even briefer choral narrative describing the arrival of Niënor alone at Nargothrond is also a massive abridgement of the extensive narrative given by Tolkien at this point in the text of the *Narn.* The losses of dialogue here—not only the situation leading to the loss

of Morwen, but also the confrontation between Mablung and the sarcastically sneering Glaurung—are indeed unfortunate, but once again the detail adds little to the inexorable march of the doom which is now actively encompassing Húrin's children. In the same way the return of Túrin to his home at Dor-lómin and his ill-fated intervention in the domestic affairs of those whom he left in the days of his youth, although they have major consequences for the later history of Beleriand in *The wanderings of Húrin* and other *Silmarillion* texts, have to be abandoned at this point; instead of setting out in a vain pursuit of Morwen and Niënor as in the *Narn* (and as suggested in the previous scene by Glaurung) we will discover in the next "epic scene" that he has never abandoned his search for Finduilas after she was abducted from Nargothrond.

The brief conclusion to the scene consists of the dialogue between Niënor and Glaurung, where she unwittingly and unwisely reveals her identity to the dragon, and he casts upon her of a spell of forgetfulness. The thematic material arises entirely from material previously heard, and the *ostinato* repetitions associated with the dragon's malice bring the triptych to a crashing close (one of the relatively few points, it may be noted, at which the music for any of my individual Tolkien movements chapters of scenes actually does so).

Scene Seven

The prelude to this scene, depicting dawn in the forest of Brethil, was after the prologue the first part of the score of *The Children of Húrin* to be composed. In fact it already existed as an independent movement, since it had previously been written for my aborted rock opera *Golden* a couple of years before (which also provided much of the material for Scene Four as well as, much later, *Blithe Spirit*). The same melody also constitutes the principal material for the 'love duet' between between Túrin and Niënor in the following scene. The version from the rock opera had a number of syncopated rhythms which are here smoothed out, to leave a modally inflected five-line melody which is repeated twice before a four-line middle section and a recapitulation of the opening melody with a changed and more elevated conclusion. The changes in the accompaniment, from the initial plucked harp rhythm to oscillating woodwind and piano figurations, the birdsong-like improvisations above the tune in the middle section and the muffled drums in the final bars, are the only elaborations to the melodic phrases themselves, and the whole prelude could almost be regarded as a semi-independent composition, since it has no thematic relationship to any part of the *Silmarillion* score that has yet been heard; and indeed it is virtually treated in this manner in the three-movement orchestral suite which was later extracted from the opera.

The links to the other *Silmarillion* themes however begin to be established immediately the curtain rises, when the opening harp rhythm returns to underpin both a new theme associated with Dorlas and the men of Brethil, as well as the already-established and familiar Túrin motif. The latter, awakening from his sleep of exhaustion, describes to the woodmen his fruitless search for the abducted Finduilas; and as Dorlas relates the story of her pitiable fate and death we hear in solo strings a final echo of the theme last heard during her extended 'aria' in Scene Four, which then bursts out in an impassioned climax on the full orchestra as Túrin falls back into a swoon over what is now identified as her grave (the thudding timpani triplets recall the similar accompaniment to the passage in Scene Four where Ulmo urges the demolition of the bridge leading to the Gates of Nargothrond).

The arrival of Brandir, as the leader of the woodmen, is accompanied by yet another new theme, where his lameness is pictorially illustrated by dragging chords in the lower lines. He reproves Dorlas for his extension of hospitality to a man whom he darkly foresees will bring about the destruction of Brethil; but the latter, to a wistfully coloured version of his earlier theme, asks whether any fugitive should be abandoned in such a manner. Túrin, now reviving for a second time, launches into his own 'aria' with further new melodic material (this section forms the second section of the orchestral suite referred to earlier). At its climactic phrase he assumes his new identity under the name of Turambar to yet another new theme, a variation of his own previous motif with an extended higher note expressive of his would-be defiance to the fate that pursues him.

This 'aria' had indeed been originally written with a rather faster and more resolute speed in mind, basically a swinging one-in-a-bar declaration of Túrin's new identity which only broadened out as he assumed his new name Turambar. But at the performance at Oxonmoot in 1982 I had already adopted a steadier pace for the opening section, and during the process of recording Simon Crosby Buttle convinced me that this was certainly preferable for a passage which should be contemplative rather than simply forthright. The new speed, and the metronome mark which now reflects it in the score, also serves to integrate the climactic declaration of the new name better into the whole. After that Brandir and Dorlas, with their own themes subsumed into the accompaniment that had accompanied the 'aria', welcome him into their midst; and the music dies back again into nothingness, as a solo cello echoing the opening of the 'aria' leads into the chorus that will launch the next scene.

Scene Eight

The glacial stillness of the chorus that opens this scene (the lines drawn from the *Lay of Leithian* as published in *The Silmarillion*) is founded on a chilly succession of open fifths in flutes and timpani, against which the chorus delineates a semi-independent line. Only in the final lines, with their reference to Angband, does there occur any reference to previously heard themes, and the expansion of that melody (heard initially in Scene One, but also in the prelude to Scene Seven of *Beren and Lúthien*) leads into the opening scene depicting the arrival of Niënor, her memories lost and her mind disturbed, naked in the forest of Brethil.

