Once More Into the Urple Depths of OFUM

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Once More Into the Urple Depths of OFUM

by misscam

Summary

New movie, new students, new lustobjects, new mini-Balrogs and a whole new curriculum. That’s right, children. OFUM is back. But wait… It’s no longer the only University in town. MUSM? What the…?

Notes

This will make a lot more sense if you have read 'The Official Fanfiction University of Middle-earth'. Trust me. For info some fabulous fanart, head for http://www.misssandman.com/LOTR/ofum.html
This was started around the time of the movie release of The Two Towers.
Prologue

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Disclaimer: Tolkien is God of Middle-earth. His creation, his work, his characters. His world. I've merely rewritten and added some characters and creations of my own. You better stay away from those, though. They bite. No disrespect intended, no money made, no fatal injuries incurred. Just a bit of fun and pain. Wheeeeee!

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It was night in Middle-earth. The sky was dark, stars shining black (don't ask. Really, don't) and the moon pale and grieved. In fact, the whole scenery seemed strangely silent. The trees hung their heads, the owls hooted sadly, the mini-Balrogs were comfort-eating bacon and even the Nuzguls had taken a break from breeding to mourn.

Horror upon horror. Word had reached Middle-earth that on the human world movie two of the Lord of the Rings neared release. And they all knew what that meant.

“I'm sure it won't be too bad,” Lina Holling (former student at OFUM with the scars to prove it) said in a comforting voice to Saruman, who was looking into his beer gloomily.

“They will make me a babbling idiot of a villain,” Saruman complained. “They'll make me kidnap the hobbids just so that some fabulous Elven maid can rescue them and break my staff…”

“You did kidnap us,” Pippin objected, nursing his own pint of beer. “All the suffering they will inflict upon me and Merry merely to comfort us…”

“Hoom!” Treebeard hoom'ed. His clear eyes were worried too, though. Who knew what horror the Ents would suffer now that they would finally appear on the big screen?

The characters of LotR had gathered in the staff hall of The Official Fanfiction University of Middle-earth for an emergency meeting.

It was time to take in new students.

Gimli shot Lina a glance as he patted Legolas on the back. The Elf was the hardest hit of them all, the mix of 'sensitive' looks, kick-ass warrior ability and soft treading being the doom of him. No relief for Legolas from movie two.

Boromir, on the other hand, looked distinctly cheered up. Having died had some advantages. Including always having something to bitch about and the bonus of being forgotten by those with short memories. Which luckily tended to be most fangirls.

“Out of sight, out of mind,” he declared happily.

“Had I known, I would have let the Uruk-hai kill me also,” Aragorn said bitterly. “Instead I must suffer the indignity of suddenly forgetting Arwen and desiring anything on two legs.”

“As if I would not kill you if you had done such a thing,” Elrond replied.

“No, I would have,” Arwen added with just a hint of steel in her voice, then noticed Aragorn's look. “You would no longer be yourself. I would be doing you a favour.”
“Even in death they can still mess with you,” Denethor said with a sigh, tossing another log into the fireplace.

“And still with utter absence from the movie,” Thranduil replied. The two had bonded over both being father of Important Characters, and both all too often being portrayed as... less-than-nice. Movie two was sure to only worsen Denethor’s case.

“At least not being in it you have no lusters,” Éomer muttered, twitching slightly. He was still recovering from his ordeal last year, when he had been working as a researcher and delving into the depths of fanfic.

Stare too long into the depths of fanfic, and the depths of fanfic stare back…

“Good evening all,” Gandalf (now the White) called as he entered, interrupting the round of complaints. “I am glad you are all here. I made some light snack and I see you have already discovered the beer. Right... You all know why you are here?”

There was a row of downcast eyes and weak nods.

“Movie two is coming,” Legolas said, and ominous music immediately filled the air. “A shadow and a threat is growing in my mind. It draws near. I can feel it.”

Gimli patted his friend sympathetically on the back once more, stroking his beard thoughtfully. Who knew what fate awaited him as a friend of Legolas?

“Yes,” Miss Cam said, rising from her seat to join Gandalf at the end of the table. “Movie two is coming.”

“We will now have a moment’s silence to mourn the impending death of sensible characterisation,” Elrond declared, and everyone bowed their heads.

“We're doomed,” Frodo said miserably as the silence ended. He stared down at the Ring, (ignoring Sauron's longing look) which for once was actually shutting up. Maybe that too feared movie two. After all, it too suffered. Many a fic had sought to castrate it by having the main character unaffected by the Ring's evil.

No one was unaffected by the Ring's evil. It was Evil!

Miss Cam gave Frodo a comforting smile, the cleared her throat. “Ladies, gentlemen, mini-Balrogs, Ents and what-not. Morgoth, Sauron and I have devised a plan to deal with this new situation... Dark Lords?”

Sauron and Morgoth rose at the same time, shooting each other an annoyed glance.

“Construction on the new University has already begun...” Sauron started, his chest so far out it was almost in danger of detaching itself.

“Following MY design,” Morgoth shot in.

“Only because you bribed the construction manager!”

“Only because I am smarter!”

“Why then is it called Middle-earth University of SAURON and Morgoth then?”

“The last name is more important!”
“Is not!”

“Is too!”

“As you can hear,” Miss Cam interrupted, “there will be a new University in addition to OFUM run by our dear Dark Lords here.”

“Are we sure that is a good idea?” Glorfindel asked (he was leader of S.I.C.T.N.I.T.M – Still Important Characters Though Not In The Movie), looking slightly less gloomy than the others. Not being in the movie had some advantages.

“Worry not,” Elrond replied. “It has all been worked out. They will offer… alternative classes.”

“Easier classes,” Miss Cam added.

“Easier?” Éowyn lifted her head from its position against Faramir's neck, looking grim and ready to pounce. “Movie two will bring fangirls trying to steal MY man and you want to offer them the chance to have easier classes?”

Elrond and Miss Cam begun to smile simultaneously, exchanging amused glances.

“It's very simple….”

Outside, rain began to fall on the Uruk-hais working on the great tower that would become MUSM. It was black and spiked, as was to be expected when Dark Lords are let near the drawings.

Then laughter rose from the staff section of OFUM. Evil laughter. And because evil laughter is to Uruk-hai what yawning is to humans, soon it was all you could hear.

Welcome to year two, students. Muhahahaha…
Legolas's Princess and the Rohangurl

It was dark in Jessica Fint's bedroom, though it was high noon outside. It was weekend, and thus there was absolutely no reason whatsoever to rise from the bed. She wasn't even sure she could without a new body.

Hangover. The doom of mornings. The brain was holding a protest rally, loudly shouting 'No more alcohol! Less working hours! No more alcohol! Less working hours!'

“Hey, Jess?” came a bright voice from beyond the door, and Jess groaned. Her obnoxious older sister Kat was of course up bright and early. They lived in the same dormitory because Jess had been to drunk too protest when the idea had been raised. Story of her life.

“Go away.”

Thankfully, her sister seemed to have taken the hint and went away, stomping through the hallway as loudly as possible (or so Jess imagined, for the sound thundered through her brain).

Man, it had been a weird night. She had a vague idea of having talked to some Tolkien-geeks called One, Two and Three about fanfics and – ugh, University? Whatever. They'd been weird and not very cute. Not like Legolas.

Mmm, Legolas. Pointy ears. Sleek pointy ears and very big bow.

If only Middle-earth had been real and she could have instantly seduced Legolas by song. Or harp-play. She didn't know how to play, but how hard could it be to pluck on a few strings?

Of course, her sister took all the fun out of such speculation by insisting it was very hard, and that it took more to seduce an Elf anyway. Like she would know. Jess hadn't yet seen a pointy-eared dude trying to sneak out of her sister's bedroom, so obviously Kat knew nothing about Elf-seduction.

Love for Lord of the Rings was about the only thing Jess and Kat had in common. Of course, Kat had read the actual books. Once. Which was a waste of energy. Jess preferred to wait for the movies. After all, only good books got movies, so it was a sure way to stay away from the bad books.

There was a distant squeal of horror. Jess groaned. Damn, Kat must have found out she had borrowed the pink and purple top with 'Middle-earth hottie' in sparkling aqua glitter.

“Jess!”

“I'm sleeping.”

“Did you use my computer to put up some ludicrous fanfic on the Net last night?”

Jess blinked. Oh yeah. The weird guys had dared her, then laughed diabolically as she scrambled down a story about Galadriel's daughter Pupula Turquoiseleaf (purple and turquoise were very nice colours, and Elves liked nice colours) and posted it. She had no idea why they'd been laughing. It was a very good story – if only she could remember exactly what she had written… Something about a magic necklace and lots of hot lovemaking involving tigers?

“So?”

“You misspelled Gandalf's name.”
“So?”

“You have a visitor.”

Groaning, Jess rolled out of bed (her clothes scattered about on the floor gave her a soft landing) and crawled to the door. Grabbing the doorknob, she hauled herself upright and opened the door.

At first she saw only Kat, her sister looking like she’d seen the President in a Santa Claus costume dancing the Macarena. Then, as Jess lowered her gaze, she found herself waist to face with a… Thing.

The thing had horns and wings and looked like it had rolled in lava or something. It also looked pissed. Very pissed.

With a hiss, it handed Jess a paper, then proceeded to give one to Kat with a slightly lower hiss.

“What the…?”

“That's Gondalf, the mini-Balrog you created last night,” a voice boomed (actually, the voice had a fairly normal level of sound, but her mind insisted it was booming), and she turned dumbfounded to stare at one of the men from the night before. He looked smug.

“Be nice to your mommy, Gondalf,” the man added when the thing hissed again.

“I… um… what? Mommy?” Jess muttered. She would surely have remembered sleeping with that thing's father, wouldn't she? The disco lighting wasn't that poor.

Wouldn't she have remembered the birth too? Or had she utterly lost her mind in that last bottle of tequila?

“When you posted a fanfic under the penname Legolas's Princess,” the man offered helpfully. “So now you are going to Middle-earth to enrol at University, and so are you, Rohangurl. Congratulations!”

“What?” Jess said again, trying to clear the daze from her mind.

“Oh, don't worry. Just fill out the forms, it'll be made clear to you soon enough. Tata!”

And with that the man and the thing simply vanished, leaving the two sisters to stare at each other.

“Legolas's Princess?” Kat asked. “LP? You realise how dumb that sounds?”

“Shut up. And why did the obvious figment of our collective imaginations say we were both going, *Rohangurl*?”

Kat looked down. “I like Faramir,” she said in a thin voice. “I may have written a story about him and Éowyn's sister, Éowyalae, having hot love like panthers…”

“Faramir?”

“Brother of Boromir.”

“Oh yeah, the evil dude.”

“He was not…” Kat begun, then shook her head. “Will you just read the books once?”
“Like you have?”

“It’s a very big book.”

Jess rolled her eyes, then ventured back into her room and fell onto her bed. For a moment her mind went blissfully blank and back to a state of non-consciousness. The way Sundays should be.

Then she felt a sharp sting in her thumb and bolted upwards, nearly dropping the paper the thing had given her.

She stared suspiciously at the paper.

“Did you just prick me with your edges?”

The paper looked blankly at her.

“Fine…” she grumbled and reached for a pen, hurriedly filling it out. Hmm, Legolas's Princess, elf (she resisted the urge to add 'part Unicorn' only because then she would have to eat horse food, and yuck, grass), female… Blah, blah.

Hmmm. OFUM or MUSM? What the heck were those? Eh, who cared. She put MUSM and dropped the paper to sink back onto the bed, hardly noticing that the paper vanished.

“I have to stop drinking,” she muttered hazily. Hangovers were getting weirder and weirder and quite fuzzy. Like bunnies. Fuzzy bunnies. Fuzzy guys. Fuzzy Legolas. Mmm, fuzzy.

Pretty soon the memory was fuzzy too.

Of course, some fluffy things are very, very dangerous (as all OFUM students would know). Beware the fluffy things.

Beware...
“Lina!”

There were nine knocks on her door, and Lina lifted her head with a groan.

“Yes, Lord Elrond?” she muttered, trying to adjust to the much too bright light. Damn her room having an eastward view.

“Are you and your stout companion decent in there?”

“Just a second,” Lina muttered, before remembering that Elves took that sort of thing literally.

“I meant thirty seconds!” she added hurriedly just as the door was about to open. Not that it would matter much; Elrond had once not even noticed that a fangirl had flashed him. Or perhaps he had merely pretended not to notice for sanity’s sake.

She found herself briefly wondering if there would be any Elrond fangirls this year. Poor things.

“Decent!” she called out, and Elrond entered.

“Gimli’s not here,” she added when she saw his questioning look. “The dungeon construction over at MUSM takes all his time”

“Ah yes, of course. How is the Abyssal Pit of Gravity Testing coming along?”

“Swell. They had a bit of trouble with the Orcish Inquisition torture chamber though. Apparently the Orcs wanted comfy cushions and Morgoth was outraged. Finally, they reached a compromise - black comfy cushions.”

Elrond gave a rare, genuine smile and showed a bunch of papers at her. “Miss Cam agreed you would be best suited to do the paperwork.”

“Of course,” Lina muttered. “Paperwork for what, exactly?”

“The Middle-earth Court For Canon Grievances,” Elrond said proudly. He smiled again. “I am the judge. All those who misbehave during their stay here or after they have received their license must answer to me.”

“Oh dear.”

“The courtroom is up. It will be deep within the staff section of course, would not want to deprive staff members of the entertainment.”

“Of course not,” Lina replied as she followed him into the hall and through the hallways. The staff section was under a large expansion – room for the new mini-Balrogs was desperately needed, as well soundproof rooms. It was Boromir who had driven that suggestion through, and had since that cheered up so much he was nearly a new man.

Amazing what enough sleep and no fear of fanfic can do. Although Lina wasn't quite sure how to break to him that he would most likely appear in flashbacks and still be remembered. She just couldn’t ruin his cheerful mood. He had even given her sword-classes to fend off Gimli-fangirls (you never knew).
Saurman the mini-Balrog gave her a grumpy glare as they passed by, clutching his bacon-staff. The mini-Balrogs were growing rather restless without students to play with. They'd invented a new form of cricket that made even less sense than the original. Lina suspected it actually had no rules except to have as many ruckuses as possible. Woe was the umpire (usually students appointed by Miss Cam. Aranel was due to judge the first match in the Mini-Balrog Flaming Cricket League. Punishment for some SNAOL activities of the lusting kind).

“Here we are,” Elrond declared proudly, pushing open a large door. “After you.”

The room was large and windowless, but the two trees making an arch by the entrance had enough light from one of the Silmarils placed proudly over the judge's bench.

“Wow,” Lina whispered, almost tiptoeing in. A few mini-Balrogs were playing soccer with a life-like doll (probably practicing until the new students arrived) and gave her a bored look.

The walls had the Fellowship mantra cut into the stone, as well as Elrond's newest mantra: 'Lord Elrond is wise. I will listen to Lord Elrond. I will not ignore Lord Elrond's judgements. Lord Elrond rules all. And if I ever annoy Lord Elrond, I will become Mini-Balrog soccer mascot.'

“Celebrían wrote that,” Elrond said proudly.

“What kind of punishment will you be handing out exactly?”

“Poetic justice.” The Elf grinned. “It is such a wonderful concept. Write an unauthorised 10th member fanfic…”

He paused to hiss for a few seconds. “… while at University here and I will assemble a Fellowship of mini-Balrogs and have the student actually re-enact the trip.”

“With Nuzguls chasing them?” Lina asked, trying very hard not to pity the poor students.

“Wonderful idea! I knew Miss Cam hired you for a reason,” Elrond replied enthusiastically. “Perhaps Radagast will be helpful in having mosquitoes follow the student as well. Though perhaps there will not be that much of such atrocities anymore.”

“It is our turn to suffer, it seems,” Éomer replied, entering. He clutched his helmet slightly, but otherwise looked much better than at the strategy meeting the other day. “I would like to subpoena all students who use the term 'Rohans' in unauthorised fanfics in advance, Lord Elrond.”

“Of course. Do you have a punishment in mind?”


The giant and very fluffy hamster came scurrying in, making the mini-Balrogs pause.

“He spawned yesterday,” Éomer explained. “One too many 'Rohans' must have disturbed the canon continuity. He's German. Very fond of beer.”

“Is he… Umm… Friendly?” Lina asked nervously. There was something rather unsettling about a hamster being as tall as you and giving you a look that could either mean 'I want to lick you' or 'I want to eat you.'

“Very,” Éomer replied. “We keep him in the stable with our horses. However, he likes to lawn bowl of sorts with human pins and I thought maybe…”
“Say no more,” Elrond interrupted. “It will be done. Your people shall have the support of my court. Lina, could you look at those papers and get them through administration?”

“Yes, Lord Elrond.”

“That reminds me, my sister had a request concerning all the sisters she suspects will suddenly appear…” Éomer began.

Lina let the two talk on, leading Ro-Hans out of the courtroom. He seemed rather harmless, but then, so did bunnies.

As she entered the hall, she saw Gimli by the fireplace, looking exhausted and covered in dust.

“Hello, my starlight,” he greeted her. “What is *that*?”

“Ro-Hans.”

“Right.”

“I'll tell you later,” she promised, sinking into the chair next to him and leaving the papers on the table. They could wait. Ro-Hans curled down nearby, looking like a giant furball.

“Boromir is teaching me how to scare off fangirls with a sword.”

“Sword?” Gimli let out a snort. “You were made to wield an axe. I will commence your training again tomorrow, if you like. MUSM is finished. As is the new OFUM lecture building.”

“Oh, only a day after schedule and on double the original budget.”

“Not bad at all,” Gimli agreed, and nestled into her neck. “We’re ready for the new students.”

'Yes,’ she thought lazily, 'but are they ready for us?’

She glanced down at the napping Ro-Hans and smirked. Somehow - she thought not.
Poetic Justice of the Poetry Kind

“Wakey, wakey now!”

“Huh?” Kat muttered, cracking an eyelid open to see a fierce-looking woman staring down at her, patting a paddle. Above, there seemed to be a stone ceiling, slightly darkened by ash. Since when had the ceiling been stony? “What, when, where?”

“Court appearance, very soon, Middle-earth,” the woman replied. “Honestly, they're so slow when they're fresh.”

“We'll change that soon enough,” a man replied, entering Kat's field of vision. Her eyes nearly popped out of her head and she bolted upwards to find herself in a hallway and on a hard wooden bench. What the…?

“Boromir!”

“Oh swell,” Boromir replied. “She recognised me. I'm so honoured. Isn't she after my little brother?”

The woman rolled her eyes. “Yep. Faramir Fangirl. One of very many to come, I fear.”

“I… What… BOROMIR??” Kat muttered, wondering exactly how hard she had hit her head when stumbling in drunk the night before.

“We have established that,” Boromir said dryly. “I should get inside. My father saved me a good seat. May your defence fail spectacularly.”

“Thanks, Boromir. I hope so too,” the woman replied, and then turned to look at Kat. “Well, well, well. I am Miss Cam. You will not call me Cam, Cammy, 'that scary chick' or anything else but Miss Cam. I am your course co-ordinator at OFUM, but today I am your defence lawyer.”

“My what?” Kat began to have a sinking feeling this was not a pleasant hallucination, but rather the kind where you ended up naked and the President of the United States walked in on you.

“Defence lawyer. You're charged with writing an unauthorised fic.”

“But… but… I didn't know you needed authorisation!”

“They never actually read their papers,” Miss Cam sighed up at the ceiling. “You remember, your enrolment papers? To OFUM, where you are now? Delivered by One and Gondalf the mini-Balrog?”

“But that was an alcohol-induced hallucination!” Kat protested, as a horrible sensation began to crawl up on her. Oh shit. No, no, no. This couldn't be real.

“Tsk. Sometimes weird men appearing in your bedroom are actually weird men and not your weird brain,” Miss Cam said gently, like she was addressing a child. “Now, because you posted more of your fic after you enrolled, we had to bring you in a bit early. You're lucky however, Lord Elrond is only mildly grumpy today.”

Kat took a long, deep breath and closed her eyes.

“I'm screwed, aren't I?”
“Hopefully,” Miss Cam answered brightly. “However, I will naturally do my very best to defend you on the charges laid against you, just as I did with your sister. I'll claim you're mentally incompetent and that you are very, very, very sorry for writing that fic.”

“Jess is here too?”

“Yes. She too, posted unauthorised. Sadly, however, hers was a 10th member fanfic involving the daughter of Galadriel. Elrond was not happy.”

“What… What did she get?”

“Oh, she should be trotting through the pass of Caradhras around now. Should be nice and snowy and cold. But still, nice change from the hundred hours of community service working in Lava-Tubs she got. The mini-Balrogs so love their lava skinny-dipping. Now, let's get moving, shall we? Lord Elrond gets testy when having to wait, and when testy, his judgements become somewhat… Creative.”

“Right…” Kat replied, dazed. She was in Middle-earth, about to be on trial for writing a fanfic… What had she been drinking last night?

Miss Cam pushed open a large blackened door, and briskly entered the hall. It was crammed; Kat noticed Legolas, Gimli, Aragorn, Théoden, Denethor, Galadriel… Ye Gods. She really was in Middle-earth, being stared at by Lord of the Rings characters and a lot of other weird people.

“Frodo!” she exclaimed quietly, staring at the hobbit, who was devouring what appeared to be dried mushrooms. He smiled merrily at her.

And then her knees nearly buckled under her as she saw Faramir. Oh God, the hair, the face, the body…

“Here,” a girl whispered, leaning over from one of the benches and handing her a handkerchief. “You're drooling.”

“Um, thanks…” Kat replied hesitantly.

“I'm Nodalec,” the girl offered, and then gestured to the Elven girl next to her. “This is Mytsie. Good luck. You'll need it.”

“Will she ever,” another girl snorted from the bench behind. “I'm Aralanthiriel, and this is Inannle. Are you OFUM or MUSM?”

“Umm… OFUM…” Kat said hesitantly.

“You'll be with us then,” Mytsie said cheerfully. “You're lucky. Those two are stuck with Morgoth and Sauron.”

“At last we had the guts to… Oh look, there's Fëanor!” Inannle exclaimed, and Aralanthiriel's eyes went glassy.

“Hear ye, hear ye! All rise for the honourable Lord Elrond presiding!”

The crowd bolted up to attention from their gallery, while Miss Cam edged Kat towards the forward bench and tables. Lord Elrond came striding out in all his regal-ness (and dressed in the traditional black robes of a judge), giving her a hard look as he took his seat.
“Thank you, Drew,” he said to the court official. “What's on today, Meir Brin?”

“Faramir and Éowyn against Kathryn Fint,” Meir Brin replied, standing up from her seat by the huge pile of files. “The defendant stands accused of character mangling, mental torture by clichéd romance, ignorance of canon, creation of mini-Balrogs and lack of taste.”

“How do you plead?” Elrond asked.

“Not guilty due to mental incompetence,” Miss Cam replied. “Kat Fint was clearly delusional when writing this fic – 'The sweetest sweet man of Gondor finding the truest true love' – we ask she be acquitted on all charges.”

“What say the prosecution?”

Faramir rose. “Your honour, this girl made me quote a Mariah Carey song.”

The crowd gasped. The mini-Balrogs hissed. Lord Elrond raised an eyebrow.

“This merely strengthens our case,” Miss Cam replied. “Who in their right mind would have a man of Middle-earth quote Mariah Carey? I ask, your Honour, that you consider how mentally competent someone naming a character 'Eowyalae' would be.”

“She created Teodred,” Éowyn said forcefully, getting up and taking Faramir's hand. “She had me marry Aragorn to lay her claim on Faramir, your Honour!”

Kat could feel Arwen's eyes on her back and whimpered.

“Miss Fint,” Elrond leaned forward. “Did you not read the book?”

“I did! Once! I just… He's so… so gorgeous! And it's a very long book,” she finished lamely.

“In her defence, your Honour, she did know that the Rohirrim are not Rohans, and that there should be only Nine in the Fellowship,” Miss Cam said smoothly. “And this is her first offence.”

“Nevertheless, this is a serious offence,” Elrond replied. “I see here from the evidence that she invented a winged horse whom she shared a 'bond' with and that she defeated two Nazgûl with her baby-pink staff to show off. Not to mention her characterisation of Merry and Pippin as mushroom-addicted stand-up comics and Faramir as a weepy wimp she needed to rescue.”

“I'm really, really, really sorry?” Kat offered helplessly. She was never ever going to write a fic again. Ever. And never drink again. At least not when the computer was on so she may be tempted to write. Perhaps there should be a breath-testing of fanfic writers…

“Poetic justice will be done,” Elrond declared (to much cheering). “Kathryn Fint, I hereby find you guilty on all charges and sentence you to a hundred hours of community service in the stables and lice-duty for Ro-Hans. Furthermore, since you obviously know how to deal with the Nazgûls, I declare you their new counselor for two weeks.”

“That's it?” Kat asked surprised, feeling a smile sneak on. She didn't mind horses, and how bad problems could the Nazgûls have?

“I'll lead her to the Witch-Wall, you Honour,” Miss Cam replied. “May I also compliment you on your judgement? It is always a pleasure to lose in your courtroom.”

“The… Witch-Wall…?” Kat asked, being nudged out of the courtroom as most of the crowd cheered
(not the students. They merely looked sympathetic). She had the strangest feeling of impending doom.

“Yes. He's just next door and has been very troubled of late. Broken heart and well, it's hard being a wall when your friends are wraiths. Here we are…” Miss Cam declared and opened the door.

“Cheer him up.”

“You're a sight for a sore wall! Why go for a human when you can have something rock-hard all the time?” the voice greeted Kat as Miss Cam slammed the door locked behind her. “Hug me! I need love!”

'Oh, drat. Dooooom…' Kat thought, staring at the Witch-Wall in all its brick-y glory. Elrond knew his poetic justice. She was doomed.

And then the poetry began.
The Diary of Jessica Flint, Legolas-Luster Extraordinaire

Chapter Notes

This chapter is written in the style of Bridget Jones, but with less Colin Firth.

***

Day one of my new, glorious life!

Am in Middle-earth. Happy, happy days! Not seen Legolas yet, but prince sure to be around, waiting for me.

***

Obstacle one: Seems to be other Legolas-claimers around. Some chick named Dot laughed very hard in my face when I said I could win Leggy over. Nearly saw my glorious, pointy eared prince a second ago, but Pika elbowed me in the gut to get there first. Turned out only to be some elf from the Silmarrrrrrrion or whatever. Said he was Gwindor and then laughed in not very comforting manner.

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Obstacle two: Seems I am in some kind of University. Am very confused. This not at all like my story. Where are the bluebirds heralding my arrival? Where is PaleSilverWood? Ellir says this is Middle-earth from the books, not our fanfics. How very dull. Tolkien boring old fart.

Am now being eyed by angry mini-Balrog named 'Toilken'.

Tolkien not boring old fart.

Mini-Balrog stopped staring at me.

I need a drink.

***

Obstacle three: Very rude lady named Miss Cam drag me off to some 'trial'. This is not at all going as it should. Why is my daydream rebelling against me?

I really need a drink.

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Obstacle four: Legolas hates me.

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Obstacle five: Elrond hates me.
Obstacle six: Can't sing. Boromir threw tomato at me when I tried. Elrond said I had no respect for the court to try to serenade Legolas while on trial for doing so.

Elves really drool-worthy when angry.

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Obstacle seven: Think I was found guilty. Hard to tell with so much cheering.

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Obstacle eight: Have died and gone to snowy hell. Being dragged about by very cheerful mini-Balrogs, who all go skiing while I must trudge through the snow. Most unfair. Was handed lots of Band-Aids by sniggering staff member named Meg. Said she had been there and had no sympathy. You'd think this University was evil or something.

***

Lost track of obstacles. Look like snow-woman from hell. Who would have thought it was cold in Middle-earth? Thought it looked like Hawaiian paradise. Am very confused.

***

Snow.

***

More snow.

***

Wish to never see snow again in lifetime. Frodod the mini-Balrog is leading us back. Thank God. Moria at least looked dry in movie.

***

Very smelly though.

Ow! Gimily the mini-Balrog gave me hard yank. Suspect he can read. Am very worried. This is some nightmare version of Middle-earth where you can actually get *dirty*? Where’s the romance in that?

***

Not sure what day. Feet hurt very much. Am convinced mini-Balrogs are fiery demons from hell, not from Moria at all. Movie very confusing. Perhaps I shall make Kat write me a summary of the book. Can't be too complicated.

***

Am back. Hurrah! Hurrah! Lived through the test of love for my Leggy!

***

Must share room with Kat, turns out. No fun. I am in MUSM. Very easy University, they say. Give me more time to compose ballads in Elvish for my lovely Elven prince.
Obstacle nine: Can't actually speak Elvish, but can't be hard to learn. Met Molly and Dawn, who are also going to MUSM. Molly seems rather strange and tried to hit me over the head with a broom. Very peculiar. Dawn also like Legolas. Am wondering if I have to lock her in the broom closet.

Mytsie offered me counselling, and laughed very hard when I told her could handle anything. Most unsettling. Wondering if I should lock her in bloom closet also.

Have had to go see nurse after Mytsie and Dawn escaped from broom closet. Meagan, the nurse, said I was lucky I had hard head. Am still very confused about everything. Am told there will be big info meeting with all staff members and student tomorrow. Hurrah! Will see Legolas again. Must wear spectacular dress to entice him.

Obstacle ten: Don't actually have a spectacular dress. Thinking maybe I can borrow one from Galadriel or Arwen.

Met GreyLadyBast, very nice staff member (hurrah! I knew there had to be one). Offered me Elven wine. Am going to drink it now.

Ich verrra gooood…

Ow.

Ow-ow. Ow.

Am never drinking anything offered by anyone of the staff ever again. Apparently, stumbled into Library and called Sauron a wiener.

Head of Archives (Jean or Lean or Dean or whatever) say it is my fault library is now trashed. Must help clean it up with Thalia (assistant librarian, acting like that's an honour. Bah).

Ow. Met Miss Thundera Tiger and had to help her show a new batch of mini-Balrogs the difference between food and torture-object.

Met yet another Legolas-luster, Nilannawen. Am beginning to suspect am not the only one to like
him.

***

Sure are a lot of students here. Shared lunch with Magdalena (who likes Finrod, whoever that is. Sounds like a bad porn name), Trinity (also likes Legolas, so must lock her in broom closet), Soup (ew! She likes Gollum! Like, gross!), Snowling (is trying to keep me off her scent by claiming she likes Frodo and Legolas. Am not fooled), Rachel (who only likes Frodo, so no danger there) and Tyellas (who is trying to suck up to Sauron for some staff position or another).

Must make bigger broom closet.

***

Horror! We must wear compulsory uniforms!

***

Horror! They are not in purple! Purple is so my colour.

***

Ugh. Uniform designer, Lotus, will not listen to my pleas for purple. Says yellow is hideous enough. Bah. Purple is not hideous. It goes very well with orange.

***

Forgot I had not finished serving sentence. Miss Dwimordene come to pick me up for Lava-Tubs service. What the heck is Lava-Tubs?

***

Not so bad. Rather hot, but mini-Balrogs fed and cuddly.

***

Have heard Morgoth is coming. Who is Morgoth again?

***

My eyes! MY eyes!

Am blind.

***

Am not blind, but is surely dying from the horror. Morgoth… Without armour or anything. Shudder. Farewell, cruel world.

***

Miss Dwimordene says I must stop being so melodramatic and that she will make me give Morgoth a backrub if I do not shut up and stop wailing about dying and Legolas crying over me. Hmpf.

***

Finished my first hour of service. Wish there was bleach to clean my eyes. Perhaps I can now go to
Legolas and get some comfort.

***

Hmmm. Staff section is in fact guarded by mini-Balrogs who look a bit hostile. Must think of a plan.

***

Have not yet thought of a plan, but thought of a great Elven name. Silveria Starlightwen, Princess of MoonPlains.

***

Have thought of a plan. Am going to convince the mini-Balrogs with my silver tongue.

***

Hurrah! Plan worked. Very nice mini, Illuvatar. Wonder who he is named after?

***

Am opening door now. Hurrah! Hurrah! Will soon be wed to Legolas, dreamiest of all dreamy men.

***

Is rather dark here…

***

Have stumbled across sleepy shape at last. Hurrah! Am hugging Legolas!

***

Did not think Legolas would be this cold, though.

***

Seems to like me hugging him though.

***

Can’t quite remember him wearing any rings in the movie though.

***

Or tattered clothes.

***

Think I will try to turn on light now.

***

………

Am never trusting a mini-Balrog again.
On brighter note, have a date with Barry the Barrow-Wight sometime next millennium.
There was really no need to have a rooster or any sort of alarm clock when you lived at OFUM. Come dawn, you’d be awake.

It was hard to sleep through a Morgoth/Sauron disagreement, after all. It usually involved at least one minor earthquake. And then there were the students to pluck down from trees, ceilings, chandeliers and mini-Balrog lairs.

It was usually a very, very bad sign when no students had to be plucked down at all.

“Morning,” Miss Dwimordene said idly as Miss Cam entered the new eating hall. It was quiet, which was a really, really bad sign. Strangely, the floor seemed to whimper as she walked over it.

“I think we'll have many troublemakers this year,” Dwimordene went on, looking up from her pile of enrolment forms (she was after all head of Student Danger Evaluation and Dealing-With Said-Danger-With-Much-Evilness, and an important tool for Danger Evaluation was research. Students were so predictable). “Rachel, half hobbit, half elf? A mushroom and wine addicted student…”

“Joy,” Miss Cam replied.

“And here's Pati, the Jedi Knight.”

“Keep an eye on her, we will. Jedi mind-tricks we like not,” Miss Cam replied dryly. “Good morning, Lord Elrond.”

“Good morning,” Elrond said cheerfully. “Ah, all the new students piled together.”

“Yes,” Dwimordene replied, continuing to flip through the pile. “Alas, my Lord, you still have lusters after you.”

“He does?” Miss Cam leaned forward. “What brave souls dare lust after Elrond?”

“Morwen, Normir, TigerCat, Vanyaer, Jax, Tadan, Molly…Pretty well off, considering.”

“Don't tell me,” Legolas broke in, looking morose as he slipped down on a chair. “They all want me?”

“Actually, only half of them,” Dwimordene replied. “The rest is divided between the hobbits, Aragorn, Glorfindel, Haldir and the other obvious choices.”

“And some not so obvious,” Miss Cam said (she was adept at reading upside down. Handy for foiling student plans). “Van’e lusts after Treebeard?”

“Aye. As does Spirit Star.”

“I would not be overly worried,” Elrond replied. “If they try flying tackles on him, they will only knock themselves out.”

There was a brief silence as all cherished the image, Miss Cam chuckling softly.

“Morning all,” Miss Thundera Tiger called brightly. Dunled the mini-Balrog immediately appeared from under the floorboards, waving his whip like he tail of a dog and begging for a bacon slice.
“What was he doing *in* the floor?” Miss Cam asked, looking down. “Oh dear…”

“Interesting,” Elrond observed. “I did not think you could fit that many students in such a small compartment.”

“Me neither. Is that… bacon grease?” Dwimordene asked, sniffing the air.

“I think at least one of the students actually rubbed herself with the stuff to appease the mini-Balrogs,” Thundra Tiger observed.

“Then why are they in a hole?”

“Someone must have written a fic again. You know how those random plot holes appear everywhere.”

“Do I ever,” Legolas replied. “I was chased by Elvea and Sauronette when one opened just in front of them, and they fell down into the Uruk-hai breeding caverns.”

“Oh, so that was the loud-pitched scream I heard about 'need acid to remove my eyes'?" Elrond asked.

“Anyone for croissants?” Sunsong offered, peeking out from the kitchen.

“Um, excuse me?” Nodalec asked in a low voice from the hole. “Could you… Umm... Free us?” Miss Cam rolled her eyes. “Better get Mytsie. This group need counselling.”

“From falling into a hole?” Legolas looked slightly baffled.

“No. From what I'm about to do to them.”

“I was bribed!” Chiad protested heartily from the hole. “Nath bribed me with booze!”

“No, I didn't!”

“Did too!” Shauna broke in. “You bribed me too.”

“Oh, shut up,” Miss Cam replied. “Millikov, go wake the Dark Lords. I think at least one of the students down here belong to MUSM, and thus are their responsibility. Jocelyn, walk the mini-Balrogs before the bacon smell drives them… cuddly.”

She gazed down the hole. “Is that a palantír you are clutching, Aralanthiriel?”

“Yeeee-ees,” came the yelp from the hole as the hobbits came running over (having smelled the bacon).

“Is that Fëanor's?”

“Yes.”

Miss Cam grinned in a way that could best described as toothy. “Oh, my little ones. Why not take the cloth off and look at it? Hmm?”

“We could? Really?” Jiffer asked, bacon grease clearly gone to her head.

“But of course.”
“No, don’t…” one of the other students protested, but it was too late. Jiffer had already pulled off the cloth.

“Interesting,” Elrond observed. “I did not think eyes could bulge that much.”

“Better get Meagen. I think they'll need a nurse,” Thundera Tiger commented. “So, that's the palantír that is always turned towards the sea, is it?”

“Yes,” Miss Cam replied. “Unfortunately, this week 'You-Wouldn't-Believe-It's-Not-Valinor Beach Resort hosts the annual Istari Nudist camp.’”

The students whimpered. The staff laughed.

By now, most of the staff section had managed to get out of bed (sans Faramir and Éowyn, naturally, and Galadriel and Celeborn were also suspiciously absent. Miss Cam had a feeling it had something to do with the discovery of certain books in the library students had smuggled in. To entice Lust Objects, of course)

Lina and Gimli came out humming (for some reason, Gimli always found Lina dropping any competition quite the turn-on, and they would scarcely been seen for days afterwards. Last week Butterfly had tried her fangirl charms – one student nailed to a tree later Lina and Gimli went missing for three days)

“I'll go see where else students may have fallen down,” Miss Cam said to Dwimordene. “I'm sure you can handle this bunch.”

“I'll come with you,” Thundera Tiger offered. “We're missing Eldorna and Gal-Galad.”

“Poor Eldorna. So gender confused,” Miss Cam said sympathetically, falling into her familiar stride (after all, a course co-ordinator could not merely walk. It was all about image) “You don't think they're re-enacting the Last Alliance with some students as orcs again?”

“Hope not. I'm glad the classes start soon. The students have too much spare time on their hands.”

“Ain't that the truth. We'll soon bury them in books – literally. Those who thought Elrond was bad… Finwë and Ingwë teaching H.I.S.T.O.R.Y…”

“Hail, Idiot-proof Silmarillion Training for Oblivious Reading-challenged Yawners?”

“Yes.”

“I look forward to Ooops, I Did It Again: The Sue and Her Multi-Coloured Eyes myself.”

“Ah, yes. I'm slightly worried about Holes, Hoots and Horns: More to Hobbits than Hugability. I fear it will only increase the aaaw-factor of the hobbits.”

“We'll see, I suppose.”

They walked in silence for a moment, carefully stepping over Rune, who had clearly tried to tackle Boromir and had discovered how well his shield could be used as deflector.

“Ah, there they are,” Thundera Tiger said brightly, noticing the two minis, as well as Morchaint and a third mini crunched on the ground. (Morchaint was the Mini-Balrog Spawning Overseer, a dangerous job. You never knew where and when and in what shape the little critters would appear)

“It smells like… Burnt milk?” Miss Cam observed. “Morchaint, is that a new mini?”
“Yes. Meet Milkwood.”

Yep, it looked like it would be a day like any other at OFUM. Failed plots, minis and any moment now, a stampede.

“That's LEGOLAS! I see Legolas!” came a distant squeal. “Legolas, I wuv youuuuuuuuu!”

“Shall we?” Thundera Tiger asked.

“We shall. To evil, Gentlewomen!”

Yep, just another morning at OFUM.
Kat awoke of the inane chatter of her sister and her friends, as usual. For a moment she considered reaching for the nearest small meteorite (it had been very stormy last night, as Miss Cam had caught several students passed out by a still, which had consequently ended up being fought over by Sauron and Morgoth, but in the commotion the Urple Bandits had snagged it), but her body simply hurt too much.

Jess sounded in intolerable good spirits. Then again, she had not been chased by Celeporn and Gladriel on worgs (mini-Wargs), trying to play polo with Kat. Naturally, the minis had caught her, but had apparently found the chase so romantic they felt the urge to do things not even bleach could remove from Kat's mind.

She sighed, feeling slightly miserable. OFUM was not at all romantic or nice. There was the huge Balgog (a huge, flaming gong, complete with whip) that Miss Cam had acquired and was apparently learning to play 'Advance Australia Fair' on (why, was a very good question) waking everyone who did not have earplugs (in essence, the students) up at Hangover Hours of the morning. Honestly, had the woman no knowledge of student life? The scarier prospect was of course that she had, and was just being a pain.

"I just love MUSM!" Dawn was saying.

"Brilliant, innit? We don't have to read anything!" Jade exclaimed.

"Yeah, I saw Kat's booklist…" Jess trailed off, and Kat opened her eyes, wondering if she had Very Valinor within reach and could hurl it at her sister.

"I do have a bad feeling about MUSM…” Cenire muttered. "Much too easy."

"I just can't wait for Free Love with Galadriel and Celeborn!” Jennifer sounded much too cheerful for so early in the morning. “I mean, we get taught to be creative in pairings and write cheesy romance! I can't wait!”

"Yay for creative!" all MUSM chicks said at once, and then giggled.

"I'm pairing Jade Evilheart with Sauron," Jade said dreamily.

"Can't you all go somewhere ELSE?" Kat hissed.

"Come on," Jess said. "Grumpy is awake."

The girls filtered out, leaving Kat to roll back against the wall, sighing blissfully. A moment later the door slammed open.

"FRODO!" screamed Lydia, making Kat bolt upwards and roll out of bed.

"FRODO!" echoed Hika, and then the two were gone, leaving Kath to curse loudly. She had managed to get back on her feet when Lydia and Hika re-entered, both with beards.

"Why must he always wear that Ring?" Lydia pouted.

"Yeah, it's so evil."

"Isn't there a class now?" Kat muttered, then looked up in horror. "Oh no!"
They ran, leaping over a snoozing Hobbot (the Hobbots were the mini-Balrog chefs, having a hob on their back and all, the task fell naturally to them) and crawled under Blarong the Balrog, third-cousin of Barlog the Balrog.

The lecture hall was full, everyone chatting excitedly about this first lecture of OFUM year two and the rumours about some crossover class with the Harry Potter universe.

“Any idea who the teacher is?” Maggie asked as Kat slumped down on the chair.

“Nah.”

“I hope it's Ulmo,” Moraiwe said dreamily.

“You're weird,” Kat muttered.

The Balgog sounded.

In entered Miss Cam and… Hundreds of fangirls held their breaths, each hoping for their Lust Object and there was… Treebeard.

“Ohhhhhhh…” came the sounds of disappointed (except for a few who cheered).

“Hoom! I will be teaching you the essence of family trees with Quickbeam as soon as he manages to shake fangirls out of his leaves. Hoom!”

“Well, it could be worse,” Kat reflected. As if having read her mind, Miss Cam got up.

“This class will be dismissed when Treebeard says it is. Is that clear?”

“Yes,” the students chorused.

“Hoom! Hasty folk.”

“They always are, my good Ent,” Miss Cam said. “I will see what takes Quickbeam so long.”

Treebeard stood staring at the students for a while, taking in everything from Jewel (a hobbit that came complete with her own boyfriend, and therefore lusted only after mushrooms), Naomi (vampire, who Miss Cam naturally had given Belphegor as a roommate. Belphegor was French and loved garlic), San (Lunar Shiftress, which the enrolment office had interpreted to mean she worked shifts for the moon. Unfortunate consequences ensued), Elentari Malore (who would have been of Ainur race, had not Illuvatar kidnapped her and attempted to… ahem… be romantic… Elentari had consequently begged Miss Cam to be anything else), Taruriel (shapeshifter, who wanted to be dragon, but had refrained from it ever since Smaug had gotten a look at her. When dragons hadn't mated for a few centuries, they went rather… Wild), Mae (the Ferret Goddess, only the ferrets had rebelled and installed the Golden Nut as Goddess instead) and fairies and elves and what-not.

“Hoom!” he said sceptically. “This is Branching Out Family Trees. I will teach you to know the real branches from the fake, plastic ones so many of you attempt to fasten to the tree. To begin with…”

He pulled up something that looked like a blanket fit for a dragon. It took a moment before Kat realised it was actually his lecture notes.

“Oh dear God…”

“That's 'Oh dear Eru…', you know,” Magdalena said. Kat stuck her tongue out.
“Boromir…” the Ent had to pause as Maggie let out a loud squeal. “Boromir has asked me to address his kinship with Aragorn. They are not brothers.”

“But in the movie he called Aragorn 'my brother’!” a girl objected.

“Hoom! It is a phrase to express kinship and love…”

“Ewwwwww!” when half the class, while the other went “Knew it!”

“Didn't some of them have platonic love class last year?” Ainaechoiriel asked, rolling her eyes.

“Out of curriculum, out of mind.” Nathonea replied philosophically.

Treebeard had begun talking about the Kings of Gondor, confusing quite a few that thought 'heir of Isildur' meant Aragorn was actually Isildur's son, not that there was a whole Age between them.

“How long is an Age, anyway?” Sienna reflected. “What it takes for Sauron and Morgoth to agree on something?”

“I think you're mistaking that with an eternity,” Andtauriel replied.

“Ah.”

Kat groaned as Treebeard rambled on, now about the 'Ship-Kings' (ship that were Kings? That made no sense. Intelligent ships? Although that would explain the Fellow Ship, Miss Cam's luxury yacht for worn down Fellowship members in need of some rest. Kat suspect it was only a matter of time before some of the students launched an attack).

There was a sudden gasp through the room.

“What?” Kat asked, having pondered how one would manage to sneak into a sentient ship.

“Treebeard revealed Aragorn was over 80 years old when he was in the Fellowship. I think some of the fangirls went catatonic,” Maggie replied. “How did he ever manage to have kids at that age?”

'Hoom!’” Treebeard remarked. “Age is no hindrance for some sweet branch holding and bark caressing. Why, when I was only obscenely old, Fimbrethil and I often danced under the hills and engaged in some sweet nectar exchanges.”

There was a long silence, and then all the students screamed as with one voice.

“EEEEWWWWWWW!”

Kat felt her mind go blissfully catatonic.

“Hoom!” Treebeard muttered. “I meant we exchanged opinions on the textures of different flower nectars together.”

It was too late. Miss Cam peeked into the room, Quickbeam in tow.

“The first catatonic students,” she said cheerfully. “Ah, the semester has begun at last.”
Free Love and a World's First Spawning

The MUSM lecture building was dark, damp, thorny, filled with trapdoors and mini-abysses and generally, a pain to navigate (Linteloteiel had quite the job cleaning up after the Sauron/Morgoth fights at dawn, breakfast, snack-between-breakfast-and-lunch, lunch, afternoon, before dinner, dinner, after dinner, sunset, moonrise, midnight and just before dawn). If you had a class at noon, you should probably start trying to get there at dawn. Jess had realised that the hard way.

She brushed off some slime as she entered the lecture hall (it was slightly-dark black of Morgoth's design, as opposed to the macho-dark black Sauron had fought for. Jess had no idea black came in so many shades). Dann the Hoppits and their slimy-green webbed hides. They were like crows; ascending (they lived in holes, which Kat had said was 'obvious', though Jess wasn't quite sure why) upon anything glittering. If it was attached to a student, even better (Bold had quite the job cleaning up after mini-Balrog 'student-handlings', and Penn had her hands full snuggling all lonely minis. The male to female ratio was such that most male minis had to comfort themselves other ways. Like chasing students).

The whole place was a zoo. Why, just last week Urku Hai and Orki-hai had showed up, the Uruk-hai missing links (one missing link per species they were a mixed of, of course. Or rather Saruman felt it was of course. Everyone else just ran screaming in another direction). Then there was Fanghorn, the enormous slow-talking horn. And the less said about Ringbarer the mini-Balrog, the better.

Jess shuddered involuntarily.

“Hey Jess,” Mari called. “Mini-Balrogs?”

“Hoppits.”

“Ah.”

The doors opened again, and AW the Blue Elf (Smurf-Elf, as Jess liked to call him. Now there were two species that should never mix) entered, limping, followed by UH (Underscore Hater).

“Did he try to make a pass at Miss Cam again?” Jess asked.

“Yes. Unfortunately, Miss Cam was watching something on her palantír and did not appreciate the interruption,” UH replied, rolling her eyes.

Jess sniggered as the woman in question entered, looking her usual evil self.

“Right. Any of you little brats write Harry Potter/Lord of the Rings crossovers, you will report to me for a… Ahem. Special seminar,” Miss Cam smiled. “The Enrolment office will check your records and if you fail to report, you get to attend Elrond's The Best of Numerology 101 – A Hundred Hours of Numbering Bliss.”

“Uh oh,” Amy muttered.

“And now, for your Free Love lecturers, Lady Galadriel and Lord Celeborn of Lothlórien.”

“Who the heck is Celeborn?” Jess whispered.

“Galadriel's husband,” Barbara answered in a don't-you-know-anything voice.
“I thought that was Elrond.”

“No, he was married to Celebrian.”

“Who is Celebrian?”

“Celeborn's daughter.”

“Wait, wait, wait,” Jess held up her hands. “Elrond had an affair with his mother-in-law and had Arwen? Wicked. If I knew the book was this juicy, I would have read it.”

“Em, Jess…”

“I mean, looking at Celeborn, I can totally understand why Galadriel would…”

It finally sunk in that no one else was talking, and that they were all staring at something behind her. She gulped.

“No, no, do go on, Miss Fint,” Celeborn said pleasantly. “You were saying?”

“That you're a very, very forgiving and nice Elf?” Jess said in a small voice.

“Alas… I am not.” He smiled. “You see, students thinking my daughter never existed and it's therefore free hunting day on my son-in-law, make me a bit cranky. Students thinking that my wife actually had my daughter with my son-in-law make me quite cranky. Students thinking Galadriel should give Arwen lessons in 'she-elf sexuality' make me very cranky. Do you know what you make me?”

“Em…”

“Peeved. Do you know what Elf Lords do when they are peeved?”

“He leaned forward, Jess leaned backwards. “I expect an essay on that from you tomorrow. Two thousand words. And Miss Fint?”

“Eee?”

“Be creative, or I will be.”

She nodded weakly as he marched back down to Galadriel.

“Good morning class,” Galadriel said. “This is Free Love.”

The Elven Lady tried to smile, but looked more like she wanted to cry.

“Yes, in this class we encourage… Creativity and no limits in romance pairings. We will be… Thrilled to read all your Aragorn-loves-Legolas-and-Arwen-is-very-happy-for-them-both, won't we, Celeborn?”

“Ecstatic,” Celeborn forced out between clenched teeth.

“Why, we have even read up on some of the classic romances of your world and Miss Cam most graciously directed us to some Free Love movies on the palantír,” Galadriel went on.
“Yeah, baby,” Celeborn intoned flatly.

“Does anyone else have a bad feeling about this?” Tadan asked in a low voice.

“So.” Galadriel tried to smile again. “To kick off this semester, we have creatively and limitlessly chosen a few pairings from which you can choose to write your first paper on.”

“We have indeed, fair Galadriel,” Celeborn said admiringly. “Your first option is Bilbo and Smaug.”

There was a stunned silence.

“Why, we all know what Bilbo really came to the Lonely Mountain for,” Celeborn went on. “Extra marks will be given to all creative puns on 'the dragon's treasure'.”

“Your second option is Legolas and Treebeard,” Galadriel said and this time, her smile was genuine. “After all, we all know how deep the Elf's love for trees run. We will award extra marks for any creative use of 'forest lingo' such as 'is that a branch in your pocket, or are you pleased to see me?' and 'you make me bark'.”

The silence stretched on.

“Then there's option three. Tom Bombadil's Wild Night at the Barrow-Downs and the Many Uses of Yellow Boots. Extra marks will be given if you write it in verse.”

It was still deadly silent.

“Option four is Shelob spinning her web of love for Sam,” Celeborn went on. “After all, being a Lady Spider is lonely business and Sam is such a good-looking little hobbit, eager to please. We will give extra marks for making their break-up believable.”

“However,” Galadriel finally said, as all the students merely stared ahead, mouths open. “For all those who feel that perhaps creativity has its limits, you may write a tale of Faramir and Éowyn.”

“But of course, we know you all prefer free love and that such an established pairing is boring,” Celeborn said merrily. “I shall so look forward to reading about Bilbo's creative use of the One Ring to please that dashly handsome Smaug.”

Jess finally started connecting with her brain again and managed to close her mouth. What was most scary was that a few students had already huddled together, comparing notes.

“Since we know you're all eager to get to it, you may go,” Galadriel said, smiling at Celeborn. “My Lord?”

The two Elves left, leaving a buzzing lecture hall.

“I'm not writing about Legolas with an Ent!” El Luitha complained.

“I think that was rather their plan,” Furious remarked. “Trapping us to write about True Love, rather than Free Love.”

“I hate this University,” Jess said bitterly as she got up and they begun the long trek to the exit (thankfully, the mini-Balrogs were busy with a class of OFUM students doing running-for-your-life. Jess waved merrily to C-chan, who was just about to be caught by Arathon, who enjoyed a good marathon). “Sometimes I wish it would just…”

There was a loud rumble.
There was silence.

There was a louder rumble.

“What the…?”

They ran, finally managing to stumble outside where the staff had gathered too, all staring at the sky.

“What's happening?”

Miss Cam stood in the middle of the crowd, staring at the sky darkly.

“Someone created middleearth. It is trying to spawn upon Middle-earth,” she said. Farmer (a Faramir mini with a love for agriculture, and therefore the only vegetarian mini-Balrog) hugged onto her leg.

And then the world went urple.
The Fire Demon Cometh and Other Good Vegas Shows

Chapter Summary

Very cunning Blackadder references ahead.

The lights sparkled merrily, merrily, merrily and slightly urple-y as Miss Cam fell out of the portal and promptly landed on her face.

Seconds later there was a second thump, a thunk and an omp.

Elrond got up first, twitching uncomfortably in this tight leather suit. Legalous the mini-Balrog clung onto Katharine, peeking out cautiously from behind her leg. Further away, Gimli helped Lina to her feet.

“Um, Miss Cam? Are you absolutely sure about this?” Elrond asked.

“Yes. VZG, Sienna and Jess dragged Thranduil through one of the Time-Space-Plot-Holes-Of-Sues when middleearth spawned. They're here.”

Elrond nodded. “They must have thought he was Legolas in the confusion. How do you know they went here?”

“They want to marry Legolas. This is Las Vegas.”

Elrond just stared at her, then seemed to decide he'd rather not know. “Will they not notice Legalous and Gimli?”

“This is Vegas. Trust me on this one, Lord Halfelven. No one will notice a thing. Okay. Lina, Gimli, you cover the chapels I have on this list, Katharine and Legalous, you take the ones on this list, Lord Elrond and I will take the others. Remember, Legalous, you're here as a legal assistant to Katharine, not to eat the fangirls, okay?”

Legalous grunted.

“At least until after we've annulled any possible marriage,” Miss Cam added.

Legalous hissed approvingly.

“Right everyone. Elrond and I are on palantír one.”

The group split, Lina and Gimli heading off hand-in-hand.

“Maybe I shouldn't have brought those two to Las Vegas,” Miss Cam muttered, then gazed down at her list. “Right. West we go.”

“How did three students manage to overpower Thranduil?” Elrond asked. “And why did you ask me to come dressed in black leather?”

“I didn't. I just told Jay and Acacia to pass on the message that you were to meet me…” Miss Cam paused. Of course. Jay had passed on the message with a few additions. Hopefully, the PPC agent
hadn't hit her head too hard when passing out. “Nevermind. As for Thranduil, he was most likely infected by Un-Canoness. That's why I asked you to pick up the Neutralisers from the PPC.”

“Un-Canoness is becoming more frequent,” Elrond observed. “The Halls of OFUM are becoming crowded. What are we to do about the Pail Riders?”

Miss Cam shrugged. “I let them play water polo in the halls with mops. They're great cleaners.”

They were. Of course, they also had a horrible identity crisis as no one had any idea what they were meant to be. Pale Riders? But neither the Riders of Rohan nor the Black Riders could be said to be pale or very pail-y, either. It was a bit of a mystery, much in the same vein as 'why do the toast always land butterside down?' and 'why do Sues always land feet down when all the forces of evil *and* good in Middle-earth would try to make them fall head down first?'

Some things probably had no answers.

“What did you do with middleearth?” Elrond asked, carefully stepping over a fainted chick (who had seen him and promptly gone down for the count).

“Fire ant colony. Lucky for us it had no capital letter so it was small enough to fit onto a bed.”

“Too bad it spawned on top of Alicia and Vilya.”

“Eh. They say the Urple will be passed out of their systems in a century or so. Meanwhile, Ragna the Urple is more than happy to keep them company.”

“I'm sure,” Elrond said dryly. “middleearth the Urple world. What is Middle-earth coming to?”

“Fangirl invasion,” Miss Cam said with a sigh. “Ah, here we are…”

“Little White Chapter of Love?” The Elf Lord stared at the blinking sign with just a hint of amusement.

“I think I hear fangirlish screaming,” Miss Cam remarked, stepping in.

Indeed she did. The forces of good on Earth apparently didn't want fangirls to succeed more than the forces of good in Arda did. Inside the Little White Chapter of Love stood three fangirls, one confused Elf and one very confused Elvis-dressed man watching the three fangirls fight.

“Gooooooood evening, students,” Miss Cam said happily. All three froze. “Imagine finding you here.”

“King Thranduil!” Elrond exclaimed, fixing the students with a hard glare. “Are you Canon?”

The King lifted his head. “Roses are red, violets are blue, watch that Sue woo, she's quite the ho…”

“Oh my,” Miss Cam muttered. “Bad rhymes and incoherency. Nowhere near Canon. Poor Thranduil.”

“Thranduil?” Jess asked. “Isn't he…?”

“Legolas is safe and sound back at OFUM, you little Elf-snatchers. Can't even tell father from son. Tsk.” Miss Cam shook her head and picked up the palantír. “All teams, we have the doomed students. I repeat… Um, Gimli? Why do I spy Lina looking at white dresses in the background?”

“Um… Research?” Gimli's voice suggested.
“Riiight. Just get over here, will you all? I have a crossover class to take to HFA tomorrow and I'd like to get some sleep first so that I'm not cranky.”

Jess opened her mouth, but wisely closed it again.

“Now…” Miss Cam said, and somehow managed to make the very word a threat. The Elvis-dressed man had managed to tip-toe to the exit and tried to run. Unfortunately, he managed to run straight into Gimli, who was walking in (Lina in close pursuit). There was a loud thump, much like the sound of someone running into a wall.

"Ooops," Gimli said merrily. Lina gave him an admiring glance.

“Um, Miss Cam?” the palantír said. It was Katharine, in the background Legalous seemed to enjoy some one-armed bandits.

“What?”

“The Valor are here.”

“Again?” Miss Cam sighed. “Get them home, will you?”

“They don't want to. See, they read a few of those 'Earth girl falls into Middle-earth' fanfics…”

“And…?”

“Well, the Valor figured that if something Earth-y was taken to Middle-earth, they should take something Middle-earthy to Earth and they fell into a high school. After they had accidentally burnt it down because they found a fanfic writer that had dared write her Sue as a daughter of the Valar – and yes, I have presented her with the legal papers and forcefully enrolled her – they took her to Vegas to see who would win the right to deal with her.”

Miss Cam shook her head. “Great. I have a Un-Canon Elf King, two lovebirds and a bunch of Godlike Mini-Balrogs running around in Las Vegas placing bets. Any traumas?”

“Well, the student seems a bit…”

“Not the student. My poor darling minis. I haven't finished their anger-management class yet. They're not trained to deal with the great rage of Canon-soiling fanfics on their own.”

“I think they're fine. They don't really want to leave, Miss Cam. They want their own Vegas show.”

Elrond had in the meantime managed to back the three students into a corner just by staring, and all three let out a bit of a squeal.

“Oh, shut up,” Miss Cam said, patting poor Thranduil's hand. “I'm trying to think here. Wait a minute…”

She turned to Elrond, a light bulb literally lighting up above her head (someone must have turned the lights on). “My Lord, I have a very, very, very cunning plan.”

“More cunning than Saruman's 'Cunning Be as Cunning Does – Turning to Evil the Proper Way' textbook?”

“Almost.”

Elrond smiled. “Do tell, Miss Cam…”
Soon, night fell over Las Vegas and Earth was once more only inhabited by Earth-beings, but weirdly enough, the city seemed short a casino. The Show Boat seemed to just have vanished into thin air – or more accurately, a plothole.

And Miss Cam enjoyed a good night's sleep while the rest of the staff went to the Valor's 'The Fire Demon Cometh'. It was a smashing success, Thranduil enjoying it most of all (he'd returned to Canon with threats of locking the students in his dungeons until moss grew on them. Miss Cam had assured him good things came to those who waited).

And with three students falling into middleearth and having to run from the amorous Elvis-dressed Ragna the Urple and Thurendil, Thrandil, Thandruil, Threnadil, Tharanduil, Tharanduil, Tranduil, Traduil, Thanduil, Thiranduil, Thrananduil, Thuranduil, Thraundil, Thundril and Thranduin (in short, all the Thranduil mini-Balrogs), with the entire Valor-choir performing 'Wind Beneath My Wings' and 'Light My Fire' to accompany, how could it not be?
The sun hurt.

Kat squinted at it through her swollen eyelids and tried to remember if the sun was supposed to hurt or not. Probably not. Then again, opening your eyes wasn't really supposed to hurt either, unless you had happened to run into Éowyn's arm.

It had been an accident, really, in the same way that Kat had 'accidentally' crossed the fence into the staff section of the garden while the minis were busy cheering Boromir on as he was kicking student ass in fencing (Tadan was getting a lesson as Kat had passed by, and it had been quite the impacting one from the sounds of it). Then she had 'accidentally' waited by the pond where Faramir liked to take some early morning dips and 'accidentally' tried to catch a glimpse of the extremely gorgeous, well-built, handsome, charming (etc) Man and then Éowyn had 'accidentally' spotted her.

The accidents had become rather nasty after that.

“Gooooooood morning, students,” Miss Cam declared cheerfully. Somebody had managed to sleep well, it sounded like. Kat groaned. Why had she even signed up for this crossover thing? Oh, right. She had written a doodle about how alike Frodo and Harry Potter were and Sam had somehow found it (perhaps throwing it out the window and into the garden hadn't been the wisest of moves) and had reported her.

“Today we are going to HFA – the Hogwarts Fanfiction Academy to learn about the pitfalls of crossovers. And I do mean pitfalls. I believe my colleague Meir Brin has arranged for a few on the campus to properly illustrate this lecture. And for fun, those of you who do not fall into pitfalls will get a chance to get Sorted. Just in case you ever horribly defile the Harry Potter universe and need a good dose of *education*.”

A few students groaned. Amber and Aranel snickered. The rest looked too tired to attempt any reaction at all – it wasn't even dawn. It wasn't even near dawn and time to duck the first fireballs of the morning (one could wonder if Morgoth and Sauron actually ever slept).

Elrond, Gandalf and Miss Cam all looked mighty cheerful which was a bad, bad sign. Elrond had even taken time to dress in his best robes and Gandalf looked so sparkly white he almost hurt to look directly at.

“Right then, students. I shall now open a plothole and you will all step through. And remember students, keep your arms by your sides unless you want them ripped off,” Miss Cam intoned in a voice that suggested she might not mind so much if that happened.

The students nodded. It was a fine collection of volunteers and not-so-volunteering, half of them had already begun to complain about no Legolas.
The plothole opened with an urple gasp. Kat had begun to suspect anything quite evil always came with urple. Further testing would have to be done, though, until she could present a thesis on evilness and colours.

“Ow!” Nodalec complained. “It bit me!”

“Surely a plothole wouldn’t bite any students? None of you have created plotholes, have you?” Miss Cam asked sweetly. No one replied.

Kat stepped through and suddenly found herself before the impressive castle, a large banner declaring ‘WELCOME OFUM STUDENTS’. It could only be Hogwarts.

“Miss Cam!” Sprite called out. “The plothole is eating me!”

Sprite, last student out, was indeed being eaten by the plothole. The opening was no longer large enough to step through, and was growing smaller by the second.

“Ooops. It must be transferring to another place… What do you see, dear?”

“Legolas and Aragorn making out!” Sprite called desperately, then both her and the plothole vanished.

“Well, well,” Miss Cam said, still as cheerful as ever. “I'll get Skuld at the PPC: SSU to fish her out. Might take a while, considering the number of Aragorn/Legolas fanfic universe there are. Oh well. One student lost, plenty to go.”

“Miss Cam!” Meir Brin called, and Kat looked at the Hogwarts entrance once more.

“Meir Brin.”

The rest was drowned out as a student next to Kat begun squealing. “Mini-Shelobs! Mini-Shelobs!”

“No, they're Mini-Aragogs,” Meir Brin explained. “This is Lockheart.”

“Pleassssure,” the spider said.

“Miss Cam, I'll go find Aragog” GreyLadyBast said, clutching the large, clunky package Kat suspected had meat in it. Courtship among giant spiders. Such a… Bloody thing. “I have a message from Her Ladyship Shelob.”

“Sure,” Miss Cam replied, walking up to join Meir Brin by the entrance. “Students, shut up and follow us. We're going to meet Albus Dumbledore.”

The students fell in line, some muttering but were quickly silenced by the dual displeasing look of Miss Cam and Meir Brin.

In two minutes, Kat begun to wonder if she was actually missing OFUM. Sure, mini-Balrogs hunted you. But the fiery demons were becoming sort of cuteish. Mini-Aragogs seemed to think it funny to make web-art on her back.

Poor C-chan had been grabbed and was now dangling like a yo-yo from the ceiling, the mini-Aragogs gathered around to admire it like it was art. Artsy types, the mini-Aragogs.

And Hogwarts was magical. OFUM was too, in a way, but stairwells didn't move (unless being blasted by fireballs) and portraits didn't glare at you disapprovingly.
At the entrance to the Great Hall stood Dumbledore, his robes colourful, but his hair was white and he looked wizardly, so predictably…

“Oh, look, Gandalf’s brother!” Alyssa declared and promptly fell down a pitfall opening at her feet.

“Wrong!” Gandalf said triumphantly. “Excellent spell, Headmaster Dumbledore.”

The Hogwarts wizard inclined his head.

“That's right, little ones,” Miss Cam said, looking like she had been served Belgium chocolate, Norwegian chips and a whole new season of her favourite show all at once. “Gandalf is not Dumbledore. Dumbledore is not Gandalf. They're both wizards and wear pointy hats, but that does not make them the same person or even related. Gandalf is a Maia. Dumbledore is not. Are we all clear?”

“Yes,” the rest of the class chorused.

“Nice chorusing,” Meir Brin observed.

“Pain does that to them,” Miss Cam replied. “Right students, take a seat. No punctuation rain reported for today, I hope?”

“Not that I am aware of. But you know how fickle some writers are with their punctuation…” Meir Brin sighed. "Only yesterday Professor Flitwick was hit by a nasty question mark-exclamation point combination. Madam Pomfrey has still not been able to revive him..."

“Maybe Lord Elrond could have a look later.”

Kat sat down carefully, wincing at the contact. Éowyn sure knew how to kick ass (literally). The Great Hall seemed cleaner than the assembly hall at OFUM, perhaps it was the lack of meteorites and mini-abysses that did it.

Harry Potter and Ron Weasley entered, to a few gasps. But no one dared make a tackling attempt, as the all-too familiar hissing of a mini-Balrog could be heard. Elessor was curled up on a table, his wings twitching as if he was dreaming. Millikov immediately went over to give him a fireproof cuddle and let him in on the mini-Balrog going-ons at OFUM.

“We support Elrond's Naturally Nine,” Harry said, gazing down at a note. “Um. We'd never attempt such a sacrilege as joining the Fellowship of the Ring.”

“But you're not Mary Sues,” Thalia said. “I mean, you could help with the destruction of the Ring and the cuteness factor of the Fellowship and…”

Kat sighed as another pitfall opened and Thalia fell screaming.


“And we support that!” Ron added eagerly. “We don't want to join your quest… Mission…. Thing. And you don't have candy in Middle-earth.”

“Thanks, boys,” Meir Brin said warmly. “Dobby?”

“Dobby is here,” a miserable voice said. A little – something – peeked out behind Elrond's robes.
“This is Dobby, one of the Elves of the Potter universe, as I'm sure you all know,” Miss Cam said pointedly.

“You know, he looks a bit like Gollum,” Jiffer observed a bit too loudly. “Maybe Gollum met a lovely Elf in Middle-earth and the two had…”

Meir Brin shook her head sadly as Jiffer vanished into a pitfall. “How can they compare such a noble Lord as Elrond to the poor house-elves? Our Elves are nothing like LotR elves!”

“One kinship I'm glad not to have,” Elrond muttered, staring down at Dobby who had taken an interest in his robes and triumphantly pulled out a spare sock (stepping in drool was a common occurrence in OFUM, so carrying spare socks and shoes was actually a rather wise move). “Give me that, you…Um, Gandalf?”

“How can they compare such a noble Lord as Elrond to the poor house-elves? Our Elves are nothing like LotR elves!”

“Hmm? Oh yes. Headmaster Dumbledore, will you demonstrate some magic from your world for us?” Gandalf asked, as Elrond begun chasing Dobby. The house-elf showed no signs of willingness to give up his silky prize.

“I would be honoured, Master Gandalf.” The wizard – well, the other wizard of the non-Maiar kind – lifted a wand, spoke a few words that sounded like 'Gabba habba yak yak' to Kat or at least something Latin. She thought. Maybe.

The large baguette rose into the air, hovered for a few moments, then was promptly dropped onto the head of a HFA student who seemed to be trying to sneak up on Harry.

“Catrin Pritchard,” Meir Brin observed. “Nice aim, Headmaster.”

“But magic is magic, right?” Amber asked, brushing some ash off her head. “Riiiiii…” The rest vanished as she took a tumble into the pitfall, nearly dragging Kat with her.

“Magic is not magic. I have a staff. They have wands. They use owls, we use eagles. We have Rings, they got magical diaries,” Gandalf summed up neatly.

“The large baguette rose into the air, hovered for a few moments, then was promptly dropped onto the head of a HFA student who seemed to be trying to sneak up on Harry.

“Next up, we have this Unicorn…” Miss Cam started, then was cut short by the ooh-ing and aah-ing of the students.

“Oooh,” Kat said eagerly. The unicorn seemed to shine silvery, bowing its head and shaking it. The horn gleamed.

“Oooh,” Kat said again. “How come we never seen any of them in Middle-eeeeeeaaaaa…”

She fell. She could hear Miss Cam's snicker as the Great Hall vanished from view and she fell and fell until she hit something semi-soft.
“Ow!” a voice said. “Who's that?”

“Kat.”

The darkness became a bit less dark, allowing Kat to make out a few shapes in the blackness. All the pitfalled (pitfallen? Pitfell? Ugh, verb tenses) students seemed to be there, as well as something else soft.

Some moments later Aranel came falling down like a sack of potatoes, screaming that she hadn’t meant to suggest the One Ring had a necklace cousin in the Potterverse. Some time later it was Chiad, grumbling that one Dark Lord was another alike, who cared that Sauron was a Maia and couldn’t possibly have become Voldemort?

And finally, Nodalec fell with a whimper, muttering something about the Whomping Willow not being a suitable mate for Treebeard.

“Here we all are, then,” Jiffer muttered. “Anyone have any idea how long till they get us out?”

No one replied.

“Where are we anyway?” Kat finally asked. She shifted slightly. “It’s kinda soft...” “And wet,” Aranel observed. “Gooy-wet. Kinda like Witch-Wall drool.”

All the students pondered that, then screamed as with one voice. “FLUFFY!”

There was a grunt. There was a slow, menacing hiss.

“Um… umm… Fluffy likes music, right?” Nodalec asked. “Can anyone… Um… Sing?”

“Row, row, row your boat...” Thalia begun weakly. “Sleep, sleep, sleep you dog, gently and unkeen, merrily, merrily, merrily, you eat us not, please?”

Fluffy snorted.

“Okay, plan failed… What now?” Chiad asked.

“Run!”

There was one upside to it, though, Kat thought miserably. At least it was good training for Running-for-your-life by actually running for your life.

And that both OFUM and HFA did have in common.
h, the starry skies of Middle-earth, smirking down (and sometimes even pointing, for Eärendil found students being 'educated' just as amusing as the rest of Middle-earth) on the world as night fell over OFUM.

Jess was quite sure that having a class at night with Sauron and Morgoth was a bad, bad thing. Really, having anything with both Sauron and Morgoth was a bad, bad thing (except for your reflexes, they got good exercise), but perhaps they'd be so busy creating the biggest fireball they'd let the students off early.

The MUSM building was rather dark as the group of students made their way past the Entish Council (Toey had helped create the One Rind, and the Ents were trying to decide what to do with it in a Moot or Moat or whatever they called their gatherings), the screaming HFA students (visiting to study crossovers, sadly someone had not checked the lunar calendar, and with Remus Lupin there…) and of course, the plotters of the great 'Let's kidnap Silmarillion characters via the path of dreams'.

Jess gave them a sympathetic look. Sure, she'd have nightmares for the rest of her life about her punishment for abducting Thranduil to Las Vegas (how such a great plan failed, she had no idea) but she at least hadn't tried to get Celebrimbor and Beren away from Valinor Vacation Water World.

Those poor students. Celebrimbor had convinced Miss Dwimordene to give them all detention with him; helping him create a big sign of mithril saying 'SOD OFF! After several millennia with Morgoth and Sauron, YOU'D need a holiday too!' and put it on the new Silmarillion house of Ancient History and Saunas, where all those who cared about anything that happened before Legolas was born (which by default ruled out most of the students) could go to relax.

Mmmm, Legolas….

“What subject did we have today again?” Arya asked, tearing Jess away from her thoughts (if you could call inner drooling that).

“Gunning Down Canon, I think.”

“Cannon?”


“Isn't that what some of the OFUM students like Alicia and Miranda yaks on about all the time?” Starbrat asked.

“Oh yeah, Kat's mentioned it,” Jess replied. “Like rules you have to follow or something.”

They all sniggered as they passed the newly spawned Fellishop (best Fine Elven Liquorice Lollipop Indulgence this side of Rivendell) and headed into the dark halls of MUSM. Rules smules. Following rules never got you anywhere interesting (like into the Staff Section, the Holy Grail of OFUM), so how could it possibly help you write any kind of good fanfic?

Amen the mini-Balrog gave them a hostile glance as they passed, but most of the minis were busy helping the Archery class by demonstrating how hard it could actually be to hit a moving target with a bow (not to mention what happened if you did hit – the minis had interesting ways of returning the arrows), thankfully.
Sauron and Morgoth were already in the lecture hall, engaged in a silent staring match. Their armours were so polished it hurt to look at.

“Can't someone please take the polishing away from them?” Clidodna Bright complained in a low voice. “Whenever they walk in the gardens, the glare off those armours is so bad I can't sleep.”

“Shh,” Endomiel Mornië said. “Their Evilnesses are speaking.”

“Good eeeeeeevening, students,” Morgoth said in a deep voice.

“Aye, good eeeeeeveeeeeevening,” Sauron said in a deeper voice. “Welcome to Gunning Down Canon, our guide to help *you*…”

He looked straight at Endomiel Mornië, who squealed in delight.

“… have as much fun writing as you possibly can,” Morgoth finished. “Now, we live in Arda as you all are surely not aware of by the looks of you…”

“Of course, who cares if you call it by its correct name Arda? Everyone knows that what really matters is Middle-earth,” Sauron added, sending Morgoth an acidic look.

“You'd think so, wouldn't you, Maia-Misfit? It was all you could ever handle!”

“Bite me, Valar-Wannabe.”

Just as Jess thought for sure the two Dark Lords would launch into another War of Insults and Minor Meteors, Miss Cam peeked in.

“All well, my Dark Lords? You do remember the truce you signed before you were given shared Headmaster-duties of MUSM, yes? The one with 'no meteors in class or you'd both have to eat Gandalf's cooking for a week’?”

The two Dark Lords looked at each other, then seemed to arrive at the conclusion that some things not even evil could digest. And so they smiled.

It was the single most terrifying thing Jess had ever seen.

“I'm blind!” Autumn wailed.

“I'm deaf!” Melyn wailed, as Autumn wailed very loudly in her ear. Jess tried to force her eyes to come online again (they'd just shut down in shock), managing to bump into JadedDreamer before eyesight was restored.

“Right then, snivelling toady excuses for human beings and other riff-raff,” Sauron said. “For your first assignment in this class, we want a story.”

“Yes. A story. Not just any story. We want a new species. Forget Elves and humans and all things Canon, we want Unicorns. Or Pegasuses. Or My Little Ponies. If the spirit so moves you, you can even invent a new one. Giant winged platypuses, perhaps.”

“And of course, they can't come from Rivendell or Lothlórien, no. They are from PaleWood, Silverforest or MoonElfistan. Or if of the evil sort, perhaps the wonderful New Mordor.”

“Or Morgothville,” Morgoth added. Sauron sent him a venomous glance.

Aranel raised a hand hesitantly. “Um, my Lords, these are not actual places…”
"Who cares!" Morgoth exclaimed. "And of course, we expect the main characters to have silly, silly names like Angelette PaleSilverHair and other names that have no connection to any Middle-earth language at all."

"While at it, mess with the languages. Alas, we speak formally in Arda, but you can, like, totally forget that, yeah?"

"Like, whatever. Who cares about languages? It's not like this world was created just for the languages."

"Not at all," Sauron went on. "And feel free to make Middle-earth suddenly have a high school all the Lust Objects went to despite being born millennium apart. Details, smetails."

"Of course, the fact that Aragorn the Upstart-Rugged-Manliness-King, would most likely have private tutorial by that Half-Elf 'Lord'..." Morgoth sniggered as he did the air quotes with his fingers. "...could make your Rivendell High story somewhat unlikely, but only if you care."

"Don't forget to add a plot. The One Ring is destroyed, but for instance... We all know that those Elemental Crystals are far more dangerous. After all, they were created by the Ancients. Forget the Valar, invent new ancient spirits who naturally mated and had the most beautiful baby daughter (or son, if you're so inclined) EVER."

"So get writing, you fungus-growing drools. Class dismissed."

The students begun to scramble, eager to get away and get to the really important things – hunting the Lust Objects.

"Oh, just one thing..." Morgoth said in a silky voice. "You will remember to brand your story correctly, aye?"

"What?" Nicole StrikeBack asked (the half-elf, half-hobbit, lover of Mushroom-Wine).

"Weeeeeell..." Sauron smirked. "With your story about wonderful Melody SingsALot, daughter of RandomInventedGodandGoddess, and her horned Pegasus-Pony from FluffyCloudLand on a mission to get to the Cup of Eternal Manicures – you know what you have created?"

The students looked at each other.

"Certainly not a Lord of the Rings fanfic," Morgoth said forcefully. "After all, it has nothing to do with Arda with all new places, languages, species, creators and populated with the likes of Angelette PaleSilverHair and Melody SingsALot. Thus ends the lesson."

"But you said 'no rules'!" Jess protested.

"But of course. There are no rules when writing an original story."

"Except grammar and spelling," Sauron added. "Unless Toey is in the story, of course."

"Only an idiot like you would create a device to inflict bad spelling on the world..." Morgoth said with contempt in his voice.

"Whaaaaaat? It's evil!"

"But it has a mind of its own, you festering boil on the behind of Arda!"

"Evil is evil, you walking vomit!"
Morgoth hissed. “There cannot be even a fragment of intellectuality or perspicacity to be found within the gaping void which should contain your brain! You're like pond scum! You have a minion smarter than you! You're a Dark Lord, you're supposed to know you should never have anyone working for you with a brain of even half a pea. After all, all *my* minions were as clueless as a dwarf in a tree.”

“Oh, that's it, you spineless jellyfish…”

“Let's get going,” Tora suggested, jumping up with the energy of someone very caffeine-addicted (no wonder, she was a Coffee Vampire).

“Let's,” Jess agreed.

The last thing they heard as they walked out was the telltale sound of puffed chests and macho hissing.

It was going to be a bright, meteor-filled night.
Thanks to Suzene, Leonora, Tabby, Aezy, Shada and Meg (the Turin letter) for writing a letter each. Also thanks to all entries I didn't use – I appreciate the time and effort.

*****

To: The Embarrassment of Evil Everywhere

Dear Sauron,

May you drown in your own drool, you groinless maggot-Maia.

Morgoth
Darkest Dark Lord
He Who Arises in Might (And Sex-Appeal)

*****

To: Prince Faramir of Ithilien, Palace in Éowyn's Room

Dear Faramir,

My condolences upon the release of movie two.

Sincerely,

Your brother,
Boromir of Gondor
Son of Denethor
One of the Nine Companions
Noble Man and General Kick-Ass Swordsman

P.S Thank YOU. Ah, sweet freedom at last, I am dead and forgotten and have a more handsome younger brother!

*****

To: Boromir, son of Denethor

Dear Boromir,

I am slightly troubled by what I see in my Mirror. It appears you may not be forgotten at all and that the grasp of fangirls reach even beyond death. Mandos is most upset. He has brought forth a suggestion to Miss Cam of a seminar called 'Grateful Dead: Dying To Serve the Plot' to explain once more why some are just Destined to Die. You would be a natural co-host, and I hear Gandalf is also interested. After all, dying was the only way he could get a new costume, poor Maia.

Immortal Greetings,
To: Peter Jackson, New Zealand, A Different Reality

Dear Mr. Jackson,

Find enclosed a bottle of the best Elven wine Mirkwood has to offer to congratulate you on your success with the Lord of the Rings movies. I can see (and hear) the results of your efforts every day. Why, just five minutes ago Newmoon was serenading me when I was taking a morning climb through the trees. I am assured by Miss Cam the student took no permanent damage from the branch the Ent dropped at her or the ensuing battle for the branch I'd leaned against between Linteloteiel, Morning Wind, Annaliunwen Greenflower, Nevbelethiel and Elnimvil Nenelien Fëanarel.

However, I feel as a vital part of the story you have chosen to bring to the screen, I may make a suggestion about my character. Originally, I thought perhaps a slight twist making me a Ringwraith (the unbelievably ugly one) would have been a worthy addition to your story, but Miss Cam brought to my attention the fact that this would only bring about tons of fanfic where The Power of a Sue's Love overcome the power of the One Ring. Thus, I thought of a much better plan. Why not have my part replaced with that of Lord Morgoth? Surely the twist of a former Dark Lord brought to Middle-earth through the Valar to atone for evil sins by bringing down another Dark Lord has great 'Oscar' potential? Lord Morgoth has generously offered his services, stating that he does not mind pretending to be good if he is part of what brings that down 'that demented rock-stupid walking fashion disaster that is Sauron' (apparently, eyeballs are out this season).

Perhaps you would like to have a drink of wine and think about it, Mr. Jackson.

Sincerely,

Legolas of Mirkwood  
Son of Thranduil  
One of the Nine Companions  
Humble, humble Elf (Not at all important except to Sues)

*****

To: The Foaming Toad in Evil's Gene-Pool

Dear Morgoth,

May you choke on your giant Adam's apple, you senile arachnophobic brain-vacant Vala.

Sauron  
Darkest Dark Lord  
Eyeball Extraordinaire

*****

To: King Thranduil, N. Greenwood
Your Kind and Most Adored Majesty,

Concerning the unfortunate mess left before the gates of your fortress: I swear, my lord, that no offence was intended! The remains of that particular Mary Sue were not meant as an affront, but an offering, much as a cat will offer its prey it has spent many hours in stalking to its owner (admittedly, this Sue had already been winged by the EIB, but I insist that the comparison holds). The creature had besmirched your good name and I thought to better the world through her elimination. Not once did it cross my mind that Your Highness would venture outside in bare feet for the morning paper. I offer my deepest apologies for any discomfort or loss of dignity that my unconscionably short-sighted, actions have caused you, and humbly beg for your forgiveness.

May I please leave the dungeons now? Thorin Oakenshield left something mighty unpleasant down here during his stay.

Sincerely,

Suzene

*****

To: Suzene

No.

Friendly Greetings,

King Thranduil
Ruler of Mirkwood/Eryn Lasgalen
Capable of Long, Long Grudge-Keeping But Generally All-Around Good Guy
NOT Legolas

*****

To: Lina Holling, Assistant to Miss Cam

Lina, Lina, red-haired flame
My bricken heart you can maim
One word and you'll it own
A robe I have you already sown
Lady of the Nazgûl all will fear
And washing is easy, all black you wear

The Witch-Wall
Lord of the Nazgûl
BadAss
Poet and Sensitive Soul Looking for Love

P.S The short skirts you wear make me really horny

*****

To: Lord of the Earth, Evilest of All Evils, Sexiest of All Eyeballs

Dear Lord Sauron,
Must report that Morgoth again has more lusters than you, Greatest and Blackest. Orders?

Nazgûl Four

*****

To: Idiot Minions, Useless Toads, Rotting Corpses, etc.

First of all you could find out how to get the fish stench out of my armor, you useless weakling-wraiths.

I should have enslaved nine Queens.

Sauron
Darkest Dark Lord
Eyeball Extraordinaire

*****

To: His Majesty King Thranduil of Eryn Lasgalen (formerly Mirkwood)

Your Majesty,

In the prologue to the movie, just after Sauron does that glowy thing and breaks apart, there are a few shots of an unhelmeted elf with unmistakeably blond hair. I maintain that this was in fact your royal self, but my sister insists that it's supposed to be Glorfindel. If you're inclined to answer, I was hoping you could clear the matter up for us. Which of you is it?

Sincerely,

Leonora

*****

To: Lenora

Yes.

Friendly Greetings,

King Thranduil
Ruler of Mirkwood/Eryn Lasgalen
Capable of Long, Long Grudge-Keeping But Generally All-Around Good Guy
NOT Legolas

*****

To: Gandalf the White, aka Mithrandir, resident Wizard/Maia/Istari

Dear Gandalf,

I was wondering if you have any more of that wonderful invisi-tea. You might not be the best cook, but that stuff is the best tea ever. Would you mind either letting me have some or sending me the recipe?

Sincerely,
Tabby
Self-proclaimed spokesperson for the Sisterhood of Evil

*****

To: Gandalf the White

Would again like to remind you not to give anything that has spent time with you in the kitchen to students. The nurses have enough to do, poor things, without having to deal with yet another case of 'Gandalfgitis'.

I am pleased to report that student Tabby will recover in time from her delusions and I'm assured that her new hooves will stop growing and her toes will re-emerge. Somehow.

Miss Cam
Course Coordinator

*****

To: Fëanor, cool evil Elven genius.

How are things? Got anymore really pretty, really valuable jewels, which will spark an Age-long war, to lose yet? If so, could you please send one to me C/o: Rev Arielle, Room 302, OFUM, 'cause it would be really, really cool to have everyone fighting over something I own!

Thankies

Aezy

*****

To: Fëanor

Could you maybe next time not make it Morgoth's pearl earring? Thanks.

Aezy

*****

To: Santa

Dear Fat, Jolly Man,

I am Lord Elrond of Rivendell. It has come to my attention you employ Elves in your daily work. I have never heard of 'Santa's Elves' – are they of Avari? Do they support Naturally Nine?

Lord Elrond
Lord of Rivendell
Keeper of one of the Three
Father of Only ONE Daughter

*****

To: the Uruk-Hai of OFUM

Due to past events at the school, may I request that you post a schedule of the Orkish laundering
days? I would be very grateful.

Your friendly, formerly traumatized student at OFUM,

Shada

*****

To: Shada

Laundry schedule very tricky. Depend how long Sauron and Morgoth fight over who get to dry-clean underwear first. Sometimes they not agree for months.

The Uruk-Hai
Army of Saruman the Many-Coloured
Evil Minions

*****

To: Morgoth, He Who Arises in Might, Dark Lord of Angband

Would it be permissible to ask for a slight reprieve from the curse you put on my family? Life has been rather depressing as of late, and I hope you will take this matter into consideration. I am after all a mere parasite beneath you, and lifting the curse would not be such a big deal.

Perhaps I should state some of the grievances which have occurred recently, so that you may have pity on me:

- I seem to be very unpopular everywhere I go. And it's not my fault, either: *maybe* I am prone to fits of rage, but it is very tiring to run away from every place that has a chance of becoming my home, at least for a short while.

- I am running out of new names to call myself. I am an imaginative person, and already I have come up with Turumbar, Neithan, Agwaren, Mormegil, and Gorthol, amongst others. But I don't have enough time to think up new names, what with the slaying of dragons and frightening orcs off and slaying my best friend by accident.

- I don't have any luck with women. I have tried, really tried, to find the right one for me! But instead, the wife of my friend fell in love with me, and when I tried to save her, she died. Then, when I thought that it couldn't get any worse, this mysterious woman I found in the woods - and eventually married - turned out to be my own sister!

- Glaurung was bent on pursuing me to the corners of Beleriand, and when I thought I had defeated him, his blood turned out to be poisonous.

- My sword is evil.

- I always find out things too late!

Surely my doom couldn’t be the top priority on your list? Maybe you could drop it off, just this once. I think I at least deserve one sunny day, or something.

Túrin the woeful

*****
To: Túrin/ Turumbar/Neithan/Agwaren/Mormegil/Gorthol (Have you considered CannotMakeUpMyMindren?)

Dream on, Cursed One. After watching Sauron trip over Balad-dur the mini-tower and Legolas deal with the Sue curse, your misery is my favourite past time.

Morgoth  
Darkest Dark Lord  
He Who Arises in Might (And Sex-Appeal)

*****

To: Headmaster

Preliminary report for OFUM year two, first semester.

At tempted stampedes: 215  
Successful stampedes: 1 and ¼  
One stampede was somewhat successful when Faramir Fangirls manage to corner Faramir, but realising too late it was actually an Éowyn ambush, it resulting in 24 of the injuries below.

Number of student injuries: 418  
Up from last year. Excellent progress.

Mini-Balrogs Spawnings: Countless
Number of mini-Balrogs increasing. Suggest plans for expansions and mini-abysses. Am slightly worried about what to do with the Uruk Hair and Minis Tirith. Haven't dared showing Elrond the 'elvin' or 'elfen' yet.

Number of 'unfortunate' incidents involving Gandalf's cooking: 4  
Down from last year, due to many warnings and slightly less stupid students (possibly).

Cases Tried for the Middle-earth Court For Canon Grievances: 57  
Guilty verdicts: 58  
One student managed two guilty verdicts for being silly enough to defend herself and in her final speech called Elrond 'Lord of Rinvindale'.

Morgoth/Sauron brawls: As many as the stars in the Universe (aka 'I've lost count')  
About the same as last year.

Staff

Students
Increased from last year. More variation in lust objects, though. Increasing calls for Silmarillion characters to teach some classes. Please advise how wise this would be.