This scene, apart from a brief intervention from the narrative chorus emphasising her amnesia, is entirely realistic in its presentation and often proceeds in entirely unaccompanied vocal lines. But it is notable for introducing a new theme as Túrin, now forthrightly proclaiming his name to be Turambar, similarly bestows a new name on the fugitive he has discovered in the woods: Níniel, the Maiden of Tears. The theme of the shadow of his fate (first heard in Scene Two when

Mablung notes its ominous presence) returns as he dismisses the shadows that had surrounded his earlier life; and he and Niënor launch into their extended duet, which recapitulates in new and richer harmonies the complete melody heard in the prelude to Scene Seven. The middle section of that melody is reduced down to solo strings as the lights depict the passing of time; this is of course necessary to depict the period between the initial meeting between brother and sister and their declaration of their love. Tolkien's original text, with a delay of a year between the two events, is here severely foreshortened but the final climax of the melody as heard in Scene Seven is here developed into a semi-fugal passage for the rejoicing chorus which opens Scene Nine but is best discussed in this context.

The text for this chorus, like that which opened Scene Eight, derives from a passage in the *Lay of Leithian* which was extracted by Christopher Tolkien for publication in *The Silmarillion.* At a time when I had no intention of making any musical setting of *Beren and Lúthien*, this verse seemed to be singularly well suited for this moment in the drama, with the substitution of the word 'love' for 'Lúthien' in the final line. Christopher Tolkien, although he observed that a generalised use of the term 'love' in such a context was contrary to his father's practice and usage, accepted the need for some lyrical passage to be included at this point; and a decade later, when I came to set the same passage in *Beren and Lúthien*, I retained much of the musical development of the theme at that juncture, redistributing the choral parts between the two principal soloists and enriching the orchestral accompaniment. This perhaps ironically also serves both to underline the similarity of the situation in the two instances, and the contrast between the incestuous sibling relationship here and the union between mortal and immortal in the other.

Scene Nine

While the lengthy Scene Four divided into four quadrants, all situated in the same location but separated from each other by unspecified lengths of time, the even longer and more discursive Scene Nine takes place over a highly condensed period of one night and the following morning while moving almost cinematically from one place to another. The musical construction itself cleaves closely to the dramatic narrative, with individual themes tumbling over each other as the tragedy moves towards its conclusion; but there are also contrasting moments of relative stasis, where minimalist *ostinati* take over and move towards an inexorable culmination. The opening quadrant, as Brandir warns his people of the approach of the Dragon and Túrin and Dorlas dispute with him over the wisest course of action, bring back most of the motifs associated with the progress of the argument; and the forlorn attempt by Niënor to hold back her new husband from the fight, with its almost understated revelation that she is now pregnant, is similarly closely founded on the music already associated with the couple. The quadrant fades into silence as Brandir leads Niënor away.

The second quadrant opens with an extended minimalist fantasy on an open fifth—B flat and E flat—which gradually accumulates a whole series of repeated phrases as the Dragon looms ever closer, with various imitative growls and hisses in bassoons and trombones. As Dorlas falls to his death in the ravine, Túrin's theme suddenly emerges as he lunges furiously at the belly of Glaurung and gives the worm his death blow with a challenging vocal phrase which extends downwards through a span of two octaves as the hero himself falls into a swoon. The arrival of Brandir and Niënor returns us to the material from the previous quadrant, and the revelation to the grieving sister of her incest by the dying Dragon (in a vocal line descending to a subterranean low C) brings another moment of stasis as she rises to her feet and declaims her lament for her brother unaccompanied except for a doom-laden timpani beat recalling Morgoth's boast in the Prologue; this rhythm of "I am the Elder King" will now continue to dominate the orchestral textures for this and the whole of the next quadrant.

Niënor's suicide is another minimalist moment, with one textured layer superimposed on another to reach a chord comprising all the notes of the chromatic scale as she plunges into the abyss of the river below. By contrast the ensuing scene, with its tragic confrontation between the rampaging Túrin and Brandir, each lamenting the loss of their beloved Niënor, is developed in a firmly dramatic fashion, the Morgoth rhythm mounting ever more insistently in the orchestra until it thunders out in isolation after the arrival of Mablung following the killing of Brandir finally reveals the depths of the degradation to which Túrin has sunk with yet another unjust slaying. It is at this moment, a dramatic situation which Tolkien imitated from the Finnish sagas of the Kalevala, that the one musical reference in the whole of the cycle to an extra-legendary source occurs. At the moment in Sibelius's *Kullervo Symphony* where the hero realises that he has committed incest with his sister, the composer inserts an isolated chord of the open fifth like a scream of outrage combined with a gasp of horror-stricken revelation. Now, it is even possible that Tolkien might have heard the first Western performance of the Sibelius score—it was given by Paavo Berglund conducting the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at a time when Tolkien was actually living in the seaside resort— but the temptation to emphasise the parallel was too potent to resist, even before I knew of Tolkien's own early poem on the subject of *Kullervo* which underlined it further. The isolated chord here was copied aurally from the Berglund recording, since at the time when I wrote *The Children of Húrin* the Sibelius score remained unpublished (the scoring is slightly different in the 2005 Breitkopf edition).

As Túrin flees desperately into the darkness before dawn, the final quadrant of the scene begins; and this consists entirely of two disparate minimalist episodes both founded on repetitions of the same material. Firstly we hear an increasingly fragmented statement of the theme associated with the sword Gurthang, as Túrin addresses the blade asking whether it is willing to drink his blood and end his life. And then, in a supernatural moment as a "cold voice" rings from the sword in response (another moment which Tolkien bodily copied from the Finnish Kalevala) the whole gamut of themes associated with the sword are played by the tuned percussion as an accompaniment to a chilly counter-tenor or mezzo voice on a single note and echoes of muttering choral lines beneath.