Slight increase in repairs budget this year. Suggest hiring some more handypeople for staff and perhaps more Dwarves. Oh, and we need a new wall in the hall. Elrond drove a student through the last one.

Canon too unwell to send any greetings at present time.

Gandalf and the staff send their Yule greetings.
Sincerely,

Miss Cam
Course Coordinator
The spirit of HO-HO-HO had come to visit OFUM.

Of course, Middle-earth didn't celebrate Christmas as such, but since the students did, everyone else decided to as well. After all, why say no to an excuse to eat, drink and be merry? (Though not exactly *be* Merry, as one of the Nazgûl had understood it as. There was something very wrong with a Ringwraith trying to be a hobbit. Very wrong.)

The halls had been decorated, Gandalf had been kept out of the kitchens, the students had been fished out of the fall-traps and gifts had been bought. Students had been allowed to go shopping in Minas Tirith, which had unfortunately run out of both Elven wine and Mirkwood Snow globes very quickly.

Of course, all the students had wanted to give their Lust Object a gift, so the Enrolment Office had temporarily turned into a Christmas Package Handling Centre and wouldn't finish handling all packages before well into the next semester. Legolas's pile of gifts could fill a small country. Grainne had tried packing in herself for Legolas, but unfortunately she got thrown in with the gifts for Éomer (a growing pile, now that movie two had come).

Lina had heard the cries for help all the way to her room. Éomer had developed quite the imagination after having read every fanfic there was for last year at OFUM. After wanting to die for a few months, he'd come back with a vengeance (literally).

"Merry Yule, my beloved," Gimli said with a smile, easing down in the chair next to her. The Christmas party was being held in the great hall, but most of the staff was still in the staff section, mentally preparing themselves for a whole evening of students.

"Merry Christmas, my bearded hunk," she answered merrily. "Where is Legolas?"

"Refusing to come out of his room," Thranduil said, joining them. The Elf King of Mirkwood smiled grimly. "Having met his fans up close and personal, I understand him all too well. Alas for the looks of elves! We should have asked Eru to make us look hideous. It would have been worth it to avoid this fate."

Gimli nodded sagely. As much as he had issues with being the Dumb Comic Relief and Generally Ignored by most fanfic authors, he was quite willing to stay that way, Lina knew.

After all, the alternative was the fate of Aragorn, Legolas, Éomer and to a certain degree Faramir and Boromir (though the two tended to become Suddenly!Evil in many cases instead. Just because they considered taking the Ring, who was after all, quite the charmer.)

"At least your boy is not an evil, raping sexist bastard," Denethor said, walking up to Thranduil. The two were scheduled to teach 'Why a Father Is Not Always an Evil, Evil, Evil Bastard', and had been deeply mysterious about what they planned for said class.

"There, there," Miss Cam said comfortingly. The course co-ordinator slid out of the darkness with a few minis on her tail. "You could help matter by not dropping students on their heads, my Lord."

"Bah."

"Or Haldir, recently," Miss Cam added. "Poor Elf. Who would have known dying would make him
"Only goes to prove there is a fate worse than death," Elrond declared, striding into the room. Everyone fell silent.

Elrond was dressed as Santa Claus. Complete with beard and all. Behind him, Celebrían was dressed in what Lina guessed was meant to be the appropriate way for Mrs. Claus. Though the real Mrs. Claus might not be as big on silk. Not the real Santa either, come to think of it.

"Um, Lord Elrond..." Lina begun.

"Is the costume wrong?"

"No, no," she assured him. "It's very... Very Christmas-y. Oh yes."

Behind her, Thranduil started coughing violently, probably to hide a fit of laughter.

"'Scuse me, better get my son..." he managed through clenched teeth.

"Well then, shall we?" Miss Cam asked. "I believe the rest of the staff are already there."

Lina took Gimli's offered arm, and they followed Denethor, Elrond, Celebrían and Miss Cam out through the guarded staff section doors. The minis had decorated them with lembass (like lembas, only darker) and were buzzing about in a very excited manner. Berin and Tenuviel were sharing a lembass, gazing deeply into each other's fiery eyes.

"They tried to nick all the mistletoe," Miss Cam observed as they passed. "Unfortunately for them, Faramir and Éowyn already had. Better them than some fangirl try to corner Legolas with it, I say."

"Good evening," Túrin (he looked to be in Mormegil mood today, dressed all in black leather) declared, coming in from the garden (and probably the Silmarillion house). He was followed by Fingolfin and Turgon, both looking quite merry.

"Evening," Elrond replied. "Working in the black leather, I see."

"Of course, Lord Elrond. We did agree on the Black Leather Alliance of Men and Elves, after all."

Lina tried very, very hard to push that image out of her mind. Just because she loved her Dwarven jewel didn't mean she had lost all eyesight, after all. A good view was still a good view. And Elves *and* Men in black leather would be a good view.

"I managed to catch all the specimens we need for 'Ooops, I Did It Again: The Sue and Her Multi-Coloured Eyes.' Even a Super-Sue and a Supporting-Sue," Túrin went on, looking quite content with himself for once. He'd realised misery was much more fun if you could pass it on to the students.

"While on the subject of teaching..." Fingolfin begun.

"Yes, my Lord, there will be a Silmarillion class for students," Miss Cam said in a voice that suggested this wasn't the first time the topic had come up. "You got your 'Those Were the Days' class. However, Morgoth insists on being included."

"He can do a bit on Ancient Evil," Turgon suggested.

"Who are you calling ancient?" Sauron spat, sliding up in an evil manner (everyone who aspired to be anything in evil knew how to slide up. It was all about the image).
"Morgoth."

"Ah. Carry on, then."

The doors opened to the great hall (Soraman on the roof of Isenguard the mini-Tower was guarding them, naturally), and Lina squinted in.

It seemed quite the party.

A quick look around revealed a great Ent decorate in candlelights and glittering with all the Silmarils in the middle of the room. The Witch-Wall seemed occupied chatting to Mayfa (his luster), thankfully, and didn't notice Lina enter. BreadLegs (who was expecting again) and family were gathered by Gandalf's cookies (and thus safe among other uneatable things). Elrond's sons (dressed all in green, as Santa's elves should be, but still attracting a huge crowd of lusters) were easy to spot chatting to Pippin and Merry. That couldn't be good. The minds of mischief-makers meeting the minds of slightly older Immortal mischief-makers - oh dear.

Frodo was wearing the Ring openly today, even decorated with some ribbons. Sam was busy fending off Jiffer, who was trying to get to Frodo. She might not have tried so hard had she seen the pile of passed out hobbit students under the table. Try to stampede the Ringbearer and you soon realised why the One Ring was the One Ring.

"They seem to think it's just some pretty jewel," Sam observed as Jiffer crashed head-on into the suddenly appearing tower.

"And that they can resist it just by willpower," Frodo sniggered, taking another piece of pudding.

"Hah! None can resist me!" the Ring exclaimed. "I'm *dashing*! Ho-ho-ho!"


The hobbit stared for a moment, then seemed to recover. "That's an.... Interesting costume, my Lord Peredhil."

Not all of the students seemed to recover as well from the sight. Perantowen had dropped her Christmas pudding on Nevbelethiel, who tried to retaliate with her Sue powers. Sadly, for her and all other Sue enrolled students, their powers didn't work. It wouldn't do to have so many Canon characters turn uncanonical whenever a Sue walked by, after all. Wouldn't be time for much education.


"Right..." Lina managed. She really wished Elrond would sometimes consult with others before trying to understand the world of fanfic authors. Or perhaps not. Sometimes she suspected he did understand all too well, and enjoyed letting others think he didn't. After all, so many tried to defend themselves in his court with 'cultural differences'. He'd never let that defence get in the way of a good judgement.

Celebrían winked at her before joining her sons and scaring off some lusters by just staring at them (Lina noticed Dingaer scurry off hurriedly and nearly tripping over a hobbit. Sadly for her, the hobbit was a Sackville-Baggins). Haldir sought refuge there was well, looking pained. Behind him, the growing number of 'He's So Hot When He's Dead' crowd followed at a respected distance (Celandine had discovered what happened when you didn't, and it involved Galadriel, Celeborn and a piñata).
"I hear the Mini-Balrog Nolder choir and the OFUM Chanting Club will do some Christmas carols later," Sam said merrily, borrowing Sting for a moment to cut some cake. The sword was a-glow with blue, of course, as some Orcs stood just nearby and was trying to determine how to best hiss and run at the same time without getting out of breath (you couldn't not hiss, after all. If you were an Orc, you were an Orc. Orcs hissed).

"If they can tear themselves away from their presents," Sunsong (as a kitchen employee, her chief mission was to keep Istari out at all costs) muttered, putting down another tray of cake. The hobbits were on it within a heartbeat.

"How did the little darlings like the Christmas gift?" Miss Cam asked, eyeing the crowd. Keyza, who seemed to be ready to make a leap onto Éomer noticed the look and suddenly changed her mind mid-leap.

"Very well. A bacon fangirl seems to be their idea of heaven. But how am I ever going to get the bacon grease out of the kitchen?"

"Simple," Miss Dwimordene answered, joining them with a few of the other staff members. "Take some students worthy of detention and let them scrub. Let's see... Alyssa and Erin were caught spying in the sauna, not realising no Lust Objects go there... Moi tried to sneak into the blacksmith to impress Fëanor... Panasonic tried to woo Bombadil with equally bad poetry, a crime on its own... Elathien disturbed Faramir and Éowyn's moonlight stroll, although perhaps Éowyn punished that student enough on her own."

"I'd say," Thundera Tiger added, lifting up Eowen so the mini-Balrog could get some cake, too.

"She has a way with the students," Miss Cam smirked. "I'm thinking her and a certain Elf Lady to teach 'Why Married Men Stay Married'. Arwen could drop by as well. She's most upset no one respects the fact that Aragorn loves her and would not forget that by the twirl of golden hair from some random girl."

A sudden hush fell over the great hall.

Legolas had walked in. Thranduil was close behind, as was the army of Mirkwood spiders Thranduil had hired as bodyguards (he'd secured them promising them Mikwood the mini-Kingdom).

Nenelien squealed with joy, but tripped over Boromir's shield when she tried to make a dash for the Elf.

"Ops, did I put my shield out just as you passed? How clumsy of me," Boromir said merrily.

"You evil..." Nenelien begun, before suddenly finding herself being lifted up and dropped on her head.

"Don't call my son evil," Denethor said forcefully.


"But tripping her like that was evil!" Penelope protested.

"No. That's education," Denethor replied.

"But..."
"Will she ever do that again?"

"No..."

"See? She's learned not to do so again. Education." Denethor smiled and clinked his beer glass against Boromir's.

"Ah, such a *merry* Christmas," Miss Cam said happily.
The Many Names of Sues and Túrin and the Meaning of Baby

Chapter Notes

Author's Notes: Special thanks to Dwimordene, Meg and Aralanthiriel for suggestions of Sue-types (namely Possession-Sue, Sue-ella DeVille and Bratty-Sue). This is but a choice selection, of course.

The alarm bell went off, causing Kat to promptly crush it with her Hail, Idiot-proof Silmarillion Training for Oblivious Reading-challenged Yawners history book (she couldn't believe they had two Silmarillion based classes! Two! Woe was her). Damn that alarm bell. She didn't want to get up.

The New Year had started very, very badly. Her carefully chosen Christmas present to Faramir had come returned - by Êowyn herself.

Kat had read the books and knew the shield maiden of Rohan had in fact brought down the Witch-King, but that had been the books. Everything seemed so simple in books. Kill the Lord of the Nazgûl, resist the Ring, have breakfast with Lord Elrond. So simple to write.

One thing was for sure. The shield maiden of Rohan (bah. 'Maiden') did know many creative uses of a shield.

Kat glanced over at the sleeping form of Jess, who was whimpering in her sleep. Apparently, Morgoth had taken them on a trip through Angmar for 'It's Not Evil Without Horns', the MUSM clichés of evil class. Jess refused to talk about it. Melyn has just muttered something about how Elves really became Orcs and looked like she wanted to hug the nearest Orc.

At least Jess had it worse, that was some small comfort. It wouldn't last long.

Because she was about to have a class with Lord Elrond and some obscure person from Silmarillion (the book with no Faramir, thus hardly worth reading) on Mary Sues. She had heard the rumours about Lord Elrond (and she had promptly learned to always call him Lord Elrond. She had been foolish to call him Elrie in front of his sons, but had escaped when another student luckily had remarked nearby that she didn't get why Elrond didn't remarry after his wife died).

"No, not the HORNS!" Jess muttered, and turned in her sleep. Kat stuck her tongue out at her sister and got up. Why the class had to be before dawn was beyond her.

She trotted into the hallway, noticing that Violet was trying to drag a sleeping Sealy (who hated mornings, as one would expect of a Sauron fangirl) with her. Not all students had as much luck getting up, it would seem.

"Hey, Shauna."

"Morning, Kat," Shauna said sadly. "Did you hear it's Túrin and not Beleg teaching this class?"

"Um, sort of. Who's Túrin again?"

"I am," the shadows declared and a dark shape stepped out. "I am Túrin Turambar, Neithan, Agarwaen, Mormegil, and Gorthol. You will address me by all my names until we've become
"really* acquainted in which case you can call me Túrin. Or Turambar. Or Neithan. Or Agarwaen. Or Mormegil. Or Gorthol."

"Eep," Chira said in a low voice.

"Why do many names?" Nenelien asked, then noticed his look and hurriedly added "my Lord Turiturmbaneithawrmoegilgort."

Túrin ManyMany-Names as Kat mentally called him sighed deeply. "I told the Headmaster we should have force-fed them the entire history of Arda before they were accepted and make them recite it."

"Come now," Elrond said, also stepping out of the shadows. "How would we fail them at tests then?"

"Eep," Spirit Star said weakly.

"I think we have them all here," Elrond went on. He took in the half-sleeping students and smiled. That was never a good sign. "This will be a practical class. Mostly."

Some sighed happily (word of Elrond's infamously long booklists had spread. Jean, Head of Archives, had made sure of it. She had even shown copies to disbelieving students to bring on that true sense of horror), others looked even more worried. They knew practical spelled p-a-i-n.

"This class is Ooops, I Did It Again: The Sue and Her Multi-Coloured Eyes,'" Túrin said. His voice echoed down the hallways, causing several MUSM students to peek out and quickly disappear again (at MUSM you apparently quickly learned to trust nothing dressed in black, judging from Jess's incoherent ramblings about 'endless pain in the blackness'). "You'll note that 'Ooops', won't you little ones?"

Kat exchanged a look with Roassary and felt her inner bile rising.

"This way," Elrond said happily.

The hallways were empty, only a few mini-Balrogs about, trying to train the Varigs to be proper mini-Wargs for the Orks. A real Warg was watching lazily, eyeing the student as they passed as if it was sizing up a kebab.

"Eep," Tynsin muttered.

The hallway turned sharply, and suddenly they found themselves in front of a barred door.

"Beyond here is Arrda," Elrond said. He sounded endlessly amused and sad at the same time. "Because it was fangirl created, it is ideal for observing Sues in their true element. My excellent colleague here has caught a few specimens of Sue and put them here. You will all walk through here and write a three thousand page essay classifying every Sue you encounter beyond this door."

"Properly named and referenced," Túrin added. "You do all have the textbook, don't you?"

"But! But! But the curriculum was unreadable!" Aria protested.

"Nonsense. It was in Westron. No Sues ever seem to have trouble understanding that, despite being from your world." Túrin rubbed his hands together. "Now. Miss Mordidiel and Miss Belphegor, you go first."
The two exchanged a dark look before opening the door. A sudden bright light barged into the room, causing all the students to yelp in pain.

"Oh dear, was that Super-Sue trying to outshine Gandalf?" Elrond commented. "Dear me, how did she get there?"

"She runs faster than Shadowfax."

"Does she now?" Elrond shook his head. "The Super-Sue seems to acquire new skills every time I encounter her. Last time she had more ss than Gollum."

"Legolassssssssssssssssssss?" spoke the Super-Sue. "Sssssssshall I ssssssssssssssssssing?"

"Begone, unCanon," Túrin said lazily. The Super-Sue exploded in a flash of urple before this confusing person that surely wasn't in the movie and thus shouldn't exist and - "Come on, students."

'Eep,' Kat though, but hesitantly she followed the others in through the door. She found herself on the plains of Rohan, Mirkwood a stone-throw away and Rivendell just beyond the hill.

"There's Legolas!" a student exclaimed. Half the students froze in a look of unimaginable bliss and silliness at the sight of the familiar Elf.

"Alas, no," Elrond said darkly. "It's a Possession-Sue. She possesses Canon characters and turns us into her mentally."

"Lord Elrond!" Possession-Sue Legolas squealed. "Aragorn was so mean to me this morning. I want to leave the Fellowship."

"Begone, unCanon," Elrond muttered, then suddenly twisted as his face slacked. "Oh, Legolas, you are so handsome and so strong and so *poetic*!"

"Oh no." Kat muttered. Elrond turned to look at her.

"That is a stunning shirt, Miss Kat. With little Legolas-in-hearts. Do you heart Legolas too?"

'Jess!' Kat fumed quietly, realising she had put on one of Jess's shirts and what was worse, Elrond was Possessed and looking like he wanted to nibble all over her. On Legolas.

"Begone, unCanon," Túrin declared, holding up his sword. It glittered darkly, and somehow Kat could almost feel the evilness radiating from it. It seemed to hiss. She could almost hear it, jabbering on about something like 'that's-your-sister-you-married-you-dimwit'? No. Couldn't be.

"Don't want to," Elrond Possession-Sue muttered sulkily.

"Let me quote the whole family of Finrod and Fingolfin," Túrin said in a pleasant voice. "The Elven lineage of..."

"Oh, *all right*," the Elrond Sue said and then the Elven Lord staggered as the Possession Sue left his body. "Not again. I hate that Sue. Why does she always possess Elves?"

"Prettier," Túrin smirked. He gazed at the horizon. "I think Sigriedette- Sue is coming."

The Unicorn came galloping over the hill, turned into a Pegasus, into a wolf, into an owl and finally, became a bluebird that landed in the Sue's hair as she strode dramatically forwards, almost tripping on a branch.
"Animal companion, you will note. This is also a Eurosong-Sue because..."

The Sue opened her mouth. "The hiiiiiiiiiills are alive with the sound of Sue-ing..."

"Ow," Chiad complained. "That's horrid."

"Aye." Túrin shook his head. "By Manwe's power, all who attempt to sing modern songs in Arda shall be cursed to sound like a zero-points entry in the Eurosong competition."

"That's horrible! Faramir baby deserves to..." Kat protested, trying to keep the redness of her ears. She had often dreamed of serenading Faramir with 'Hit Me Baby One More Time'.

"Do you know what the word 'baby' means in Westron?" Elrond said evenly.

"Um."

"Go look it up, and then you will understand. It is not a word you should use around Faramir unless you desire Éowyn to nail you to a Warg. Ah, here comes our next Sue already."

Thunderclouds appeared. The Earth darkened. Wolves howled. A figure dressed all in black appeared, squinting at them.

"I'm evil," she declared. "I will kill you all now."

"Ah, Sue-ella DeVille," Túrin muttered in what almost sounded like an annoyed voice. "Thinks redeeming herself from evil is so easy she can do it in one day."

She saw the unPossessed Legolas and suddenly the wolves turned into bluebirds. "Legsy-wegsy my love! For you I banish Sauron my father and turn good!"

Legolas threw one look at her and bolted wisely.

"LEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEGS!" she squealed and ran after him, leaving the students with ringing ears. "Greenleafy-chibi, my loveeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!"

Elrond took off his Naturally Nine earmuffs and shook his head sadly. "How an Eyeball managed to foster that, I would rather not know."

"Maybe you should put the earmuffs back on," Túrin suggested. "I see Victim-Sue and Supporting-Sue slouching this way. And this is an Arwen-Was-Treated-Better-Than-Me-Wah-Wah-Victim-Sue."

Elrond looked up sharply. "No, not her..."

"I'm just as pretty as Arwen!" wailed the Victim-Sue. The Supporting-Sue patted her in a supporting manner. "Wah! My father has remarried and my step-mother doesn't like me! Arwen yanks my braids! My father only calls me dove and not beautiful dove like Arwen! Orcs once kidnapped me! I'm going to almost-die five hundred times! Supporting-Sue, my best friend, sing for me in my many funerals even though I'm not dead."

"I. Think. That. Is. Enough," Elrond said through clenched teeth. He motioned for the students to back out through the door again. "We shall continue our studies of the Sues next week, with a special look at Bratty-Sue..."

He eyed all the students with that special Elrond-stare only Elros could match.
"... and no students are allowed to bring earmuffs."

"That was fun," Mother Nature groaned as the students made their way back. "I still have spit from Eurosong-Sue all over me."

"But we got to see Legolas!" Yar said happily and all the Legolas fangirls sighed.

Kat rolled her eyes, hurrying away not to slip in all the drool. Granted, the Elf was handsome and in touch with nature and green did look very good on him.

No, no, no. That was Jess-thinking. Had to be crawling into her blood through the little Legolas hearts. She pulled off her shirt the moment she came back to her room, eyeing Jess who still slept.

"Drat."

Glancing at her English-Westron dictionary desk (it served very well as a desk, given its size), she decided to find out what exactly baby did mean in Westron. Of course, opening the damn book took half an hour and a whole curse vocabulary. Maybe there was another way to find out.

When Jess finally woke up and trotted out for breakfast some time later, Kat was sound asleep. But she did wake up when Jess came crawling back, eyes widened in shock.

"Sauron. Morgoth. EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP!" Jess muttered and fell over, 'Morgoth & Sauron = baby' still written on her back.

Apparently, it was one of *those* words.
Why the Valar Are Not 'Toys and Great Powers 'R Us' and Other Lessons

Jess was still scowling as she marched out of the student halls, careful not to disturb Morogoth and Sauron, who were arguing about who had the biggest wings. Damn that Kat!

It was war. After Kat’s little ‘prank’, Jess had taken revenge by locking Kat in with Foromir (who was a surprisingly poetic mini – only problem was he liked his poems in blood and ash and written on students). Just as Jess was sure she had won, she had found out that her breakfast bread was alive and did not find nearly being eaten very amusing. Ever since that, that damn toe ring of Sauron had been stalking her. That might not have been so bad, had not Dwimordene seen her attempt at Ye Olde Englishe Love Poeme (Toey-style) to Legolas and decided it was time for a GrammarBootcamp soon. Like grammar and spelling was really that important. Hah! (She was careful not to voice such opinions to Miss Dwimordene and other staff members though. She had no wish to have to eat commas).

To top it all off, just as she thought she had managed to corner Legolas and sneak into his strangely unguarded room, all her dreams to come true at last, it turned out to be the wrong Legolas’s room. How the heck was she to know there were two Legolases, one from that Silmarillllien or whatever? Those things should be public knowledge!

One thing she was rather pleased with herself about, though. She had picked up Kat’s Lord of the Rings and found out all she could about Faramir and his family. Then she had laid in place the sneakiest of sneaky plan. Even the thought alone was enough to lift her spirits.

Right about now, Kat would be waking up….

“Hey Jess,” Dynaevel Kaluial greeted her absentmindedly. Jess followed her gaze to see Faramir, Frodo, Isildur, Morgoth and Sauron having some sort of argument.

“What’s going on?”

“Well, Sauron claimed that since none can resist the One Ring, it means they can’t resist him and so he has more lusters than Morgoth,” Sandra explained.

“Yeah, and then Faramir claimed he could, and Sauron claimed that it wasn’t so in the movie and that everyone here cared only about that and because of that Morgoth shouldn’t even be a Dark Lord,” Anshu added.

“I am the Dark Lord!” Sauron exclaimed, holding out his giant maze. Morgoth only sniggered.

“None can resist the One Ring!”

“Shut up,” Frodo said, holding out a thick ball of cotton in slightly threatening, but mostly cute, manner.

“I get no love,” the Ring complained bitterly (but in a very low voice). “I can give the power to rule Middle-earth and how am I repaid? Constant abuse and not one friendly ‘how are you doing, One Ring?’ ‘Want to be polished today, One Ring?’ ‘Can you please help me build a very large tower, One Ring?’ ‘Thank you for hurting me so that I can get comfort from my best friend, One Ring?’ Nothing. Bah.”
“Perhaps you would get more love if you did not slip off fingers at inopportune moments,” Isildur suggested, just a touch of venom in his voice.

“I was merely moving so that your finger could get properly washed by the river, too,” the Ring said innocently. “I mean, what is it about you Men? Do you attract dirt? Is that what manly ruggedness is? A dirt-attraction gene?”

Sauron and Morgoth both sniggered, then, realising the other was sniggering too, stopped to stare at each other.

From the staff section, Jess could distantly hear Denethor’s angry’ voice and Éowyn’s hissing. They had probably found Kat. Hah! Revenge!

“Moron of a Maia,” Morgoth muttered darkly. “Ah, students. Welcome to Divine Me, where we shall deal with the higher powers of Arda – that is, me – and why the higher powers have better things to do that be a ‘Toys and Great Powers ‘R Us’ store for Sues.”

Faramir, Isildur and Frodo made a hasty exist, followed by a few lusting glances. Even Isildur had some on him. After all, he was the forefather of Aragorn, and good looks were said to be in the genes. (That, and he had stood up to Lord Elrond, and that was enough to earn the respect of any student with brains. Sure, in doing so he had ensured that the Ring was not destroyed and Sauron would endure, causing much suffering and death, but that was a minor point)

“You?!” Sauron hissed. “The Valar threw you out, ‘He-Who-Arises-In-Might-Then-Collapses-Like-A-Deck-Of-Cards-(Subtle-Innuendo-Intended)’. And we agreed this class was Divine Us!”

“Hah! You don’t have a diving spot of drool in you! At least *I* was a higher being. You were a mere Maia, a footstool for my feet.”

The two hissed at each other, then seemed to remember their peace-agreement in classes and turned to regard the students, gleaming with faux-friendliness.

“Now, Arda is not ruled by the power of Sueness, as you may think, nor the divine powers of hormones.” Morgoth rolled his eyes. “It does in fact have a Creator, whom you might know as Eru because you can’t spell any other name.”

“Arda also have the Valar, who wisely kicked out this tone-deaf maggot…”

“SAURON!”

“MORGOOTH!”

The air cackled.

“Better find cover,” Neverhere muttered, bringing out her fire-proof helm. Most students had bought them from Silmarillion Smithy – ‘The Only Thing Ancient Will Be Your Armour Troubles’ – run by Fëanor and Family, who were making a fortune of MUSM students. You never knew where a fireball war would break out there. Unless you wanted to lose your hair, like poor Xydia, you had better get a helm. (And not one with a target painted on, like Artesania had been unfortunate enough to buy from Boromir).

“Dark Lords,” a voice boomed, and the world shook. Jess lifted her eyes – lifted them, lifted them – and saw – something.

“Manwē,” Morgoth said, acid in his voice. “Brother. How nice of you to… Stop by. Now that you
“But surely you want some tea first,” Sauron said in his nicest voice, obviously relishing the fact that there was someone who could make even Morgoth squirm. “I believe Morgoth had some on the kettle.”

“Who the heck is that?” Jess muttered, wide-eyed.

“Manwë of the Valar,” Rip said. He and several others of the OFUM students had come to see what the fuss was about, in the theory that if it was happening to others, it wouldn’t happen to them.

“Is he a big shot?”

“Almost the biggest there is.”

“What kind of name is Manwë anyway?” Jess muttered, then felt a terribly powerful presence upon her. “Oh.”

“A name of Arda,” Manwë said, his voice like a song. A moment the song seemed jubilant, then an overwhelming sadness filled it. Jess just stared, and felt strangely sad when his attention returned to the two Dark Lords.

“I didn’t know there were such things in Middle-earth,” she whispered, mostly to herself. There was greatness - and there was Greatness so unimaginable even now her mind had trouble grasping it.

“Miss Jessica Fint!”

“Jess, you’re in deep trouble!” Niko whispered, waking Jess from her almost-trance to see Miss Cam come stalking towards her, Lord Elrond close behind. The crowd parted (wisely).

“Eep.”

“Did you write this to Lord Elrond: ‘Your so meeeeeeeeeeeeeeane! Legolas is sooooo hott, I shuld be let tu join the Followship. I wis you’d go to hell and dye!” Miss Cam asked, exchanging a look with Elrond.

Jax, Andi and Psychicsaphie (all OFUM students) sniggered in a way that made Jess think they knew all about this.

“No, it wasn’t me, I didn’t…”

“The mini-Balrogs found your scent on it. ‘Go to hell and DYE?’” Miss Cam shook her head. “Miss Dwimordene was asking for an axe and five minutes alone with you, but it’s so early in the semester to lose a student. And sadly, we do not have hell as such to send you to; as I’m sure ‘Divine Us’ will teach you all about. But Lord Mandos has most generously agreed to take you to his halls and dye you so that you may never use that phrase in vain again.”

“But…” Jess protested, staring widely around for Kat. That little…She must have written it on Jess’s paper, which Toey still stalked. Damn! Unfortunately, Kat seemed to be out of range, being chased by both Denethor and Éowyn. Apparently, they had found the forged marriage license declaring that Kat (a minister of the Church of Forgotten Pride and Doing Anything for the Holiness the Lust Object) had joined the two in Holy Matrimony to then marry Faramir. Such a sneaky plan…

“Bye-bye,” Miss Cam said merrily and the world went around and became black.
And a second later, it was dyed gushy-green and urple.
Pellets, PAPs and Proper Grammar

Chapter Notes

Author's Note: In the proud tradition of OFUM1, the chapter contains a section of GrammarBootCamp written by the eminent Miss Dwimordene herself (edited only here and there to fit the chapter and with a few additions of my own) in a spout of evilness. Helped by AC here and there.

In general, there was a lot of hiding going on at OFUM and MUSM. There were students hiding from mini-Balrogs, mini-Balrogs hiding from students (to ambush, of course), students hiding from mini-Balrogs hiding from students, students hiding from Miss Cam, students hiding from Miss Jean and Tom Bombadil (they were rewriting LotR Bombadil-style and wanted student 'volunteers' to test it on), Elves in Black Leather hiding from fangirls (to train ambush techniques), Morgoth hiding from Ungoliant, Sauron hiding from Shelob (rumours were she wanted him to be Best Man - um, Best Maia - at her rumoured future wedding), Kat hiding from Denethor and …owyn and everyone who had a sane bone in their body hiding from Ragna the Urple.

Unfortunately, hiding didn't always go as planned.

"Conjugate! Second person singular, familiar. Verb: to do!" barked Miss Dwimordene, gazing out over the panting students that hadn't managed to hide well enough from GrammarBootCamp. Most of the unlucky had by now fallen gasping to the ground, unable to do any more push-ups.

Kat had a good view of the spectacle from her hiding place in the basketball net. It was entirely by accident, as Morgoth had thrown her there, mistaking her for the rather large, spikey basketball they used as she had come running like the wind onto the court (having spotted Denethor looking for her). But luckily, no one had noticed the mistake as Sauron and Morgoth started a who-can-spit-the-longest competition immediately thereafter. So here she was, clinging onto the net with all she had, hoping her grip would hold and that Men of Gondor and Women of Rohan didn't hold grudges.

Somehow, it seemed a faint hope.

But at least she wasn't suffering through GrammarBootCamp. She could see Jhyntalliss Auriga stare ahead, frantically searching her brain for the right reply.

"Er... ah... y-you..."

"WRONG! Threnadil, I think ten laps around the Palennor should help her recall her Shakespearean English. Go!"

The mini-Balrog smiled warmly, chasing the student as they dodged the ever-shifting mini-geography of Arda, which had been placed next to the Basketball Court of Hate for the occasion.

Alcsewien gave a terrified squeal as Yomer seized upon her, bringing her to the centre where Dwimordene was towering above the mini-Balrogs.

"Conjugate! Third person singular. Verb: to do!"

"He... doth?" gasped Alcsewien.

"Er... He shalth?"

"Stadium steps, six rounds in Minis Tirirth, please, Yomer. Modal verbs—may, can, will, shall, must-DONOT have a unique ending in older forms of English. Meaning that they were used then exactly as they are used now. In Old English, they may have, but that would be the language of the Venerable Bede, which none of you can read. Thank Eru," she added under her breath, visibly shuddering at the thought. "Tolkien did not use forms more complex than Shakespeare did, for which you may be grateful. We have all read some Shakespeare, have we not?"

"To be or not to be," Tasare began weakly, staggering to stay on her feet. "Um... A rose with another name would still smell as. um..."

"Oh good," Dwimordene said, managing to withhold an eye-roll just barely. "I can see you're all experts already. So students: what is the verb ending for the second person singular and informal?"

"Thou adds -(e)st' to most verbs, half the group managed to gasp. A few of the minis seemed to find it amusing sitting on student backs while push-ups were done.

"Except...?"

"Eeee... 'To be,' 'shall'... er... 'will'..." Ceridwen croaked. Legoals and Grimli were giving her a long, good look. The wonder duo of mini-Balrogs had started a 'who can make the most students beg for death' competition, and so far Legoals was ahead by forty-one to thirty-nine.

"Which are conjugated how?"

"Um... 'art'... 'shalt'... 'wilt'..."

"And the third person singular's verb ending in older forms of English is...?" Dwimordene went on, undeterred. Kat felt pain just watching.

"Third person singular adds -(e)th' to most verbs... except modals... and 'to be,'" the students chorused.

"If you can't use older forms of English properly, stick to contemporary English forms—Tolkien used those, too, you know. We do *know* that, do we not? Because we *have* all read the books, yes?"

A few students jumped, looking like deer caught in the headlights of a very, very large truck with 'we eat deer' painted on it. They had unfortunately thought that Peter Jackson had invented the world of Middle-earth and voiced such an idea. Needless to say, Tolkien and J.K Tullking (who had brought with him a permanent plot hole to Hogwarts upon spawning. Apparently, it was very easy to confuse Tolkien and J.K Rowling) the mini-Balrogs had quickly hunted those students down. It had been quite the ruckus.

Also needless to say, no one made that mistake again.

"Halidar, another volunteer, if you please," Dwimordene said pleasantly, tossing some bacon to the mini. "You know, we wouldn't even be working on this but for you lot. Who talks like this, anyway? Aragorn, maybe twice in the entire trilogy. The Mouth of Sauron, once. …owyn, once. Not many characters use older forms of English, and they barely use them at that. I'd much rather discuss the common, erroneous substitution of the contraction, "it's," for the possessive, "its." A far more basic mistake, yet the egregious misuse of older English is so blatant that it causes headaches."
"Not to mention making the Valar want to end the world," Denethor added, walking up. "Miss Dwimordene, have you seen Miss Fint? My daughter-in-law and I have a little discussion we'd like to have with her."

Kat felt to her horror her legs beginning to buckle and her grip on the net beginning to slip. She grasped frantically, but the net had suddenly become slippery with... urple paint?

She stared down, where Merry and Pippin waved merrily up at her, both hobbits holding slings and pellets of urple pain. A bucket of urple paint stood leisurely on the ground next to them (and Michelle, Amber and Leah looked lost in drool behind the hobbits, but dared not approach. The hobbits were mean with urple pellets).

The ground greeted her with a rather sour mood (the Basketball Court of Hate had a mind of its own, probably an accident caused by the constant battles between Sauron and Morgoth trying to make the other slip and fall) and seemed to make itself as hard as it could. She landed with a 'thunk' and immediately felt the gaze of Mad, Mad Fire-Prone Steward of Gondor upon her. Oh, smeg.

"I think that would be her," Dwimordene commented, smirking. "Now students, we shall work on "what is a modal verb, anyway?" And may I just say that if Hoi Arrac here gets this wrong, you will all be doing hill repeats on 'Carathras.' Five repeats per mistake that each person makes from now till the end of the hour. Next week, we'll work on subjunctive... if the comma splices don't get to me by tomorrow, that is. You'd better hope no one creates 'Orodrueen' by then, either. And students, do not forget the emergency GrammarBootCamp to be held tomorrow on proper citation of sources. Miss Cam's special Etiquette Seminar will be run just prior to it, and all attendees must report to the Map of Arrda immediately thereafter..."

Dwimordene's voice faded as Kat began to sprint, hearing the angry footsteps of Denethor just behind. Fear gave her wings (well, almost anyway. She was glad she hadn't put down faerie as species when completing her enrolment. All those students had quickly realised that the laws of physics dictated that wings needed to be a certain size before carrying the weight of a human. Tiny, sparkling pink wings only gave the mini-Balrogs something to pull at). She bolted through the gardens, before a Huorn treacherously stuck a root out and she went tumbling into the ground - which opened before her and sent her smack into a cave wall.

The ground closed soundlessly above her. Funny, she couldn't remember seeing a cave here.

"Gimli?"

There was no mistaking the soft Elven voice of Legolas. For a moment, Kat felt something like triumph. Jess would die of envy. Hah! This was a good revenge for what Jess had done to her. Almost the ultimate revenge, in fact.

A torch came into view.

"Oh no," she heard Legolas groan. "A PAP."

"A what?"


"I'm not one of your fangirls," Kat managed. They categorized fangirls? Which one would she be?

"Thank Elbereth," Legolas breathed. "Gimli constructed this secret passage for the staff. I thought a
horde of students had come upon it at last and I would have to find a new path into the gardens."

"No," Kat said weakly. She could finally see the shape of the Elf, emitting a silvery light in the dark. She wondered how Jess could lust someone so seemingly far above, so... Magnificent.

Torchlight begun to fill the cave as Legolas lit up a few placed along the walls.

"I know you. You have a sister that chases me..." Legolas took out a long, long parchment and consulted it. "Jess Fint?"

"Yeah, that's her. I'm Kat."

"Kat Fint. No, you are not on my list." He smiled as he folded the parchment, a breathtaking smile at that. "Gimli suggested that perhaps it would take less time to keep a list of who is not lusting after me. I am starting to see the wisdom in the Dwarf's words."

He shook his head, the smile fading. "Had I known the Quest would bring this upon me, I would have stayed with my father. Who could have foreseen there is a force more terrible than Sauron and more perilous to the Elves than Morgoth himself?"

"Hormones," Gimli grunted, walking into the light hand-in-hand with a redheaded girl. Lina, wasn't it? "My friend, I would strike with my axe at this enemy had it a shape we could fight."

"I know, Master Dwarf," Legolas answered. "But your presence gives me hope. If True Love can break one hormonal crush, it may break more."

Lina laughed softly, to Kat's surprise. "I was horrible. I'm sorry, Legolas. You shouldn't have to go through the indignities of 'Leggy', 'Legs' and Eru help us, 'Lego'."

She fixed a strong gaze on Kat, but there was strangely enough pity in the older girl's eyes. Pity for what, Kat could not say.

"One of yours?" Gimli asked, gripping his axe firmly.

"No. One of mine," Faramir said, stepping into the light. Kat felt her legs nearly buckle again, but by a miracle she managed to keep standing.

Breathing. That was the key. Keep on breathing.

Strangely, the Man was grinning from ear to ear. "My Lady Éowyn was so angered by your actions that she felt a need to prove to me just how much my wife she was. She was most... Vigorous. So I find it hard to be angry with you, Miss Fint, though I should be."

The Dwarf laughed, giving Lina a wink while at it. "So that is why your brother Boromir went out to have the fencing lessons for students himself. I could tell he wanted to kick ass from here to Moria."

Faramir's grin widened. "It is not my fault he wanted to use the baths at the same time as Lady Éowyn and myself."

"You should learn to put up 'Do Not Disturb' signs," Gimli suggested. "Lord Elrond and Lady Celebrían have a whole chest full, I believe. The Last Homely House had many visitors and few locks, which could lead to some embarrassment when guests wandered about, I have been told. Why, my great- great-great..."

Kat could feel her heart finally stop thumping and feeling seemed to return to her limbs. She
wondered if she would dare reach out and touch Faramir. Just a touch. That couldn't hurt...

"Faramir?" came the voice Kat had learned to fear. "My husband? Did you find Legolas and ask if Aragorn..."

And then Éowyn saw Kat.

There was a brief silence.

And then there was a lot of running and a rather painful tackle and consequent tossing into the Deed Marches of Arrda.

Apparently, the White Lady of Rohan did hold grudges.
"Jess? Hellooooooooooo? Jess!"

Neverhere's voice buzzed distantly in the background, but Jess couldn't find the strength to care. Oh, how she hurt. And yet..

"Jess!"

She finally managed to lift her head to look at Neverhere and Xydia, who both looked at her sympathetically.

"What?"

"It's time for the Etiquette seminar. You know what Miss Cam does to anyone who is late."

Jess groaned, but her body hearing 'Miss Cam' and 'late' in the same sentence had already gotten up on its own. Bodies had excellent memories.

The room was quiet and dark. No sign of Kat.

"She had some troubles getting out of the Deed Marshes," Xydia answered the unasked question. "Apparently, home to the Dead Knights Who Say Gurglespitt- Gurglespit- Help-I-Am-Drowning. They caught her and demanded she bring her a Shrub. They were tired of shrubberies."

Jess tried not to feel any sympathy. After all, this was war. You did not feel sympathy for your enemy, i.e. the Faramir-Fancying twit of a sister.

"Come on, you lot," Artesania Chaos declared, peeking her head in. "I hear Lord Elrond will be there too, and you know how he is when anyone is late."

'Run. Run now,' demanded Jess's body and went into a sprint. The other students followed quickly, but when they reached the great gathering hall, only students were there.

"What's going on?" Jess croaked, dropping down on a chair.

"Miss Cam unfortunately caught a student telling of her lucid dreams starring Lord Elrond. In great detail," Chainedgirl replied. "Miss Cam was just in here, hissing about how she was trying to work with Lord Elrond without any reminders how he looked under his robes, even if Eru had been most generous with him."

Jess steeled her mind. She shouldn't think about Legolas without clothes. She shouldn't. It wasn't attractive to drool.

A few students around her seemed to already have gone into the territory of Lust Object A Natural. Jasey looked slightly slack-jawed, Alex and Sarah had started muttering about 'precious Gollum and
his precious' and Eaphen was fingering her mushroom-carved-as-Frodo.

Yet, strangely, Jess felt her mind resist and she thought instead of the Halls of Mandos and the spirits of Elves, magnificent in presence even without a clear shape.

"Oh look, there's Aragorn!" called Sage excitedly.

Aragorn did indeed stride in, followed by a very regal looking Elf, Lord Elrond, Éomer, Thranduil and Legolas.

"Oh! That's Gil-Galad. He has probably not gone off to HFA yet," Maureen Lycaon said happily (how she managed to speak properly as a Warg was beyond Jess, but then it was a welcome change from all the Elves, who drooled so much when sighting The Black Leather Alliance of Men and Elves that they were even worse than the Wargs).

"Before Miss Cam joins us and we begin this Etiquette seminar, we have a legal announcement," Aragorn declared, ignoring those who tried to toss embroidered heart pillows at him.

"Aye. Upon reading story three gazillion and two starring me and my arranged-bride-to-be-even-though-Elves-do-not-arrange-marriages story, whose only excuse was 'it's only fanfiction', I decided to bring the matter before court with the help of Éomer of Rohan and Acacia of the PPC," Legolas said, for once not looking depressed. He was positively beaming. Jess's inner luster gulped hard.

Éomer nodded grimly. He was well known for having read every fanfiction about Arda, followed by a nervous breakdown for later to return with a vengeance. And creativity. Jess had learned to fear creativity.

"And thus, we are serving the following excuses for messing up our world with a restraining order," Aragorn began, looking grim and regal and very, very angry. "As you will note students, Lord Elrond has signed it, making it legally binding."

"And I shall delight in poetically punishing all those who ignore it," Elrond shot in. "All who wish to appeal my judgements, may do so. The new Court of 'Fat-Chance'-Appeal is up and will be presided over by his Honour Gil-Galad."

Gil-Galad smiled. It was an even more terrifying smile than Elrond's, the smile seeming to speak of all the joy the Elf would have hunting down all of them *personally*.

"Eep," Vikka muttered.

"As I was saying, we are serving the following excuses with a restraining order with the following reasons: It's only fanfiction!" Aragorn began again, only to be interrupted by loud snickering and several gasps of indignant anger from Gil-Galad and Elrond.

"It's only fanfiction! (That's right, *fan*. If you truly wrote *fan* fiction, you would care enough to get it right.)

But the books are so long! (As will your punishment be.)

I'm too lazy to find out! (We're too lazy to pay attention to that excuse.)

Who cares if they're out of character, it's my story! (Why are you writing about us if you are going to write us without any recognisable features besides our names?)

If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all! (It's called review, not 'mindless
praise'.

You're just mean! (Yes.)

It's not a Mary Sue! (Yes, it is.)

If you don't like it, don't read it! (And we're supposed to know in advance that we won't like it how?)

Who cares about spelling and grammar! (Anyone whose eyes work.)

But Legolas is soo hott! (If you persist in such slanderous remarks, prepare to be sued by Webbalicious Lawyers of Mirkwood and eaten when you lose.)

I suck at summaries! (Strive to un-suck, then.)

My computer doesn't have a spell check! (Yes, it does. If it doesn't, get your money back.)

I have read the books! (Then show it.)

I'm not Tolkien! (Gee, you don't say.)

I'm only a wheeny little baby of X years! (Then share your story with your kindergarten, and put it not up in a public place.)

If we see any of these within a hundred feet of a piece of writing about Arda, there will be dire legal consequences."

Legolas beamed even more as Gil-Galad and Elrond gave him pats on the back. Sarah Melissa quickly hid her 'Legolas is soo hott' banner while a few students looked as guilty as Gollum caught by the fish pond.