This final scene depicting the supernatural voice of the sword was intentionally designed, with its unchanging minimalism, to sound totally unlike anything else in the score—and indeed different from anything else in the

whole cycle. We do hear echoes of similar techniques in the writing for the Barrow-wight in *Tom Bombadil*, and for the unquiet slain warriors In the Dead Marshes and the Paths of the Dead, but each of these is differentiated and the constituent elements vary widely. It had always struck me that Sibelius, treating the same scene in his *Kullervo Symphony*, missed an essential element in the narrative by simply assigning the words of the sword to his narrative male chorus, even when deliberately giving an eerie cast to the orchestral accompaniment. The whole passage ends as Túrin throws himself on the black blade, and a grinding orchestral chord containing simultaneously all the notes from the minimalist texture dies slowly away into extinction.

Epilogue

The final section of the score is another of those almost self-contained passages, and indeed with the spoken vocal contributions omitted it constitutes a purely orchestral movement as part of the suite extracted for concert performance. The funeral march, beginning with the motif associated with both Túrin and Húrin, develops its own melodic extension and central section in a tripartite scheme before the music associated with Morgoth's curse returns (in the same form as in the Prologue where Morgoth had isolated Húrin on his pillar to witness the unfolding of the fate decreed for those whom he had loved). Here it is extended as Húrin's pillar descends to the ground, and the hapless prisoner is finally released. The music of the funeral march returns as he moves slowly towards the grave of his son, and we see Morwen crouching over the site where she has discovered the interment (Tolkien is specific that Niënor, who cast herself into the river, has no tomb).

For reasons that I have already explained in my discussion of the Prologue, the performer of Húrin had to be an actor rather than a singer; and to avoid the inevitably artificial distinction that would have arisen if the despairing father had found himself in dialogue with a wife with an operatic mezzo-soprano voice, Morwen's despairing dialogue here also has to be delivered in speech rather than song. This lends increasing poignancy to her urgent demands that her husband should tell her what has happened to their children, and his refusal to burden the dying hours with that knowledge. It is only by withholding that information that he is able to console himself with the thought that she at least was not conquered by despair or grief. The theme of mortality, quietly delivered on the clarinet, brings the tragedy to its quiet conclusion; but the muted trumpets round out the score with the brief motif associated with the *Narn* itself. Both these themes will however return in *The Fall of Gondolin* where they will move towards a more optimistic conclusion. And the theme of mortality will of course achieve its final consummation where it eventually reappears during and after the coronation of Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings.*

The actual mechanics by which singers deliver spoken dialogue is a process that has caused problems over the years to many composers. Writers of operettas and musicals of course leave the delivery of the words entirely in the hands of the performers (with very rare exceptions in Gilbert and Sullivan), as indeed do composers of incidental music for stage plays such as Grieg in *Peer Gynt* or Delius in *Hassan*. And even composers of symphonic works featuring the spoken voice will often leave the matter of precisely which words are to be fitted over precisely which music to negotiation between the speakers and the conductor during the process of rehearsal: Bliss's symphony *Morning Heroes* and Vaughan Williams's cantata *An Oxford Elegy* allow for considerable freedom in this respect. I find this slightly cavalier aspect rather difficult to comprehend; if the music is to reflect the emotion implicit in the words, then a greater degree of correspondence between the two is surely necessary. As a purely personal preference, I possibly err on the side of over-prescription, both here and in similar extended passages in *The Plains and the Forest* and *The Children of Lir*, where for much of the time I allocate not only the words but also the rhythms for their declamation precisely into the score. This is not to expect the performers to cleave exactly to the notated rhythms, but to ensure that the emphasis of the words corresponds with the harmonic and melodic underpinning in the orchestra without relying on possibly fallible (and certainly time-consuming) attempts during rehearsal to determine precisely what the composer intended at any given point.

I should perhaps emphasise that the score for *The Children of Húrin* has remained almost totally unaltered since it was originally written in 1980-81 - and that it was originally intended to stand entirely alone as a single opera. The tragic story itself is of course unique in Tolkien's output, not just in the *Silmarillion* legendarium, and the fact that was brought so close to completion sets it apart from any of the other 'Great Tales' with only the central section of the story reduced to an outline rather than a full exposition. And even then the *Lays of Beleriand* provide a considerably expanded telling of the narration leading to the death of Beleg and the coming of Turin to Nargothrond. It was interesting that this was the first stand-alone volume of *Silmarillion* material that Christopher Tolkien issued back in 2007; he noted in a letter to me before publication that it would not contain any new material with which I would not be familiar (although in fact there were some newly-revised and amended passages), but the single volume does introduce readers to a story that would otherwise have remained spread across several different texts.

The Fall of Gondolin

Prologue

As Christopher Tolkien made evident in his one-volume edition of *The Fall of Gondolin* (published after the completion of the recording) the source material for this section of Tolkien's legendarium, unlike the plentiful alternative versions of *Beren and Lúthien* and *The Children of Húrin*, comes basically from just two original manuscripts, one of them far from complete. The only full-length version of the story is that included in *The Book of Lost Tales,* a revision of an earlier overwritten narration which was read by the author to an Oxford college in 1920. This is a fully detailed history of the destruction of the Hidden City, with full-length military depictions of the fighting almost on a house-by-house basis and elaborate analyses of the motives and characters involved. Unfortunately there is very little

dialogue in these pages, and the exact descriptions do not lend themselves to dramatic representation on stage (they might fare somewhat better on film) while the opportunities for lyrical expansion in the music are decidedly limited. Some ten years later Tolkien wrote a brief summary of the plot which now stands in the text of *The Silmarillion* as published in 1977; but this has almost no value for the composer, being sketchy in the extreme in practically every instance. Following the completion of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien turned back to the story and began a long and detailed description of the youth of Tuor extending the narrative up to his arrival at Gondolin; and although, as will be seen, this provides much valuable material for the Second Triptych, there is little which is available for use in either the opening or the closing of these epic scenes.

Towards the end of his life, Tolkien turned back to the matter of Gondolin, finally delineating the earlier history of the city in a detailed narration of the story of Maeglin (partly included in the text for the 1977 *Silmarillion*). This was presumably intended to be inserted as a 'flashback' at a later stage in the 1950s version of the tale, after Tuor had arrived at the City and the character of Maeglin had been introduced; but as it stands it constitutes the only recital of the tragedy of Aredhel and Eöl, which had been the subject of a brief allusion in the original *Lost Tale* but otherwise totally unknown. It is this story which constitutes the principal contents of the First Triptych.

This is in turn preceded by a full-scale Prologue, the first of a number of lengthy verse settings which are included in the score as semi-independent musical entities. All of these have tangential (if sometimes remote) links to the history or nomenclature of Gondolin, and were included in the earlier volumes of the *History of Middle-earth* as published by Christopher Tolkien. As will be seen some of them even predated the very first writings of Tolkien's mythology. One of the earliest of these is the song entitled *The bidding of the minstrel* which originally contained only a brief allusion to Eärendil and appears to have been linked to a later poem entitled *The mermaid's song* whose relevance to the legendarium is shrouded in obscurity. Later revisions, and some judicious trimming, result in the poem as delivered here by the narrative chorus: an injunction to the minstrel to sing of the heroic deeds of the mariner, and his reluctance to respond with a tale that is now half-forgotten. The opening bars, the three-note acrostic outlining the name Tuor (Te=B natural, Ut=C, Re=D), is repeated twice and forms the opening of the choral melody which will return on several occasions most notably for the wedding march at the beginning of the Third Triptych.

The poem dies away in the chorus as we hear the voice of Ulmo, the maverick Vala who continues to provide support for the exiled Noldor, as he instructs Turgon as the King to remove his people to the hidden City of Gondolin, but warns him against giving too much trust to military strength in his opposition to Morgoth. Ulmo, like the Elder King who inspires his words, cleaves unremittingly to one single unchanging note, only finally moving away into a final cadence which rises like a message of hope (a development of the Tuor-phrase which will also recur significantly later). It is only now that the history of the City itself can begin.

Scene One

Appendix
TOLKIEN SONGS

As will be noted all these songs were in existence in the form recorded here by the mid-1970s well before I began work on *The Silmarillion.* They formed part of a body of individual items which also included other settings which later found their way into *The Lord of the Rings*, including treatments of *A Elbereth Gilthoniel, Namarië, The Ride of the Rohirrim, The Sea Bell, The road goes ever on,* and many other fragments and more extended passages. As noted, several of the songs were already in full score by the mid-1970s but others - *Strider, Drinking song* and *In Western lands* - were not orchestrated until the late 1990s.

STRIDER This setting originally dates back to 1972, and basically revolves around a single theme of five rising notes which are varied rhythmically as the song progresses. In *The Lord of the Rings* the theme becomes the main motif associated with Aragorn in its various guises, and indeed it first made its appearance in that specific role during my setting of *Tom Bombadil* (where it featured during the hobbits' vision on the Barrow-Downs). The melodic line at "renewed shall be blade that was broken" also becomes a separate motif for Andúril.

THE SONG OF THE EAGLE I have a memory of working on this during a weekend I spent as a guest at Merton College Oxford in 1969, and for a long time it remained as a separate song without any thematic connection at all to any of the other music in my *Lord of the Ring* sketches. The original version, already fully scored, was however always conceived as part of the dramatic cycle (with stage directions that go back to the very first drafts), and the main theme was subsequently developed both in the orchestral interlude before the Field of Cormallen and more substantially following the coronation of Aragorn.

FISHERMAN'S SONG This was written in 1967-68 as part of my operatic setting of *The Black Gate is closed*, which explains the inconclusive ending as the song originally led into the following orchestral interlude. The accompaniment was then in 1972 reworked in *The Hobbit* as a figuration underlining all the riddles in the scene with Gollum—complete with a sudden shift away from open strings in the solo violins as the rules of the game are broken by Bilbo.

DRINKING SONG This was certainly written with the complete *Lord of the Rings* cycle in mind since the two voices were clearly intended to be Pippin and Sam. Again there are no obvious references to thematic material from the cycle except in the opening and closing passages where motifs associated with the Nazgûl occur. I think it may be the latest of these settings, possibly dating to 1974 or so.

IN WESTERN LANDS I remember writing this song in Pontypridd during the early 1970s, and the accompaniment to the opening verse cites the Shire theme originally written in 1967 which I had already employed in my setting of *The Hobbit* and which had been included in the orchestral suite played in London in 1971. The use of the opening bars as a 'death motif' did not however arise until I was using the same text in my setting of *Beren and Lúthien*, at which stage also the reference to the Shire theme was removed. It has now of

course been once again reinstated in the use of the verse in *Mount Doom* along with Sam's "merry finches." The melody heard at "Beyond all towers strong and high" returns not only as an echo as Frodo attempts to respond, but with a sense of quiet triumph as the hobbits begin their escape from the Tower of Cirith Ungol.