"That was beautiful," Miss Cam said, entering from the shadows (or so it seemed. Perhaps it was because with Barlog the Balrog playing with the mini-Balrogs in the back of the hall, almost all of it was in shadow). "Now onto the scheduled Etiquette seminar and the proper citation of sources."

Some of the students started whooping and clapping enthusiastically. Minions of Miss Cam, of course, proudly garbed in the official uniform. Jess suspected they were all just sucking up to earn a staff position. Of course, that wasn't such a bad idea, really. Living in the staff section with the possibility of seeing Legolas every morning...

'Oh, do shut up,' her brain complained.

'You shut up,' her inner luster replied.

'No, you.'

'Like you don't enjoy the view as well.'

'I enjoy reading! And classical music! And culture! And... stuff,' her brain finished lamely. Jess blinked. She enjoyed reading? Since when?

"Now, why is this so important, some of you may ask," Miss Cam said, interrupting Jess's internal fight. "And normally, I would be happy to explain that to you in great detail while Shelob makes you hold her veil in the wedding rehearsals. But sadly I don't have the time to do that to all of you."

She sighed, looking genuinely disappointed. "So pay attention students, this is important. It's not all
right to take someone else's work and pass it off as your own. It's theft. Forgetting to cite your source may seem innocent, but forgetting once might lead to forgetting twice and suddenly you think it's fine to take credit for someone else's creativity and hard work. That, students, is even worse than calling Legolas 'Chibi-Leggy'. My apologies, Legolas."

Legolas shuddered, but nodded.

"Ripping off the work of another is showing no respect at all," Miss Cam went on.

"To gain respect, show respect," Gil-Galad said gravely. "If you wish to be a writer, you must respect your craft and your fellow writers. I would be a poor king if I did not respect my people. If I forced all Elves to say 'dude' and 'don't stress' like so many of you seem to think we do, I would be showing no respect for our dignity, wisdom and culture. Nor are you if you write us that way."

"My poor son," Thranduil muttered. "No respect for his Elven dignity. No respect for his quiet wisdom. Reduced only to a gawking, slobbering idiot with no trace of Elvendom left... Why do they want an Elf when they write him as a teenager from their own world? Do any of you know how it feels as a father to see this committed against your son? Or as a King to see this committed against your people?"

He shared a look with Gil-Galad that Jess could only describe as... Understanding? As if they both shared a burden few others would understand. The burden of Kingship.

'I knew you had some sense in you,' her brain applauded. Jess tried to ignore it. Damnit, why was her brain suddenly so... So... Thinking?

"Does anyone besides me have a bad feeling about what's to come?" Michelle asked in a low voice. Dingaer nodded furiously.

"Can't be worse than GrammarBootCamp," Polaris muttered and shuddered involuntarily.

"Shhh!" Colleen whispered, eyes widening in panic. "If you say it can't be worse, it always will be! It's the curse of the Universe. It loves to prove you wrong."

As if the Universe had heard her, a loud whip-crack echoed through the hall.

"Students!" barked the entering Miss Dwimordene, carrying the Balrog-whip for the occasion. "Five mile sprint, now!"

The students jumped, but quickly got in gear, making a line behind the mini-Balrogs.

"I shall always cite my source," Dwimordene chanted.

"I shall always cite my source," the students chanted back.

"I shall do so properly."

"I shall do so properly."

"I shall spell names the right way."

"I shall spell names the right way."

"I shall never call Legolas 'hott' ."

"I shall never call Legolas 'hott'."
"I shall always respect Naturally Nine."
"I shall always respect Naturally Nine."
"I shall soon whimper in pain."
"I shall soon whimper in pain."
"For here come the Webbalicious Lawyers of Mirkwood to teach me respect."
"For here come... What?"
The students looked up.
'You know, if you listened to me and not your inner luster, you wouldn't get into these messes,' Jess's brain offered helpfully.
'But Legolas is so pretty. So hott,' her inner luster whimpered.
It went on whimpering for a long time.
Visions of Love, sung by Mariah Carey, is not mine. (Thank Eru - and O Slave Labourer, for digging up said lyrics) The suggestion of what a Luv is, came from the always devious Miss Dwimordene. If you don't get the cunning reference, you really ought to be watching Blackadder. If you don't recognise Maglor, Amroth or Elros, you really ought to be reading Silmarillion - oughtn't you?

Starlight, star bright, star sight, star of human height.

"Oh, Legolas, it's perfect!" Jess breathed, batting her eyelashes seductively. She looked divine in her pearly dress given by Lord Elrond himself as a gift to the woman he had never seen before, but instantly liked anyway and was not the least bit suspicious that she had fallen from the sky during the middle of the council (and suddenly caused everyone to speak in very long run-on sentences that seemed to go on forever and never really died even though the speaker might since he ran out of air and choked trying to say it all without pausing). Legolas did not think even the Two Trees of Valinor were this beautiful.

He smiled at her, so glad he had come to see reason at last. Of course such a fangirl was the right one for him! It was his one true love, as surely as Thranduil would never harm his son! (Would he? A strange feeling of dread surrounded that thought.) Not that she knew anything about his people or ways or even that Greenleaf was the translation of his name and not his last name, but like...

Whatever.

Gimli was jumping up and down behind him, but he didn't pay attention. His munchy-duncy-lovemuffin didn't think Gimli important, so neither did he, of course. What was a life of friendship and brotherly love against a sudden hormonal crush, after all?

Why, Mirkwood had suddenly sprouted a palace at her arrival (and somehow, Rivendell had sprouted tentacles. Most odd) and all people had suddenly converted from Westron to English-with-modern-slang. A miracle!

"Oh, Leggy-chan, luuuuuuv of my live (or at least until next year, when Spiderman 2 comes and my hormones decide Tobey is the new love of my life), I shall sing to you again!"

Legolas grinned even more. It was starting to hurt to grin so much. Didn't she know what luv was? His brow furrowed. Something was not right.

"I've realized a dream /And I visualized /The love that came to be / Feel so alive /I'm so thankful that I've received /The answer that heaven has sent down to me / I had a vision of love /And it was all that you've given to meeeeeeer..."

It was breathtaking. It was nightingales. It was the soft drip of dew on leaves. It was the inner hum of a gem. It was the beat of a dreary fairy's heart.

Of course, she was off key and couldn't hold a tone and several birds had dropped dead from the sky from the shock, but still - magical!
"Oh, Mr. Greenleaf," Jess purred. He smiled. Of course Greenleaf was not his last name, but the translation of Legolas, but minor details like paying attention to his name could hardly be expected from someone who cared so deeply about him - could it?

He almost felt like writing a poem just for her, modern rhyming patterns and all, despite not knowing those until five minutes ago.

"Kiss me, Legs," Jess demanded.

"Of course, sweets of my sweet," he muttered and suddenly realised he'd forgotten that he was on some kind of Quest. Something about jewellery? Fate of the world? Fellows in a ship?

"GIMLI!" he screamed, just as Jess reached for his pointy ears. "Aragorn! Frodo! The One Ring!"

"Geez, thanks for remembering me," the One Ring's voice said from within Jess and suddenly, he found himself not holding a drooling fangirl, but a golden ring.

"Kiss me, Legs!"

"NOOOO!"

Bolting upright, Legolas snapped out of the reverie and nearly knocked his head against the roof (that was what happened when you let a Dwarf build you a Sue-proof room).

He groaned as he managed to breathe again. Seventh nightmare in a row. All because Legolas had dared say Vilya looked prettier. The revenge of the sentient, evil Ring of Sauron was terrible. Forced to participate in student dreams was a fate worse than Fëanor. But this one of - Jess Fint's, was it? - had been the nastiest yet.

'Mr Greenleaf.'

He shuddered.

"Legolas?" a soft voice called, and the door opened. It was a scantily clad Celeborn, looking slightly irate and worried. "My Lady Galadriel caught disturbing images from your mind."

"A nightmare only," Legolas replied. "I shall not disturb your Lady any further."

Celeborn gave him a look of slight pity. "Have hope, Legolas. You will live forever. Fangirls die. Soon, the light of Valinor will greet you and not the yells of 'Lego! Hear my poem just for you, my archer-hunkadoory'."

"I appreciate that you tied that one to a mellon tree and practiced your rotten tomato-throwing, Lord Celeborn."

The Elven Lord smiled. "My pleasure, neighbour. Good night, Legolas of Mirkwood, valiant resister of Sue-love."

Celeborn wandered out, cursing only slightly when nearly tripping over Glimli (who was a very devoted and loyal mini, and since Gimli was hardly in need of defending, followed Legolas around like friendly dog, albeit a dog with wings and horns and a peculiar sense of humour).

Sighing, the Elf got up. Perhaps a good walk and some midnight archery would lessen the feeling of the nightmare. No students should be awake at this hour, unless the Balrogs were playing cricket against the dragons again (with fireballs instead of actual balls and the point of the game to hit the
audience - students, of course - rather than to gather runs, it was a game that often went well into the night).

He got as far as the Hall when Lord Elrond came barrelling out of the kitchens, almost stepping on several minis. Celebrían followed, wringing her hands and looking as pale as Legolas had ever seen the fair Lady of Rivendell.

"Lord Elrond...?"

"My sons. My dear, beloved sons," Elrond muttered. He turned to his wife and took her hands.

"They found Elrohir/Elladan slash," Éomer said softly, stepping into the faint light of the mini-Balrog guards.

"There is such a thing?" Legolas asked, beginning to wonder if perhaps he was easy off after all.

"There are far fouler things in the dark places of the fangirl mind," Éomer said darkly. "I remember one where Boromir had to punish you for..."

Legolas did not hear what was to follow, for strong hands settled on his sensitive ears, blocking out the rest of the sentence.

He turned to see his father (followed by Denethor, as usual. The Man and Elf had developed a strange friendship over shared I-Did-What-Now reactions to fic), giving Éomer a strict glance.

"My son suffers enough," Thranduil said, hissing a few Elven curses under his breath. Legolas thought he caught 'fell fungus-breath of fangirls', but it was hard to tell with so much hissing.

Quite a few of the staff members had entered the hall by now, curious as to what had stirred the wrath of Lord Elrond this time.

"I heard Yano dare suggest Lord Elrond should take anger management lessons," Denethor said merrily. "I saw her trying to learn Elvish for her 100,000 'If I read what some authors had goblins doing to my beloved, I'd be angry too' sentences to write."

"Of course, he forgot to tell her what version of Elvish, so she is stuck doing both," Éomer chuckled. "How did ever Lord Elrond learn to be so... Creatively bitter?"

"Family trait" Elros said lazily, entering from the shadows. "If you were partly raised by Maglor, son of Fëanor..."

The human brother of Elrond let the rest of the sentence linger in the air while they all considered it.

"Good point," Denethor replied.

Elrond was still pacing the floors, when the door to Galadriel and Celeborn opened and the Elven Lord walked out (even more scantly dressed this time), humming softly. Upon seeing the crowd in the hall, he halted slightly.

"I was looking for whipped cream," he said with as much dignity he could muster.

"Faramir and Éowyn took the last of it," Boromir informed him, a visible sigh in his voice. "They made quite a mess of it, if the trail in the kitchen is any judge of it."

The table giggled. Legolas gave it an odd look, but the giggling ended and he wondered if the last nightmare had finally made his mind snap.
"I can make you some," Shada said bravely. (Only in the staff section at night, due to her special staff work. She was the undercover student, reporting to Miss Cam on plans and plotting of fellow students. After all, you knew all only if you had many ears in sneaky places). "Just a moment, my Lord."

The Elf Lord followed her into the kitchens, making the table giggle harder.

"Is it any wonder we get written as bunnies, doing everyone at every opportunity?" Legolas said darkly. To his amazement, his father only smiled.

"Alas, they do not realise that since we do not arrange marriages among Elves and marry only when we are most certain it is love, we like to enjoy the rewards of such a strong love. Your mother and I have enjoyed..."

This time, Legolas put his own hands over his ears and blocked the rest of the sentence out. Some things were the same, be you Elf, Human or Balrog. There were mental images concerning your parents that just weren't right.

"Is it breakfast already?" Sam asked, the little hobbit padding in, hand in hand with a smiling Rosie. Legolas sighed.

"You could always marry Jess, you know," a cool voice informed him. The Elf groaned. Of course. "Oh, shut up," Frodo told the Ring, as usual dangling golden against Frodo's shirt as the hobbit walked in and joined the group of Legolas, Sam, Rosie, Éomer, Elros, Thranduil and Denethor. "Has it been sending you nightmares again? I told it I would bring out the sparkling, pink cotton this time."

"I can't even send evil nightmares anymore! You're ruining my reputation! I'm Evil! Evil! I'm supposed to affect the Hobbits! Instead I'm looking forward to second breakfast, enjoying the smell of pipe weed..." the Ring's voice fell into a small wail. Elros snorted, walking over to his Elven brother and patting him on the back. (Probably to help plot revenge.) Frodo looked uncomfortable for a moment, then patted the Ring softly. "Um... There, there."

"You're being too nice to that... Thing," Sam said sagely. "You were too nice to Gollum and that cost you your fin-..."

Frodo's look turned to what could best be described as 'ow'. "... your best clothes, ruined by fish smell," Sam corrected quickly. Frodo relaxed, sending Sam a grateful smile.

"Aw," the Ring muttered, then almost seemed to slap itself. "No! Hobbit-brotherly-love is not cute! It is not! I am evil!"

"Sure you are," Rosie said in a comforting voice. "We all fear you, don't we boys?"

Even Denethor and Thranduil gave a nod when confronted with her glare.

"Legolas," Frodo said suddenly. "I have a very, very cunning plan."

"As cunning as Cunning Sackville-Baggins in Cunning Rows, New Cunning in a particularly cunning mood?" Sam asked.
"Yes."

"Oh, that is cunning," Pippin observed; he and Merry popped up from below the table, where they'd been eating whipped cream.

"You can send anyone nightmares, right O Evil Ring?" Frodo asked in a silky voice.

The Ring sniffed. "Of course."

"But I don't suppose you are so evil you can send many people nightmares at once?"

"I can!" protested the Ring. "I'm the One Ring! The *One*!"

"Show-off," something muttered from within Elrond's robes, just a whisper in Legolas's ears. None of the hobbits seemed to have noticed.

"You could send any nightmare we wanted to any student, couldn't you, O Evilest, Sneakiest, and most Fearsome Ring of all?" Frodo went on.

The Ring swelled.

"What do you think, Legolas? Nightmares to anyone who dare dream of you in an undignified manner?"

"You really are a devious hobbit," Denethor said admiring.

Frodo bowed.

As Legolas opened his mouth to answer a sudden thought struck him. Perhaps it came from centuries living in Mirkwood where the air of devious Dol Guldur lingered, perhaps it was from the three hundred thousand and fifth love letter he'd gotten calling him 'Legolas Greenleaf.'

Wherever it came from, it was surely evil. And right.

"Frodo, I have an addition to your very cunning plan..."

*****

Jess dreamt.

Her Inner Luster ruled happily here, as all higher brain functions were asleep. It was a dream of perfection.

She was in Mirkwood palace, the princess of Lórien send to marry the Prince of Mirkwood. She would be Legolana Greenleaf, wielder of the Elven Ring of Love, prettiest Elf ever!

"Ahem."

She turned to see not Legolas, but another Elf, pretty too. Her Inner Luster sighed happily.

"I am the last King of Lórien, and you are not my daughter!" the Elf thundered. She blinked.

"Um, what?"

"I am Amroth, last King of Lórien. Is your hearing impaired? You are not my daughter nor any kin of mine and therefore cannot be the princess of Lórien. Celeborn and Galadriel are Lord and Lady of
Lothlórien, not King and Queen. Not that they would name a daughter Legolana either way."

Her Inner Luster just stared, confused. Logic had no place in lust. What the heck was going on?

"I come as the Herald of Logic," Amroth went on. "The Black Leather Alliance of Elves and Men, supported by the Cute Devious Hobbit Association will give you want you desire, O Leggy Luver."

He vanished in a puff of scented air, leaving Jess confused.

The trees groaned.

Lightning slashed the sky.

The spiders turned and ran.

"H-hello?"

Out of the bushes came the Luv. She knew it on sight, though she was sure she had never seen it before.

A polymorphously perverse, hermaphroditic version of the Nuzgul species, the Luv was. The huge, hairless horror eyed her hungrily, white teeth glittering in the blackest dark. The pheromones leeched of it, making her dizzy and unable to run. His foul air and gleaming eyes made her head spinning wildly with adjectives.

"Oh, bugger."

It turned out to be a very Luv-ing night for all students.
Kat wasn't quite sure how she had ended up out in the mud, but she was quite sure walking had not
been involved. Her legs had long since quit in protest, quite confident being nibbled on by Nuzgul
and being splashed with urple paint had not been part of the job description when they signed on.
Her brain seemed to have serious concerns also, judging from the frequent cries of 'Bleach!
Bleeeeeeeeaaaach!'

It wasn't that Middle-earth wasn't great. It was more the fact that the entire world seemed steered by
some force who badly wanted to get revenge. On her.

She looked skywards, wondering what the heck she'd ever done to deserve this.

The clouds sniggered down on her. She could almost swear they made out 'H-A- H-!', but that was
of course ludicrous.

"Now, what were we not going to call my niece again?" a silky voice said above her. Oh, right.
*That's* how she ended up in the mud.

"Unfit to be called White Lady of Rohan when she acts like a naughty bunny," Kat muttered through
muddy teeth.

"Fantastic and Wonderful and Great Tosser, King Théoden," she added hurriedly. The silky voice
above her sniggered, but sounded slightly more pleased this time around.

It wasn't like she had meant to call Éowyn a naughty rabbit. In fact, she was quite sure she hadn't,
which could only mean one thing.

Jess would pay.

"Um, Kat, what are you doing in the mud?" Emele's slightly nasal voice asked (due to a certain
accident involving a Merry-chase, said Merry-chase onto a slippery floor, said slippery floor creating
a slight imbalance and said imbalance sending her nose-first into the Witch-Wall. The Urple Bandits
had given the fall 8.3 out of 10 for great flailing of arms and general comic sense) and Kat found that
Théoden had left, and she was being stared at by Emele, Yukiyo, Emjay and Earwen.

"Getting clean, what does it look like?" Kat snapped.

"Éowyn cornered you about your underwear-stealing from Faramir?" Yukiyo asked sympathetically.

"No. Théoden."

"What, the old guy?" Emjay asked. It took about three seconds before the air was blurred by a
passing shadow and Emjay found herself in the same mud Kat had become acquainted with.
"Hah, still got it," the King of the Mark remarked gleefully. He struck a dramatic pose on his horse.

"Where is the decent fan fiction? Where are the worthy plots going? They have passed like rain on the mountains Like a wind in the meadow

Good fic has gone down in this fandom,

Behind ff.net, into shadow."

"Is it just me, or do the staff seem more vicious these days?" Earwen asked as she helped a confused Emjay up and watched Théoden ride off.

"They will be more vicious if we're late for class," Yukiyo opinionated. The others quickly agreed.

Slightly muddy, they started towards the halls of OFUM, but the front door seemed to be blocked by a rather large gathering of spiders. The Webbalicial spiders of Mirkwood had spun a great arch of spider-web and were now tossing students at Aragog and Shelob, with the help enthusiastic Drew and Miss Cam.

"What in...?" Kat muttered.

"Aragog and Shelob got married at HFA," Orfeo told them, brushing off some spider web. "Apparently, they're holding the reception here. Don't step too close, or you'll get tossed as well."

"Why are they tossing students?"

"We ransss out of rice, my precioussss," a voice said happily from behind. Gollum peeked out between Kat's legs, looking actually content. "They like Gollum's idea, they doessss. Miss Cam saysss Gollum should get to teach class, my precious. Has devious minds, we does."

"Um... Right," Kat replied. Gollum gave her a sneaky look.

"Get Sauron's sock from Dobby, Gollum did. Put it in Morgoth's room, Gollum did. Tell Sauron where sock is, Gollum did. Steal Sauron's 'Diary and Scorekeeper Against That Slimeball Vala-Reject', Gollum did. Hoping to make new precious, Gollum doessss."

"Yeah, that's... Lovely," Kat said as earnestly as she could. For some obscure reason she didn't want to tell him he had a bigger chance of marrying Sam than managing to make a new precious. He looked so hopeful and almost hobbit-cute.

Gollum stood up and leaned closer. "Gollum knows sssecret, Gollum does. Gollum readsss in diary the great plan about MUSM. Ssssneaky plan, my precious."

"Come on, Kat!" Emjay called. "We're going to be late!"

"Coming!" she called back. "Um... see ya, Gollum."

She felt his eyes on her as she sprinted off, catching up with the rest of the group and narrowly avoiding being tossed by a fearsome Mirkwood-spider.

"Hey, any of you considered what kind of children Aragog and Shelob will have?"
"Ew, Kat!"

Kat sniggered lightly to herself as she stumbled into the classroom, immediately being met by a killer look from Denethor.

"Just in time, you lot. Sadly, as I am downright evil and always a bastard, just in time won't do. A two thousand word paper on my father to be handed in by next class for all of you."

The class groaned.

"Now, now, you're the ones who write me this way," Denethor said, slight humour in his voice. "Ah, here is my esteemed colleague at last."

Thranduil entered the room, dragging with him a rather resisting student. Kazra, was it not?

"Do not break into a meeting of Elves in Black Leather ever again, or we will do the tour of the Orc and Uruk-hai saunas," Thranduil said strictly. Kazra nodded wildly and staggered to her seat.

"King Thranduil and I will be teaching 'Why a Father Is Not Always an Evil, Evil, Evil Bastard' - stop drooling, Sindahiriel. King Thranduil is not Legolas - and generally making your lives miserable," Denethor finished with a smirk.

"Well said, Lord Denethor. I am not Legolas, but being his father does not make me Evil. I love my son - no, not that way, stop making notes you sick, sick people - and would never hurt him. Why do you think I protect him so from you lot?"

"I love my sons also," Denethor declared. "One of them is much too like his mother, but that is so."

"You tried to burn him!" Kat complained. Poor, beautiful, sleek, sexy Faramir. Sure, she liked him on fire, but not literally.

Denethor merely waved a hand dismissively at Kat's statement. "Bout of madness, can happen to the best of us. Note: I said madness, not change of character. I still wouldn't..."

He shuddered, unable to finish the sentence. Thranduil patted his back, obviously sharing the pain.

"Now, Miss Cam has put up a list over the usual crimes committed against us," Thranduil said, a hint of steel in his voice. "To familiarise you with it, I present to you Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor."

Dark mists suddenly swirled and two figures stepped out. Evil radiated off them. A few students squealed happily. Wannabe-evils, for sure.

"I abuse my son," Evil!Thranduil read off a cue-card.

"I abuse my sons," Evil!Denethor read off his cue-card.

"I deny my son marrying Sues," Evil!Thranduil exclaimed. "Hey, isn't that a good thing?"

"The Evil thing would be to actually let him marry them," Evil!Denethor replied. "Right. I rape Aragorn. What?"

"What?" Denethor echoed. "That's not evil, that's just wrong."

"Even Evil has its standards," Evil!Thranduil huffed. "I chain my son up in the Evil!Palace."

"I hit Faramir and Evil!Boromir is my favourite."
"I rape my son. What?"

"I have others rape my son. What? Excuse me, is this the wrong room?" Evil!Denethor turned to his good counterpart. "Are we at Sex-Addicted Rulers Anonymous?"

"I am afraid not," Denethor said sadly. "Fangirl ideas of evil, you see."

"I am an evil tyrant," Evil!Thranduil read, rolling his eyes. "I assume I turned Mirkwood into Evil!Mirkwood then, since no one has toppled me."

"I am an evil Stewart. Of course I am. I obviously don't even know my proper title," Evil!Denethor muttered. "If you really want to write us evil, we should be conspiring with Sauron, trying to gain the One Ring for ourselves - not this petty stuff. I feel like Miscreant!Denethor."

Evil!Thranduil nodded vigorously. "This isn't evil, this is just stupid. Why would I be abusing my son? I would be busy corrupting him if I had even bothered having a son at all. Do you know how often Evil Kings are toppled by their no less Evil Sons?"

"And what in Sauron's black name is this rape stuff? We're evil. We have our standards."

"Indeed, in Morgoth's black name, we do."

"Sauron!"

"Morgoth!"

Evil!Denethor considered. "Well, we could topple both."

"This may be the start of a beautiful friendship..." Evil!Thranduil smiled, as the Man and Elf wandered off (tossing their cue-cards at students), both looking disturbingly happy.

Thranduil leaned closer to Denethor. "Did not Miss Cam say we were to send those back from whence they came?"

"No, she said 'send them back unless you really want to create havoc' and then she winked and Gollum asked if she had something in her eye."

"Ah. Of course. Most observant of you, Lord Denethor. Perhaps experiencing real evil will stop students from writing us as perverted old bastards," Thranduil said, brightening. "Now, students, as you can see, even real Evil objects to the kind of activities you write us doing."

"Now, all of you write 'Father is not Evil spelt backwards' a hundred times in Westron and Sindarin," Denethor dictated. "All who get spelling and/or punctuation wrong will have a date with Miss Dwimordene's 'Bowling with Commas' this evening. When you are all done, I shall explain in great detail the difference between 'slightly mad' and 'totally horny' using charts."

Kat groaned as she reached for her notebook, then noted an all too-familiar shape a bit to the left of her.

"Jess?!"

Jess looked thoughtful and was scribbling in her notebook with great reverence. Kat just stared. Surely she was dreaming. Her sister was in MUSM, she would have no reason to show up at an OFUM class or any class she didn't have to, for that matter.

Carefully, Kat edged a piece of paper out of her notebook and scribbled a hasty note.
"Pass this to Jess, would you?" she asked Chelsea in a low voice.

The note passed along human, Hobbit, Elvish, Dwarvish, Entish, Maiar, Faery, Warg, Half-Elvish Half-Hobbit (it was best not to ask), Jedi (obviously, someone had mistaken Gollum for Yoda and ended up in the wrong Universe), Bug hands and finally into to Jess's, who barely raised an eyebrow.

The note came back the same way and Kat reached for it impatiently.

'I wish to learn' it simply said. Kat stared. No, no, this was obviously Evil!Jess, the opposite of all Jess-ness entailed. Or perhaps her sister had once again mistaken Thranduil for Legolas. Yeah! That was it!

"Oh, Miss Fiiiint..." Denethor called. "You are not writing. Shall we resume the rotten egg tossing? I so enjoyed that the other day."

Kat didn't get to answer, as Miss Cam stuck her head in at that moment, looking troubled.

"Lord Denethor! Why are Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor running around? I thought I made it clear they had to be sent back!"

"You... Winked..." Denethor said hesitantly.

"I had something in my eye! Those two will..."

The daylight flickered. A darker than black darkness settled for a moment, finally disappearing to reveal Thranduil and Denethor gone.

"Oh bloody hell," Miss Cam muttered, turning to see a smirking Evil!Denethor and Evil!Thranduil. "Where did you send them?"

"Well, so many fanfics seem to want to send the Fellowship and assorted other characters to high school," Evil!Denethor said innocently. "We just wanted to help."

Miss Cam sighed. "Great. That's just great. You sent them to a real Earth high school, didn't you?"

Evil!Thranduil beamed.

Miss Cam turned to the students, many already weeping at the thought of Legolas being on Earth while they were not. "Now see, students - *that's* real evil."
Welcome to Earth - Please Pass the Absinthe

Chapter Notes

This chapter was co-written with Meg and Will of PPC Despatch.

Something much like panic had broken out among students at OFUM.

Lust Objects were gone. Not only had Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor had their good counterparts sent to Earth, the Fellowship and other Hunky Men and Elves had vanished too. No one to ogle! (Unless your taste was into Witch-Walls and Ents, of course) A tragedy of unspeakable proportions.

In desperation, some students had turned to lusting lesser known characters, and Lindir had suddenly found himself chased by Sindahiriel, Celebrantiel and other Legolas-Lusters during a garden stroll. Of course, being an Elf of Rivendell, he had picked up a thing or two from Lord Elrond.

It had taken five hours for the students to get the Nuzgul out of their hair (they had nested), apparently.

"Poor Canon characters," Thundera Tiger muttered to Dwimordene, both looking grim. "A high school. They have never experienced such a horror."

"If you believe certain fanfic authors, they have," Dwimordene sniggered. "Aragorn, Legolas and Frodo all in school together despite age differences of millennia."

"I stood for Aragorn's education, thank you very much," Lord Elrond said sourly (even Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor had not dared to send him to Earth). "I have heard no complaints about my teaching skills here."

"That's because students value their lives and their present hair colour," Miss Cam muttered, entering. "Where did I leave my leather boots?"

"I think I saw a Nuzgul nibble at one," a clear voice rang from the door, sounding only slightly Australian.

"Meg. You made it."

The PPC Despatch worker walked in, her partner just a few steps behind. "It sounded like it was an emergency."

"No. Worse."

"How can it be worse than an emergency?" Will asked, staring at the gathering of mini-Balrogs with alarm. He had yet to attend one of the famous PPC/OFUM parties, where mini-Balrogs usually got drunk on bacon grease and became very affectionate. But he had heard the tales.

"Legolas. High school. Earth. *Hormones*," Miss Cam said simply.

"Oh dear," Meg commented. "This may be a little tricky."
Lord Elrond looked over at Meg, raising an eyebrow. "A *little* tricky? Miss Thornton, you appear to have a talent for understatement."

Meg shrugged. "Practice," she explained laconically. "So, I gather we're retrieving a lot of staff, on short notice, from a number of locations, yah?" There were nods from around the room.

"Do we know who's where yet?" Will asked, from where he was leaning against the doorframe.

"We've had some reports," replied Dwimordene. "It appears that the whole of the Steward's family are in L.A. Denethor and Thranduil have been dropped into a kindergarten, and we can't get a precise fix on Boromir or Faramir."

"Anyone else?" Miss Cam looked up from where she was lacing on her boots.

"The Dark Lords are at the headquarters of the United Nations." This bit of good news came from Thundera Tiger. Everyone who knew what the United Nations were winced. Lord Elrond and the mini-Balrogs looked bemused.

"Miss Cam, I think you get to fetch those two," Meg said. Will nodded emphatically.

Miss Cam gave a barely audible groan. "Fine. But you're going to France and separating the Hobbits from the cheese and truffles."

Meg looked troubled. "Do they have any idea what Earth food will do them? With added sugar and preservatives, it will be countdown to a bodily strike."

"They can take it out on the students when they came back," Miss Cam said dryly. "Perhaps it will help the students not thinking of them as cute, helpless, must be looked after babies who just happen to have big feet. Speaking of babies and the school they go to, I'll get Gimli and Legolas from the high school in Missouri. You can track down Aragorn and Gandalf, and we'll meet in L.A to get the rest home."

"Agreed," Meg replied. "Have you considered upon seeing Elves and Hobbits, some might be inclined to turn to fanfiction of the drool and fool kind?"

Miss Cam merely smiled. "Dwimordene, I believe Key and Sarah Johnson just fell down the mail tube if I'm judging the cries and bumps correctly. Perhaps you would deal with it while I'm away."

Miss Dwimordene smiled. "Why, certainly. I believe Aru was looking for his first student hunt."

Thundera Tiger nodded, her eyes glistening with tears. "Such a precious mini-Balrog, all grown up now."

Aru gave a hiss and set off in a run, nearly tripping over his whip at one point, but kept on running like it had never happened because he would never trip over his whip, no.

"Off we go then," Miss Cam said cheerfully. "Um, Meg, perhaps you can help your partner there. I think Mr. Bagginnse is trying to hug him into submission."

With a wink, she opened a portal and vanished.

After prising the minis free, Meg and Will set portal of their own and stepped through to France. They emerged in a picturesque French village.

"Thank gods for Universal Translators," muttered Meg. "Will, break out the reality checkers, let's
Will raised a pained eyebrow at the joke, but complied. "Looks like they're over that way," he said, pointing in the direction of what looked to be either a cafe or a pub. Or possibly both. "Trust hobbits to find food quickly."

They started walking off in the direction of the pub, aptly named "Le Poney Caracolant". As they got closer, they could hear the strains of "Ho ho ho to the bottle I go" being sung. Unfortunately, Merry and Pippin were already apparently somewhat the worse for wear, for the song was rather badly off key.

"Oh dear." The comment was from Meg, who had seen the scene inside the pub. Merry and Pippin were sitting there with pint mugs, and were singing as if they had all gone tone death (perhaps they had). Sam was looking somewhat owl-eyed, while Frodo was looking very much the worse for wear.

"Ish your turn to gi's a song, Frodo!" Merry slurred, as they came to the end of the final verse. "You got lotsa shongs, ol', ol'..

"Bilbo," supplied Pippin.

"Yeah, thatsh the name, ol' Bilbo! Wha' happ'n'd to ol' Bilbo anyway? He dishappeared or sumthin' dinne? No more shongs from Bilbo. Gorra have a shong from Frodo instead." Merry was definitely suffering from the affluence of incohlo. Or something similar. Either that, or he'd been sampling one of GreyLadyBast's brews before he had been sent here.

"I know a song." Frodo said, with the immense dignity that comes from being just drunk enough to know that one is drunk. The hobbit got up on top of the table, and started to sing (rather badly, and with long pauses while he hunted down the words) his song about the Man in the Moon.

"Oh dear," said Meg again. "What kind of cheese is that on the table, Will?"

Will looked. "Camembert, I'd say. Any particular reason?"

"Let's just say that I had no idea that the universe had worse taste in jokes than I did and leave it at that, shall we?" Meg looked just a bit pained. "Ah well, at least this one will be relatively straightforward to deal with. Give me five minutes with the landlord."

Will watched as Meg walked over to the bar, and had a quick and hasty chat with the landlord. Some money changed hands (or rather, a Visa card was produced and processed) and Meg returned.

"Right," she said. "Here's what we're going to do...

Meanwhile, Frodo, much to the amusement of his friends and relations, was dancing atop the table. Of course, being as drunk as a very drunk hobbit can be, he slipped, and fell. In the slipping and falling, the One Ring fell onto his finger.

"Oh no, not again!" cried Sam, who was the soberest of the lot of them. "Didn't we do this before?"

This set up a slightly startled babble amongst the staff of the inn, as well as amidst the four hobbits (Frodo had managed to get the Ring off by this point).

"I'm okay." Frodo was ignored.

"Hey, I'm just trying to say I'm fine here?" The argument continued on without him some more.
Frodo considered the situation. He could try and break up the argument, but that would require coordination, and his wasn’t really that active at the moment. He decided to retire toward a different table. Then he felt the hand fall on his shoulder.

"Come with me, Mr Underhill," said Will, picking the hobbit up bodily and carrying him up the stairs.

They came to a bedroom. Will kicked the door with one booted foot. The door was opened by Meg, who grinned triumphanty.

"Hey, it worked."

"Yes," grunted Will. "It worked. Now can I put him down somewhere? I never realised hobbits weighed so much."

"Sure," Meg replied. "Drop him on the bed. I'll whatsitise him while you keep an eye on the door. Expect the other three fairly soon. Or at least, once they've got their feet under them."

Meg removed something from her pack which looked like a battery-operated lint-remover which had been fed dodgy growth hormones for a bit, then riveted back together. She held this over Frodo's wrist, where it made a humming noise. The cartridge on the whatsit filled up.

"If that's you, Strider, I'm not frightened this time," Frodo murmured, as the sensations of drunkenness got replaced by the grandmother of all hangovers.

"It's not Strider," Meg responded. "It's the PPC. We've come to take you back to OFUM."

Frodo opened his eyes. The woman sitting there looked vaguely familiar. Or at least, he *thought* she looked familiar. He just couldn't remember who she was. The black coveralls were familiar, though. As was the lightning bolt on the sleeve. He looked over to the doorway. The other figure in the room was male, tall, wiry and blond. Ah. Now he remembered.

"Meg and Will, right? Despatch?" he asked.

"Got it in one," Will said. Whatever Will had been planning to ask next was interrupted by a rather irregular thumping on the door.

"Oi, let us in!" It was Sam's voice. Will opened the door, revealing Sam standing with fists clenched, Merry rather unsteadily holding a stool, while Pippin was carrying a battery-powered torch (candlesticks being rather hard to come by in this day and age).

"Let him go, or I'll - here, you're not Strider!"

After Meg had stopped giggling, the remaining hobbits were whatsitised. Meg went downstairs to settle up the hobbits food and drink tab, while Will got out his PPC-issue laptop, and a range of complex bits and pieces, and tinkered around. Quiet, exasperated swear words could be heard.

"I still can't get a fix on where Aragorn or Gandalf might be," he said to Meg, when she returned to the room.

"Oh, are you looking for them?" asked Pippin. Will nodded. "I think they wound up somewhere hot," the youngest of the hobbits said. "We all sort of vanished at once, and I think I heard a voice that said something about 'no trees there' when Aragorn and Gandalf went away."

Meg and Will looked at each other. It wasn't much, but it was a lead.
"Can you get a global scan out of those things?" Meg asked her colleague.

"I think so," Will replied. A few minutes later, after some more quiet swearing on Will's part, he got a result. "Looks like they're in Australia."

"Right," said Meg, looking over his shoulder at the display, as she dialled up a portal. "Everyone through."

Shooing the hobbits through the portal, they vanished from France.

******

Miss Cam emerged from the portal to find herself in the middle of a smog cloud.

"Bugger," she hissed, her lungs protesting wildly against be yanked from the fresh air of Middle-earth to the airborne sewage that was Earth air in a big city. It was much like going from sipping the finest French wine to having to drink your own urine.

It took a moment before she managed to spot the high school where Gimli and Legolas should be. It looked to be the right spot all right. A natural disaster seemed to have hit, judging from debris and broken windows. A natural disaster named teenage hormones.

"Oh dear," Miss Cam muttered as she stepped into the building, noting the human-shaped dents in the walls - probably evidence of a certain Dwarf in good shape. A few girls were pinned to the floor with arrows (through their clothes, though. Legolas was too kind) and squealing about hot, hot Elf being real, real.

"Hello," Miss Cam bent down to one of the teenage girls, smiling her best smile (which, incidentally, was also her worst smile). "Did you perchance see a rather dashing Elf come by this way? Had a friend with him you didn't notice till he kicked you half way across the hall?"

"That way," the girl whispered. "Um, could you help me get loose?"

"Where's the education in that?" Miss Cam replied and got up, careful to step on a few girls as she continued through the halls. You could never have too much education. Finally, she spotted a very energised Dwarf facing down a crowd of girls, Legolas looking on with a slightly bemused smile.

"Having fun?"

Legolas looked up. "I think Gimli is. He had some strange brown drought and has been very aggressive ever since."

"Great. Caffeine and sugar. Okay, girls, party over, get to class."

"But... But... I WANT THE CUTE POINTY-EARED HOTTIE!" a girl wailed.

"And I want peace, quiet and Elven wine," Legolas replied. "Unfortunately, it is impossible to have any of it as long as someone wails lyrics that would embarrass even the Witch-Wall every night in my vicinity. Did you know a good vintage of Elven wine can be ruined just by one verse of Dirrrty?"

The girl stared at him as if he had sprouted tentacles for a moment (probably something to do with the fact that he had spoken in Sindarin). Then she made one last dive-attempt and found herself suddenly under the boot of a very irate Dwarf.
"Excellent reflexes, Gimli," Miss Cam observed. "She didn't even get her feet off the ground. Now, I better get those toxins out of your system before..."

Gimli jumped.

"Oh, bugger."

The floor gave way with what almost sounded like 'why did you have to do that, you idiot Dwarf.' Or perhaps it was the Elf who said that.

*****

It was dry. Hot and dry. Very desolate. Very remote. There didn't seem to be any sign of human (or Elven, or even Orcish) civilization anywhere within sight. Oddly enough, Aragorn son of Arathorn, King Elessar Telcontar of Amor and Gondor, Envinyatar of the line of Elendil (also known as Estel, Thorongil and Strider) was rather enjoying himself.

"This place reminds me of Harad," he commented to Gandalf, who was standing beside him. "All the open skies, and the red sands."

"That's all very well," muttered the wizard rather grumpily, "but this heat is rather trying. Are you sure there are no trees anywhere in sight?"

"It does not look as though there are. There are a number of low bushes, but no trees. The climate must be too hot for them."

"It's too hot for me!" Gandalf was not enjoying himself. He had been in the middle of a rather pleasant nap when he had been forcibly removed to this world (which he was starting to suspect was Modern Earth). He had awoken to find Aragorn standing over him. Since then, they had been walking for three hours in this tediously uninteresting wilderness, without food, without water, and without any shelter from the pitiless sun.

Aragorn took a look at the wizard. For all that Gandalf was an immortal being, his physical form was subject to limitations, and one of these appeared to be that the wizard did not enjoy hot places very much. The ranger looked around for a suitable place to build a shelter. There was a stand of tall bushes (or what passed for trees, in this treeless place) not too far away, that would do. Aragorn pointed them out to Gandalf, and the pair of them made their way into the scant shade that was provided.

They had sat there for about ten minutes when the air shimmered before them, and four hobbits came wandering through a gap in the shimmering, wincing at the brightness of the sky. The hobbits were followed by a tall Man (about the same height as Aragorn himself) and a short woman (about an inch shorter than Gimli).

"Looks as though Pippin got it right," the man said, looking around him.

"Yup. Middle of the Nullabor," the woman concurred. "Hi, I'm Meg, that's Will; we're from the Despatch section of the PPC. We're here to get you both back to Middle Earth, and OFUM. Sound good?"

Gandalf nodded enthusiastically. Aragorn, on the other hand, looked somewhat regretful. Meg gave a small snort of laughter, and grinned up at the ranger.

"I'll ask Miss Cam whether you can come back for a visit, if you'd like?" she offered. "Right now, though, we've got to meet up with her. She's busy getting everyone else collected together."
Aragorn nodded. "I would appreciate the return visit. This looks to be an interesting place."

Meg looked over at Gandalf. "Would you like a return trip as well?" The look on the wizard's face said it all, and it was a rather comprehensive and emphatic "NO!"

The portal was set, and everyone walked on to the rendezvous with the rest of the group.

******

It wasn't a day like any other at the UN. Not quite. The insults were usual. The two guests were not.

"I move to declare Sauron the biggest git to be born in Gitland of gitty gits."

"I veto that!" Sauron boomed. "I move to declare Morgoth a witless worm with mud for brains and the charisma of a piranha with teeth rot."

"I veto that!"

The other delegates were looking at each other, clearly wondering just how much they'd had to drink last night for two armoured things to appear in the middle of a session and declare the world now under evil rule. The problem had started when the self-proclaimed Evil Overlords has disagreed on what to name Earth - Sauronia or Morgothistan.

"Fighting gives Sméagol a headache, precious," a creature said sadly. It jumped onto the main table. "Why do they fight, precious?"

"Because that one is a moron and a disgrace for evil," Morgoth hissed.

"Hah! I only followed what you taught me!"

Morgoth paused. "You remember what I taught you?"

"Of course. Best years of my life. I mean, I was planning to usurp you all along and... And..."

"Just like I taught you," Morgoth said, voice thick. "Remember when I cursed Húrin?"

"How could I forget? You taught me where to poison a mind and bring the most misery to the family. You were like a father!"

"You were like a son!"

"Tell Sméagol all about it, precious," Gollum said sympathetically.

When the doors slammed open some time later, it revealed two Dark Lords hugging, the representative of the US crying on the shoulder of the representative of China, Russia's representative drinking French wine, France's representative drinking Russian vodka and a sing-a-long in Arabic.

"Oh dear," Miss Cam exclaimed. "The air pollution on Earth must have caused brain damage to Sauron and Morgoth! They've created peace!"

The Elf and the Dwarf merely stared.

"Legolas, pinch me."

"Alas, I cannot. I'm clearly hallucinating. Sauron and Morgoth would never hug. Would they?"
"I'm afraid to even go there," Gimli replied. The two shared a terrified look as their mind did indeed go there.

The two Dark Lords had suddenly spotted the newly entered and jumped apart quick as lightning.

"Fish-breath," Sauron muttered.

"Oliphaunt-face," Morgoth countered.

"Come on," Miss Cam said, a smirk on her face. "Gollum, put down the UN flag. It's not your precious."

The UN hardly noticed them leave, all representatives singing merrily and passing around the absinthe. They didn't even notice one of the bottles of the blue drink vanishing.

"Gollum," Miss Cam said, shaking her head. "That stuff is lethal."

"Preciousss..." Gollum simply replied, stepping though the portal. "Ow! Bright!"

LA shone at them, sunlight reflected off bright surfaces. A moment later, another portal flashed open.

"Meg. Will. Any troubles?"

"A rather large VISA bill," Will observed. "They sure drink a lot for being so small."

The hobbits (wearing what looked like very new sunglasses) merely groaned.

"You?" Meg asked.

"The UN is drunk and Missouri has a very newly built high school." Miss Cam shrugged. "I had the Dwarves rebuild it after Gimli accidentally brought the old one down. Convinced the principal it had to be done, due to asbestos and that the asbestos fumes may have caused some hallucinations. Right. Any idea where the lovely Boromir and Faramir are?"

Will gave his laptop a nasty look as he brought it up, fiddling a bit while the hobbits huddled behind Morgoth and Sauron (who were not acknowledging the each others existence) to hide from the bright sun.

"Thranduil and Denethor are just down the hill, Faramir and Boromir are... Um. Oops."

"What?"

"I think they're on the set of Big Brother's Nude Survivor Wedding by America, the newest reality show."

"What's a 'reality show'?" Aragorn asked, looking genuinely interested.

"I'll show you some later," Miss Cam said absentmindedly. "We better get the brothers of Gondor first. Who knows what they have to endure."