ROADS GO EVER EVER ON This song was definitely written in the summer of 1972 as the concluding scene of my setting of *The Hobbit* and I remember completing the orchestration during the following year before the song itself was given a first performance at Wortley Hall, Sheffield, in the autumn of 1974. At that time it was extremely well received, and Alan Bush referred with approval to my employment of modal scales of which I am ashamed to say I was at that time totally ignorant. Again the Shire theme returns during the final lines of the poem, now in a form which will return several times during *The Lord of the Rings* whenever the Shire comes to mind. The main theme of the song also returns, sung at various times by both Bilbo and Frodo even when the actual words are different.

IN TOLKIEN'S OWN WORDS

The initial impetus to write this paper came when I noticed, during the recording of Morwen's farewell to Túrin in *The Children of Húrin*, that one pronoun in Tolkien's text had been accidentally altered during the transfer from the original manuscript score to the computerised version used to print the vocal parts. Helen Greenaway, the singer concerned, was happily philosophical about my discovery: "We do want it to be correct...someone's bound to notice!!!" This in turn chimed with an observation of Marion Milford, singing the same role in Oxford in 1982, that she had found it slightly alarming to be performing for an audience where she was convinced that every listener knew every word of the text better than she did. And this in turn sparked off the thought that nobody had ever really commented upon the fact that my adaptation of Tolkien's original words for *The Silmarillion* had frequently entailed some minor adjustments of the precise words that the author had used; nor had I at any time written anything to explain those adjustments.

Now in the case of many authors such alterations of their precise words and phrasing would not be of any great significance; but that is decidedly not so with J R R Tolkien. With the publication of *The History of Middle-Earth* we can see how over the course of composition he precisely honed the words in *The Lord of the Rings*, constantly making changes in word order and vocabulary in order to achieve the exact effect which he sought. Even after the books were published, he continued to tinker with the text in a manner which is precisely and elaborately enumerated in their *Readers' Companion* to *The Lord of the Ring* by Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull, published in conjunction with their revised edition of 2004-5. But many of those later amendments seem to have arisen from happenstance, either factual discrepancies arising from earlier drafts or simply printer's errors or unauthorised resetting. Only rarely did they arise from other considerations, as when Tolkien toned down one of Aragorn's more waspish responses to Gimli at Helm's Deep.

Tom Shippey has pointed out in his two monographs on Tolkien *The Road to Middle-Earth* and *Author of the Century* that the result achieved by the author was quite distinctive. The tone, the exact words and even the grammatical order of sentences varied according to which of the characters was speaking: this ranged from the 'high style' of Denethor and Théoden, through the more practical and business-like hobbits and the measured delivery of the dwarves, to the debased forms of Gollum and the Orcs. At the same time other characters, such as Gandalf, Aragorn and Frodo, seemed to be able to metamorphose from one style to another depending on whom they were addressing. And Tolkien himself pointed out his deliberate use of the second personal singular ("thee, thou") as an important distinction when Denethor contemptuously confronts Gandalf for the last time, or when Éowyn abruptly shifts case from the formal to the intimate during her plaintive appeal to Aragorn.

In *The Silmarillion* too Tolkien makes extensive use of the archaic forms of the second person pronoun, but

because of the nature of the texts here their use is far less clear-cut than in *The Lord of the Rings.* The earliest versions of the stories in *The Book of Lost Tales* are exclusively in the antique style, using "thou" and "ye" according to whether the persons addressed are singular or plural. Even in later works written after the completion of *The Lord of the Rings*, such as *Of the Ents and the Eagles*, Tolkien adhered to the older style; although this fact is obscured by the fact that Christopher Tolkien, when editing the text for inclusion in the published *Silmarillion*, amended the use of the second person pronoun to conform with modern usage. Here the guiding principle appears to be that the Valar continue to employ the old style (what might be regarded as the vocabulary and grammar of the King James Bible) while all the other characters adopt the usage of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.* Morgoth however seems to use the "thou, thee" mode of address as a sort of studied insult, like Denethor denigrating Gandalf, whether he is talking to Ungoliant or Húrin (both texts written after the completion of *The Lord of the Rings*) although in his conversations with Fëanor he adopts a more oblique and circumspect manner making plentiful use of the third person. In my own versions of the text for the "epic scenes from *The Silmarillion*" I have adopted Christopher Tolkien's similarly pragmatic approach, although in the Prologue to *The Children of Húrin* I have allowed Morgoth to occasionally slip into a more modern style—"but upon all whom *you love*" rather than "but upon all whom *thou lovest*". That does however match Tolkien's own usage in the *Narn i Chîn Húrin*. Elsewhere the Valar constantly employ the old-fashioned style of address, and indeed in the final phrases of their dialogue I allow Morgoth to revert to that style when cursing Húrin*,* using the version of his words cited in *The Silmarillion* rather than those in the *Narn.*

An even more serious consideration in the text of the epic scenes is however the matter of rhythmic syntax. Tom Shippey draws attention, inevitably, to the curiously poetic style Tolkien employed in *The Lord of the Rings* when describing the adventures of the hobbits with Tom Bombadil. The verse and the prose seem to be almost inextricably intertwined, with some passages of narration rendered as poetry while other stretches of dialogue not only contain a persistent metrical impulse but even internal rhyming schemes. But this ambiguity is not solely confined to the Bombadil scenes. Throughout *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien the poet continually makes his presence felt by the pattern of underlying rhythms which inform vast stretches of the dialogue (especially with characters who employ the "high style") but even in prose narration. "Helms too they chose" was singled out for criticism by Hugh Brogan in a letter to Tolkien as an example of unjustified archaism, and although Tolkien responded with a robust defence of the notion of "high style" he refrained, perhaps deliberately, from pointing out the clear musical cadence which underlies the otherwise extreme reversal of the usual and expected word order. Indeed there is a precise echo of exactly this same rhythm a whole volume later when in *The ride of the Rohirrim* he again reverses the expected word-order: "Forth rode the King" and "Forth rode Théoden."

In the sketches for *The Lord of the Rings* published in *The History of Middle-Earth* one can frequently see Tolkien deliberately selecting his words in order to achieve such an effect; at other times he seems to have done it almost instinctively. But the result, whether intentional or no, can be clearly heard in places during the BBC radio adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* where Tolkien's largely unchanged dialogue is delivered by sympathetic actors, admittedly by some more effectively than by others.

But of course when we consider the texts for *The Silmarillion*, with the possible exception of the later versions of *The Fall of Gondolin* and *The Children of Húrin* (both left unfinished and unrevised at the author's death), none of the constituent materials of the mythology received the same measure of metric honing from Tolkien. It is for that reason that I have taken it upon myself to revise the exact wording in many places of the text of the epic scenes, as well as rendering various poetic passages into prose during sections of *Beren and Lúthien.* At all such times I have been guided not only by the need to ensure comprehensibility (which entailed the alteration of some words) but also by the wish to create a rhythmic patterning in the text which can be reflected in turn in the music itself. At one time during the 1970s, I consciously adopted in some of my Tolkien settings a very precise notation of the sung rhythms, which was intended to avoid the sense of rhythmic monotony which I feared might otherwise set in; but I soon abandoned such attempts, because I found that singers became more preoccupied with reproducing the exactly written rhythms rather than the meaning of the words, which was not only counter-productive but also obscured the very effect I was seeking to achieve. Some amendments were made to the actual written notes when the printed scores were being prepared in the 1990s.

Where however I could not contrive a solution was in the matter of the re-assignment of dialogue. Now that Tom Shippey has drawn our attention to it, readers of *The Lord of the Rings* cannot fail to realise the manner in which Tolkien's precise style is employed to delineate specific characters. When words are transferred from one character to another, there can be a falsity imported into the dialogue which can seriously distort that characterisation. In Peter Jackson's film of *The Lord of the Rings* much of the re-assignment is carefully done, but even so I do find that the assumption by Éowyn of Faramir's vision of the drowning of Númenor rings a false note (and Éowyn in any event is not of Númenórean descent), and Gandalf's description of the shores of Valinor to Pippin during the siege of Gondor (taking a narrative passage from the end of the book, in a completely different style) similarly jars in its context.

In *The Silmarillion* on the other hand the differentiated tone of the speech assigned to the individual characters is however almost entirely absent, except in the case of the late *Gondolin* and *Húrin* texts already mentioned. I had little compunction therefore in the wholesale transfer of sections of dialogue from one character to another, especially when passages from *The Lay of Leithian* were being simultaneously transmuted from poetry to prose; thus Lúthien at the end of Scene Six takes over one extensive stretch of dialogue from Huan, and Beren in Scene Three commandeers one verse in rhyming couplets from Lúthien sometime much later in the story. It is in this context, also, that the two lovers can appropriate Sam's *In western lands* from *The Lord of the Rings* without seeming totally ludicrous—or at least so I hope—in order to plug an inexplicable gap left in Tolkien's narrative poem. In the final sections of *The Fall*

of Gondolin such adaptations of material originally written by Tolkien for substantially different contexts form the greater part of the sung text; and I am gratified that objection from the realms of Tolkien fandom has not only been absent, but that even a reviewer such as Chris Seeman has gone so far as to commend the use of extraneous verse in that connection.

So, at the end of the day, it may not be true that even if "someone's bound to notice", they will necessarily take exception to the alterations which I have made to the text—and hopefully now, if belatedly, justified. Under the circumstances there may indeed be no "correct" solution to the many problems that Tolkien bequeathed in his tangled web of sketches and differing versions, especially if none of them ever reached what he might have regarded as a final and completed form. One notes that even when *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were already set up in print ready for publication, he continued to tinker with the proofs and make some quite substantial alterations. One cannot doubt that he would have done the same with *The Silmarillion* even if the text had reached a much more 'finished' form than we possess.

That is even more of a consideration when we look at the tangled history of the poetic narrative of *The Lay of Eärendil*, where even the author seems to have been totally confused as to exactly what the final form of the verse should take. But that is another question entirely, which is explored in exhaustive detail both in a complete chapter of Christopher Tolkien's *History of Middle-Earth* and discussed further by Hammond and Scull in their *Readers' Companion.* When I myself came to set the poem, initially as an appendix to my *Silmarillion* cycle, I made some additions and alterations to the text as published in *The Fellowship of the Ring* without adhering slavishly either to that version or the possibly final revision (as given in Hammond and Scull's companion and *The Treason of Isengard*). In this I was guided both by the wish to provide a greater clarity of narrative line (Tolkien's published text is far from clear exactly in what manner Elwing is 'flying' to Eärendil, or indeed what she is flying from) while adhering to the formation of text to which I had, I admit, become accustomed over many years.