*****

"Welcome to Big Brother's Nude Survivor Wedding by America, where you get to watch the contestants in our special Survivor style house and then decide who get to marry! Our contestants think they are here to win a million dollars. Imagine their surprise when their real prize is a nude marriage!"
The crowd cheered wildly as the host smiled, looking like a Colgate commercial. The crowd cheered more as the second host walked out, smiling as well. However, no one was looking at her smile.

"I see them," Meg said in a low voice. "Second row, Faramir is taking notes while Boromir looks a bit bored. Must have been Faramir's idea."

"He did want to study the human mind to better understand fangirls," Miss Cam replied.

"And he chose a reality show?" Will asked, shaking his head. "He'll think we're all mental."

"Sauron, Morgoth, make yourselves useful and start the fire alarm, would you?" Miss Cam suggested. "Let's get out of here before they recruit us all for the Jerry Springer show."

A few meteorites and fireballs later, a few hundred hysterical audience members were telling the National Enquirer that God's wrath had struck and that God liked to laugh diabolically a lot and wear spiky armour.

The National Enquirer had a lot of interesting news that issue, in fact. The UN had made some very strange resolutions, one demanding absinth be served at all diplomatic meetings. A Missouri high school had been rebuilt by aliens (led by a very hot pointy eared alien with some odd looking dogs that were very vicious and drank cola a lot). A kindergarten in LA had also been visited by aliens, who had come with the Message of Fatherly Love and Learn-To-Spell-Our-Names-Right-By-Eru, which was clearly some kind of coded message. Strange tracks had been found in Australia, clearly also aliens. In France, a lot of cheese had mysteriously vanished and strange, large footprints had been found ('Cheese-eating Yeti comes to France!' the paper claimed).

And somewhere in Missouri, a girl turned on her computer to write about the hot, hot Elf and Galadriel and Elrond's daughter who could resist the One Ring. She'd had the most wonderful daydream while sick from asbestos fumes (or so they told her).

In the shadows, someone watched with keen interest.

"Riverdale?" Evil!Thranduil scoffed. "Perhaps we could take her on a trip there and dangle her from the cement balcony she loves to write so about."

"And toss her in Galadriel's mirror, suddenly made of the Four Elemental Crystals," Evil!Denethor suggested.

"I never knew work at the Enrolment Office could be this evil."

"Not to mention fun."

And they laughed and laughed, had some absinthe, and laughed again. The shadows laughed along, swiping some absinthe as well.

Some jobs are just *that* good.
The night was slightly chilly, but the sky was clear as glass, as if a window to the stars. A soft humming could be heard far off; Elves singing to Varda.

It was almost like living in a dream, Jess thought lazily, just as Sam had remarked once. Or was it Frodo? She couldn't quite remember. She'd have to read the book again.

She was still quite amazed that she had managed to read it at all. And that she had actually enjoyed it. Who could have known books were actually enjoyable to read? Kat never spoke of them as enjoyable, just as a point of pride having been read. A show off.

Beyond the darkness, a thin line of grey had begun to appear on the horizon. Dawn would come. There really was no point in sleeping, given that Sauron and Morgoth's morning fireballs would probably come soon (although, after returning from Earth they had been acting most strange and the weather had suddenly become less meteorite-ish).

Pushing away the book, Jess got up, checked that the cold fish was still in Kat's bed (a gift from Gollum), got dressed, fed Argo some bacon (she'd learned to keep bacon around to appease minis. It worked wonders. She hadn't been a cricket ball for days) and began the slow trek from the dormitories of OFUM to the gardens.

Stepping into the hallway, she was greeted by loud snoring. Kazra of course - still sound asleep in the chandelier due to a certain unfortunate bat-wing inducing bagel incident.

"Poor chick," Jess mumbled softly. Loud voices could be heard from Norma's room as she passed, and she resisted temptation to join in.

"Elves!" Norma exclaimed.

"Men!" Cassie countered.

"Elves!"

"Men! Okay, rock, scissors, paper?"

"You're on."

Of course, the losing side would claim cheating, as always. It was a bit of a morning ritual in the rooms with one student of each preference - Men or Elf. The hobbit lusters would probably have joined in, had they not been too busy in the mornings eating two breakfasts.

Sarah's door cracked open

"Morning, Sarah!"

"Shhh! Have you seen a really, really big spider around?"

"Um, no..."

Sarah shuddered. "I accidentally stepped on Shelob's five hundred and sixteenth cousin. She's out to
"I told you not to wear those high leather boots," Lex's voice called from inside the room. "The Elves in Black Leather will not let you join just because you look good in black leather."

"Did someone say Elves in Black Leather?" Teri exclaimed, bolting out of her room. "Is it Glorfindel?"

"No."

"Aw."

Managing only barely not to lapse into brainlessness and luster-state, Jess quickly moved on as a conversation of which Elf had the better behind in a black leather outfit started (Legolas, beyond any doubt. No, no, wrong thoughts).

Dew still clung to the grass, and Sam could be heard singing softly as she stepped into the gardens. His fangirls had to be asleep still, for there seemed to be no one else around.

"Good morning, Sam!" she called cheerfully.

There was a fast blur in front of her eyes that may have been a rake, then a throbbing pain spreading from her head to her toes.

"Ow," she heard herself say, seemingly rushing to embrace the ground. For a moment all was black, before sight returned to her with too much light and vigour. Sam's face entered her vision, a moment later Frodo's.

"I don't think she was one of your lusters," Frodo remarked. The hobbit looked rather content, nibbling on what smelled like mushroom.

"I gathered that from her not lunging at me like a Sackville-Baggins at Mister Bilbo," Sam replied. "She startled me. I am frightfully sorry, miss..."

"Jess. Ow. My mistake," Jess whimpered as she tried to get her body to let go of the ground.

"Was it Boromir that suggested hanging bells on all the students so we could hear them coming?" Frodo asked leisurely, attention on Sam.

"Yes. But Faramir wisely pointed out it would drive us all mad."

"Don't worry about me, I'm fine," Jess muttered, feeling her head. A large bump was already beginning to form, promising to be sore for a good while.

"Should you not be in bed suffering from a hangover?" Sam asked, picking up his rake again and eyeing it for any damage. "I thought I heard Gandalf mention your shrieking had interrupted his nap."

"That was Kat," Jess smirked, pain momentarily forgotten. "I managed to get her to drink some of the more interesting Ent droughts."

The effects really had been most interesting. She hadn't thought her sister capable of actually trying to spider climb up to Faramir's window. The wall Kat had climbed had been most impressed - unfortunately for her, it was the Witch-Wall.

All in all, Jess 6 - Kat 4.
"You git!"

The hobbits and Jess all turned, facing the all too familiar sight of two Dark Lords quarrelling. Yet, there was something off with the scene. Jess couldn't quite put her finger on it.

"You're as sexy as an eyeball," Morgoth snorted. "No wonder you have less lusters than I, the Ancient Enemy of the Elves, Evil in the sexiest form known to Man. And Elves."

"I was an eyeball!" Sauron countered.

"And your sex-appeal never recovered!"

The two paused unexpectedly, looking around, failing to notice the hobbits and Jess in the dim light of the not-yet-morning.

"We are alone." Sauron said, his voice now without any hint of anger. It sounded more awed. "I have acquired the tapes of endless Britney Spears / Mariah Carey duets and the urple glasses."

"Excellent. It is all as planned." Morgoth gave Sauron an affectionate pat on the shoulder in a very manly fashion. "The students are sound asleep. Let us go wake them. I have an excellent new fireball that leaves the smell of rotting hubba bubba and a ringing sound in your ears that sound like the music for Tetris."

Sauron seemed to grin widely, but as they began to leave the garden, a whispered "dimwit" could be heard, echoed by a just as whispered "mould breath."

"Well, I never..." Jess muttered, then realising she was alone in the garden. The hobbits had left her, and the smell from the kitchens told her why. First breakfast of the morning.

Frowning, she turned, and walked smack into an immovable object.

"Ow!" she complained, tilting her head upwards to stare into deeper stars than the stars of the sky.

"Are you not up a bit early?" Haldir asked. "If you are here to tackle Legolas, you have the wrong one."

"Eh?" She managed to tear her eyes off Haldir ('must not lust. Must not. Am trying to be intellectual. Bookish. Must not lust after Elves. Okay, maybe just once more') to see Legolas of Gondolin give her a merry wave. "Oh. Um, why is he holding a gecko?"

"It spawned during the night. It has the souls of all animal companions of fanfictions and the rage of a thousand bulls at the abuses inflicted upon it. I would not go near it if I were you."

The gecko gave her a long, hard glare. It couldn't really be upset over her writing in this little part dove, part tiger as an animal companion, could it? It was just.

"Ow."

"Oh dear," Legolas of Gondolin said even more cheerfully. "I must have lost my grip on the gecko. How clumsy of me. Here, allow me to remove it from your behind."

"You are not related to Elrond, are you?" Jess muttered, whimpering slightly as the gecko let go of its prize.

Legolas merely smiled mysteriously ('must not lust. Must not lust.'), or perhaps it was amusement. Hard to tell with Elves.

"We were singing a lament for our dignity," Haldir said sadly. "It is the weekly meeting of Why Me? Oh Eru, Why *Me*? (WMOEWM), a gathering for those of us who are forced into the fates of Lust Objects by cruel coincidences."

"Sharing a name with an Elf played by Orlando Bloom," Legolas of Gondolin said even more sadly.

"Dying prettily in the arms of Aragorn," Haldir added. "It is not even Canon! I am not important! I am just an Elf of Lothlórien, neither famous nor powerful. Why me?"

"I'm not even named," came a clear voice. "Figwit, my lusters call me. That's not even an Elven name."

"I think it's... Nice," Jess offered lamely. The Elf gave her a hard glare.

"Some of you could not even name an Elf even if Manwë came and sat on your heads. Do Elven names sound the same as normal Earth names?"

"Um..."

"No, they do not! So why are Invented Elves then given Earth names? Are you named Thaurwen? I think not."

The other Elves chuckled, soon getting lost in a discussion in their own language. Laughter trickled into her ears as Jess walked on, and she smiled. She couldn't help looking back for one last, lusting glance ('Mmm, Elves') and...

"Ow."

Soft silk and hard body greeted her as she walked right into Lord Elrond, and for a moment she was sure This Was It. She would surely disappear never to be found again until nine thousand nine hundred and nine years had passed. She was in short doomed.

Then she noticed Lord Elrond wasn't looking at her at all. He was staring into the void, as if having discovered that the stars spelled out 'No, not nine. Ten!' and had gone horrified beyond belief.

"Lord Elrond?"

"Is that you, naneth?" Elrond sounded a bit like a child whose favourite ice cream had just been stolen by the next-door bully. "You sing with the waves. So pretty. So bright. Such as my Evenstar. I would never rape my Evenstar."

"Are you okay?" Jess asked before she could think. Of course he wasn't. He'd just rambled about waves singing and rapes. Never a good sign.

"So many children," Elrond said tonelessly. "So many tens. So many Sues. So much evil. I am so evil..."

"Okay then..."

"Yes, Ewandughwen, I shall arrange a marriage between you and Legolas. Because Mirkwood needs an heir. Yes, an heir. To join Imladris and Mirkwood into one glorious cement heaven."

'I told you book-reading would get you in trouble,' her Inner Luster said darkly.
'Oh, shut up,' her brain shot back.

'Although Elrond has a nice behind...'

'Shut up!'

'Elven Cultural icon, that. How come I never noticed that before?'

'SHUT UP!'

'You're just mean.'

"I'm going to throttle my Inner Luster," Jess swore quietly. "After I ogle Legolas one last time. Just one. Just... Ow."

"Oh, sorry," Gimli said cheerfully, seeming to have popped out of a hole somewhere, for she had neither heard nor seen him coming. "Did that rock- hard bread hit you when you spoke of my dignified friend in a lusting manner? So clumsy of me. Umm... Lord Elrond?"

"He's..."

"Bugga bugga," Elrond said softly.

"...sick. Come on," Jess said gently, taking Elrond's hand. "Let's find Miss Cam and. Um, fix you?"

Tomorrow, she was going to sleep in, Jess decided. Mornings were cursed. They were evil. Work of the Devil. A sin.

And then the fireballs started.

Mornings were indeed evil.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks Millikov.

And behold, a great debate started on whether it should be 'ogle Legolas' or ogle at Legolas'

Yea, and verily spake the angel, who was the Voice of God, named the Metatron, and sayeth:

Yes.
Into Fire and UnCanon (part one)

Chapter Notes

The badfics our heroes travel to in this part, and upcoming parts, are all used *with* permission and all but one are in fact written specifically for this. I had almost 30 entries in this ‘For Lord Elrond’s Sanity’ contest, and I thank all those who bothered to participate. Alas, I could only use a few, but rest assured, they were all horrible. Hopefully, all entries will be put up on my website when all parts are done, so the pain can be shared.

This chapter features: Keeping it in the Family by Aralanthiriel

Even the clouds hung gloomily as Elves, Men, a Hobbit, a Dwarf and a few grieving Elrond mini-Balrogs gathered at the steps of the staff section side entrance, all armed and grim. (And a few students were about as well, hoping the Elves and men were dressed in black leather. Unfortunately, Vikka and Sage had never found out, as they had passed out from knocking their heads together when both tried to look up from their hiding place at the same time.)

“I have summoned you here to answer a grave threat,” Miss Cam said, and Lina clutched her small axe (a gift from Gloin), trying to look deadly and ready to face threats. It wasn’t an easy pose. “Lord Elrond has fallen into shadow.”

“Bugga,” Lord Elrond said, his voice monotone and eyes distant. Celebrían gave him a small pat, her eyes determined and hard. She had apparently raided the Rivendell armoury, and carried knives as well as Elrond’s sword.

Vikki, Lord Elrond’s Bailiff, could be heard distantly sobbing into her handkerchief. Some were taking the loss of Elrond’s court judgements harder than others (Some students, however, had thrown a party to celebrate, but sadly got insanely drunk. Asuka and Midnight Enchanter had been caught dancing on Lord Elrond’s bench – and promptly discovered that High King Gil-galad handed out even worse sentences than Elrond for contempt of court).

“We think it is a combination of Possession Sue and shell shock. We’ve been unable to reverse it. The option I suggest is radical, but may be our only chance. You must take Lord Elrond into the deep chasms of fanfic, show him the worst crimes against Canon that you can stomach. If our luck holds, his anger will boil over and sanity will be restored.”

“Poor Elrond,” Lina muttered, clutching Gimli’s hand harder. She hoped such a fate would never come to him. How would she handle it?

“You eight have been chosen for your skill, your slight less appeal to hormones and your willingness to subject yourself to far greater evils than this world has ever seen. I now ask you – will you walk into fire and bad characterisation? Are you willing to face the most twisted versions of you, your friends and your world to return sanity to Lord Elrond?”

“I will,” Thranduil said gravely. “You will not object to slight… Shall we say… Corrections, were I to see a very grave misinterpretation of my son in action?”
“Collateral damage,” Miss Cam replied. “Not that I or the Headmaster are encouraging it in any way at all. I’d bring more arrows, though, Your Majesty. More really sharp arrows. Laced with poison.”

“I will,” Denethor said. “I come for Gondor and the glory of the Stewards, to stand against the shadow of Hormone Inflicted World of Lust and Screwed Canon.”

“I will,” Bilbo said, stepping forward. “For Elrond, as kind as summer. I stand for the Shire and my lad Frodo. Silly fangirls. He is not a weeping lily. I would never adopt a weeping lily.”

“I will,” Gimli said, stepping up to Bilbo. “I am very eager to meet Grumpy, my distant cousin who so often gets mistaken for me.”

“I will,” Lina added. She gave Gimli a smile. “I know the minds of fanfic writers and I’m not letting him go there alone.”

“I will,” Turin Turambar said, patting his sword. “Silly Sues of Arrda think they know misery? I will show them misery.”

“I will,” Radagast the Brown said. “I have always wanted to study these beasts named Sue in their natural habitat. Do they wander in herds of prefer the solitary life in their marked territory?”

“I will,” Celebrían said. “I speak for my husband also. We will go. We must.”

“Pretty concrete of Imladris,” Elrond muttered. “All the way to the sky…”

“It is decided then.” Miss Cam sighed. “Nine Seekers. May your minds be steel and your hearts true to Canon, for you are walking into Lust and Lies. All the wishes of the Canon people of the world go with you. Now, excuse me, I have a rather unfortunate case of disfigurement and gelding in the stables to deal with. Silly Sue pretending to be staff. Oh, and Sarail and Losthuniel – get off the roof and stop ogling the Nine Seekers, or I’ll sic Denethero on you.”

“Too000 laaaaate…” came the slight wailing.

“I didn’t know humans could fly,” Radagast observed.

"We can’t," Turin replied. “As that student is about to find out just about… Now.”

It was quite an impressive fall, Lina had to admit, flailing arms and solid ‘thunk’ and all. Even Celebrían brightened for a moment, before determinedly setting a portal. It opened with a yawn, flickering blue against the pale grey of the morning.

“We will not be seen unless we so choose,” Celebrían explained. “This is a world where Canon is ignored, and so we will be as wraiths to it, until we directly influence it.”

“Until I - hypothetically, of course – were to grab, say, a Legolas-Lusting Sue by her hair, swing her around and toss her into the nearest spider infested cave?” Thranduil asked, his eyes gleaming.

“That would do it.”

Lina grasped Gimli’s hand as they walked forward, clutching her axe harder in her other hand. Danger and hormones awaited – she should know, they were walking into what she had once been.

May Eru have mercy on them all.

*****
"Oh, Brego," he moaned, stroking the horse's mane. Brego used to be a mighty horse-lord of Rohan, and he and Thorongil enjoyed many nights of passion together. Unfortunately, a jealous Gálmód cast a spell on Brego, turning him into a horse. But Thorongil always thought that Brego had animal magnetism, and this did not deter him in the least.

Abruptly, Brego pulled away from Thorongil, and stared at him with an accusing look in his eyes.

"Alas Brego!" confessed Thorongil. "I fear that our love will soon be ending, for my heart now belongs to another. Nay, I will not divulge his identity, for I know of your wrath. But he loves me not, and for now, I would take comfort in your company. Do not hate me, dearest Brego, but let me ride you once more!"

The wind hissed; a moment later, the air seemed to thicken and the Nine Seekers stepped into Arrda with a groan.

"Hmmm. This looks much like Middle-earth," Denethor observed. "Is that not Aragorn? By the horse there? What is he doing? It looks like…"

The Steward’s words trailed away. He, like the eight others, merely stared.

“I know humans love their horses, but…” Bilbo shook his head. He took up the Urple Book (the stories of Arrda, all gathered) and flipped it open. Like any good magic book, it opened on the right page.

“Apparently, the horse is really Aragorn’s ex-lover made into a horse for some obscure reason,” the Hobbit observed. “Aragorn’s about to return to Rivendell and… Oh, poor Elrond.”

Even as he spoke, the scene started to change, becoming Rivendell, but a Rivendell with a slight difference.

“Oh God, it looks like Hugh Hefner’s mansion!” Lina exclaimed, wincing as UnCanon Lord Elrond was slithering up to UnCanon Aragorn, greeting him and then making a pass at him within a heartbeat.

"Lord Elrond, no!” UnCanon Aragorn protested.

"Why now do you hesitate? If it is for the Evenstar, then you pine for her in vain. She has already been soul-bonded with her brothers for the past few millennia."

"It is not that which ails me, my lord. But I already love another."

"Ah, Estel, have you learned nothing of the Elvish ways? All hearts are free to love as many as we desire. It is as Eru intended, lovely Elfstone."


UnCanon Elrond was paying her no mind, already sweeping Aragorn up in his arms and carrying him off to the bedroom.

“That is a very interesting mating ritual,” Radagast muttered, making hasty notes on a parchment. “The alpha male carries the other male, perhaps trying to attract a female by showing superior strength and no fear of intimacy. Very interesting.”

“Who does Aragorn love in this – this foulness that disguises itself as fanfic?” Denethor asked. “Legolas, I suppose.”
“No,” Bilbo said brightly. “You, my Lord Denethor.”

“What?!”

“You come visit him in Rivendell later this night, make hot manly love and leave him. Then he does meet Legolas….”

“I knew it,” Thranduil said darkly.

“… and Gollum too, apparently.” Bilbo sniggered. “It’s a good thing I never met this Gollum. He wouldn’t have wanted to play riddles, but strip poker. Where was I? Oh, yes. At the council he meets Boromir, so he dumps Legolas, but Legolas is comforted by Haldir, Rumil, Orophin *and* Celeborn, lucky elf that he is.”

“I’m going to kill him,” Thranduil muttered, though just who he referred to was hard to tell.

“Then, actually sticking to Canon, Boromir dies; Aragorn returns to the White City and claims his bride.”

Celebrían relaxed. “I knew Arwen would save him and set things right.”

“Not Arwen,” Bilbo said, sounding torn between amusement and horror. “Denethor. They get married and recite self-composed poetry to each other.”


There was a brief silence. Elrond’s face twitched, but he made no other signs of having contact with reality.

“Right,” Denethor said, straightening. “Lady Celebrían, would you excuse me one moment? I have to go meet myself with a sharp, pointy object.”

Celebrían seemed not to be listening. She had already reached for a torch.

“I knew we made Rivendell mostly out of wood for a good reason,” she said brightly.

“On second thought…” Denethor said, eyes gleaming. “I can kill myself later.”
Into Fire and UnCanon (part two)

Chapter Notes

This chapter visits the horrible, horrible worlds of:

Sylvana Sylverbranch by Nath

The Blue Rose by Ruby (aka The Evil Old Woman)

Jaydie by Anemicfairy

And yes, they’re all *intentional* badfic written for this specific purpose, if that is some comfort to you.
Reference to Discworld within.

Flames flickered and burned brightly, as if the fire itself relished the chance to burn down this particular Rivendell.

“It burnssss, precious,” Gollum said, admiring the view. He’d climbed on top of Miss Maureen (the newest security detail. Being an anthro Warg she was a natural Lurker in the Shadows, and sharp teeth made her a natural for giving out instant punishment, too) to get a better view of the show in the palantír.

“It looks almost like the fire is shaping itself into a certain obscure hand gesture,” Miss Pika observed, quickly grabbing a pen and paper to sketch.

“Most interesting,” Miss Cam muttered, adjusting the rope on the large bag a few feet away (which was trying to squirm away with great vigour).

“Last night’s catch?” Legolas asked leisurely, causing a large ‘squee’ to come from the bag.

“Mmm. Anais and Amariel were trying to steal Elrond’s silk robes to impress whomever they had the droolings for. Raven and Jasey unfortunately mistook Smaug for a safe hiding place from the Warq.” Miss Cam shook her head. “How hard is it to spot a large dragon?”

“Hmpft!” came the protest from the bag, which was probably meant to be ‘bloody hard in the dark, you evil you!’

“They’re moving on,” Legolas observed, reaching for more Elven wine.

“Lord Elrond looking any better?”

“His eyes bulged.”

“Well, that’s something,” Miss Cam reflected. “Now, where are they off to? I think I see Elrond… Why is he wearing a crown?”

*******

Rivendell-in-ashes disappeared behind them as they wandered into the portal to find… Rivendell
again.

“Does this place have some weird magnetic pull on badfics?” Bilbo asked, shaking his head sadly.

“Equal to that of Mirkwood, sadly,” Thranduil replied. “What does the Urple Book say? When are we?”

“I think *King* Elrond is about to answer that one for you…”

"Nine companions. You'll be the Fellowship of the Ring," King Elrond said, and the whole counsel got up to go get food to eat: they were hungry after the long meeeting.

Suddenly a door slammed shut and everyone sat down again as Sylvana Sylverbranch, the King’s second daugher strode into the council. An expression of terrible anger was painted on her loverly features, and she walked over to Elrond and slammed her fist on the table.

“Oh. No.” Celebrían clenched her teeth, looking ready to charge with her bare hands and kill. “It’s Her.”


“I never gave birth to… That,” Celebrían muttered, clutching Elrond’s hand. “My love, I am so sorry.”

“Can we kill her yet?” Turin asked, looking bored.

"Daddy!! How could you send the of without me? You know I'm the best fighter!"


“More like the Outing Fellowship,” Denethor murmured.

The Sue pouted, and King Elrond the UnCanon seemed to cave at once, causing the real Elrond to let out something close to a hiss. But nothing more.

The Sue had meanwhile found her horse, a great steed named Morgoth (black of course) and dressed appropriately in red silk and a very confused Fellowship of Ten set off, Bill the Pony trying to trip Morgoth the Horse the whole way.

“I always knew that pony could sense evil,” Gimli said as they followed a few steps behind, not needing to hold a great pace as the Sue stopped every two feet to brag about her fighting skills. Three of the UnCanon Fellowship turned temporarily into mini-Balrogs, and came begging for bacon. Lina couldn’t help but feel sorry for them. All the horridness they had to endure… Poor little evil flaming demons.

Skipping the attempt to climb the pass at Caradhras (probably the Sue’s doing, snow was *murder* on red silk), the Outing Fellowship reached Moria, to Gimli’s delight.

His delight turned sour as soon as he spotted the Doors of Moria, now decorated with fruit pictures and opening to the call of “Melon” (by the Sue, of course).

“Seems Moria has turned into a fruit emporium,” Bilbo explained, reading from the Urple Book. “Wonder if they’ll have mushrooms…”

“I’m going to kill her,” Gimli said between clenched teeth. “I will beat her to death with a branch, I
swear I will.”

“Better do it quickly. Balrog is about to arrive, and unfortunately not only take Gandalf to his death, but you as well, my dear Dwarf.”

“What?” Lina tightened her hold on the axe without even thinking. “I’m going to kill her. I’m going to grease her in bacon and feed her to the Balrog and *then* I’ll get nasty.”

“That’s my girl,” Gimli said proudly.

“I think something has happened to Gandalf,” Radagast interrupted. “He looks thinner and is wearing a hat with ‘Wizzard’ on.”

“Rincewind!” Lina gasped, recognising the shape. It was hard not to.

The Discworld wizard looked at her, at the great flaming monster about to drag him to his death, at the Dwarf about to fall with him – and sighed.

“Not again.”

Down the Balrog, the ‘wizzard’ and the Dwarf went, but they all looked rather relieved. Falling to their deaths, they might be, but at least there was no Sue waiting at the bottom.

“Poor Rincewind,” Lina said with feeling. “I wonder how many trips he’s made to Middle-earth because the author can’t spell ‘wizard’?”

“Kill…” Elrond muttered. His eyes bulged, and some colour had definitely returned to his cheeks.

“We can intercept them at the exit,” Gimli suggested. “The Sue just led them the wrong way, as the light that way showed her highlights more. I know several loose boulders just above the exit that need just a wee push… And if anyone miraculously survives that, we’ll just have to kill them *personally*.”

“I want the horse,” Turin called. “At last, revenge on Morgoth.”

“Won’t revenge on Morgoth seem rather hollow as it’s just a horse that happens to share his name?” Lina asked as they trudged after Gimli.

“No.”

“Aa.”

*****

“What’s happening?” Miss Thundera Tiger called, entering with a tail of minis behind. “I was caught up with Eaphen D'Orelne'neg. Frodo glued her to the One Rink when she tried to steal his jacket to hug. Did I miss much?”

“Oh, the whole Outing Fellowship has been rather nicely smashed, making out the letters ‘Up Yours’ I believe. Very nice crushing art there,” Miss Cam replied, admiringly. “Wine? Make yourself comfortable.”

“Don’t mind if I do. Is that Bill the Pony helping Turin chase a black horse?”

“Yes.”
“Ah.”

“This Sue did not go after me,” Legolas said brightly. “Is there hope? Am I out of fashion?”

“I wouldn’t count on it,” Miss Cam muttered, eyeing the palantir. “I think I see you wandering around Mirkwood looking for a girl crying. You know what that means.”

“Oh. No.”

*****

Somewhere in the forest, Legolas heard a girl crying. The trees and underbrush were too thick to see and big spiderwebs were everywhere, he moved cautiously because the spiders might here him and tie him up in the webs and eat him. But he couldn’t tell were the sound was coming from. He looked all around him and he looked under bushes and in hollow trees, and finally he looked up and saw some long wavy blonde hair hainging from a spider-web.

“Home,” Thranduil declared even before they had come out of the portal. “I can smell it.”

“I can smell a Sue,” Denethor remarked. “Oh, look. There she is. She’s all helpless and Legolas is about to save her. How highly original and freshly thought of.”

“Who’s this one?” Lina asked Bilbo, who was beginning to hold the Urple Book much like you’d hold a rattlesnake.

“Orlanda Bloomflower. Eyes as blue as turquoise and she has a glow like noonlight.”

“ Noonlight?”

“ Noonlight.”

Thranduil looked like he might have a minor fit, eyes bulging and a vein in his forehead throbbing dangerously. UnCanon Legolas had just asked Orlanda Bloomflower to marry him, and the Sue had accepted.

“Love at first sight, otherwise known as ‘any excuse for sex right away’, ” Radagast noted. “Obviously a curse set on certain good-looking Elves by Morgoth, forcing them to endure Sue after Sue after Sue.”

“Even he is not that evil,” Turin replied, looking mighty pleased still. “One dead Morgoth, one more to go.”

“Orlanda. Sounds like an airport,” Lina mused. She seemed to remember having changed planes there.

“I’d like to land a few things on her for certain,” Thranduil muttered. “Why are they trying to walk into that strange mountain?”

“That’s your marble palace,” Bilbo replied. “You have a gold throne as well, as you can see.”

“Why is a giant cotton ball sitting on it then?”

“That’s you.”

There was a long, horrified silence as all took in the sight of an Elf millennia old – and showing it. Apparently, Immortal in this world didn’t apply to looks of Characters the Sue detested.
“Shall I take you out of your misery?” Denethor asked, readying his sword.

“No need,” Bilbo said slowly. “King Thranduil the UnCanon dies soon thereafter when choking on a pancake.”

“I die from choking on a PANCAKE?!”

“Yes.”

“YOU WANT TO MARRY A GIRL YOU FOUND IN A SPIDERWEB??!! NO WAY!!! YOU’LL MARRY A PRINCESS OR YOU’LL GET OUT YOU LAZY BUM!!!” Thranduil the UnCanon yelled as the Nine Seekers stood in horrified silence. The UnCanon King looked by now like a very angry giant cotton ball. The Sue was already weeping.

“He thinks Arwen is a bitch for not marrying Legolas,” Bilbo muttered, shaking his head. “He wants a princess for his son.”

The Sue got up, running as she wept, running past Legolas and... Smack into Elrond’s raised arm. The arm didn’t budge an inch, almost as if it was made of granite. The Sue whimpered, her turquoise eyes rolled to the back of her head and she went down like a sack of rocks.

Lord Elrond smirked, but said nothing.

“He’s recovering,” Turin said, slight admiration in his voice. “Nice aiming. Held out the arm just at the right moment so she saw it coming, yet was unable to stop. Very nice.”

“Intruders!” UnCanon Thranduil called, staring at the Nine Seekers. “Intruders in the throne room! Appearing out of thin air! Help me, I’m old and helpless!”

“Oh, do shut up,” Thranduil said, aiming and firing an arrow within a heartbeat. “I’m not old, I’m vintage. Like fine wine, better as the years pass.”

UnCanon Thranduil looked slightly baffled at the arrow suddenly poking through his chest, and sounded much like a balloon losing its air as he went down.

UnCanon Legolas tried to run for it, getting all of two feet tripping over a certain Dwarf.

“Oh.”

Random Dispensable Elves were already running into the room to save their Royal family, but sadly sliding on the slippery marble floor and crashing head first into the nearest pillar. Unfortunately, that also happened to be the one pillar carrying the weight of the whole marble dome that was the palace ceiling.

“I think the laws of gravity are just about to remember to exist,” Celebrían observed with grim satisfaction.

******

A marble palace is not very pleasant thing to have landing on you.

“Oh, that must have hurt!” Miss Sarah remarked, a slight snerk in her voice as she slid into the room with a bag that gave off mysterious clinking noises. Much like the sound of many, many filled bottles of wine clinking together. *Fine* wine, in fact.

“Ah, you’re here just in time to drink to the total collapse of Mirkwood Marble Palace,” Legolas said
merrily. “My evil twin, Mister GreenMeanThiefLeaf just had a very profound experience of what it must be like to be a pincushion.”

“Lord Elrond looks better,” Aragorn observed, dropping out of the shadows to snag a wine bottle from the bag and settle down next to Gollum.

“Colour in his cheeks and rage in his eyes again. I think he is beginning to break through,” Miss Cam said cheerfully. “Ah, they’ve set a new portal. Can’t quite make out where they’re heading… Looks a bit… fuzzy. Almost senseless…”

*****

“Where in Middle-earth are we?” Celebrian asked, scouting the horizon for any familiar landmark.

There didn’t seem to be any. The very sky looked like it was confused what colour it was, the mountains kept changing shape and they were standing on water.

“I sense this is not a good thing,” Lina muttered. “I feel like I’m in a MTV clip.”

“Elbereth?” Thranduil asked, eyes wide. “Why is she fancying my son?”

“No. Author,” Celebrian replied, managing to put contempt, disgust and repulsion all in just one word. “Miss Cam warned me of these mid-story author’s notes.”

“This must be the Black Speech of Earth, otherwise known as ‘teenspeak,’” Radagast observed. “Like research has indicated, it does make your ears bleed. Note to self about further research: Bring earmuffs.”

n jaydie sed ur rlly rlly hott 2!!!!! wann hooook up n leglas sd sur so thedid
n thEn laegles

The earth shook again, the sky turned vaguely Urpleish and begun to eat itself.

“Oh dear,” Radagast muttered. “I do believe the world is collapsing on itself from Trying to Make Sense. This is a rather unforeseen consequence of horrid spelling and grammar. Very interesting.”

“Radagast?” Turin asked.

“Yes?”

“We’re about to be eaten by a giant Urple sky. Shut up and run for your life.”
Imagine a world where the laws of logic and physic bow to the superior power of Narrative. Imagine on this world a place commonly known as Rivendell, Imladris, the Last Homely House east of the Sea - its very name a tribute to the Elves living there.

Now imagine what would happen if the Last Homely House east of the Sea decided to redecorate (perhaps hard to imagine sensible Elves ever taking such a silly decision, but imagine then that many, many bottles of wine were consumed before reaching this decision). Imagine that they hired decorators that considered NSync and Britney the height of musical sophistication, thought pink and purple were the divine colours, had the fashion sense of a Turkish entry to the Eurosong contest *in the 1980s*, had no sense of Middle-earth style and were overly fond of precious stones.

Imagine the horror. Imagine the horror and multiply it by ten, and you should be close to what welcomed the nine people stumbling out of a portal, having just escaped certain death at the hands of a giant Urple sky.

“The metaphysical implications of a world turning Urple and beginning to eat itself are indeed highly remarkable. It seems to suggest that the mind of a Sue has the qualities of…” Radagast said, but his voice sounded distant to Lina. She could only hear the wailing of her mind.

Holy smeg. What *was* that thing?

“My dear Imladris,” Lord Elrond muttered. His eyes were bright with rage, but he said nothing more. Celebrían barely heard him it seemed, her own voice working soundlessly.

“I do not think I have seen this style of architecture before,” Radagast observed, tilting his head. “Is that a moat with swirling pink water?”

“Rivendell Castle,” Bilbo muttered. He shook his head. “Oh joy, we have landed in another Sue tale. Here she comes now, miss Líésnîdrïà Rýmésûâ.”

Líésnîdrïà Rýmésûâ patted the neck of her steed, Mëorsorcëascrá Silverwing, as she approached the castle of Rivendell. She was returning from a visit to the surrounding lands of Imladris where the hobbits lived, farming the lands for their elven masters. Her father Gandalf had sent her to make sure that Frodo and his company arrived safely. She had saved Frodo from a poisoned wound he had sustained when he had been hit by an Orc-arrow and sent him on his way to Rivendell.

“Her name sounds like the death rattle of a slug when you step on it,” Turin said. He smirked slightly.
“What kind of species of slug would that be?” Radagast asked, suddenly looking interested.

“The worst kind, my dear wizard, the very worst. The kind that often looks like overcompensating Dark Lords with inferiority complexes and likes to place silly curses on people - like that makes them real men.”

“Technically, Morgoth was not a Man though he…” Radagast began, but noticed the glare sent him. “Um, yes, I see your point.”

The Sue had meanwhile galloped on, smiling at her reflection as she passed a pool, but did not fall in and drown – much to everyone’s disappointment.

“Why does she have wings and why does her hair keep changing colour?” Thranduil asked guardedly.

“Her father’s mother, *Eowyn*, was half-angel,” Bilbo read out. “She’s the granddaughter of Lord Elrond, as well. The other grandfather was a Siren, and….”

“What?” Celebrían hissed. “Give me that thing. Dragon blood? *Dragon* blood?! She is the daughter of Gandalf and has Elven, Human, Siren, Angel and Dragon blood?! And is the half-brother of Legolas? Aragorn is the son of my father? My mother is my daughter’s daughter? Gimli is the son of a Ringwraith and a human and was cursed to be a dwarf?”

“What?!” Lina and Gimli said in unison.

“This reminds me of a faith we heard of while on Earth,” Denethor reflected. “We saw shrines to him often, did we not King Thranduil? The Springer God some people prayed to before that box with palantír powers.”

“The God of the laws of improbability and depth of contrived reasoning?” Thranduil asked. “I remember him. But surely he is not a creature of Arrda? Lady Celebrían, is he mentioned in the Urple Book?”

Celebrían did not reply. She was too busy trying to destroy the book by merely glaring at it. Her glare looked like it could made several towns burn themselves, but the Urple Book was made of sterner stuff.

“Lady Celebrían?” Thranduil asked. He eased the book out of her grip and read for himself. He stared blankly for a moment, then reread and reread again.


“What?” Denethor asked.

“The Sue at the council gets the mission of destroying the Ring, but is approached by the Nine – excuse me, the *Ten* Ringwraiths. They implore her to put the Ring on, and she does.”

“Of course, you’d trust the Ringwraiths with what to do,” Turin muttered sarcastically. “Not like they’d ever lie to you about anything.”

“When putting it on, she and Sauron chat and it turns out Saruman has imprisoned Sauron and that the wizard is the real evil. Sauron is just misunderstood.” Thranduil clenched his teeth again. “The Sue destroys him; Sauron is freed and marries her. Gimli marries Arwen and all ends happily.”

“Over my dead spirit,” Celebrían muttered. “I’m going to strangle her – no, stab her – no, drown her
“Excuse me, Lady Celebrían, daughter of fair Galadriel, but I respectfully claim this one as mine,”
Gimli said with a low bow. “Cursed to be a dwarf? She disgraces my entire race.”

The group exchanged some glances, before Thranduil bowed back. “Of course, Master Dwarf.
Please accept this acid as a gift from the kingdom of Eryn Lasgalen for your cause. I made it myself,
and I dare say it is a very remarkable mix.”

“Thank you, King Thranduil,” Gimli said formally, taking the vial.

“I’m coming,” Lina said defiantly.

“Lina…”

“I’m coming.”

He smiled at her finally, eyes twinkling as they started towards the castle and the entering Sue. “I
wonder if angel wings make good mattress stuffing for our bed…”

*****

“Am I late?” Gandalf asked, wandering into the room with a tray of muffins. “I was trying out a new
recipe and lost track of time.”

“Rather,” Aragorn said brightly, voice just a bit slurred. “Have some wine.”

“Have some muffins,” Gandalf counter-offered.

Miss Cam eyed them. “Those look suspiciously like the muffins I saw some of the students eating at
breakfast.”

“Well, I did give a batch to Merry and Pippin yesterday. They asked so nicely, I couldn’t say no. I
had no idea they were going to share. Did the students enjoy the treat?”

Miss Cam was saved from answering when Saruman entered, sneering at Gandalf. The wizards
immediately took up the Steps and Ladders game from last night (all part of a contest to decide once
and for all who had the brighter mind as the White and therefore had strongest claim to dry-cleaning).

“What did the students say?” Legolas asked, leaning over to Miss Cam.

“As I recall, Thendel begged me to kill her, Arielle was convinced her teddy bear was really Gimli,
Emele passed out while dancing ballet in the bathroom, Sindahiriel grew three tails and two beards,
Gayahithwen started speaking in ancient Hebrew, Alakarda started teleporting whenever she
hiccupped and Suzene turned into a wombat.”

“Normal symptoms of Gandalf cooking in other words,” Legolas observed, tilting his head slightly
as he returned his attention to the palantír. “I had no idea a Sue could bend like that.”

“Or that a mere drop of acid could actually do that to a body. My, oh my.”

“Quite.”

“What’s in that mix?”

“Spider poison, some brews my father found at Dol Guldur and Mountain Dew from Earth. Father
wants to market them as Thranduil’s Toxic Torments.”

“Very nice,” Miss Cam said approvingly. “I must say, hanging all the UnCanons from the towers make Rivendell castle look like a Christmas ornament from Las Vegas.”

“Though Las Vegas is a bit less trashy,” Miss Thundera Tiger observed. “This wine is a very good year, I must say.”

“Needed to survive watching this,” Miss Cam replied. “Ah, they’re moving on. I see green fields…”

******

“Hobbiton!” Bilbo declared the moment the portal became solid and they stepped onto green, green grass and overlook lush hills. Then he seemed to realise the implication. “Oh. No.”

A moment later a hobbit lass came running over the fields, her dark hair flowing in the wind, her skin pale and flawless.

“Ah, the Hobbit-Sue,” Radagast said brightly. “Typically just as beautiful as an Elf which raises interesting questions about the hobbit evolution. Is there a dormant Elf beauty gene, or is simply the strength of the will of Sues to always be beautiful overriding the normal genes of a race?”

“Latter,” Lord Elrond replied, balling a hand into a fist and eyeing the Sue much like a bull eyeing the red cloth. The Sue paid no heed, she had found her target.

“Oh, Frodo,” Bilbo said despairingly. “Not you as well.”

"Bilbo's sick!" the Sue blurted out.

(she why she's not a Sue? She's not perfect!) the Author boomed from the sky mere seconds later.

“Oh, shut up, Author,” Bilbo said irritably, skimming through the Urple Book. “You wouldn’t know real characterisation if it came up, bit you in the leg and set up nest in your hair. What have you done to my lad?”

Frodo did indeed look distinctly not himself, Lina noted. He looked pale, insecure, slightly fat and well, quite frankly, he looked a bit like…

“A loser?! She made Frodo a *loser*?!” Bilbo gasped. The Hobbit narrowed his eyes dangerously as the Sue hugged Frodo (nearly choking him in the process), her hands wandering freely.

Radagast looked slightly confused. “Is it really customary among hobbits to… Um… Pat each other’s behind when trying to offer comfort?”

“No,” Bilbo replied, beginning to stalk in the direction of Bag End. The Sue was still busy deciding she loved Frodo despite having hated him for years.

Bag End was unlocked, of course, and Bilbo marched right in, muttering darkly. Lina followed carefully, thankful she wasn’t too tall. Hobbit holes were quite a threat to your headly welfare in general.

UnCanon Bilbo was sleeping as Bilbo marched into the bedroom and slammed the Urple Book down on the bed.

“Knock, knock,” he said cheerfully as UnCanon Bilbo stirred.
For a moment, the two Bilbos merely stared at each other. Then UnCanon Bilbo promptly had a heart attack from the shock and dropped dead.

“Bilbo!” UnCanon Frodo cried, coming running into the room. He paused, stared at the scene before him and promptly had an aneurism from brain overload and dropped dead.

“That’s… Interesting.” Lina observed. “I have never seen that before, and I used to watch ER.”

The Sue was already rushing in as well, but tripped over Frodo’s body and fell face first before Bilbo’s feet.

“And you call yourself a Proudfoot, miss Clover,” Bilbo said and shook his head. “Silly Sue.”

“But…”

Her protest was cut short by the Urple Book being promptly dropped on her head. Bilbo smirked slightly, picked up the book again, pocketed the Ring from UnCanon Bilbo and leaned down to sneer at the Sue.

“Is she dead?”

“Knocked out,” Bilbo replied. “Where did the rest go?”

Lina turned to find that only she and the hobbit remained in the bedroom. Distantly, however, she heard faint bumps and several curses in Elvish.

“I think they’re raiding the Bag End food storage.”

Bilbo’s eyes lit up immediately.

“I knew this mission would come with some fridge benefits. And I know just what to do with Clover Proudfoot.”

******

“Two in a row that have not gone after me,” Legolas exclaimed. “Oh, joyous day!”

“Speak for yourself,” Frodo muttered.

“Oh, Mister Frodo,” Sam said sympathetically and patted his friend on the back. Somewhere inside Frodo’s shirt a low snigger could be heard.

“Are we holding a party?” Faramir asked, peeking in.

“More like a wake,” Frodo said gloomily. Froodo the mini hugged his leg, then suddenly sprinted out the room and came back a few minutes later, dragging a student in by her leg.

“Aw, he’s trying to cheer you up,” Miss Cam beamed, giving Froodo a proud look. “Such quick reflexes. Eruantale, were you trying to sneak into the sauna at the Silmarillion house to spy on Glorfindel?”

The student hung her head. “Yes, Miss Cam.”

“Tsk. You go play with her, Froodo. You’ve earned it.”

Frodo did look cheered up (tossing Froodo some bacon as the mini dragged the student out again),
and when he returned his attention to the widescreen palantír, his smile broadened.

“Oh, Bilbo...” the Hobbit said fondly.

*****

Imagine again, if you will, the world ruled by Narrative. Imagine on this world home of evil, the tower of Barad-dûr in Mordor. Dark and deadly, it is the fortress of Sauron, sadly at current rather reduced in shape.

Now imagine a Nazgûl dragging a large sack that seems to be whimpering as he heads towards Barad-dûr. Imagine this sack carrying a logo that identifies it as coming from Hobbiton, and being a special delivery to Lord Sauron. Imagine the note attached, written in a clear script by a steady hand.

“Dear Dark Lord, Evil Eyeball, Menacing Maia etc,

Find attach to this note one tied-up hobbit lass of Suvian disposition and one golden ring as a gift in appreciation of all the evil things you have done to Arrda. Truly, may you be evil in this world forever!

Sincerely,
Bilbo Baggins

P.S Please feel free to hurt the hobbit lass. A lot.”

Imagine the fun.
Chapter Notes

This fic visits:

I'm With You by Dacey Black (aka AW. Happy birthday, Smurf-Elf!)

Falling to Ashes of the Starlit Dreams by Mercuria

The Gender Bending Canon Offending Kenshin Rending Marty Stan Fic by Katharine the Great

This is the last chapter of badfic adventures. I thank all those who participated, as this would not have been merely as fun if I had to think up all these horrid, horrid plots myself. You should all be proud of yourselves, regardless of whether I used your entry or not (my choices were based simply on what I needed for my plot). They were all deliciously bad. *bows to all participants*

It was raining. Thick, perfect drops of water were falling down, like the tears of angels. Angels weeping over the pain and misery the dark-haired Elf, currently seated by a small fire, was feeling. Such pain. Such sadness. But nothing that a little hot-hot steamy- steamy sex with the very embodiment of the word perfect could not fix.

Yes. The Sue was coming.

For suddenly the Elf was no longer by the fire, but outside in the thick rain, looking miserable and staring at the dagger in his hand. So sad, so hopeless, so lost. Could there be a more perfect setting for the arrival of a Sue come to save the hot-hot Elf?

Elrohir shivered. It wasn't for the cold rain that kept falling upon his shoulders, but from the coldness inside his heart. No one was looking for him. It seemed as if no one knew he wasn't inside. ::Maybe I should just do it and end my pain.::

'Yes, do that.' A thought seemed to encourage his current way of thinking. 'Make them hurt as much as you. Make them feel your pain.'

To feel his pain. Why not? ::But, what would mother think if she heard that I was doing this?::

'Your mother is gone.'

The air started vibrating, humming, sighing and suddenly gasping in relief as a portal opened, and Nine people and a pony came through it, all nibbling on various food items. The pony was loaded with bags of what smelt suspiciously like a mix of mushrooms, newly baked bread and cheesecake.

“I am telling you, going back and taking Bill with us is a stroke of genius,” Bilbo said, patting the pony affectionately. “He knows UnCanon by its smell. He deserves better than having to watch Sues woo Legolas after Legolas after Legolas.”

The pony gave a loud neigh, as if agreeing.
“I was merely saying…” Celebrían began, then stopped dead in her tracks. “Elrohir!”

The Elf looked confused a moment, but his attention was quickly drawn to the brush, where a tall figure was emerging.

Bill gave a low hiss.

“Oh no you don’t,” Celebrían snapped as the Sue was stepping forward. “Not with by son. Not while there still is life in my spirit.”

“Who are you?!” Elrohir demanded of the Sue. When getting no reply, he repeated the question.

“A friend,” the Sue said sweetly, so dripping with sugar that the nearest bird fell dropped from the sudden overdose.

“Ah, this one reads thought,” Bilbo observed, reaching for some more cheesecake as he read on. “She and Elrohir get sweet and loving until Elrond… Oh dear…”

“What?!” demanded Elrond and Celebrían at once.

“Well, apparently the Sue, Miss Elear Lirimaer, is… um… Elrond’s other daughter.”

“I don’t have another daughter!” Celebrían snapped. “I have one daughter. One. How hard is that to remember?”

“Um… Actually, it isn’t yours,” Bilbo said carefully.

“Ah, the Obstacle to Romance,” Radagast said cheerfully. “Usually an evil parent, a horrid past or hate-that-becomes-love-because-what-the-world-needs-now-is-love-sweet-love. I must admit I have never come across this kind before. How shall the Sue win the hot Elf if she is his sister?”

“Oh, she finds a way,” Thranduil said darkly. “She always finds a way.”

There was a brief silence as Celebrían clutched the sword and looked much like a tiger ready to pounce upon its prey. The perfect rain fell on.

“Oh, stop it,” Turin said, his voice slightly annoyed. Amazingly, the rain died away at once, causing the Sue to look temporarily confused.

Celebrían seized the moment. “Oh, my son, how glad I am to see you!”

Elrohir looked up sharply, dropping the Sue’s arm as if burned, and she fell right down on her perfect behind.

“Mother! But you left us?”

“I never left you,” Celebrían answered honestly. “It grieves me to see you like this. Come, take me to your brother. I will take away this pain and very, very accidentally blow up Rivendell with this little grenade Miss Cam gave me.”

“But…” the Sue said, getting up. “But… I was… He… Mine!”

Celebrían and Elrohir had already started towards Rivendell, neither looking back even as the Sue let out a loud shriek and set off in pursuit. Celebrían merely flicked her wrist and with a loud gasp, the Sue suddenly ran into an unsheathed sword.
“That must hurt,” Gimli said cheerfully.

The Sue fell to the ground with her perfect, wide eyes as round as the moon and equally white.

“I think she’s still alive,” Denethor observed, as the Sue whimpered and started crying for her mum.

“Well, I think Celebrían will be a while,” Bilbo said. “Miss Lina, perhaps you can indulge us all with further dart instructions. I so enjoyed the game the other night.”

“We don’t really have a dartboard…”

“No fear,” Turin said, cracking his knuckles. “We have *her*.”

*******

“Alas, you are not even safe from Sues though you have no speaking part in the movie,” Glorfindel said sadly, sliding down on a chair next to Aragorn and Arwen (who were temporarily lost to the world playing tonsil-hockey).

“But you are safer,” Legolas pointed out. “You have a few, I have a flood. I even have people trying to steal my bed sheets.”

“Oh, Celebrantiel and Amy Stone won’t do that again,” Miss Cam said assuredly. “Miss Dwimordene gave them Nuzgul Lovehutch scrubbing duty.”

“Lovehutch? Do I want to know?” Gandalf asked, shaking his head as if he already knew the answer.

“No.”

“Oh,” Gandalf replied, returning his attention to the palantír widescreen. “Interesting. I didn’t know Bill the Pony was such a wizard at darts.”

“I always said he was a very talented pony,” Sam said proudly. “Um, why has the palantír widescreen gone black?”

“Oh no,” Miss Cam groaned. “They’ve walked into an evil even greater than a Sue.”

“Bad slash orgy?”

“No. Pretentious author’s notes.”

*******

It was dark. Dramatically dark. Not even a star or a moon to light up. Just darkness.

“Are we sure we’re not wandered into the Void?” Turin asked, sounding slightly excited at the possibility. “Morgoth? Are you there, you entrapped Vulgar Void of a Vala?”

“I think not,” Elrond said slowly.

The Voice suddenly boomed, sounding important and deep and very, very pretentious.

First of all, you should all go read my first story, "Blood of the Shadow Rose in Darkness", which details the abuse of Thranduil at the hands of his father, Orophin, over the span of fifty-seven chapters. I would like constructive criticism, of course, but don't tell me what I did wrong, because
that just proves that you have no life and like to spend your time poking fun at decent, hardworking writers like myself.

Title: "Falling to Ashes of the Starlit Dreams"

Summary: The cycle continues as Thranduil takes out the pain of his childhood upon his son Legolas. Can the similarly abused daughter of the Steward of Gondor rescue him before they are both consumed by the fire burning within both of their wronged souls? (AN: I am SO deep.)

“If you really want to be deep, I have many deep dungeons I would like to acquaint you with,” Denethor muttered.

“And my very deep sword is always ready to plunge into your deep places, O Deep Author,” Turin added.

Thranduil said nothing, but something suspiciously like the gnashing of teeth could be heard.

And suddenly, there was Light and there was Mirkwood, looking very dark and grim and depressed (wouldn’t you?).

Once upon a time there lived a terrible king. His name was Thranduil. Thranduil ruled over the Elves of Mirkwood forest in a mighty palace, but he was a horrible wicked despot, who ruled over the fair realm of Mirkwood with a fist of iron.

“Of course,” Thranduil muttered, sounding like he was having a root canal. “Of course. I am evil. I rule evilly. Of course.”

In addition to being a horrible wicked despot, Thranduil was also an alcoholic. Unfortunately for his beautiful son, Legolas, Thranduil was a violent alcoholic, who often beat his son mercilessly in his inebriated rampages. Although Thranduil was only a violent alcoholic due to the abuse he had suffered as a child, there was not an Elf in Mirkwood who could or would condone his actions.

“And naturally, I also drink and beat my son. Yep. I’m one evil dude.”

Denethor gave him a comforting pat. “We can have a Mirkwood massacre and kill them all horribly.”

“Promise?”

“Promise.”

“Abuse – commonly attributed to evil everywhere despite little evidence suggesting the two are necessarily linked,” Radagast observed. “Suggests that authors think evilness is like a sickness of mind rather than a conscious choice. May help to explain why good characters suddenly fall evil as if it was a common bug going around and infecting whomever it chose.”

UnCanon Legolas the Gracious poked his head out of one of the windows, looking sad and woeful, yet perfect.

Turin rolled his eyes. “What do any of these authors know about being wronged? Have they had their lives cursed, accidentally killed their best friend and very accidentally married their sister? I think not.”

“And just how do they think I keep on ruling Mirkwood if I am so evil? Do I fool everyone, or do people just ignore it because no neighbourhood is complete without an evil Elf around?” Thranduil
“I’d say,” Bilbo replied. “According to the Urple Book, your UnCanon self and UnCanon Denethor has arranged that Legolas and Denethor’s daughter, Kaelin, get married so that Thranduil and Denethor had take over Rohan and then rule Middle-earth.”

“As you do,” Denethor said dryly. “King Thranduil, a word please…”

The two huddled together, as UnCanon Legolas continued to look woeful and sigh. Deeply. Because the story was so deep and full of deep, deep meanings.

“I know he is my dear friend and companion, but I am ready to toss him out the window and toss him at a Barrow-Wight,” Gimli muttered. “He looks like he’s about to burst into a song about how sad and woeful his life is.”

Lina patted the Dwarf’s hand as comforting as she could. “You know the true Legolas would have made a pincushion by this one by now. He’s not a whimpering victim.”

“So why do they write him as such?”

“Um… he’s pretty?”

“The bane of all Elves,” Elrond said sadly.

“Oh, most excellent plan!” Thranduil exclaimed suddenly. “Your mind is ever devious, O Steward of Gondor.”

“Thank you, thank you, you are too kind,” Denethor grinned. “My Lady Celebrían, with your indulgence, King Thranduil and I have devised a plan…A very cunning plan.”

*****

“Why are the plans always cunning?” Saruman the Many-Coloured muttered under his breath. “I am the one who is supposed to be cunning. Cunning mind, ring a bell?”

“Oh, I tried to teach them about cunningness and sarcasm with a few intense hours of Blackadder,” Miss Cam replied. “I think I may have overdone it. Merry and Pippin have stolen Sauron’s underwear and are trying to breed some kind of new biological or chemical weapon out of it. I’m afraid to ask just what cunningness they have planned.”

Merry and Pippin smirked.

Boromir and Faramir sniggered, waving a little ‘Go dad!’ banner (Éowyn was comfortably snuggling in Faramir’s lap) as Mirkwood yawned on the palantír – and awoke.

******

The advantage of bringing a wizard with close ties to nature with you and having the power of Canon on your side were numerous – among them was that where there was life, there could be brought about consciousness. A little bending of narrative, and the forest could come alive.

Mirkwood had awoken. And boy was it pissed. Wouldn’t you be if lots and lots of idiots lived on you?

There was a brief struggle of sorts, but it is rather hard to run from a forest surrounding you on all sides. It is especially hard when the forest allies itself with the sky and lightning starts smiting you. It
is even harder when at the edge of the forest, Nine Seekers are waiting for you with lots of very sharp pointy objects.

In the end, there was nothing. Only darkness.


“Oh, we’re here,” a cheerful voice said, as an Elf and a Man (in Black Leather, of course) stepped out of the darkness and lit up by the light of a strange, fiery, small demon. “Uncle Evil!Thranduil is here with Uncle Evil!Denethor to teach you *all* about proper evil.”

*******

“Uncle Evil!Thranduil,” Legolas mused, opening another bottle of beer. “He is rather a decent guy, if you steer him towards your enemies and don’t actually talk to him much.”

“At least they have *style*,” Saruman replied. “The way evil is written these days, you’d think we were all made of cheese.”

“Fine French cheese, if so,” Miss Cam said assuredly. “That reminds me… Sam, where is the rest of the specially imported French cheese?”

Sam looked up guiltily. “Eh… Um… Buffy took it when trying to sneak into the staff section?”

“Riiiiight…”

“Speaking of cheese,” Miss Thundera Tiger said brightly, “they’re moving on.”

*******

It was Rivendell. Again.

A golden-haired and a red-haired Elf were sparring, looking hot and muscular (as you do), their swords gleaming silver-ish in the sun. And from the window, a dark-haired Elf-Lord was watching.

Soundlessly, a portal opened, but did not interrupt the dance of Hot Elves A’ Sparring.

Elrond sighed aloud. “I wish I could join them,” he muttered with a frown, glancing back at the mound of paperwork on his desk. “Being the lord of Rivendell just isn’t as fun as it used to be.” He remembered the days when he and Glorfindel had gone out sparring, days when there wasn’t so much bureaucratic work to be done… He sighed again. It just wasn’t fair sometimes.

“What is ‘bureaucratic’?” Celebrían asked confused.

“It’s an Earth thing,” Lina explained. “Basically…. Um… Well, say you had two cows, right? Now, if Sauron ruled Middle-earth he’d take your cows and force you to contribute them to his glorious dark empire. If… um… the Gondorian workforce ruled Middle-earth and you had two cows and your neighbour had none, they might take one of your cows and give it to your neighbour. If Middle-earth was a bureaucracy, you *had* two cows.”

The other eight and Bill the Pony merely stared dumbly at her.

“It was funny when my teacher explained it,” Lina muttered under her breath as Denethor leaned towards her.
“Gondorian workforce?”

“Nevermind.”

Meanwhile, UnCanon Elrond had been joined by UnCanon Gandalf, and the two were chatting about the two Elves sparring outside – Glorfindel and the mysterious red-haired Elf.

“That is Turin Autumnbranch, an Elf of Mirkwood named for Túrin son of Húrin of the Third House. He was in Gondolin with Glorfindel, that is all I know,” Elrond answered, once again reminded of how bored and discontent he had become. He sighed. “How I wish I were young again, like my children,” he muttered. “Then perhaps I would not have to do all of that paperwork, and I would find reason to laugh again…”

“What?” Turin hissed. “Leave me out of this! I am dead! Dead, you hear me! Do not soil my name!”

“They get you even when you are dead,” Denethor said darkly, giving UnCanon Gandalf a scowl. “My son is not even safe in death. Logic or decency has no hope here.”

“Nor numerology,” Elrond said sadly. “Is this another Tenth Member?”

“No,” Bilbo said, staring at the Urple Book as if it was a Sackville-Baggins. “It’s worse.”

“Worse?” Elrond repeated, eyeing his UnCanon self with great suspicion. “How?”

The Hobbit leaned forward and pointed at the text. There was a brief silence as the Half-Elf read, face growing paler and paler and red spots beginning to appear in his cheeks.

UnCanon Gandalf started to chant, obviously casting some spell.

“I. See,” Elrond finally muttered through clenched teeth. “Lady Celebrian, my sword please.”

The scene had already started to shift to the gardens, where Turin now was strolling and bumping into a fair maiden of dark hair.

“What?” Gimli asked, readying his axe.

“That is Rondiwen,” Bilbo said, shaking his head.

“Rondiwen?” Thranduil asked. “That is no Elven name. Rond and wen do… Oh, Elbereth, not that…”

“What?” Lina asked, before horrible realization dawned on her. “Oh no! Poor Elrond! Elrond – Rondiwen. He was turned into *she*?!”

“Yes. By choice,” Bilbo replied. They all looked at Elrond, who was clutching his sword and looking angrier and angrier. Finally, a cloud seemed to pass over his face and he smiled. Evilly.

“Oh, beloved,” Celebrian whispered, looking too relieved to be angry. “Welcome back.”

Elrond kissed her hand lovingly, but still eyeing UnCanon Rondiwen the Used-to-be-Elrond.

“Turin, perhaps you would like to spend some quality time with Turin Autumnbranch and your sword,” Elrond suggested silkily. “Perhaps you’d like to make *him* feel like a woman.”

Turin smiled brightly and unsheathed his sword (which happily hissed).
“As for the rest of them….”

*****

It was dark and it was timeless. That was pretty much it. Hey, it’s a void, what do you expect? And in this Void, there was nothing.

Except snoring. After all, if you are trapped in timeless Void, what else is there to do?

And suddenly, the snoring stopped as the being sensed… Company?

“Um, hello? Is anyone here? I was writing this really deep story and then some freaks that clearly have no life and hated my story dragged me here and… hello?”

“Hello? I am Rondiwen, Lady of Imladris. Who are you?”

“The deep author. Where are we?”

“I was just in Rivendell when a doppelganger knocked me and my entire house out and *ruined* my dress and someone has written ‘For entertainment purposes’ in some sort of hideous colour on my chest and everyone else’s and the pony kicked me and I keep talking in really long sentences ever since that wizard pointed his staff at me and I think he cursed me to sound like…”

“Ahem,” a voice said, sounding dark and dreadful and old. And bemused. For it seemed that boredom was at an end.

And very slowly, Morgoth grinned.

“Eeeeeeeeeeexcellent.”
It was a rather rude awakening.

Sleeping peacefully and dreaming of Faramir in a chocolate shower, Kat's brain was quite unprepared for an Elf holding a horn to her ear - and then blowing it.

Faramir in a chocolate show exploded into white bright light spelling out 'HAHA!' and the brain ran away screaming while her body rolled off the bed and fell to the floor (luckily, falling out of bed was such a common occurrence she'd clued a few pillows to the floor next to her bed).

"Did that hurt?" the Elf asked cheerfully.

"No, I like losing brain cells," Kat muttered, looking up at the Elf as she climbed up on the bed again. Gildor in Black Leather. Splendid. He looked like all his birthdays had come at once and then some. "You're mean."

"Yes, I'm working for Lord Elrond today, so I thought it appropriate. Assembly. Outside. Now."

"But it's not even dawn!"

"Tell that to Lord Elrond, but I'd hurry if I were you. You're late and you know how Lord Elrond feels about late."

Kat's body certainly did, because before she knew it, she had bolted off the bed and was dashing madly through the hallways. Sometimes she thought her body must have a mind of its own and one that rather despised her real mind for bringing so much pain upon them.

Or maybe she was just paranoid. OFUM did that to you, because they really were out to get you.

"Elf with musical instrument?" Eruantale asked, jogging up next to her.

"Yes. Gildor with a horn. You?"

"Finrod with a harp."

"Can that actually wake you up?"

"When smashed against a giant gong, yes it can."

"Ah."

A cold draft greeted them as they exited, Kat wishing she'd had enough sense to put on some clothes before running out. Her pajamas were not exactly of the warmest kind.

"Anyone know why we're here?" Ellipsis asked as Kat and Eruantale slipped into the crowd, both grateful to see it didn't seem to have started yet.

"I have a very bad feeling about it," Fran the Hobbit muttered from her stool (to see anything, hobbit students rather needed stools, which had made one carpenter in Minas Tirith a very happy businessman).

"That's indigestion," PinkMartini snorted. Hobbit students had the appetites of Middle-earth hobbits, but alas, not the digestive systems.
"Oh, right."

"Good morning, students!" Miss Cam called merrily, climbing up on the erected podium. "As you all know, Lord Elrond has recovered from his recent rather unfortunate meeting with insanity. I'm sure you're all *thrilled* to have him back."

"YES!" Sirinial Saeros cried out, getting weird looks from most of the students. Such was life as a member of Erotically Elrond, the club for Elrond lusters. You got funny looks (quite possibly because everyone in that group had to be insane to actually lust him, Kat reckoned. But then again, Black Leather did things even for the Lord of Rivendell.)

"Indeed," Miss Cam muttered, rolling her eyes. "In any event, in his joy to be back, Lord Elrond has taken it upon himself to write all this semester's exams."

"Doooooom!" Shaun muttered, shivering in his boxers. It appeared that quite a few others had forgotten to put clothes on, Kat noted with satisfaction. Nice Yoda boxers, too. Not that he'd keep them on for long if Gollum was around (he had picked up some unfortunate habits after spending an evening getting drunk with Dobby).

"Even MUSM's one exam," Miss Cam went on, "covering all the history and culture of Middle-earth."

"What?" Sam objected (a MUSM student, of course. The black always gave them away). "We weren't taught that!"

Lord Elrond smiled. "Oh no, you mean to tell me the two Dark Lords didn't teach you any of what is really in the curriculum? Surely they would not do such a thing, it's not like they're *evil*."

"Should have known," Herodias muttered. The MUSM crowd looked torn between despair and disbelief. Heh, Jess would be horrified. Where was Jess, anyway?

"Do not despair, students," Lord Elrond boomed, bringing Kat's attention back to the podium. "We have, in all our wisdom and grace, decided to help you all study."

"Feeling of doom getting stronger," Tiana said, groaning.

"Yeah," Kat muttered, eyeing Elrond warily. It was never a good day for students when Elrond was too happy. Nor was it a good day for students when Elrond was unhappy. Actually, it tended not to be a good day for students if Elrond was about, period.

Gandalf stepped up, carrying scrolls with him. He too, looked amused. "For this year's study period, you have been divided into several groups and taken to a special study camp. Or as we like to call it, Camp M.U.H.A.H.A - Middle-earth University's Horrific Adventure Hellhole Advancement."

"And this camp will be as a small village of Middle-earth," Elrond explained, and some students let out a relieved breath. That was not a good sign, either. It was never better than they feared, it was always worse. Looking relieved in front of the staff was like waving a red flag with the words 'come on, you can't hit me' at a bull with a perfect aim and sharpened horns. You just didn't do it unless you wanted pain.

"Yes. A *real* village," Miss Cam broke in. "That means no shower, no toothpaste, no heated houses, no food you don't make yourself and no entertainment you don't supply yourself. It does mean plenty of mud, hard work and general misery. It will be very educational."

"Yes, very," Kat muttered to herself. Very painful it was certain to be, which was to the staff the
same thing as being very educational.

"You will be split into four groups," Gandalf announced. "As you can see, the eminent Elves in Black Leather have placed several banners about, so when your name is called, go to the banner with your group's name. Aimee Leigh, group North. Alanna Roseguard, group West. Arielle, group South. Arianna Demarcus, group South..."

Kat groaned. Her only fragile hope was that her nose would die on her so she wouldn't have to smell the result of no shower, no deodorant and mud everlasting all mixed together.

"Can't they just kill us and get it over with?" Marion complained.

"Can't die here, remember?" Ellipsis muttered.

"Really?" PinkMartini asked.

"Really. You just end up at the Halls of Mandos, regardless of what species you enrolled as, and get re-embodied and sent back."

"Not until Vairë has laughed hysterically at the tapestry she wove of your fate, though," Leisha muttered, shuddering. "It's not *that* silly to tell Boromir you could have saved his life with your amazing healing powers, and when asked to demonstrate, leapt into his boat and rather accidentally forget to leap out as it went over the waterfall."

"You have done that too?" Kittie asked, wide-eyed.

Kat sniggered quietly, then remembered her frequent mud-baths curtesy of Éowyn, and wisely shut up. Let those who were plot-successful throw the first stones.

"... Kat Fint, group East. Jess Fint, group North. Lupiane, Group North. Naeth, group West..." Gandalf droned on, and Kat slinked off towards the banner that carried 'East' on it. She wondered why her brain was gently humming a funeral march.

Where the heck was her obnoxious sister, though? Come to think of it, Jess hadn't come in last night... Some kind of plot, obviously. Everyone seemed to be plotting these days, despite the fact that all student-launched plot seemed to fail.

Odd, that. Kat frowned slightly, feeling the bruises proving her own plots had failed spectacularly. Why, you'd almost think there was a rule to this Universe that all students should fail at their plotting, just as there was a rule that if you let go of an apple midair, it would fall down (and hit a student who just happened to pass underneath).

"Hey," Eibbor said as Kat reached her group. "Jess's sister, yes?"

"Only until I've killed her," Kat muttered.

"So she did hide the Rohan in your bed."

"Yes, thank you, and no, I will not require therapy for years from having an armless hand try to feel me up."

Eibbor and a few other MUSM students sniggered, having obviously heard of the plot. Perhaps that was the key to get the upper hand on Jess, getting a MUSM student as a spy.

"That should be everyone," Gandalf announced loudly, stopping all chit-chat (or rather, it was the
stern glances of Miss Cam and Elrond combined that did that). "Now, every group will have a guide, who will oversee that no one cheats - Whitney, drop that lighter, you will learn how to build fires our way - and offer friendly advice. I shall be North's guide, Radagast the Brown will take East, Saruman the Many-Coloured will be guide for the West and Ragna the Urple will take South. Our esteemed Blue Wizards..."

The Blue Wizards bowed, while students looked confused.

"... will be in charge of tracking down all students who try to run. They will also feature on your exams, because we are very mean and want you all to fail."

"Spectacularly," Lord Elrond added.

"We will see you all in one week for your exams," Miss Cam said, smiling. "You did all study during the semester, yes? You weren't relying on catching up one week before the exam by living on coffee and sheer desperation, were you? Oh, that reminds me. No coffee, either. Have fun."

"Anyone else thinking they'll be the ones having fun while we're downright miserable?" Gairid asked.

"Yes."

"Thought as much."

The portals opened at the various banners, and students started filing through in slow motion, no one in a particular hurry. As she stepped through the portal, Kat could swear she heard champagne being opened and what sounded like a band starting to play the Macarena - but surely not?

"Um, Kat?" Selena Luna said tentatively. "Have you looked down?"

"Hmm?" Kat muttered, tearing her attention away from the quickly fading OFUM. Only then did she realise that she was wearing her Bob the Builder pajamas and that someone was clutching her foot.

"My preciousssss..."

"Gollum!"

"Wantsss funny man in yellow hat for New Precious, precious! He fixesss, he doesss."

"Let go!"

Gollum sulked for a moment, then seemed to get a bright idea. Kat could almost see the lightbulb go off over his head as he let go, and jumped back into OFUM's dimension just as the portal closed.

"Here we are," Radagast declared. "Home of group East for a week."

The students stared wordlessly.

"Radagast, are you sure this is the right place?" Vikka asked hesitantly.

"Yes. Why?"

"Because a pack of wolves is eying us like we're a Thanksgiving dinner."

"Oh, that. Reality lesson of Middle-earth, number one. Nature is not your friend, unless you're me or an Ent."
Kat only dimly registered his words as she started off in a sprint, but the grounds didn't seem to want to help her much at all.

"Reality lesson of Middle-earth, number two. Running in mud and with snow blowing in your eyes leads to..."

The tree came out of nowhere it seemed, and it was hard. Very hard. Kat managed to see it was rather darkish before it seemed to be made of mostly stars. Or maybe that was her head.

"...that," Radagast finished. "Remember wolves, you are only to nibble. Fresh steaks of meat you can actually stand and that will not give you indigestion will await you later."

The wolves barred their teeth.

Ten minutes later, only one student was left standing and when Kay Marie accidentally mistook Radagast's staff for a branch to defend herself with, there wasn't even that.
It was raining. Again. Jess had never really noticed how much it could rain. Then again, she usually stayed in during the rain and lived out of the fridge. No such luck here, as there 1) were no fridges and 2) what storage for food they had, they hadn’t actually managed to fill.

“My Elf ears are so cold they feel like icicles. I had no idea rain could be this wet and cold,” Helena complained. “I’m never this cold at home!”

“That’s because the roofs at home usually don’t fall apart mid-rain,” Elenari replied. The others gave her a sour look.

“At least our house wasn’t taken by a mudslide,” Angela pointed out. This didn’t really seem to comfort the others.

“That incident was rather Agent AAA, Agent of the Order of Coleslaw’s fault,” Jess replied. “I had no idea Gandalf would be so touchy about blond jokes. I mean, white isn’t blond... Is it? And anyway, what is with that name?”

“Obviously a student trying to be funny filling in the enrolment form,” Moraiwe muttered. She gave a brief shudder – having filled in ‘Valar’ like many other smart-arsed students, she’d had a long visit from Manwë, who had not been amused.

“Anyone want to try starting a fire again?” Kaiya suggested tiredly. Everyone recoiled, eyeing the matches they had stolen off Gandalf with great horror. Apparently, stealing what looked like matches from a wizard who happened to be very, very good at fireworks was not the brightest of ideas. The first time they’d tried, they had managed to burn all the water they had gathered.

The second time they had tried the fire had taken the shape of Gandalf and hung them all from the clothing line.

“No,” Twila said firmly and everyone nodded with great vigour.

“I’m too tired to think,” Tabby managed to get out after a long pause. “Could someone kill me, please?”

“Takes too much energy,” Whitney groaned and the others grunted in agreement. They sat a while just listening to the rain and the stampeding moose and flying chickens.

The flying chickens had been a bit of a surprise. Apparently, Lord Elrond had come across a story talking about the ‘fowl voice on the air’ and had, in his endless wisdom, decided to demonstrate it.

“Ow, stop pecking me!” Jess complained as one chicken took a nip of her behind. The chicken merely gave her an unimpressed glance.

“At least it ain’t one of Miss Cenire’s Albino Attack Chickens,” Ala said comfortingly. Jess considered that for a moment, then nodded slowly. The Albino Attack Chickens were evil, but luckily deployed elsewhere at the moment, (where, only the staff knew, but Miss Cenire had been heard muttering “Ha! Think you can walk on top of snow? Nance on this, fangirl!”) where Jess hoped they would stay a long, long, long time.

“I’m cold,” Lyllyn muttered, then noticed the looks she was getting. “Well, I am!”
“There is a perfectly fine pelt you can cover yourself with right over there,” Jess muttered, mentally throttling Lyllyn. It had been Jess’s job to get blankets, but sadly, knitting had turned out not to go quite as fast she had hoped, as the sheep weren’t quite willing to give up their wool.

“My idea of a pelt is it not still being attached to the moose!” Van’e shot back, waking up from whatever blissful dream she was having about Treebeard. In Jess’s opinion, Ent-lusters were insane and crazy to boot.

The moose smirked at them all, happily continuing to eat the berries Sabaye had so painstakingly gathered.

“You try to get it off!” Jess snapped.

No one dared reply to that, as the moose all eyed them. Not that it was supposed to be there, anyway, a rather silly, silly girl had tried stealing Gandalf’s staff to open a portal to an eat-all-you-can-buffet at Gastronomically Gourmet – and missed by a few centuries. So now a pack of moose were at large and weren’t particularly keen on becoming a gourmet dinner. One student had even been so hungry she had tried nibbling on the moose while it was alive. The moose was not amused.

“I’m going out,” Jess muttered, getting up before anyone could protest. Not that inside and outside were that different – both were equally wet and muddy. She was bored, she was hungry, she was restless and she felt like her whole body was itching. Hmm, it rather was itching…

“Oh bugger - fleas,” she groaned, resisting the urge to scratch her nose. She probably had lice by now, too. Fabulous. Just fabulous.

“Oh, look what the mud rejected,” a very familiar voice said. Jess rolled her eyes as she turned to face her sister.

“Shut up, Kat. You look like something a troll would wash itself with yourself.”

“Not my fault,” Kat snapped back. “Brandy had the great plan of digging a ditch to get Radagast to fall into and then take his staff to get back. Unfortunately, we kinda forgot to mark it so we forgot where it was. Then Kitty borrowed some knives from an ancient tomb to carve the one fish we’d manage to catch by piling on it, but she didn’t realise there were Barrow-wights in that tomb and they rather needed the knives for their turkey dinner. So they came chasing us and we kinda… um… fell into the trap.”

Jess couldn’t help herself; she sniggered.

“Oh, hahaha, very funny,” Kat muttered darkly. “I heard about your attempt to make a bow. You do know the arrow should be fired into the air and not down into your foot, right?”

“Says Miss-where’s-the-ladder-to-get-on-this-horse.”

“Hey, it was very tall!”

“It was *a pony*!” Jess shouted back.

“Oh, shut up. I remember the last time you went on a binge and ended up with twenty-five other girls all married to the Witch-Wall in a mass ceremony.”

“That wasn’t legal!”

“Tell that to the Witch-Wall, he’s apparently still planning his honeymoon!”
“Haha, very funny! At least I didn’t think I could bribe Ro-Hans the Giant Rohirric Hamster into handing over Faramir!”

“It could have worked!”

“Kat, the hamster dipped you in beer and licked it off you.”

“Shut up, Miss No-Brains!”

“That’s what you think, Miss Goody-Two-Shoes! You just liked to think you had a brain by all that reading that you didn’t even enjoy,” Jess snapped, feeling a strange relief at finally having said it. “You know what? You might not enjoy being smart, but I do!”

“Hah! You just discovered that not everyone thinks you prettier than me for once so now you’re trying to get a brain!”

It was bound to happen, Jess thought dimly as she pounced on Kat and the two fell into the mud with a rather subdued ‘splash’. She just wished she had not worn her white cotton blouse with sparkly pink flowers.

The rain stopped.

“More fried corn kernels, Maedhros?”

“Thank you, Maglor. I do say, this mudwrestling of human fangirls are as amusing as Legolas Thranduilion’s tales would indicate.”

“It is a shame we must break it off to gather them all for the exams.”

“Alas, yes.”

The words slowly sunk into Jess’s brain, and she let go of Kat’s hair and felt her sister let go of a very large mudcake, which had been about to be slammed into any available surface. Slowly, they both looked up to see two towering Elves giving them a small wave.


Kat nodded. “Only thing worse would be…”

There was a discreet cough as the two sisters turned to the other side to see five more Elves smiling merrily at them.

“All of the sons of Fëanor together,” Jess finished.

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Meanwhile, at OFUM…

Miss Cam yawned and stretched slightly, feeling deliciously lazy. The sun was shining; the new pool was filled with staff members in their swimsuits; the Valinor beach (specially brought in, of course) was warm under her feet; the comfy deckchair was just the right angle and best of all – not one student in sight.

”Mmmm,” she murmured comfortably.

Legolas Thranduilion gave something that sound suspiciously like a low purr in reply from his own
deckchair. A whole week of not one student lunging after him (while drooling, of course) had rather relaxed him. And it had given him and Gimli plenty of time to plot yet another luster-reducing scheme. Miss Cam had decided not to ask. Plausible deniability, and all that.

“Oh, blessed silence,” Finrod muttered from under his sun umbrella. “I did not think silence could be this blissful. I have already started composing a song in the honour of silence.”

“Speaking of silence,” Aragorn started, groaning slightly as Arwen changed position on his arm. “Where are our two hated and despised Dark Lords?”

“Trapped in the void,” Miss Cam replied, sipping a bit more mango juice. “Sauron said he’d manage to escape the Void within two decades because he was a much better Dark Lord, then Morgoth dared him, Sauron snorted and refused, Morgoth double-dared him and called him armpit-fungus, Sauron agreed to do it, Morgoth insisted on coming so he’d know Sauron didn’t cheat – so there they are.”

“Can we force them to stay?” Túrin asked, stretching his bare legs slightly.

“Alas, no,” Aragorn answered. “They are staff members and will be required for the start of the new semester.”

“But if you are fast, I think the Urple Bandits have finished redecorating and repainting the student dorms – you can always convince them the Dark Lords are looking for a new look for their rooms,” Lord Elrond said, smirking slightly as Celebrían rubbed more lotion on his back.

“I have always admired the speed of that man,” Finduilas said as Túrin vanished faster than a hobbit spotting an all-you-can-eat-mushroom-buffet.

“I have always admired his dedication to misery and doom myself,” Erestor said happily, coming up from the pool.

“He will be a great ‘Angst, oh Angst my Angsty Angst’ teacher,” Miss Cam said happily and wriggled her toes. “His sister has agreed to help, as well. All the angst gathered in that classroom will probably collapse under the weight of itself and make a black hole of angst. Will probably ruin the room, but it’ll be worth it. I imagine the students will learn very much. You asleep there, Meir Brin?”

“Mmmm,” the Hogwarts Fanfiction Academy co-ordinator muttered. HFA’s term was over and with the rather violent rupture of Canon from the arrival of book five, a vacation far away was just the thing. Dobby, having a fight with Gollum over a pair of Bob the Builder socks, seemed to agree.

Somewhere near, Lúthien could be heard singing softly to Beren.

“Speaking of utter bliss,” Lord Elrond said, turning over on his stomach. “How much are the students suffering right now?”

Miss Cam smiled. “Suffering? During an exam? Would I do such a thing to our dear students?”

Lina looked up, seeming to wake from her lazy trance as Gimli was slowly braiding her hair in dwarf fashion. “Speaking as a former student and survivor of this University… Yes, you would.”

*****

It was cold. It was wet. It was smelly.

“I’m scared,” Quickbeam the Hobbit whispered in a low voice to Jess. Jess didn’t dare reply, as
Curufin seemed to be eyeing her. She tried desperately to focus on the parchment – ‘name the kings of Rohan’. Her brain seemed to freeze.

Éomer? Um… Théoden…

The haunts were singing again.

To her despair, she couldn’t even read her own writing. Trying to write while standing in the Dead Marches rather did that to you.

“Oh Jess… I wuv you! Come to me so we can run naked under the Mirkwood trees!”

‘Don’t look,’ Jess told herself. It was hard not to look at a naked Legolas looking up at her so adorably from the water. It was hard not to notice how inviting his arms were. It was hard not to dive in head first.

She swallowed hard.

Near her, Niamh seemed to be torn between her terror of water and the inviting image of a harem of Legolas’s in black leather thongs below. Laura was eyeing the Pippin on a mushroom-bed while Epona was trying to resist comforting a weeping Frodo, the tears in his eyelashes shining like pearls.

And slightly to Jess’s left, Vulgarweed was staring into the waters where the Ringwraith had become the Casanova of the Hogwarts Male Teacher Seminar. Jess decided she’d rather not know.

“Jeeeeeess…”

“You’re not Legolas,” she whispered, and gripped the parchment harder. “Translate into Quenya: Elves are noble, good and kind. You will not call an Elf Lady a She-Elf unless you want pain. A Half-Elf is not Elven ears with a human mind. Remember Nine, not ten, and Lord Elrond will stay sane.”

“Jess, my luv!” Legolas pleaded from the deep.

She looked – and whimpered.

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Celegorm turned to Maglor with a faint smile. “Should we tell them the real exam is to see if they can resist their fanfic fantasies, so if they have not fallen in by now, they have passed?”

Maglor considered it for a moment. “Let us give them five more minutes, shall we? I want to see whose fantasy that pregnant Legolas belongs to, so I can tell King Thranduil.”

“As always, my brother, you are much more evil than you look.”

And so, though muddy, wet, cold and utterly miserable, students (who were still alive) had managed to pass the first semester. They might have been pleased to know that, but their minds were rather on other matters. The haunts decided that being fantasies was dull – being Earth smurfs in urple kilts while chasing students, that was fun.

Somehow, it was a very appropriate start to semester two.
Of Semester Starts and Breeding Problems

After a week in the wilderness on their own, OFUM looked like heaven for students in comparison. A heaven where the Gods were a trifle unfriendly with the students, granted, and the wings were on mini-Balrogs (or were they?) and not on angels. But still. Kat decided to cling to the good things she could see, because the bad things she had a tendency to not see, but to hear lurking behind her back - before she was pushed into the Easterling sauna/dipped in Oliphaunt droppings/bathed in urple dye by smirking Urple Bandits/’balrogged’ by a mini-Balrog/ or suffered other painful fate.

And thinking of good things stopped her from thinking of the sudden realisation she’d had while pushing her sister’s face into the mud.

Kat was miserable. Utterly, completely, all-consuming miserable. But Jess – silly Jess who never before had seemed to be able to spend more than five minutes of the day forming coherent thoughts! – Jess was not. Despite the pain and the humiliation and the fact that Legolas had arranged for a blind date with a Dwarf from the lonely mountain for her (actually, for all his lusters, thinking that since he had lost one luster to a Dwarf, perhaps the Dwarves had some anti-Legolas lusting effect) and clearly did not in any way fulfill her fantasy, Jess was finding enjoyment in her current situation. How could this be? Silly, vain, silly, thoughtless, silly Jess liked Middle-earth.

“Kat? Are you okay?” Twila asked hesitantly.

Kat shrugged and didn’t meet Twila’s glance, keeping it on her plate of ‘food’. She wasn’t sure what they were eating, as Sunsong the Cook was on strike until the student who had dropped an aphrodisiac in the staff’s food had turned herself in (or anyone who wanted to take the punishment. She wasn’t picky). In the meantime, the students were getting Gandalf Gourmet. (The aphrodisiac had been a bit of a bust, anyway. The student who did it had hoped it would make a certain staff member who liked to stride more receptive to her advances, instead Arwen and Aragorn had gone on a record-breaking attempt to stay in their room longer than …owyn and Faramir in one go.)

The line of students turning themselves in at Sunsong’s office currently had about eighty people, and a hundred more were sure to join as soon as they figured out how to walk with only one foot.

Well, it was as good a way to start the new semester as any other.

“You think Elrond is teaching our new class today?” Aimee asked in a low voice, fear all over her face.

“No, we have Breeding Not like Rabbits 101,” Mercury replied, eyeing a piece of carrot like it was a deadly weapon (which it very well could be).

“Yeah, with Sam and Rosie,” Darkkalea confirmed. “You think this is a potato?”

Kat glanced over. “No, it’s an egg.”

“Oh.”

“Good thing I enrolled as an Entwife and don’t require your food,” Fasttwig proclaimed happily, sipping some Entdraught. “Miss Meg told me I’d only been to the healer’s wing half as much as most students for that reason.”

Kat joined the rest of the table in sticking out a tongue at the Entwife, who merely sniggered in a
“Speaking of the healer’s wing,” Sassink said, trying to stab her wriggling bacon slice without much luck, “have anyone seen Akasia since she got caught by King Thranduil trying to replace all of Legolas’s clothes with thongs so he would be forced to wear that?”

“Plan-stealing wench,” Juniper Rose muttered in a low voice. It had been her plan, only starring Aragorn, not Legolas.

“Yeah, she’s having the arrow removed from her butt,” Syvia replied. “Thranduil must have missEEEED!”

The last bit came out as a yelp, probably due to the arrow making its way into her fork. Her silver fork.

“I never miss,” King Thranduil said silkily, slipping out of the shadows (Kat sometimes suspected even the shadows sided with the staff and against the students). “The… ‘butt’ seemed most appropriate as that was what she wanted to see on my son.”

“K-king Thranduil,” Syvia stuttered, still staring wide-eyed at the arrow. “Didn’t see you there. Was only joking. Hahahaha.”

King Thranduil did not seem amused. “You actually think I defended by kingdom from constant attacks from Dol Guldur by being a fat, evil Elf who abused my son and planned to take over the world but couldn’t even get an arrow where I wanted it?”

“Noooo…?” Tatiana replied hesitantly. “I mean, you probably have help from your minions on the planning part and… OW!”

The arrow didn’t come from King Thranduil this time. Dropping down on a table from the chandelier, Legolas looked downright pissed.

“Never speak of my father thusly,” the Elf said, eyes flaming.

“Oh God, he’s so sexy when he’s full of righteous anger,” Rook muttered. She and all the other Legolas Lusters looked like they were judging the distance to the table, except for Ranger Ari, who had already attempted the leap and had consequently tripped over Pippin’s suddenly appearing foot (“Did my foot do that?” the Hobbit said with mock-sad tone).

“Do not even consider it,” Gandalf warned, coming in the door. “Students, your class today has been moved to the assembly hall due to the size of some of the… em… illustrations. MUSM students will also attend, as Sauron and Morgoth are still stuck in the Void and both are refusing to leave while the other is still there. What a time to have a duel of patience…”

Gandalf rolled his eyes only slightly, but didn’t look too annoyed. Maybe he too appreciated that mornings weren’t started with the two Dark Lords trying arguing over who could order the biggest Uruk-hai to strangle the rooster (usually by the time they had fought it out, Saruman had already had Wormtongue do it).

The students got up slowly, Kat falling into the crowd next to IthilElentari, who was trying to make her salad let go of her foot. It clung on like a salad in love, or possibly a salad that really, really liked to nibble at feet.

“Remind me to turn myself in,” IthilElentari muttered, groaning. “The punishment cannot be worse than having your food trying to eat *you*.”
Kat sniggered, even if she rather agreed. At least she hadn’t had her dinner attempt to grope her yesterday, like Jess had.

Bloody Jess.

“Come in!” a cheerful voice called, and Kat looked up to see Rosie Gamgee on the assembly hall podium, smiling happily. “Take a seat. Hobbits in front, please. I am Rosie and this is my husband Sam Gamgee, Mayor of the Shire.”

“Rosie!” Sam protested, ears going slightly pink. “I was only elected because Master Frodo didn’t want it.”

“Nonsense, Sam,” Rosie replied calmly. “Everyone’s here? Good. Sam and I will be teaching ‘Breeding Not like Rabbits 101’ for OFUM students. This class will deal with breeding in Middle-earth – yes, miss Ginny?”

“Rosie!” Sam protested, ears going slightly pink. “I was only elected because Master Frodo didn’t want it.”