And these considerations loom even larger when we come to consider the text for the final segment of *The Silmarillion*—with the title of *The War of Wrath* drawn from Tolkien's own title for the final chapter of his narrative—which exists only in one very sketchy outline, and a more expanded epilogue which in many ways disagrees with the original version of the mythology. Initially, as I have elsewhere explained on several occasions, my thoughts were that there was far from sufficient textual material to furnish the elements for such a work, and it was only after the recording of the complete cycle was already under way that Simon Crosby Buttle sought to persuade me otherwise. The final text owes much to his persistence and his suggestions for elements that could and should be included. But the discrepancies and evolution of the motives of the sons of Fëanor, for example, are subjects which seem to have been in a state of continual change throughout the course of Tolkien's writings, which remain to the end uncertain even regarding such basic considerations as how many of the sons actually survived to become involved in the wars of Middle-Earth.

The question of 'tone' in the construction of the text becomes, of course, even more of a serious problem with this material. Particular consideration needs to be given to what Shippey in his later book identifies as Tolkien's almost chameleon-like approach to the English language—compare the tone of the *Book of Lost Tales* to the encounter between Caranthir and Eöl in *Maeglin*, or Saruman's political newspeak, or at its most extreme Théoden, Merry and Pippin at Isengard where completely different styles jostle each other in consecutive paragraphs. Shippey's comments on the 'chaotic committee meeting' that constitutes the council of Elrond are particularly trenchant here—and how far I should seek to parallel those shifts (Gimli, Saruman, Boromir, Elrond, Isildur, Denethor all speaking different styles of English and others such as Aragorn and Gandalf moving from one to another) in different idioms in musical terms. Even Smaug in *The Hobbit* switches in a split second from the tone of a supercilious English country squire to that of an avenging demon, and Tolkien manages the transformation with superb sleight of hand.

But with the actual story of Eärendil the only vaguely mature version of any of the story is what Christopher Tolkien describes as the 'mysterious' reworking of the final pages which were apparently written at about the time that the *Quenta Silmarillion* was finally abandoned in 1937. Tolkien's text is fine as far as it goes, but it has the annoying habit of cutting away into reported speech at climaxes, especially when Maedhros overbears Maglor during their argument. And the response of Eönwë constitutes a rather bald summary statement; I cannot believe that in any extended version Tolkien would not have found a way of exploring the moral dilemma which here confronts the Valar. It is unfortunate too that Tolkien's dialogue totally peters out at this point

I have fretted in the past about the sheer amount of the story which has had perforce to be consigned to the chorus in their role as narrator (the first triptych of *Fëanor* only the most prominent example—there are others in scenes two and six of *The Children of Húrin* which are also particularly pertinent here). In my own text for *The Silmarillion* I allowed myself considerable freedom in adapting Tolkien's original material to its context, but I carefully avoided adding anything extraneous or new to that material even when excision of discrepancies might have required it. Christopher Tolkien similarly allowed two contradictory reasons for the echoes of Lammoth to appear in the published *Silmarillion,* although elsewhere he deliberately made alterations to avoid such inconsistencies. I permitted a greater latitude to my own treatment here—Norse mythology has several explanations for Wotan's loss of an eye, none of them compatible with another unless he had a multitude of eyes to sacrifice in various causes—and I would imagine that Bilbo, who is presumably supposed to have compiled the text of *The Silmarillion*, would have found such discrepancies in his sources also (especially in historical periods before the birth of Elrond, or about which the latter could not be expected to have personal knowledge). In my selection of text for musical setting, however, I deliberately sidestepped any such concerns, allowing a vague legendary feel to substitute for precise motivation: not only the departure of Tuor, but also Túrin's capture by the Orcs, how Finrod came to Middle-Earth, how exactly Lúthien overcame Sauron, and so on.

By comparison with the earlier sketches for these scenes, Maedhros certainly adopts a more quiescent attitude not only in his later dispute with Maglor, but also (in the passage from the *Grey Annals* quoted in the published *Silmarillion*) in his conversation with Fingolfin. And Amrod and Amras too, in the very brief glimpse we get of them in the late essay *The Shibboleth of Fëanor* (where one of them is actually killed) seem to have very quiescent personalities which accord ill with their enthusiastic participation in the sack of Sirion (summarised in a passage written over forty years earlier). Indeed I strongly suspect that if Tolkien had ever returned to this period of 'history' we would have found that the prime movers in the attack on Arvernien would have been assigned to Curufin and Caranthir, who were clearly being set up as the more ill-intentioned of Fëanor's sons in Tolkien's later writings not only in *Beren and Lúthien* but also in *Maeglin*—we find him arguing with himself over Caranthir's motivation in notes on the latter. That would have meant of course the complete rewriting of the extremely sketchy texts on the fall of Doriath, which are in themselves a tangled web of contradictions.

Tom Shippey frequently points out places where Tolkien himself had great difficulty in finding the right words and style to express his meaning. And there remain some missing elements, with the curiously dispassionate view of Elrond and Elros's parents to the eventual fate of their children the least of these. Mandos in some early drafts of *The Silmarillion* is given extraordinary prophetic powers, and there are some very curious and interesting passages in the debate of the Valar after the death of Miriel (see *Morgoth's Ring*) which directly reference Eärendil. But the narrative of the battle in which Morgoth is finally defeated is definitely unsatisfactory as it stands, and it is odd that in the version of *The Drowning of Andûne* written in conjunction with the *Notion Club Papers* during 1946 Tolkien appears to have reverted to the earlier 1930s version of the myth where Eärendil's voyage fails to elicit intervention from the Valar who specifically state that they are forbidden to interfere in the affairs of Middle-Earth—in direct contradiction, or so it seems, to Elrond's statement to his assembled council written some eight years before, although it might be regarded as underlying Bilbo's poem as mentioned earlier. It is not the only occasion on which Tolkien seems to have backtracked on his own invention, although (like Morgoth's absence from the destruction of the Trees in a late 1950s revision) he seems to have reverted to his original idea when it came to construct a new opening paragraph for the Appendices in the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1966. Maybe by that stage he had simply got himself confused, which would be readily understandable.