“You mean the sex lives of Middle-earth?” Ginny asked breathlessly. A happy sigh went through the room; particularly the slashers looked to be cheered up at the thought.

Rosie looked alarmed. “Sam, the students aren’t even sure that sex is a part of breeding! Have the Ring been telling lies about how hobbits breed through foot-rubbing again?”

“Frodo hasn’t mentioned anything if it has,” Sam replied, looking worried.

“Sometimes Frodo takes too much after Bilbo and enjoys a good prank,” Rosie calmly opinionated. “As I was saying, this class will deal with breeding in Middle-earth and therefore we will begin with what breeding in Middle-earth isn’t. A lot of you see to confuse what is possible in breeding with what could only happen if the Eru had created the world while drunk and hanging upside down. To illustrate our lecture, Radagast the Brown will kindly assist. Sam?”

Sam fidgeted slightly, looking down at a note card in his hand. “Scenario one: A female Elf will not breed with a Unicorn. Can anyone tell me why?”

“She’s already married?” Yar Kramer suggested.

“A good suggestion,” Rosie replied, smiling. “Other acceptable answers are: a) Difference in race – Elf and Horse with Horn; b) Difference in existence – Elf exists in Middle-earth, Unicorn does not; c) Difference in… ahem… breeding equipment; or d) Pain.”

“Scenario one illustration highlights these troubles,” Sam read from his card, ears pink.

From Radagast’s staff two silvery forms drifted up; one clearly being a female Elf, the other a Unicorn. They floated up on the podium as cheesy music suddenly started playing (Merry and Pippin on flutes, Kat noted. They looked amused) and the lights dimmed. With a sinking feeling, Kat realised this was ‘setting the mood’.

Afterwards, it was very, very silent.

“I didn’t know Elves could bend like that!” Lorna whispered wide-eyed.

“They can’t,” Calliope replied. “I should know, I am one.”

“Scenario two: Male Elf, female Hobbit. Potential breeding, but highly problematic,” Rosie explained as the two silvery forms changed. “Suggestions as to why?”
The silvery hobbit took out a stepladder.

“Size!” Jenna immediately called out.

“Correct,” Rosie said brightly. “Size is a major obstacle, and I also draw your attention to the difference in race. Elves and Hobbits are much further apart than Elves and Men. You can also witness the size issue in the breeding equipment area.”

Kat closed her eyes. When she opened them again, the silvery shapes had changed to an Elf and a...

Wizard?”

“Scenario three: Female Elf, male Maia. In reversed roles, a breeding that has occurred. However, one obstacle to breeding with a Maia would be…” Sam asked, looking out over the students.

“Ew, wizard?” Nigel Van Gool suggested.

“Almost,” Rosie said, still smiling. “Wizards or Istari are among the shapes Maiar have been known to take, but another is…”

The silvery shaped changed, growing horns and wings and lava. A Balrog.

An amorous Balrog, actually.

“That,” Radagast said, speaking for the first time. He looked pleased at the shape and the fact that several students had ducked under their chairs.

“Oh, no,” CJK said, swallowing. “They wouldn’t…”

They did.

“I want to die,” Evelynn Evans declared, seeming to attempt it by banging her head against the chair. “I’ve seen a Balrog mate. I want to die.”

“Scenario four: Female fairy, male Elf. Problems?” Rosie asked, still painfully cheerful. No one even attempted an answer this time.

And anyway, the silvery fairy answered it for them, as the sparkly wings couldn’t actually keep it flying and it plummeted to the ground where the Elf happily begun jumping up and down on it.

“Ow,” Seiyaryu observed.

“Scenario five: Sauron and random female Elf,” Rosie went on. “A fairly obvious problem, students. As an eyeball, Sauron does not have…”

“Breeding equipment?” Jess offered weakly, and Kat suddenly realised her sister was sitting right behind her. Drat that girl.

“Good!” Rosie beamed. “And now, we will see what these and various other problematic breedings would result in could they actually happen - and just how painful the births would be.”

“I feel ill,” Jess muttered.

“Me too,” Kat agreed, wondering if her body was rejecting the food or the food wanted to get out of her and leave the room as fast as possible. She was rather leaning towards the latter. Out of the corner of her eye, she could see that Jess looked about as sick as Kat felt.
United in the urge to hurl. And here she had been thinking she would never have anything in common with Jess.

Miracles did happen.

And when they later saw the Hobbit give birth to its child by an Ent male, they could all more or less agree on *that*.
Chapter Notes

The various crossover references in this chapter are as follows:

The pirate ship and Will Turner are of course from Pirates of the Caribbean, where Orlando Bloom plays Will Turner.

Drows are from the ‘Forgotten Realms’, the role playing world and setting for many novels.

The wizards of the Unseen University (and the Librarian) are from Terry Pratchett’s Discworld.

Aslan the Lion of Narnia is from C.S Lewis’s books about that very world.

The Holy Grail is in this case from a rather famous Monty Python movie.

The Care Bears and the Gummi Bears are both children’s TV shows.

Jess wasn’t sure at first what woke her up. It wasn’t the sudden awakening you usually had at OFUM (usually initiated by the Balgog morning call to breakfast, or a Dark Lord moody morning meteorite, or a toss out the window by the bed-stealing Ro-Hans), but rather a slow awareness that she was awake. Her eyes started reporting what they saw (darkness), her ears started tuning in sound (giggling) and her body started to indicate how sore she would be this day (very).

Something was amiss. It took her a few moments to realise giggling was not usually a part of the morning wake-up call (diabolical laughter, on the other hand, was).

“Whaaa?” she groaned, and sat up.

“Merry, one of them is awake!” a low voice whispered.

“I can hear that, Pippin.”

“Oh no,” Jess muttered. “You two!” Sitting up, she saw two smaller shapes huddled around a candle. No mistake, the two hobbits were indeed in her room and... Reading? She could barely make out a pinkish book with gold writing and…

“My diary! You’re reading my diary! That’s my personal, private, personal diary! You have no right to read my personal, personal thoughts!”

Merry and Pippin merely smirked.

“I think Legolas already knows about your secret desire to dip him in fudge,” Merry said deviously.

“You’re the hundredth and fifth person to express that desire.”

“Hundredth and sixth,” Pippin corrected. “Thali across the hall also had it in her diary.”
Merry nodded, scribbling something down on a parchment. “I forgot her.”

“Are you taking notes?” Jess gasped, glancing over at her sister’s bed. No movement indicated that Kat had been disturbed, and faint snoring could be heard.

“Of course,” Merry replied, as if it was blatantly obvious. “How else would we remember all this?” Jess opened her mouth to reply, but closed it again. Well, it was rather logical if you put like that.

“Why do you want to remember it all?” she inquired after a moment’s hesitation, not sure if she wanted to know.

“We are writing a book,” Pippin said proudly and beamed. “Since you students like so much to write stories about us, we thought we’d return the favour.”

“Oh,” Jess replied. She had a nagging feeling something should alarm her about this, but why? Merry and Pippin were nice, innocent little hobbits, weren’t they?

When she looked up again, the two had vanished soundlessly, leaving only the diary and some dripped wax on the floor. Muttering under her breath, she pushed herself out of the bed and tried to bolt across the cold floor as fast as she could to grab the book and then bolt back.

Only when she was safely under the warm blankets again did she realise it was Kat’s diary she had grabbed, not her own.

Oh boy.

Of course, it would be wrong to read her sister’s diary. Utterly, completely, totally, utterly wrong. Bad thing to do. Bad, bad, bad.

On the other hand, as Merry and Pippin had already read it and made notes that they were going to use for some purpose, they had rather put it in the public domain, hadn’t they? And what was in the public domain was fair game, wasn’t it?

“Mppfff…” Kat muttered and rolled over in her bed.

Perhaps it was best to enjoy the spoils of public domain reading elsewhere, Jess decided. Carefully, she got dressed and tiptoed out (as much as you could tiptoe in heavy boots, anyway. If you didn’t wear boots at OFUM, you soon realised just how painful it is to walk on thorns, eggshells, rocks, branches, lava and so forth. OFUM wasn’t just home to humans, after all, so it wasn’t just mud that was dragged in).

The halls were quiet and empty, being too early for morning waking and too late for night wandering. Somewhere distantly Elves were singing, which seemed to be quite a hobby for them. As well as poetry and wine, of course, and being slightly aloof.

Sometimes Jess wondered if the Elves were distantly related to the French. It would explain a lot.

She made her way to the grand entry hall, nearly tripping over some of the sleeping mini-Balrogs in the staircase. She recognised Treants, the Ent-ant mini-Balrog that had just the other day started a hunger strike in protest over having no Treant-wife (the strike had lasted two minutes until he had spotted Emilee snacking on a bacon bit. The rugby tackle that followed would have made any coach proud).

Luckily, none of the minis seemed to think Jess worthy of a rugby tackle, and she managed to get
past and outside. A wind greeted her at once, and it was cold and dark except for a thin edge of the moon glittering white and some stars sparkling dimly.

Oh, and the torches on the huge ship parked in the middle of the garden.

The what?

Turning slowly, Jess could feel her mind do a double-take. A ship in the middle of the garden. Surely she had just thought she had seen that, because there weren’t supposed to be any ships in the garden. In fact, it was rather impossible for a ship to be in the middle of the garden as there was no water for it to be in.

There was a ship in the garden. It seemed to be a large sailing ship of some kind, black wood and black sails alike.

That couldn’t be right.

“Is this of your world?” Aragorn asked, and Jess nearly had a heart attack. The ranger slid out of the shadows as if he had for a moment merged with them as effortlessly as he could breathe.

‘I gotta learn how to do that,’ Jess thought to herself.

“No,” she said aloud, trying not to sound like she had been scared out of her wits. “It doesn’t look quite right.”

“No,” Aragorn agreed, looking perplexed. “I heard several cries of ‘Arrr!’ from the ship earlier. It does not seem to be of Elven design.”

“It is not,” Legolas said, also sliding out of the darkness and nearly giving Jess her second heart attack in a minute (although this time for different reasons). “Aragorn, something is wrong. Gimli took me to see yet another cave and we met some strange Elves there with dark skin. They seemed to be called ‘drow’, but tried to attack us on sight. We had to collapse the cave upon them and Gimli was heartbroken at all the wonderful rocks now caved in. Lina had to comfort him.”

“I have never heard of ‘drows’,” Aragorn muttered, shaking his head slightly. “Perhaps we should ask Gandalf.”

Legolas nodded, and Jess hurried to nod as well. Aragorn had asked her opinion! Well, sort of. And Legolas didn’t seem bothered by her! That could of course be because he was more worried about other things, but hey, it was something!

Neither the Man nor the Elf seemed surprised that she tagged along as they headed towards the staff section. She tried to be nonchalant about it, as if she had always managed to walk alongside the poster boy for Scruffy Living and the pin-up Elf of the Pretty without being reduced to a drooling puddle.

And she was so nonchalantly looking at the ground and not the droolalicious Elf that she walked smack into Gandalf’s staff.

“Ow,” she complained bitterly.

The Maia didn’t even seem to notice. “There is a group of very rude wizards claiming to be from the Unseen University in my room and some sort of hairy fellow is stealing all my parchments! If those two hobbits have done something again, I will…”
“I think this is something more serious,” Aragorn interrupted. “We better wake Miss Cam.”

“I am awake,” a tired voice replied, and Miss Cam came out of her room (Jess assumed) with a rather poorly hidden yawn. “What is…?”

She paused. Out of the darkness stepped a rather confused young man, brown shoulder-length hair framing a pale face. And Jess knew who it was instantly. Or rather, her Inner Luster knew.

Oh boy.

Will Turner looked at Legolas and Legolas looked at Will Turner.

“Oh smegging hell,” Miss Cam muttered. “Not that. Not Pirates of Carribean characters in Middle-earth. Bloody smegging hell. I better get onto Thalia and Merc.”

“I think it’s not just pirates who have come,” Jess injected, still staring at Legolas and Will Turner staring at each other.

Aslan the Lion of Narnia walked across the room, looking slightly confused.

“Oh, great,” Miss Cam groaned, smacking a hand to her forehead. “Some idiot must have spawned plot holes to crossovers. Couldn’t have been a student, the portals will not spawn for them. But who would have…”

A low song flowed through the room, becoming stronger and stronger until Gollum came wandering happily into the hall, dragging a sack after him.

“Gollum,” Aragorn said strictly, “where have you been?”

“Sméagol doesn’t answer to you, precious-hatersss,” Gollum said defensively, clutching his sack.

“Gollum!” Gandalf snapped angrily, and Jess took a step back before she could stop herself.

‘Note to self: Don’t piss off any wizards,’ she thought, realising that perhaps stealing Saruman’s nice silk belt to wear in her hair might not have been very wise. But that was weeks ago, he’d surely not find out… Would he?

Gollum looked for a moment like he’d refuse still, then he stuck his chin out proudly. “Sméagol gotss new preciousss, he doesss. He sees bright gold and knows it is precious. Good Sméagol doesn’t want to disturb others, so good Sméagol gets without help.”

Miss Cam closed her eyes. “What did you take?”

There was a brief silence.

“Gollum…” Aragorn warned, taking a step forward.

“Meaniessssss,” Gollum hissed, to Jess’s ears sounding uncannily like her inner voice when it didn’t get what it wanted.

“I have to write a memo about Canon characters picking up student phrases,” Miss Cam muttered, mostly to herself it seemed. “Gollum! What did you take, and where the bloody hell did you take it from?”

“Did you steal the ‘movie reels’ of movie three and accidentally destroyed them?” Legolas asked hopefully, looking cheered up at the very thought.
“In your dreams,” Jess sniggered before she could stop herself. Legolas sent her a look she couldn’t quite make out, except that it made her knees weaken.

Gollum, on the other hand, looked hurt. “Sméagol doesn’t steal, precious. It was a gift from silly English kniggits of the round tablesss.”

“Meaning they turned their back and you took it,” Miss Cam translated, groaning. “Now what are these ‘English kniggits’ and where…”

She paused, her face freezing in a look of disbelief. “Oh, no. Please tell me you didn’t venture into the land of Monty Python and stole the Holy Grail?”

“Precioussss,” Gollum replied proudly.

“Bugger,” Miss Cam said loudly and turned to Gandalf. “We have plot holes forming all over the place and with the laws of crossovers as they are, I have no bloody idea what it will do to each individual Canon. Nothing good, I’m sure…”

Jess didn’t catch the rest of the sentence as something tugged at her foot, and she looked down into the smiling face of a Care Bear.

“Aw,” Jess muttered, staring at the cute, fluffy bear of her childhood TV watching.

Fluffy…

Now why should that alarm her?

Two seconds later, the Care Bear had jumped her, toppled her over, grabbed her hair and was now dragging her away while several Gummy Bears were jumping here and there and everywhere while hissing menacingly. Out of the corner of her eye, Jess could see Legolas and Will Turner fighting two Care Bears wearing horned helmets. Funny, she couldn’t quite remember *that* ever happening on TV…

OFUM was being attacked by Evil!Care Bears and Evil!Gummy Bears.

And the morning had started so well.

Perhaps, in retrospect, that should have tipped her off.
Two and One-Third Hunters Set Forth

Chapter Notes

More crossover mayhem – new of the chapter are:

Thomas the Tank Engine, Teletubbies, My Little Pony, Fraggles, the Smurfs and Postman Pat are all children’s TV shows in some form.

Oompa Loompas are from Roald Dahl’s Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

Professor Snape and one group of centaurs are from J.K Rowling’s Harry Potter series.

Jack Sparrow and Elizabeth also hail from Pirates of the Caribbean.

The Daleks are from Dr. Who, the British TV series.

The ‘thing’ Kat runs into is a Vorlon from Babylon 5, the TV series (ten points if you guessed it yourself)

The skeleton is of course Death from Terry Pratchett’s Discworld

Kat wasn’t quite sure exactly what woke her up – it could have been the distant sound of Elven bowstrings, or perhaps the sound of a screaming Thomas the Tank Engine ramming the great hall.

Or maybe it was the menacing Care Bear leaning over her with a happy little smirk.

Seeing something fluffy within attack range, Kat reacted as a semester at OFUM had taught her well – she grabbed the nearby emergency helmet (for meteorite-filled days) and swung.

It made a satisfying ‘clonk’ as it hit its target and the Care Bear went down for the count.

“What the…?” she muttered, pushing away the stricken bear (noticing only now it had on a silly cowboy hat) and getting up. Nearby, she could hear screams and evil laughter, but not of the Dark Lord kind.

And Jess was not in her bed.

Kat didn’t even pause to think, clutching onto the helmet and charging into the hall. She crashed straight into a purple Teletubby, who was apparently trying to drag Emilee by the hair through the hallway.

“Pick on someone your own colour!” Kat snapped, and brought the helmet down with all her strength.

The Teletubby went down like a Nazgûl at the sight of Éowyn.

“Th-thanks,” Emilee stuttered, freeing herself while taking the opportunity to kick the unconscious Teletubby. “I was just sleeping when… That thing came and grabbed me. What’s going on?”
“I have no idea,” Kat replied, eying the hall warily. Sounds of slight snoring seemed to indicate that most students were still undisturbed, or rather that the students wanted to indicate that they were still undisturbed. It tended to work on the Dark Lords (no point being all evil and proving how much greater you were than the other Dark Lord if no one was about to witness it, after all), but this seemed a little more complex than a Morgoth and Sauron fight (and there were no fireballs. Dead giveaway, that).

A door opened slowly, and Miril glanced out (while clutching a bagel like it was a deadly weapon).

“Kat? What the blazing Mordor is going on?”

“We are being invaded,” a majestic voice said calmly, and all the doors in the hall immediately slammed open to see Lord Celeborn, King Thranduil and High-King Gil-galad striding into the hallway in full battle gear.

“Oh my,” Haleth said in a low voice. “Oooohh myyyyy.”

“Emergency war council in the great hall. Bring anything you can use as a weapon,” Gil-galad went on, pointing his lance backwards just as a Little Pony came galloping in. There was a slight whimper. “Show no mercy to anything you remember from your childhood unless you desire great pain.”

“On the other hand, do not attempt to attack anything not from any of your…” Celeborn frowned slightly. “What did Miss Cam call it? ‘Children’s television shows’? We seem to have a great number of guests in our world.”

“Hurry,” King Thranduil simply added, and the three Elves wandered off again, presumably to give the same message to the other floors.

“Does anyone else have a horrid feeling about this?” Tara asked the group nearest to her in a low voice.

“It’s like a crossover gone bad,” Aero replied, shuddering. “I used to have nightmares about the Oompa Loompas, but I never dreamt I would have to defend myself against them one day!”

“Wait... Does this mean we can be attacked by anything we remember watching in our happy, carefree childhood years?”_ asked (yes, some claimed to be called an underscore. Some really, really weird people enrolled at OFUM sometimes – usually, they quickly discovered just how the Enrolment Office felt about weird).

“Oh Eru... Fraggle attack!” Em muttered.

“Postman Pat!” Lassenista exclaimed. “Oh, man.”

A few horrified glances were exchanged before everyone hurried in and armed themselves with the nearest heavy object. Kat took the opportunity to change and arm herself with a second weapon (Elrond’s ‘A Not So Brief History of Imladris’. It was certainly heavy enough). Jess still didn’t show herself.

“I can’t see Jess,” Kat told Fawkes when they piled out in the hallway again, all students looking ready to run screaming away and attack anything that moved at the same time.

“I think Kenna is missing too,” Fawkes replied. “She hasn’t slept in her bed. I just hope she has been killed and not abducted.”
Kat nodded. Death at OFUM meant spending time at the Halls of Mandos before being sent back (though getting a few lessons first, of course). Being alive could quite often mean a fate a great deal worse.

The great hall (with one smashed Thomas the Tank Engine being sat on by Quickbeam) was already full. Not just with student and staff. There was pirates (Jack Sparrow could be heard discussing with Snape the possibility of inventing a new kind of rum-potion), centaurs (the Narnia-kind, they could be heard huffily explaining to anyone who asked and anyone who didn’t), more centaurs (the Harry Potter kind, they could be heard huffily explaining to anyone who asked and anyone who didn’t), drow (being eyed warily by the Elves, but the drow themselves were far too busy bowing to Shelob to notice), wizards (of many different kinds, apparently exchanging spells and fashion tips), lots of strange humans, Daleks (it was hard not to miss their cries of “EXTERMINATE!”)…

“Silence!” Miss Cam’s voice boomed, and Kat was torn out of her observations. “Thank you all for your efforts so far and welcome to the Official Fanfiction University of Middle-earth to all newly arrived, despite the rather unusual circumstances.”

“Cheers!” Lister cried out, holding up his beer mug. Kat hoped he wasn’t drinking any of the special beer-brew. Many students had fallen into that trap and suffered strange delusions (the last had been Caliné, who still believed koalas were deadly dropbears and would scream at the sight of one. Luckily, there were none in Middle-earth. Not so luckily, Merry and Pippin found out about this and made some fake ones).

“Yes… Well, as you all have surely observed, OFUM has become the host of crossovers. Unfortunately, the strain of so many Canons has inflicted upon us a common problem of crossovers. Too many worlds meeting means something had to give – in this case, some of the Canons got a headache and took a holiday, so to speak.” Miss Cam paused, shaking her head. “Therefore, the Canon of Care Bears and My Little Pony and Teletubbies and so on are now dominated by OFUM Canon.”

“Anything cute and fluffy can be deadly,” Gandalf injected.

“That is the essence of it,” Miss Cam agreed. She sighed. “The presence of the Headmaster at OFUM has made our Canon strong. But instead of crossovers being a meeting of Canons, our Canon has now started to dominate. If enough time passes, this may cause permanent damage. Will Turner may become Legolas-as-a-pirate. The wizards of the Unseen University could become Maiar. And that would just be the start.”

Near Kat, Vana sighed happily at the mention of Legolas, then looked alarmed. “Legolas! He is not here!”

Miss Cam (as always) heard. “Yes. Legolas, Will Turner, Aslan of Narnia, Aragorn, one of our students and Gollum were unfortunately overpowered in the first wave of attack and taken by a party of Care Bears. That is part of the problem. Gollum opened the plot holes and only he can close them and stop new ones from opening. We must find him. They have not gone back to their own world where their own Canon still rules, for then they would turn nice and let their prisoners go. They must be somewhere in Middle-earth.”

“Poor Gollum,” Dana said sadly. Around her, most students were too busy mourning over the loss of Legolas, Will and/or Aragorn to even pay attention to who the other missing were.

“Will Turner was here?” Eve of Mirkwood asked incredulously. “And I missed it? Eru truly hates me.”
“Probably,” Túrin said brightly.

A horrifying thought suddenly descended upon Kat. She knew who the missing student was.

“Which student?” she asked nevertheless, her voice carrying all across the hall.

Gandalf looked sad; Miss Cam looked sympathetic as she answered. “I’m afraid it was your sister, miss Fint.”

Kat merely nodded, closing her eyes. She could feel Litheorin give her a comforting pat on the shoulder almost distantly. Jess was missing. Her sister. Oh, shit, shit, shit.

“We will find them,” Lord Elrond said gently, his voice washing over Kat like a comforting caress. She looked up to meet his eyes and saw nothing but kindness.

“We will,” King Thranduil echoed, looking grim. Beside him, Elizabeth and Arwen nodded empathically.

“OFUM Students, you will come with me and help in the defence of OFUM,” Gandalf announced. “Those of MUSM join up with mini-Balrogs and help search the buildings. You will report to Saruman. Pirates, please go with Círdan to the moat…”

Kat didn’t really listen. Out of the corner of her eye, she could see Gimli carefully tip toeing past the Elves and vanish into the gardens.

He was planning something. She wasn’t sure where the knowledge came from, but she was sure she was right. Carefully, she slipped behind her classmates as they started moving after Gandalf, almost crashing into a weird looking… thing on the way.

“Understanding is a three-edged sword,” the thing said seriously (in between some strange musical tones) to the huge skeleton next to it.

ONE EDGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN ENOUGH FOR ME.

“You must listen to the sword, not the scythe.”

THE SWORD SPEAKS?

“Yes.”

The two walked off, looking quite buddy-like.

“Oookay,” Kat muttered to herself, finally managing to duck behind a Dalek and get out. The gardens were being battled over as everything else; she could see Turgon headbutting a Smurf. Idril and Tuor were tossing a Care Bear between them, looking grimly amused.

And Gimli was vanishing into the earth just a few metres ahead.

Kat blinked, for a moment wondering if she had been hallucinating again (although no naked Ro-Hans dancing German folk dances this time). Only one way to find out, really.

She leaped. For a moment she thought the earth would indeed smack her hard, but instead she kept falling. Down and down she went, until finally something hard greeted her behind.

“Owmpf,” she complained.
“Be glad it was not the sharp end of my axe,” a voice said in the darkness. “Why are you following me?”

“You are going after Legolas, aren’t you?” Kat asked, trying to stand up without whimpering. She managed only just.

“Perhaps,” the Dwarf said guardedly.

“And I think I know where they are,” Kat went on.

There was a brief silence. She could almost hear him thinking in the dark, trying to judge how probable her statement was.

“How do you know?” he finally asked.

“I remember the Care Bears. They lived in the clouds. But here they seem to be opposite of what they are normally. I think they would go deep underground. I remember falling into one of your caves once before. You and your Dwarven kin have been making caves all around OFUM, haven’t you? They are here somewhere.”

“Yes, they are,” a voice confirmed, and torchlight started filling the cave. As Kat managed to adjust her eyes to actually seeing again, she spotted Frodo holding a torch and looking fairly fierce. Sting hung from his belt, and light reflected off his mithril vest. “The Ring told me.”

“And you trust it?” Gimli asked, eying the golden ring with as much trust as a student would regard a known piece of Gandalf cooking.

“I’m hurt,” the Ring snapped back. “Hurt at your careless remark doubting my sincerity.”

“You have no sincerity,” Gimli replied.

“Yes, but I am still hurt.”

“I threatened to dye it urple,” Frodo broke in. “I think it told the truth. They are in one of the deep caves below.”

“Let’s go then,” Kat said hurriedly. Gimli and Frodo merely looked at her. “Oh, come on. She’s my sister. She’s a pain in the bum, but she’s family. I have to help her.”

“I don’t know...” Gimli started, but Frodo broke in.

“She can come. We can always use her as a human shield.”

“Good point,” Gimli said brightly.

“All right! Let’s hunt some Care Bear,” Kat said happily, then noticed the others looking at her. “What? I’m using Aragorn’s line from when the Three Hunters set forth.”

“Let us not quote the movie,” Gimli said evenly as he started moving into the darkness.

“And anyway,” he added in so low a voice Kat could barely make out the words, “with her along it’s more like the Two and One-Third Hunters.”

“And anyway,” he added in so low a voice Kat could barely make out the words, “with her along it’s more like the Two and One-Third Hunters.”
It had turned out to be a very interesting day indeed, Jess thought to herself and tried not to die of bliss.

Okay, so she had been kidnapped by homicidal Care Bears who wanted to sacrifice her to the Care Bears God of UnCare and that wasn’t really a good thing. Okay, so she had been tied up with fluffy white rope and would soon be burned at the stake. Neither of these were good things.

But she had in fact been tied up with Legolas and Will Turner and was now sandwiched firmly between the two. She could actually touch Legolas’s bum.

Hey, everyone had to die sometime, so why the smeg not now?

“Miss Fint, are your hands really so firmly tied you have to rest them there?” Legolas said after a moment.

“Um… No?” Jess ventured.

“Ah,” Legolas replied. Another moment passed. “Perhaps you would be as kind as to remove them then.”

“Um… Yeah. Sorry,” Jess muttered. She tried not to look towards the general behind area of Will Turner. Bad Inner Luster, Bad! “I just… You… Great ass, I mean.”

“Do you have many young ladies who act this way around you?” Will Turner asked, wriggling slightly.

“Yes. You?”

“Countless. It seems we both share the fate of Orlando Bloomigitis.”

“Aye!” Legolas nodded vigorously. “Perhaps we could have a meeting after escaping and discuss our common problem.”
“I would like that.”

Jess’s Inner Luster had already passed out from all the bliss, but it managed to wake up long enough to imagine Legolas and Will Turner sharing Elven wine under starlight before promptly passing out again.

Figured. She was trapped in a personal fantasy and her Inner Luster bailed out on her.

Somewhere behind her, she could hear the excited chatter of Care Bears. They seemed to be arguing over whom to sacrifice first – her or Aragorn.

“Um, excuse me?” she called out. “Could you do me first? I’m all ready to die.”

The chatter fell briefly silent, before resuming in a slightly more amused manner. Or maybe it was slightly more menacing manner. It was hard to tell with Evil!Care Bears.

“You would die for Aragorn?” Legolas asked in a tone she couldn’t quite place.

“Well, better me than him, right? Maybe it would give him time to get rescued. Anyway, I’m ready to die a happy woman.”

And then, a small miracle happened. For the first time ever, Legolas Thranduilion gave her a genuine smile. It was a smile for her, not at her (as was not uncommon when staff watched students learning yet another lesson).

“I would not worry about Aragorn,” Legolas said quietly and gave her a wink. “We are not going to die, any of us. We are just waiting.”

“Waiting for what?” Jess asked, just as Legolas unravelled the ropes holding him within two seconds. Oh, bugger. She wasn’t going to die a blissful woman after all. They had a plan.

Drat them.


*****

The sun shone brightly in the sky over OFUM, although that was hard to tell, hidden as it was behind dark, fat clouds that shot lightning and poured rain. In short, the clouds were about as moody as Morgoth and Sauron on a Monday Morning Mope.

“I don’t see why he is so scary,” Sauron said with a snarl, leaning against the pile of unconscious Muppets.

“And that’s what he calls armour? Hah!” Morgoth sneered. They both scowled.

Darth Vader seemed unaware of the two Dark Lords eyeing him, and kept gagging the red Power Ranger with a cheerful disposition. It wasn’t every day Evil got to be Evil in the service of Good, after all.

In the garden, the Riders of Rohan were playing polo with Bob the Builder’s builder’s hat (okay, so it wasn’t actual polo, but the Rohan Polo League had reinvented the game in a very creative manner) and with Bananas in Pyjamas serving as goal posts on one side.

“Stupid riders,” Sauron muttered. “You know, I could have conquered Minas Tirith had it not been for them.”
“Had it not been for them and the fact that you were outsmarted by a *hobbit*,” Morgoth replied and smirked.

“Says you, you mildew-infected moron!”

“Stuttering suck-of-two-lemons!”

“Menopasuring miniscule… Huh?” Sauron faltered midway through an insult and Morgoth paused as well. The earth shook slightly. Thunder thundered.

“I know that sound,” Morgoth said darkly. “That’s the sound of an evil fortress being brought into this world.”

The two Dark Lords exchanged glances. Someone had an evil fortress in this world and it wasn’t one of them.

Sometimes, two Evils can have a common goal.

To keep other Evils out.

“Kill?” Sauron asked, reaching for his mace.

“Yes. Slow, painful and bloody killing,” Morgoth replied and grabbed a handful of Muppets. “Let’s kick some Evil-wannabe behind.”

“The term is ‘kick some bum’, you git-groin.”

“It is *not*, you grub-groper!”

“Is too!”

“Is NOT!”

“IS TOO!”

*****

The opportune moment, as it turned out, was at the very moment all the Evil!Care Bears were busy with Rock-Paper-Scissors to agree on who was to be sacrificed first. And so, the Care Bear that got rock, it did indeed get a rock - straight to the forehead.

“Nice shot!” Jess said admiringly to Aragorn, who gave a small shrug.

“Growing up with Elrond’s sons gave me many useful skills.”

The Care Bears hissed, realising that all their prisoners had managed to free themselves (well, except for Jess, who had been freed by Will Turner), and that one of them was a lion (who was already chewing on something yellow and fluffy).

“Okay, so now what’s the plan?” Jess asked, edging closer to Legolas.

“We find Gollum,” Aragorn replied. “He went with these creatures willingly. Obviously, he is planning something. These creatures were kind enough to bring us to their lair so we can find out just what that plan is.”

“You mean you let yourself be captured?”
“Of course we did, miss Fint. This is easier than having to search all of Middle-earth for their lair. You did not think we got captured for real?” Legolas asked, eyes twinkling.

“I was!”

“You have not been raised to fight and be a warrior,” Aragorn replied calmly. He didn’t even flinch as a Care Bear rushed at him, merely lifted a foot and stomped.

The rest of the Care Bears eyed him warily.

“Tactical retreat?” suggested one Bear.

“Yes.”

It was quite astonishing how fast those little buggers could run, Jess reflected.

“And don’t come back!” she shouted after cloud of dust trailing hundreds of running feet.

“This is too easy,” Will Turner muttered and Aslan growled his agreement.

“Die, you pink menace from…” a voice shouted and Gimli came tumbling into the cave with his axe raised and helmet halfway on. “Oh.”

Frodo came charging right behind, and behind that came…

“Kat?!” Jess gasped, staring at her sister. “What are you doing here? And why are you armed with a dead parrot?”

“I… Um… Came to free you,” Kat muttered.

“Oh,” Jess replied. “Um… Thanks.”

“Where is Gollum?” Frodo asked warily.

“He is here,” a happy, cheerful voice said and a purple shape stepped out of the shadows.

“Barney?!” Jess asked and blinked. “Barney the Dinosaur?”

Barney smiled menacingly. “That is Dark Lord Barney to you, missy. Soon I will rule this world and all the others! As soon as Gollum give me the Holy Grail, I will control the plot holes!”

“Why would Gollum give you the Holy Grail?” Frodo asked, eying the shadows.

“Because I will give him his precious.”

“Oh, look, *someone* loves me,” the Ring said pointedly.

Barney smiled and Jess winced. She would never be able to look at a dinosaur the same way again. They weren’t meant to smile evilly.

"And the carrier of it comes walking right into my lair, right next to my new evil fortress,” Barney went on. “I thought I would have to find a way to lure you out, mister Baggins, but here you come to save your little friends. How touching. Minions – attack!”

“Oh, great,” Kat muttered and sent Jess a look.

Care Bears, Gummi Bears, Fraggles and Sesame Street characters were suddenly everywhere,
charging like a blanket of fluffiness.

Jess didn’t really think. She jumped over Elmo, who was attempting to bite her kneecaps, grabbed a struggling Miss Piggy and tossed her at the Care Bear trying to topple Legolas. Frodo was slamming two Care Bears into the wall, but froze suddenly.

Gollum’s hand had suddenly come out from the shadows, and was now dangling the chain with the One Ring on triumphantly.

“It’s mine! My precious! Mine! My… Ow!”

The fireball came hurling into the cave like only a Sauron/Morgoth fireball could, and Jess barely had time to duck as it came whizzing past and continued into the next chamber. Seconds later, both Sauron and Morgoth appeared, looking very, very irate.

“NO!” Gollum hissed, clutching his hand. “You made Sméagol drop his precious!”

“Thanks, Sauron!” Frodo said brightly, quickly edging away from Gollum with the Ring clutched in his hand.

“What? I helped the hobbit who ruined me?!”

“Oh, yes,” Morgoth said happily. “And I was here to watch so I can remember this for a long, long, *long* time.”

The minions of Barney had paused in their attack (those who were not burned to a fluffy crisp), but their leader didn’t seem to notice. He was staring into the next chamber.

“My fortress!” Barney wailed. “Now Skeletor will never lend me another evil fortress again!”

“All right… That’s enough,” a voice cut through the room – a voice that expected immediate obedience. Jess found herself straightening without even thinking. Miss Cam had come, and not alone.

Elves, pirates, Daleks, Vorlons, drow and countless other creatures started filing into the chamber, making the Fluffy Forces of Darkness surrender at once like true cowardly minions would.

“Gollum, do you realise what kind of mess you’ve made?” Miss Cam asked darkly, giving a Care Bear a kick as she passed.

“Gollum did it for the precious, precious!”

“That’s right, blame poor little me,” the Ring said bitterly.

“Shut up,” Frodo replied testily. “You didn’t exactly resist Gollum taking you, now did you?”

“But we won, right?” Kat asked, getting up from under two unconscious Fraggles (knocked out by one paw-smack from Aslan).

“Yes, we won,” Miss Cam replied, and the Forces of Good cheered. “But now comes the worst part of all.”

“Realising what we lost in order to win?” Jess suggested, sighing. Man, she could have died while in a threesome with Legolas and Will Turner (‘Shut up, Brain! That is what happened!’ her Inner Luster screamed), but life just wasn’t fair.
“No,” Miss Cam said grimly. “Now we have to clean up.”
Ample Angst and Washing Woes

Peace and abnormality had returned to OFUM, as all visitors had departed (many having made some new acquaintances – Aslan and Neo seemed to have struck up a friendship and were trying to recruit Frodo to some Chosen’s Union; Will Turner and Legolas planned to do correspondence and hunt on for a cure for Orlando Bloomigitis; Morgoth had nicked a Care Bear to attempt to crossbreed it with Orcs; and Gollum was comforting himself over his foiled plot by attempting to woo Miss Piggy). The mess was still being cleaned up, however.

But mess being cleaned up at OFUM wasn’t really anything new. There was always a mess. Usually, there were students at the centre of it – hell, sometimes students even were the mess. Usually, it was the students who got to clean it up as well.

“This is so not fair!” Caliné complained to Kat, dragging yet another bucket of Goldberry Spring Clean for Sparkling Floors ™ up the stairs. “Why do we have to clean the hallways?”

“It’s educational, Gandalf says,” Kat replied, trying not to spill too much water. The stairway was starting to look a wee bit too sparkly (you could tell by the way Gollum was trying to cut off a piece and make it a precious).

“He would,” Wade the Cobalt (Wannabe-Istar) muttered darkly. “What did he say it supposedly teaches us?”

“That washing hallways sucks, and therefore should always be delegated as a task to people you dislike,” Kat announced, trying to mimic Gandalf’s voice.

“Sounds about right,” Lora replied, groaning.

“Hey, it could be worse,” Kat pointed out.

“It could?”

“We could be washing the toilets.”

A collective shudder went through the small group. Any student who was female and breathing (and a few others) had at some point come across the Witch-Wall.

Even senility wouldn’t be able to kill those memories.

“They make these stairs so long on purpose,” Indiga groaned as they finally managed to climb the last step.

“Would we do such a thing?” a silky voice said from the shadows.

The students regarded each other, then answered as one.

“Yes.”

“My bad. We would indeed. And you are late for class. My class, specifically. Angst and Proper Woes 101.”

The students all groaned, and Kat let out a sigh as well. Túrin Turambar teaching a class. Valar help them all. But at least it meant a break from washing the hallways.
“Oh, joy,” another voice said, sounding dark and angsty (and kinda hot, actually).

“Hottie alert!” Losse exclaimed. “I heard someone hot speak!”

“That would be my sword,” Túrin replied, finally stepping out of the shadows.

“Otherwise known as the one with the looks,” the sword said, still sounding dark and angsty.

“One of these days I shall wrap that sword in tinfoil and leave it in my sauna to rust,” Túrin muttered darkly. “The class will commence in a few minutes, students. You better hurry, or I will give you something to really angst about.”

“What is up his bum?” Kat asked as the group of students all dropped their buckets and started making their slow way towards lecture hall three.

“In my head, it’s Beleg,” Vulgarweed said dreamily.

“I always thought it was the other way around,” Miss Maureen said, stepping out of the shadows in her usual lurking manner.

“Ew,” Owl replied, shuddering visibly. “Is that all you slashers think of?”

“Is Legolas all you Legolas Lusters think of?” Vulgarweed countered.

“Well, yes, but…”

“And does not what you want to do to Legolas make King Thranduil go ‘ew’?”

“No,” Owl said defensibly. “He didn’t say ‘ew’, he tried to drown me in the moat.”

“Hey sis,” Jess said merrily, coming out from lecture hall two. She looked fairly pleased with herself, as any Legolas Luster who had cupped a feel at both Legolas *and* Will Turner would be.

Truth be told though, she hadn’t broadcasted it much. In fact, Jess was almost bearable to be around these days. Some of it had to do with the unspoken cease fire they had both (silently) agreed to, and some of it had to do with the vast quantities of Elven wine Kat had looted from Barney the Evil Dinosaur. It was hard to stay mad at your sister when you were both drunk.

“Jess,” Kat replied. “Shouldn’t you be in class?”

“Class was dismissed early. Sauron tried to glue Morgoth’s bum to a pink throne.”

“Yep,” Zikulkodar Twilight confirmed, also coming out of the lecture hall. “Unfortunately, Sauron only managed to glue himself to Morgoth.”

“As well as gluing them both to Grond,” Uryale added. “I guess trying to ram it at Morgoth wasn’t the best of plans.”

“Please tell me someone got pictures,” Elenea Anarima begged, struggling not to laugh. “It would make a great Christmas card. ‘Season’s greetings! Fear no evil this holiday, for evil is its own worst foe.’ Or we could just plaster it all over campus as a joke.”

“I made drawings,” Blume offered.

“Yes!” Elenea Anarima exclaimed, yanking the sketch book out of Blume’s hands. “This will be a proper revenge for when Sauron dipped me in butter and locked me up with the Witch-Wall!”
Jess leaned towards Kat. “You think it’ll take one day or two before Morgoth and Sauron both hunt Elenea Anarima down and hang her from Dol Guldur?”

“I’m thinking one,” Kat replied.

“Me too.”

The crowd started filing into lecture hall three; Jess and a few MUSM students were joining in as well, probably to watch OFUM students get barbequed (it was the MUSM students idea of a party – see OFUM students suffer. And the opposite happening was a party for OFUM, so really, both sides were benefiting).

“Welcome to Angst and Proper Woes 101,” Túrin declared as students found their seats, most looking bored already. “This class will teach you about proper suffering, how to deal with it, how not to be a drama queen and just how to make angst believable. Frankly, I have no hope I will be able to teach you all this as an eagle cannot teach an Orc to fly. But at least I shall have the pleasure of failing you all.”

He paused.

“It’s my only pleasure… Oh, for woe is me. My only joy is in giving others pain! I am different, they all hate me! The Elves abused me and picked on me for being a mortal and I wanted to kill myself like a thousand times! I felt inferior because I did not have pointed ears! My ears were round!

ROUND!”

He fell to his knees, now sobbing heavily. “Thingol hit me because my ears were round! Then he raped me! And I accidentally killed my friend! My one true love turned out to be my sister! A dragon outsmarted me! Wah! My life is horrid! And to think all that was needed to save me was hot, healing sex with my one true love! Woe, woe, woe is me!”

“Oy…” Hugo Khan whispered next to Kat. Túrin didn’t seem to hear, for he kept on letting out very loud sobs, before finally standing up.

“Now this is how you don’t do it. You see how silly that was, all overblown and much too dramatic?” Túrin asked. There was a silence.

“That was so hot,” Bjam muttered finally.


“I want him more,” Harmony shot in.

“I want him most!”

“No, me!”

“ME!”

“Meeeeee!”

“Oh, shut up,” Túrin broke in, sounding annoyed. “You honestly found that pathetic self-pity display hot?”

“Yes,” Evil Munky replied after a moment. “Could you do it again?”

“No! I see this will be harder than I feared. Therefore, you will all hand in an essay next week on all
that was wrong with my little act. No less than a thousand words or I will let Glaurung really give you something to cry about.”

“Oh, the angst…” Hathaldir sighed. “I have to hug the poor baby and give him comfort!”

And she lunged.

Moments later Túrin found himself facing a stampede for the first time yet.

“I knew there would be trouble,” Miss Maureen said happily and flashed her teeth. “Bad angst tend to trigger the fangirl within.”

“Want to head to the library?” Jess suggested after a few minutes of watching fellow students getting wrestled by many enthusiastic mini-Balrogs, an equally enthusiastic Túrin and a growling Miss Maureen. “I know of a book that can help you with your essay.”

“You do? Jess, you’ve been acting really weird of late,” Kat replied, ducking as LeAnne Winter was hurled through the room.

“Tell me about it. I’m freaking myself out.”

“You’ve probably finally crossed the line over to insanity. It was bound to happen.”

“Oh, haha,” Jess said dryly as they managed to make their way out in the hallways. “Aren’t you the funny one?”

“I like to think so.”

“Uh huh.”

They walked in silence for a while, Jess happily sucking on a lollipop. Distantly, Túrin could be heard to be laughing.

“Well, at least he’s not angisting anymore,” Kat muttered.

“But the students who lunged at him probably are.”

“Mmm-mmm. Hey, are we having a normal conversation without being annoyed at each other?”

“No! Are we?”

“I think we are.”

“Hell must have frozen over and now all the little devils are playing ice hockey,” Jess observed. “Um, did we take a wrong turn? This hallway doesn’t look familiar.”

The hallway did look slightly odd. It seemed… Darker, almost. It certainly wasn’t the way to the library.

“Kat… I think we’re near the Enrolment Office.”

“Why do you think that?”

“Because that door says ‘Enrolment Office.’”

“Oh.” Kat glanced around, wondering if they were technically in the staff part of the University, and
if so, how painful it would be if they were discovered there by Miss Cam.

The initial prognosis was not good.

“Let’s peek!” Jess suggested happily and made a bolt for the door.

“Jess! We shouldn’t be here!”

“Since when has that ever stopped us before?”

“Well, yeah, but…”

“Come on, we can see if we find Amy’s enrolment form! Maybe there’s something there we can use to get even with her from when she scribbled ‘Space for rent’ on your forehead while you were asleep in class.”

“Hey!” Kat protested. “How do you know about that?”

“Read it in your diary,” Jess replied, opened the door and vanished into the room.

“I’m going to kill her,” Kat said, mostly to herself, before stepping up to the door. This would so bring them in trouble.

But as she entered, she saw that they weren’t the only ones who seemed to be trying to get dirt on students from the enrolment forms.