It is certainly the case that *The War of Wrath* consists of a far more disparate collection of miscellaneous Tolkien texts than any of its predecessors in the cycle of epic scenes based on *The Silmarillion,* even more so than the already discursive pages at the end of *The Fall of Gondolin*. It is more in the nature of an assembly of vignettes than the four connected series of narratives that constitute the original cycle. And then there is once again the matter of the words themselves. In the previously composed segments of the epic scenes I had gone out of my way to avoid the use of specific terms that would be unfamiliar to Tolkien readers whose acquaintance with the books did not extend beyond *The Lord of the Rings* and its appendices. Even references to the Eldar, the Quendi and the Noldor were reduced to the bare minimum with other words such as Elves or Singers substituted. However in more recent years, when presenting recordings of the epic scenes to Tolkien Societies and other interested bodies, I have discovered that many listeners now have a much greater familiarity with some of the author's terminology; and therefore we now find specific references to peoples and places such as Alqualondë and Losgar included in the sung text.

Similarly in the earlier-composed segments I had not scrupled to adapt some of the Elvish text to forms that would have been more familiar to readers of *The Lord of the Rings*—"Anor" and "Ithil" for "Anar" and "Isil", for example. I had excused this by a rather cavalier justification that singers of Elvish were scarce in choral societies and that listeners who appreciated the aesthetic appeal of the language would not be overly concerned about the niceties of vocabulary and grammar. I was of course quite wrong, and in *The War of Wrath* I have retained Tolkien's original Elvish texts as written even when it may now conflict with later versions of the languages.

Similarly I have taken the opportunity, during the course of recording, to make one correction of an earlier misjudgement. It was pointed out to me by Jeroen Bakker and René Vink that one of my textual glosses in *Fëanor* had unintentionally produced an unfortunate effect. In the original *Silmarillion* text, at the awakening of the Elves Tolkien had referred to them as the "Firstborn of Ilúvatar". In my adaptation I had deliberately avoided the use of the names *Eru* and *Ilúvatar*, employing where necessary circumlocutions such as "the One" familiar from their employment in the *Lord of the Rings* appendices. Here I thoughtlessly substituted the word "God" (following precedents in the *Book of Lost Tales*) but this of course introduced a purely Christian overtone into the text which Tolkien had been at great pains to eliminate elsewhere. It was not however possible here to simply revert to the original version as published in *The Silmarillion*, since the musical phrase clearly ended on a strong beat. I did however change the wording to read "the One", altering the rhythm of the choral line in order to do so. In much the same way, later in *Fëanor* I had substituted Maedhros's narrative of the death of Finwë for the rather plain choral description (drawn from the published *Silmarillion*) included in the original score. My manuscript copies in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, still contain those earlier versions; I cannot imagine that anyone would ever wish to resurrect them. Indeed, Maedhros's narration, almost the very last work undertaken on the original four-part cycle back in 1996, is an overwhelmingly clear improvement, evidenced especially in the dramatic delivery on the recording by Stephen Wells. Which brings us back to where we started, with the singers who have over the years so successfully and triumphantly realised the music for my cycle of epic scenes. I cannot begin to express my thanks to them.

INDEX OF THEMES

The index of themes given below gives brief 'titles' for all the *motifs* in the cycle as a whole, cited in the musical analyses of each individual work. These, it should be emphasised, are indicative and not exclusive.

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H35 *Ash nazg durbatuluk*
H36 Gollum
H37 Riddles (I)
H38 Riddles (II)
H39 Sméagol
H40 *What have I got in my pocket?*

H41 Vanishment
H42 Wolves [S89]
H43 Joy in Wickedness
H44 Eagles [S102]
H45 Eagles' wingbeats (I)
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H48 Béorn
H49 Horses
H50 Mirkwood (I)
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H52 Wind on the heath (I) [S105]
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H54 Leaving Mirkwood
H55 Dwarves' despair
H56 Dwarves' confusion
H57 Spiders (I)
H58 Spiders (II) [S27 and S 204]
H59 Attercop
H60 Thranduil and Legolas
H61 Barrels (I)
H62 *Down the swift dark stream you go*
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H65 Master of Lake-Town
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H67 Wrath of the Dragon
H68 Bard
H69 Men of Lake-Town fanfares
H70 Under the Mountain, *later* Moria
H71 Battle of the Five Armies
H72 Mithril mail
H73 Dáin
H74 Barak Khazad
H75 Thorin's funeral
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H77 The road goes ever on

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LR2 The Shire [H1]
LR3 *Good morning* [H6], *later* Sackville-Bagginses
LR4 Jewels
LR5 Buckland
LR6 The One Ring [H32]
LR7 Gandalf (I) [H5]
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LR9 Adventure [H3]
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LR15 Time and suspense
LR16 Sauron [S61 and H34]
LR17 Scepticism
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LR21 *Ash nazg durbatuluk* [S98 and H35]
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LR26 Nazgûl (I)
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LR29 Old Man Willow [S150]
LR30 Tom Bombadil
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LR33 *Nothing passes*
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LR38 Angmar
LR39 Aragorn
LR40 Prancing Pony (I)
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LR44 *There is an inn*
LR45 Weathertop, *later* Aragorn's destiny
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LR105 *Gondor! Gondor!*
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App4 Lay of Nimrodel