Merry and Pippin had knocked over a file cabinet, and were now happily shifting through papers while making notes.

“Oh, you two again, sneakily reading sensitive information,” Jess said, planting her hands on her hips. “Just what kind of story are you writing about the students?”

Kat blinked. Merry and Pippin were writing a story about the students?

“A giant slash orgy,” Pippin said proudly. “With a touch of overblown angst and many woes. It will be a masterpiece.”

“Speaking of woes,” a dark voice said from somewhere in the impenetrable shadows, sounding amused. “What are you doing in my office?”

“Oh, sorry,” Merry said hurriedly. “We were just leaving, Headmaster.”

“Headmaster? You’re…” Kat started, but her voice failed her.

“Yes.”

“The Headmaster?” Jess asked, sounding awed. “I’ve heard you are actually Him.”

“You don’t say,” the voice said in a tone so even Kat could feel her hairs stand on end.

“I had no idea you ran the Enrolment Office… But then again, who better, right? I wanted to ask you, did you…”

“Jess?” Kat said nervously.

“Yes?”
“Just shut up and run.”

Unfortunately, there was a slight problem with running away from He who is Canon – He is Canon, and if he decides the ground you’re running on should no longer be the ground, you’re in for a surprise.

The ground fell away.

And Jess and Kat found themselves plunging straight into something wet and slightly gooey.

It took them two hours to get out, and then it took them five baths just to feel dirty – and that was before they discovered what they had actually fallen into was Morgoth’s failed attempts to make Orcs and Saruman’s failed attempts to make Uruk-hai.

On the bright side, it was a very, very effective introduction to angst.
Hiss a Song for Middle-earth, Baby

Chapter Notes

Lyrics appearing in this chapter were from:

Truly, Madly, Deeply – Savage Garden
(Everything I Do) I Do It for You – Bryan Adams
Frozen – Madonna
Babe, I’m on Fire – Nick Cave

Like all pop songs in Middle-earth, they are considered armed and dangerous. A reward has been promised by Lord Elrond for their capture – dead or alive. Preferably dead, so he won’t be forced to listen to them.

It was a bright, but fairly cold morning Jess woke up to that day. The floor was freezing, as stone floors without heating tend to be after a cold night. Not for the first time, she missed central heating.

It wasn’t that OFUM didn’t have it; it was just that the management refused to turn it on until far into the winter. ‘To give a more accurate Middle-earth experience’, as Miss Cam had put it. In Jess’s opinion, if they wanted to give the students an accurate Middle-earth experience, they’d kept the mini-Balrogs somewhere else. And not let Ro-Hans wander the student hallways, always sniffing out the nearest student binge – for then to steal the beer. (The binges weren’t that hard to find, really. You just had to follow the nearest hobbit.)

Of course, all this did keep things interesting and students were rarely bored, but still. Maybe the students should organise themselves in a union and start demanding better treatment. Hadn’t Amy the Elf been mentioning that just the other day?

Come to think of it, Amy hadn’t really been seen since…

Perhaps it was best not to say anything, Jess decided, before making a dash for her clothes. In a way, she supposed the cold floor was educational. It taught you how to leap across a room in as few steps as possible. Useful skill, that.

Kat was still sleeping peacefully and warmly, as she had no classes for a while yet. MUSM had a lot more early classes in general, as Sauron and Morgoth (like the true Dark Overlords they were) realised the evilness of morning classes. Especially as MUSM students had a higher contingent of Sisterhood of Evil members, who liked to stay up through the night to plot evilly. Sometimes it seemed that half the fun of evil was being evil to other evil-doers. It hadn’t made sense to Jess at first, until she realised that no one understood the skill and finesse of an evil scheme than someone versed in the art themselves. Only another evil could give evil the recognition it craved.

That didn’t really make much more sense, but Jess’s brain was still a bit untrained at the whole ‘making sense’ thing.
She hummed a Bryan Adams song softly as she left the room, knowing Kat would hear it in her half-sleep and have the song stuck in her head the rest of the day. It was revenge for Kat doing the same to Jess with a Celine Dion song the day before. Even though they did have a ceasefire, they wouldn’t be sisters unless they did minor pranks to each other. That was half of the fun of siblings, after all.

That, and getting caught sneaking about together.

There came that unpleasant memory slamming back. Headmaster. Goo. Fall. Ew to infinity.

Shuddering, Jess decided to stop by the bathrooms, as a sudden desire to plunge herself into water had taken hold. She still needed two showers a day after the certain *incident*. Kat had agreed with her that they should never speak of it ever again, and deny it vehemently even to their own brains until it really never had happened. That was the plan, anyway.

It wasn’t working too well.

“Good morning, you sexy hottie!” a cheerful voice declared as she entered the bathrooms.

“Bite me,” Jess replied, walking over to the sink.

“Gladly! Ears or neck?”

She just groaned, running her hands through the water. Surely, she had to have washed off everything from That Which Had Not Happened by now?

“Ready for your class today?” the Witch-King asked as noticed he didn’t have her attention anymore.

“Oh, yeah,” Jess replied absentmindedly. Who would have known experimental Orcs could have so much goo in them?

“Really? Hem-hem,” the Witch-Wall said, clearing his throat. And then he sang.

“I’ll be your dream, I’ll be your wish, I’ll be your fantasy.
I’ll be your hope, I’ll be your love, be everything that you need.
I love you more with every breath truly madly deeply do...
I will be strong I will be faithful 'cos I'm counting on a new beginning.
A reason for living. A deeper meaning.”

“Oooookay….” Jess said hesitantly. She wondered if her ears were really bleeding, or it just felt like it.

“I thought it appropriate as you have a songfic class,” the Witch-Wall beamed. “I’m so your fantasy, baby! I’m steady, I’m dark, I’m always hard and you’ll have no problems getting a ring on my finger!”

“Good to know,” Jess replied and ran. Well outside she stopped to shudder. She really had to start remembering putting on earmuffs before going to that particular bathroom (Wormtongue had started selling them, to great success).

Trying to get Savage Garden lyrics out of her head, she made her way down and out into the morning. The air was crisp, and the sun didn’t seem particular warm. A small group of students were
making their slow way across the court yard, and Jess hurried to catch up.

“Hey Jess,” Deathdroid said as she caught up, “did you knit that scarf yourself?”

“Yeah, I did, actually. How did you know?”

“The pink and orange together gave you away.”

“Hey, Galadriel told me it inspired her!”

“Yes,” BG replied, “I heard she suggested to Legolas that he should tag all his lusters with a scarf like that, as it would allow him to always see them coming, even in the darkest night.”

The other students sniggered, especially fellow Legolas Lusters. Jess stuck her tongue out at them.

“Hey, maybe he’ll be thankfully to me then. At least he knows who I am.”

The other Legolas Lusters gave her an ugly stare.

“How you can lust after that scrawny android is beyond me, anyway,” Talissa Gabdine injected. She was an Aragorn Admirer, of course.

“Because someone who looks like he has just had a mudbath is so much better,” Andariel shot back. She was a Legolas Luster – naturally.

“Actually, yes…” Talissa Gabdine started, but Culfinwen cut in.

“Remember girls, we signed a ceasefire agreement to join forces against our number one nemesis – Hobbit-lusting OFUM students.”

“Oh, yes,” all the students chorused, and exited planning of the next strike occupied most of the students until they finally managed to reach the lecture hall at MUSM (only Jimmy Wang managed to fall into the Small Crack of Despair #12 this time, unlike the last time, when half the class had fallen in).

Sauron and Morgoth looked to be in their usual moods – peeved, scheming, angry, devious and sarcastic all at once.

“Welcome to Lyrical Lusting, your songfic class,” Morgoth declared. “With us today is the Orcish Hissing Choir, who shall insist us in this endeavour, if they aren’t too distracted by the repulsive stink of Sauron.”

“They are more likely to be distracted by the glare of your giant armoured ass,” Sauron shot back.

“Is it just me or are these classes like 60% Sauron and Morgoth insulting each other, 35% Sauron and Morgoth working their way up to insulting each other and about 5% actual teaching?” Jacky (the Jack-O-Lantern student, who usually got kidnapped by the mini-Balrogs to be their light at late night cricket games) asked Jess in a low voice as Morgoth and Sauron were hissing insults at each other.

“I think it’s more like 3% class. You forgot the 2% fireball ducking.”

“Oh yeah.”

Morgoth and Sauron seemed to finally remember they had a class again.

“As you know any song is useable in a LotR fanfic,” Sauron said, giving Morgoth a pointed look. “It
doesn’t at all have to fit with the mood or theme of Middle-earth, and as for language? Who cares if
the song you want to stick in use words Middle-earth wouldn’t even cough up like a bad hairball?
Don’t let silly modern slang stop you from sticking in your favourite song at all inappropriate times.”

“Yes, feel free to stick in lyrics anywhere without care for the flow of the story,” Morgoth added.
“Have your Elf princess from BadlyInventedNameistan sing modern pop songs, for surely, that is
what Elves in Middle-earth do every day, baby. They just adore those Dido songs. And of course,
bonus points for using lyrics from the soundtrack of the movie by that drooling ooze of a director
who didn’t bother sticking me, the original Dark Lord, in his pathetic piece of puke. Because no one
would surely expect you to stick lyrics from the movie in a LotR fanfic. That’s just so clever. No
one’s thought of that before. To sum up, feel free to be as tasteless as Sauron.”

“That’s right… Hey!”

“You’re still too slow to spot an insult,” Morgoth said, shaking his head.

“You’re too old to make a proper one!”

“Scatterbrained scab!”

“Alliteration abuser!”

The two stared hatefully at each other as only Dark Lords could.

“Look into my eyes - you will see
What you mean to me
Search your heart - search your soul
And when you find me there you'll search no more
Don't tell me it's not worth tryin' for
You can't tell me it's not worth dyin' for
You know it's true
Everything I do - I do it for you,” sang the Orcish Hissing Choir. (At least, Jess assumed it was
singing. It was hard to tell with all the hissing.)

“Not now!” Sauron hissed. The Orcs looked confused for a moment, then the leader seemed to get
the point.

“Now,” he sang, “there's no point in placing the blame
And you should know I'd suffer the same
If I lose you, my heart would be broken
Love is a bird, she needs to fly
Let all the hurt inside you die
You're frozen when your heart's not open.”

“You weren’t supposed to sing those until we lured Saruman and Gandalf here!” Morgoth snapped.
“And what is with these inane lyrics? If love was a bird, I’d snap its neck and eat it for lunch.”

“There’s a charming picture,” Sauron said dryly. “And here I was wondering how all the female
Valar turned down a hopeless romantic like yourself.”
“I sense this is nearing that 2% fireball ducking,” Venomeyes sighed.

Jess nodded and took out her fireproof helm. Unfortunately, it didn’t block out the Orcish Hissing Choir singing as the fireballs whizzed past.

“The man going hiking says it

The misunderstood Viking says it

The mad at the rodeo

And the lonely old Eskimo says

Babe, I’m on fire

Babe, I’m on fire.”

And indeed, it didn’t take long before many of them were on fire.

It was a hard lesson, but it had to be learned.

Always duck a fireball, even when you’re wearing a fireproof helm.
“Kat, you gotta wake up!”

The voice broke into Kat’s blissful dream of Faramir bathing naked in the waters at Henneth Annûn, and she groaned.

“Jess, go away. No class today. Me sleeping.”

“Kat, come on! We’ve got mail.”

“We… huh?”

Kat finally gave up, and pushed the blankets down from her head. “This better be good.”

“It is,” Jess replied, holding up a thick leather-bound book wrapped with a pink ribbon. The title was in gold.

“Merry and Pippin’s Short Stories of Slash and Other Naughty Narratives,” Kat read and groaned again. “Oh no. This is what they’ve been writing on, isn’t it?”

“I think so,” Jess replied, looking torn between horror and amusement. “Want me to read aloud?”

“Might as well,” Kat said, and fell back against her pillows. “It can’t be worse than that four page epic poem the Witch-Wall wrote you, anyway.”

“I wouldn’t be so sure,” Jess said, sniggering quietly. “The front page proclaims that this book is a masterpiece ‘with such tales of giant slash orgies with a touch of overblown angst and many woes as you have never seen before!’ and that it has been recommended by eight out of ten Elves in Black Leather.”

“Those two hobbits are insane,” Kat declared, peeking over Jess’s shoulder. “Is that a drawing of Elrond in Black Leather with a thumb’s up?”

“Yes. Listen to some of the chapter titles. ‘Wicked Wagers in the Students’s Sauna.’ ‘Ye Olde Naughtye Christmas Carole.’ ‘Much Spanking and a Wee Bit of Haggis.’ Good grief.”

“Haggis?”

“Haggis.”

“It’s too early in the morning for haggis, or any other food for that matter,” Kat muttered. “Just read the first chapter.”

“As you wish,” Jess replied, “but I’m sure it’ll be food in this one too, being written by hobbits and
all.”

She cleared her throat.

“The Tale of the Ringwraith’s Raunchy Revenge…”

*****

It was a day like any other in Middle-earth, as Amber walked happily down the hill to the Green Pony. It was spring in the Shire, and the blue sky and bright sun seemed to promise a good summer.

But the hobbit girl wasn’t really thinking about the coming summer. The new neighbour had invited her over to elevensies, in the age-old tradition of sharing the first meal in a new house with your nearest neighbour.

The door opened even before Amber could knock.

“Can I invite you in for mushrooms and some whipped cream?” Andtauriel Longwood said seductively, wearing nothing but the whipped cream. She smiled.

“Surely,” replied Amber, who was wearing nothing but mushrooms.

The meal was mixed up in the traditional way before being consumed, for hobbits were a people of strong traditions. Later that week the whole neighbourhood would be invited for the traditional bring-your-slave BDSM barbeque.

It was such a carefree morning that no hobbit could envision any dark clouds on the horizon. Life was good, and orgies were plentiful.

But in a dark cellar in Bree, Vilinathraxes the Ringwraith Queen (she was mostly female, at least) was plotting evil schemes while spanking Tyellas, her human slave. Vilinathraxes had been running a highly admired House of Pain and Pleasure in Bree ever since Sauron had fallen. It seemed a natural career choice when being Evil Minion had fallen through. (The house had originally belonged to an Elf named Starfish, who was most famous for taking her love for trees to the level of having a long-term relationship to an Entwife. If that wasn’t pain, nothing was.)

“May you punish me harder, Mistress?” Tyellas asked. “Surely I have been naughty enough for you to use your whip on me now?”

Vilinathraxes, who prided herself on her many creative uses of a whip that did not involve whipping, decided that was a good idea. Whip Application #12 always helped her relax.

A few hours and many tubes of lube later, Vilinathraxes went back to her evil scheming. She wanted to target Men, Elves, Hobbits and Eagles, who were all deeply involved in the fall of Sauron. Preferably in one sweeping blow, as she had a very profitable business to engage herself in. The House of Pain and Pleasure offered more fun than Sauron, the naughty Maia that he was, had ever been able to offer on his lava lovebed, but Evil Minion was a commitment for a lifetime. You didn’t stop doing evil in His name just because he’d become a harmless cloud.

And Vilinathraxes had just the plan needed for Sauron’s revenge. A plan that would soon bring many woes to the enemies of Evil Tyranny Everlasting.

It was a plan she had come up with while visiting Akira, an Elf of evil disposition living in Mirkwood. It wasn’t easy being evil and living in Mirkwood these days, and it was especially so if you engaged in certain deviant sexual practices. Akira had bonded herself to Starbrat, an equally evil
human, and this caused moral outrage in Mirkwood. Only one lover? Not even a whiff of a threesome? And she dared call herself an Elf…

So Akira had only been too happy to help with what Vilinathraxes needed. A recipe for disaster. All Vilinathraxes had to figure out was how to make the free and happy peoples of the world taste it.

It wouldn’t take her long.

******

It was an evening just like any other in Bree, except unusually dark and stormy. Not that it bothered the inhabitants too much; it was just another excuse to stay in and be naughty.

And in one small house, Fran the Hobbit was having her first human - and only a week into her stay in Bree. Hobbits usually came here after their coming of age in the spirit of species enlightenment. You weren’t an adult until you’d had done the deed with at least non-Hobbit. If you managed to shag an Elf, you’d be admired for the rest of your life.

“My, my, my,” Fran said, giving her partner’s chest region an appraising look. “This must be why you are called the ‘Big Folk’.”

“No, that is not why,” Venya replied, smiling. The Hobbit would find out soon enough. “Be a dear and rub some lotion on me, you small honeymuffined curly-feet.”

Fran was only too happy to oblige. It was rather unusual for her to engage in foreplay without food, but when in Bree, do like the Bree-ians. And then just do them.

“You tingling tease,” Venya said seductively, but Fran was not paying attention anymore. The human’s skin had started bubbling slightly, before beginning to change colour. That couldn’t be right…

Indeed it wasn’t, for within minutes Venya had changed species – and not to a more attractive one, either.

“Oh no! I’m an Orc! I’m hideous! My teeth are yellow! No one will ever want to have sex with me ever again!”

“Other Orcs might,” Fran said helpfully and made a bolt for it. She wasn’t about to sleep with someone ugly. Society would just never forgive her.

It wasn’t the only sex session that turned weird that evening. Flamingo Feathers was admiring Anya and Wilwarin skinny-dipping in the Passion Partaking Pond and considering whether to join them or not when she noticed that both suddenly turned brownish and ickyish.

The trauma made her comatose, and it was said to have taken her two comfort-sex sessions just to be able to speak again.

Word reached the ever-listening Elves, and worry started to spread amongst them. Everywhere, humans in perfectly fine shag-condition were turning into walking lust-repulsers. And worse, some Elves had also seemed to be infected. Was this the Valar’s punishment for Elves sinning and not having enough sex? Was this the end of all orgies? Surely, that would be the end of the world!

And so many wandered to Rivendell, to the Last Horny House, to seek the advice of Alandriel, the great Healer of the Elves (her Comfort-Sex was simply the best around). And she decided a council were to be held on the future of Middle-earth.
“Shag-buddies and friends of old. You have come here seeking my advice, and I say to you – Middle-earth stands on the brink of becoming an orgy-less place of no hanky-panky at all!”

Those gathered shuddered at the mere thought of such a fate. Sauron may have been a bad, bad Dark Lord, but at least they’d get to much angst-filled sex under his rule.

“You have only one choice,” Alandriel went on. “The cause of this foul magic must be found and stopped, or all will fall into darkness. You must do this even if you must sacrifice your own good looks to do it.”

A gasp went through the council. A fate worse than death!

“One of you must do this.”

“Why can’t you do it?” Caiterlin asked, a human of Rohan. Alandriel rolled her eyes.

“Because if I went and turned ugly, no one would get to be naughty in my award-winning sauna ever again. Any other stupid questions? No? As I said then, one of you must do this. Any volunteers?”

It was painfully silent.

Then a small voice suddenly spoke up, sounding very small and terrified indeed.

“I will do it.”

Wen Quendalie of the Dwarves stood up, looking brave. “I will do it.”

“Your courage warms my heart and make my blood lusty,” Alandriel said warmly. “But you shall not go alone. From my home, Yew Oak will go for the Elves. Irian will go for the Old Ones and crossover shag-buddies. Ciela Night and Starbrat will go for Gondor, and Leto H. and Vana E. will go for the males. Akki will go for the unattractive Gollum look-alikes and Sunsong will go as the token wizard(ette). Thus you will be Nine Walkers, for that is the perfect number for a true orgy.”

The Nine bowed low.

“You will depart in one week, after seven days of as much blissful sex as we can give you. All the hopes of the lusty peoples of Middle-earth will go with you.”

*****

“Hey, Sunsong isn’t a student,” Kat interrupted.

“Yeah, but Merry and Pippin are probably punishing her for that time she denied them a mushroom pie.”

“Oh yeah. Speaking of food… Let’s get some breakfast before we read on. All the mushroom and whipped cream mentions made me hungry.”

“Hey, you think Merry and Pippin have given the book to the staff as well?” Jess asked as they made their way through the halls. Kat was about to answer when they turned the corner to the eating area and nearly banged straight into Saruman and Aragorn, who were laughing so hard they were leaning on each other while omer was trying to read aloud from a leather bound book, but failing miserably. He was simply laughing too much.

“Somehow – I think they have.”
“Oh great…”
This chapter (also) contains a bit of parody slash. It is not explicit in any way, however, and features students, not LotR characters. (And the slash-orgy participants are all students who especially volunteered for this.)

It was unusually noisy in the eating hall when Kat and Jess entered, especially considering how early it was. Usually, you’d have to threaten the students with Elrond to get them up this early, but this morning it seemed every student at OFUM had gotten up to eat breakfast – while reading.

“Well, I see we’re not the only ones who got a surprise this morning,” Jess remarked. She smirked slightly.

“What is so funny?” her sister demanded to know.

“I was just imagining Merry and Pippin’s reaction to five hundred students cringing at once.”

“I feel so wrong just reading this,” Talagand Harper moaned at the nearest table.

“Have you come across yourself yet?” Daeglin Firethorn asked, flipping a page and immediately cringing.

“No.”

“Better start drinking that spiked eggnog before you do,” Malien Clementielle advised. “It dulls the pain.”

“No, it doesn’t,” Kitty replied, miserable. “It just makes you want to drink more.”

Jess exchanged a look with Kat, who shrugged.

“How bad can it be?”

“You have been paying attention to what you read, right?” Jess asked.

“Yes, but it’s no more painful than the time Denethor tried to roast me over the fire for commenting on the greatness of his son’s behind.”

“Wanna bet? What if Merry and Pippin have discovered…” Jess gulped, “our little stories? I think I called Pippin ‘Pippi the Midget’ and I know you had Merry be the silly comic relief as you snagged Faramir. I mean, what if they want to get even?”

“Oh Eru,” Kat breathed. “We’re so dead. Deader than a killed soldier of the dead army from the Paths of the Dead.”

“And then some.”

“It’s your turn to read,” Kat replied and tossed the book at Jess. “I’m getting us both a lot of eggnog.”
“And a butterknife to kill us both with,” Jess muttered, and slipped the book open.

*****

And so the Fellowship of Sex Fiends set forth, each determined to save the world and have lots of sex forever and ever until the end of time (known as the Age When Hormones Shall Vanish).

They set their course for Bree, where the curse had started. Unfortunately, they had to stop after only five minutes of sexy strutting to toss Anjerla and Caierlin out of Irian’s backpack, as the two had crept in there to cuddle up and have closeted sex and had then fallen asleep.

The trip was a slow trek, mainly due to the Fellowship stopping every hour to shag some before moving on. Akki also had the rather unfortunate habit of kidnapping a ‘precious’ and shagging her brains out. She even managed to snag an Elf, and Luhtarían, the unfortunate victim, promised loudly to bring a complaint up before Feather, ruler of Mirkwood (who famously had shagged as many mortals as there were trees in Mirkwood). It wasn’t that Luhtarían hadn’t enjoyed the sex; it was just the rather unfortunate attempt to glue her hands to her feet and then thread a chain through so that she could hang around the neck (like any true precious should) that had riled the Elf.

As they neared Bree, they came across a fleeing villager named Sassinak who had ill tiding indeed. In the town Adi, Jocelyn and JCSmith had been playing the-oh-so-naughty version of musical chairs and all three had promptly become Orcs. The horror of a fate as someone ugly had terrified even the lusty inhabitants of Bree - and the Mayor, Psychicsaphie (she had won the office by winning the last election debate – the ‘shag as many voters as you can’ marathon – against Mika, who had only managed to do half of Bree. Lack of commitment there, the voters had thought and had voted Mika out of office) had ordered all to stay celibate. This had never before been done in Middle-earth, and some saw it as a sure sign that the End was near. And they couldn’t even have one last sexual hurrah!

“And so I fled,” Sassinak finished bitterly. “Even a day without some sex seemed to me as long as all the ages of the world.”

“What foul craft is causing this?” Starbrat asked, patting Sassinak on her breasts to comfort the poor woman.

“I do not know,” Sunsong said thoughtfully. “But this is dark magic, and not of the pleasant dominatrix kind either. We must find the cause of this. Sassinak, do you know if any of the victims of this curse had anything in common?”

“Naught that I know of, but I had only slept with each of them once, so I cannot say I knew them very well.”

“There must be some reason those have been cursed and others not. Ciela, stop patting the poor woman’s butt. I am trying to talk to her.”

“I was only trying to be comforting,” Ciela said sulkingly.

“Pat my butt, then. It helps me think.”

And Sunsong thought, had some sex, then thought some more. And at last she decided the only way they could find out was talk to the cursed ones themselves.

“Talk to ugly people? Are you mad?” Irian asked, shuddering at the very thought.

“We may have no other choice.”
“But what if they like… touch me and stuff and it’s contagious?” Yew Oak asked, horrified. “I have plans to go nipple clamp shopping with Juliet Norrington next week in Gondor, and ugly just doesn’t go with clamps.”

“Norrington?” Leto asked, confused. “Is that not a maritime name and not of Middle-earth?”

“Oh, that,” Sunsong said dismissively. “We’re stuck in an eternal crossover with anything that stars hot people. You know how it is… You’re hot, she’s hot, so sex in many creative positions it is! Doesn’t matter that the Universes don’t mix.”

“I always felt pirates and Elves had much in common,” Yew Oak said after a moment’s consideration. “They sail ships, we sail ships, and all like to skinny-dip. How could anyone not cross us over? Preferably with lots of rum, of course.”

“You’re just saying that because you’d like to sip the rum from some pirate navel,” Starbrat pointed out.

“Be that as it may,” Sunsong interrupted, making a mental note to set up a palantír to look for Elven-pirate meetings on sea. “We will go now to Bree and seek out those who are ugly. All should take some lembas bread with them and eat whenever you desire an orgasm. You must not sleep with any in the city, for we know not what foul magic is about.”

“Morgothian mace,” Vana E cursed quietly. He had hoped to test out the new Lindon Luscious Lube on some willing Bree males.

“Come on,” Sunsong commanded. “We fear nothing.”

“Yes we do,” Starbrat interjected.

“Okay, we do, but if worst come to worst, we’ll just sacrifice the Dwarf, who can’t get any uglier.”

“Hey!” Wen objected. “I’m very attractive, I’ll have you know. All who have me are hooked on Dwarf sex forever.”

“And how’s that?” Akki asked.

“It’s all about the beard…Have you not read the Zmazru Kama Sutra?”

Akki grudgingly admitted she had not, and was promised lessons later on. But for now, the Fellowship moved on. It was time to confront a horror greater than Morgoth’s foul hair care formula that had cost Fëanor his hair (and then led to a great war, although the Elves had pretended it was about some silly jewels. They couldn’t very well admit to the truth as long as one could wear wigs and still be the prettiest).

It was time to enter Bree.

*****

Meanwhile, in Bree itself, panic had spread among the masses.

“We’re doomed! Doomed, I say!” Kylie Walker wailed from her chair at the Hanky-Panky Pony Inn.

“No more sex,” Jo Storme wept. “Just shoot me now.”

“No more pregnancies, though. We must look on the bright side,” Nellie pointed out, but she
sounded rather depressed.

“How did we ever get pregnant when we only have sex with people of the same gender anyway?” Jackie Firecracker asked suddenly, as if the thought had only just occurred to her.

“Who flaming cares?” Rel shot back. “Explaining things is the root of all evil. Then we start thinking logically and you know what comes then…”

Everyone shuddered. The tales of Phoebe the Logic-Thinker were still whispered in dark nights and used to scar children. One day, young and promising Phoebe had started thinking about things, realised the impossibility of being named ‘Phoebe’ and living in Middle-earth, then the improbability of everyone in Middle-earth being homosexual and then she had tried to seduce a male.

Her soul was still trying to gain entrance to the Slashy Sauna Halls of Mandos, and could sometimes be heard wailing in the cold nights. Such was the price for sinning.

“I’m horny,” Nellie complained bitterly after a moment. “It feels unnatural to be in at an Inn and not greet strangers in the traditional Bree fashion.”

She patted her traditional welcome-candle (in the traditional shape with the traditional knob) longingly.

“One shag cannot be that dangerous,” Rel offered hopefully. “I mean, we’re the only ones here. The Innkeeper has gone to play with a water jet in the tub to console herself. No one will ever know we were naughty.”

They all looked at each other, but as all knew, sexual desire is what makes the world go around, and no one wanted the world to stop turning, after all. So they took their candles and special wax, climbed into the chandeliers and had much merriment.

When Aranel, the Innkeeper, returned an hour later, she was greeted by the sight of Orcs hanging from her chandeliers.

Her scream could be heard all the way into Vilinathraxes’s cellar, and the Ringwraith Queen smiled evilly.

“Now I rule. Muhahahaha. Ha.”

*****

“No us at least,” Kat broke in, finishing her toast.

“For now.”

“Maybe Merry and Pippin decided to spare us.”

“Kat, this is Merry and Pippin we’re talking about. They’re like mischief with large, hairy feet.”

“Gooood morning!” a cheerful voice by Jess declared, and she looked up to see both of Elrond’s sons beaming down at her.

That was not good. Members of Elrond’s family smiling was one of three signs of upcoming doom at OFUM.

“Yes, good morning,” the other twin said. Jess thought it was Elladan. “Delightful reading, is it not?”
“Easy for you to say,” Kat muttered. “You’re not the ones being subjected to embarrassment and utter mischaracterisation.”

“Naturally, we’d know nothing about what that is like,” Elrohir said dryly. “I was just wondering if you had come across your little section in the book.”

“Noooo…” Jess answered hesitantly.

“Such a shame. Elladan and I have particularly enjoyed it, have we not?”

“Surely. I’m sure you will enjoy it as much as Elrohir and I enjoy reading about ourselves engaged in the same kind of activities. I mean, sibling love is so wonderfully expressed by having sex…”

Jess felt her brain whimper.

“Lalala, I’m not listening!” Kat said loudly, sticking her fingers in her ear. Elrohir merely smiled.

“I thought she might say that,” he said to his brother, giving Jess a terrifying smile as well.

“That is why I prepared this delightful chart explaining all the action.”

There was a brief moment of silence as both sisters took in the chart he held up.

“Dear oh dear, is that their breakfast coming back up?” Elladan asked, snickering.

“Seems so.”

“Tsk. That’s the three out of three pairs of siblings who’ve let go of their food when introduced to their activities in Merry and Pippin’s utterly *delightful* masterpiece.”

“Yes,” Elrohir replied. “I just feel so, so terrible for subjecting them to such horrors.”

“Indeed,” Elladan agreed. He paused for a moment.

“So, who’s next on the list?”
A Morning With Merry and Pippin's Masterpiece (part three)

Chapter Notes

This chapter (also) contains a bit of parody slash. It is not explicit in any way, however, and features students, not LotR characters. (And the slash-orgy participants are all students who specially volunteered for this.)

It was rather amazing how unattractive food managed to look going up compared to heading down, Kat reflected and leaned over the toilet bowl once more. Not that she had more to throw up. But heaving kept her mind from illustrating certain horrors in graphic detail.

"Where is a good acid to pour over your brain when you need it?" complained Jess nearby.

Kat merely moaned, then lifted her head weakly. "Jess, promise you'll never do anything like that to me with a funny-shaped gingerbread cookie."

"Only if you promise to never eat it off me afterwards."

"Agreed."

They contemplated all the previously unconsidered horrors that a kitchen could hold for a while, shuddering now and then.

"Typical hobbit mind to have us do it in the kitchen," Jess reflected after a moment.

"It wasn't just the kitchen though," Kat replied.

"Right. There was the bit with the lounge chair."

"Yes. Is that even anatomically possible?"

"I don't really want to find out," Jess muttered, pushing herself up. "Let's get out of the toilets. The Witch-Wall snoring is giving me a headache."

"Better than than his poems," Kat remarked, but did get up. "Why is he asleep anyway? Does a wraith need to sleep?"

"He wrote an epic poem dedicated to the fine curves of Ayla Eimhim. It must have worn him out," Jess reflected, and flipped open the book. "Now. Where were we?"

"You're kidding, right? Read more of that. Foul, foul, foul. Something fouler than foul?"

"Oh, come on. Where's your spirit?"

"I threw it up," Kat replied darkly. "Oh, fine. Read from it. But if I throw up over your shoes, you'll owe me an apology."

******

Lightning flared in the sky, dark clouds (funnily shaped, of course) covered the moon and stars. It
was a terribly clichéd evening in Bree, as if ordered by the dark forces themselves.

"So reliable, the weather gods," Vilinathraxes remarked happily to her visiting pleasure-seeking business partner, Vulgarweed (who was slightly preoccupied with spanking Tyellas).

"You don't say," Vulgarweed muttered, somewhat distracted. "Say, is this a new type of whip?"

"Yes. And I do say. All you need to do to appease the weather gods is tickle them in the right places."

"Ah. Um. I feel slightly odd."

"Oh, that's just you turning into an Orc," Vilinathraxes said reassuringly. "I smeared some of my brewed Orc potion on the handle. In fact, I've been smearing it on or putting it in everything that has been sold in The Naughty Little Shop on the Corner. Pretty soon you'll probably all be Orcs."

Vulgarweed opened and closed her mouth a few times. "But I run that shop for you!"

"Oh yes. They'll probably blame you, once they figure it out," Vilinathraxes replied. "They'll probably kill you. Bit unfortunate, as I always enjoyed our shagging - you always could bend so amazingly well. But nothing lost, nothing gained, alas."

Vulgarweed stared for another moment, then her eyes rolled back and she fell over as her skin started turning green-ish.

"Of course, I do have an antidote," Vilinathraxes went on, patting Tyellas on the head and giving her a cookie. "I shall be only be too happy to give it to everyone in Middle-earth, given that they shag me all once. And then. Then I will truly do what Sauron could not and rule all of Middle-earth. You will all be in my power. Latex will forever be in fashion. Black, I think. Black latex. Yes."

"Aha, that's what you think!" Sunsong declared and jumped out of the shadows.

"Where the flaming voluptuousness did you come from?"

"Now wouldn't you like to know."

"I would, actually," Vilinathraxes snapped, crossing her arms.

"Oh. Right. Well, as soon as we figured out you were behind this."

"How did you figure that out?"

"I could explain, but as you very well know, explanations just kill the libido."

"Hmpf."

Sunsong crossed her arms as well. "This *is* a slash story, after all. Where would we be if we started explaining things? Takes the enjoyment right out of the shagging."

"Yes, that is true. So, an 'oh-I-hate-you-so-much-you-hot-arch-nemesis-you' shag?"

"Sure."

They shagged, and there were many much interesting uses of a wizard's staff and Ringwraith's ring as there always were. Outside, the wind picked up and gently rocked the sign above Vilinathraxes's door - 'Here be evil. Established 108 Second Age, Monkeyfetus the Nightmare Kin'. 
Three orgasms, a cup of tea and a different kind of hammock rest later, the two nemeses faced each other once more and the clouds darkened in anticipation.

"You will never have the cure," Vilinathraxes declared hotly. "For lo, I have a supreme plan."

"Oh please," Sunsong replied. "Any evil lady with respect for herself would say that."

"But this time it is true! For I have mixed this poison with my own blood and your only antidote is to shag me. And when I have shagged all, I will do what Sauron never could, and with my ring I will have dominion over all sex-desiring life."

"Blast," Sunsong muttered and stomped out. She hated it when evil actually *thought* their plans through - it made resolving their evil schemes more work and less sex.

"Was it her?" Irian asked as Sunsong exited to the street where the Fellowship of Sluts was waiting (armed to the teeth and ready to defend themselves against desperate hormonal lusty Bree housewives).

"Yes."

"How did we figure out it was her, anyway?" Akki asked.

"She was the only one participating in the flirtatious fountain fair that did not turn into an Orc," Wen patiently explained. "Also, her sign? Dead give-away."

"It is her. She has brewed a poison with her foul blood, and only shagging her can cure the inflicted," Sunsong explained, and whipped out her small bottle and chucked it down. "Ahhhh. Tequila."

"So that is that then? The Fellowship was for nothing?" Yew Oak said sadly, and shuddered. "Middle-earth is lost to free sex and careless spanking. Alas! Alas for the Elves!"

"Always with the Elves," Ciela Night muttered. "As if Gondor doesn't do a kick-ass 'Spank, Spank Thy Neighbour Spring Feast'. Bah."

What the Elf was about to reply to that, no one would ever know (except the Elf herself, of course), for a woman came running screaming through the street and crashed breasts first into Starbrat.

"Ow!" Starbrat complained. "Watch where you poke those!"

"I. I. Sorry," the woman muttered, and seemed to regain some composure. "I am Erin of the Bree house Lusty Lures. I was running, for my sister Rona has."

Erin shuddered.

"Turned into an Orc?" Vana suggested.

"Worse. A male Orc! A male touched me, even if it used to be my sister! I feel so unclean, so foul, so. Hetero."

"There, there," Sunsong said comfortingly, then seemed to light up. "Your sister! Of course! I have it! By Berúthiel's Boobs, I have it!"

"Have what?" Leto asked, ducking as Sunsong swung her staff around excitedly.

"The solution, of course! Listen closely."
Nights came and went, and Vilinathraxes kept herself entertained trying on black latex and occasionally lightly kicking Tyellas. Any day now the Orced-up population of Bree would realise they had no other option, and they would come to shag her. Then Rivendell would come, and then Lothlórien and Mirkwood - and soon the whole world would have no option but to shag her. The poison was spreading, and she would soon be Queen. Queen Ringwraith. It had a nice ring to it.

Granted, shagging Orcs was a bit of a bother, but she would close her eyes and think of all the Elves she would shag when she ruled.

"Good evening. Are you open?" a voice called, and Solar Penguin, ruler of Rohan and particular "friend" to all horses came out of the shadows.

"Ah, the Queen of Rohan. I did not think your kingdom would be affected already."

"My kingdom affected?" Solar Penguin asked, looking slightly perplexed. "I stopped by your shop, but it appeared to be closed. I came about my order. The special shagging saddle?"

"But were you not afraid to enter Bree?" Vilinathraxes asked, furrowing her brow.

"No. I was welcomed with the traditional welcome-candle by Claudia Beth King, and I participated in that delightful Shag-a-thon Sunsong the Wizard(ette) was running in the town square. Solar Penguin trailed off, as she noticed Vilinathraxes had already stormed out the door. "Well, that was rude."

"Can I help you?" Tyellas asked humbly, and bowed low.

She could indeed, and the two later eloped and together came up with the most popular saddle Middle-earth would ever see.

Vilinathraxes wasn't aware that her slave was about to run off with a customer, nor would she had cared much. Her mind was too busy worrying as she stomped through the streets of Bree, and as she turned the corner to the town square, her worst nightmare seemed to appear.

Meg.

It is well known that many romantic heroes and heroines have an Evil Twin, who always show up when least expected and make trouble.

It is not as known that many villains face the same problem with that always embarrassing Good Twin.

"Sister!" Meg called from the podium where she had just finished having sex with Aranel.

"Oh bugger," Vilinathraxes muttered and realised using her own blood maybe hadn't been such a bright idea after all. Meg shared the same blood, and since she was not evil and did not carry a Ring of Sauron the Seducer, having sex with her would be safe and curing.

"Indeed," Sunsong said, appearing nearby. "You have lost, O Evil. Nana-nana-nana."

"This is most unfair," Vilinathraxes complained. "So now what?"

"You know what. There is but one end for a villain in a slash epos."

"Bugger," Vilinathraxes said again, and sighed.
A fate worse than death for a Slash character and the ultimate punishment - no slash ever again, and instead deportation to Arrda's Mary Sue-fested Mirkwood.

Bugger indeed.

******

"The end," Jess read, not without relief in her voice. She slammed the book shut and seemed to resist a strong temptation to toss it into the hallway.

"Well, that was contrived," Kat remarked and then yelped when she felt a sharp pain in her shins.

"Did I kick you after you insulted my writing?" Merry asked, looking up at Kat with innocent eyes. "How terribly, terribly clumsy of me."

"Ow!" Jess complained, feeling a headbutt against her behind. "I didn't say anything!"

"You were going to," Pippin replied, appearing from behind and looking amused. "Did you not enjoy our tale?"

"No," Kat said shortly.

"I'm hurt. Heartbroken. Wounded to the point of death," Pippin uttered, putting a hand over his heart. "With all the stories you students write about us having sex anywhere, anytime, any position, surely you enjoy reading about yourself doing that?"

"Fine, fine," Jess cut in. "We get the point. You got your revenge."

"Raunchy revenge," Merry replied, winking. "But we do feel slightly bad about all the emotional pain we have caused you both."

"Yes," Pippin agreed. "We feel just terrible. So we have brought a peace offering."

"You have?" Kat asked suspiciously, her brain shouting very loud warning signals.

"Yes," Merry said innocently, lifting something from behind his back. "We give you. A basket of gingerbread cookies."

When Miss Cam wandered through the hallways some time later, she found Kat and Jess furiously attempting to light a pyre of gingerbread cookies and one fat book (with Denethor watching with interest).

"Students," she muttered with a slight headshake, and wandered on. There were bigger concerns to worry about.

Like how to get Merry and Pippin to relinquish their plan of kidnapping Peter Jackson and forcing him to direct the grand epic 'Merry and Pippin's Naughtiest Narrative'.

Somehow, she didn't quite think the world was ready for it.
On Evil, Their Ways and Their Deathmatches

It was a fairly calm day in the staff section at OFUM - well, as calm as any day can be when a building housed both Lusters and Lustees. Someone in the student halls always plotting and someone in the staff section was always plotting the appropriate painful lesson for the student plotting. It was like an eternal war, only one side had all the weapons, all the spies, and thousands of little fiery demons.

So maybe it wasn't as much as war, but more like a rather amused cat watching the mouse attempting to stab at it with a dull toothpick. It was mostly entertaining, but now and then it got a wee bit repetitive.

"I am bored," Evil!Denethor announced, and tossed another paper ball at Evil!Thranduil, who was skimming the student records. They were both in the Enrolment Office (or rather one of the many offices that together made up the section inappropriately named 'Enrolment Office'), where they currently worked. Of course, it wasn't as much work as more being officially allowed to make students's lives miserable.

"Go burn some Faramir love letters then," Evil!Thranduil suggested without looking up. "I hear it is only likely to get bigger. Miss Cam has decided to show the students movie three, so that we can better study what horrors it may bring up close. Given that Faramir gets all oiled up in it."

"Bah," Evil!Denethor muttered and scowled. "I should have burned him and spared him this pain. It would have been better. Death is sometimes a blessing. Perhaps then we could have avoided my slimy cousin Abusing!Pedophile!Denethor."

"Trust me, Lord Denethor. He would have shown up anyway. It is the fate of all fathers of Lust Objects. Even Lord Elrond. Being 'kind as summer' did not stop him from being written as a raping, alcoholic, womanizing, ten-loving, drool-for-brains, supposed evil git."

"It's just a show of bad, bad taste. No class. No class at all."

"No argument here," Evil!Thranduil replied. "Listen to this enrolled name - 'Calenelleth Greenmaid'. Lusting after my son, of course. They think they're so bright when they come up with spins on Greenleaf, don't they? My son will love them the minute he hears how akin their name is to his, I'm sure."

Both Evil fathers sniggered, and not in a particularly pleasant way.

"What will you do to her?" Evil!Denethor asked, throwing his feet up on his desk.

"I was thinking of making her clean up my room. She wants to be a maid."

"A green maid, you mustn't forget."

"Yes, you are right. I better have green paint tossed on her first. Thank you, Lord Denethor. Your attention to details is almost as shining as the bright evil flame within you."

Evil!Denethor smiled, and grabbed another enrolment form from the file cabinet. It seemed to belong to a student who wanted to enrol as 'Lady of Light' and a Valar Elf. Valar Elf, indeed. Manwë had probably had a few things to say about that.

He yawned slightly, curled up the form, dipped it in glue and tossed it at the ceiling. It stuck on
second try.

Working in the Enrolment Office was usually quite fun. It meant that when Amy had enrolled as a Fire Witch, Evil!Denethor had only been too happy to oblige. Only, Amy had soon discovered turning the fire off was not quite as easy as she had imagined. It made Evil!Denethor snigger evilly whenever room 452A requested a new bed due to burning damage. Ah, petty little revenges.

But today he was bored. Making Kel Mindelan the Jedi Knight speak like Yoda a whole morning had been amusing, but it had been utterly ruined when Ielenia NicAslinn had asked if he, Evil!Denethor, spanked 'poor widdle Faramir' with a belt or his hand.

"What do they think evil is?" he asked the air, and tossed Laurel Whitney's enrolment form at the ceiling (she had enrolled as 'ageless', so Evil!Thranduil had rotted her teeth. She hadn't specified that they were also ageless, after all).

"The students?" Evil!Thranduil asked, finally looking up.

"Yes. Seriously, what do they think Evil is? Spanking your son? Chaining up your other son and doing things to him that would embarrass even Morgoth? That's not Evil, that's just disturbed."

Evil!Thranduil shuddered. "You forget we also appear to have a drinking problem."


"The way they write us would drive anyone to drink."

"Indeed, indeed."

"I think the problem is their lack of appreciation of real Evil as we see it," Evil!Thranduil said after a moment, sounding thoughtful. "Evil in Middle-earth is very clear. Sauron, Morgoth, world domination, enslavement, aggressive warfare."

"And us," Evil!Denethor cut in.

"And us, of course. Classic, classy Evil. Seduce your enemy here, curse his family there. Devious planning here, slightly flawed execution there. A nice dark tower to call home; and a son you do not rape, spank, or arrange marriages for, but rather groom to be your evil heir."

"Well put. That's Evil. All this silly stuff they consider Evil - where does all that come from?"

"Their minds," Evil!Thranduil replied and shuddered again.

"You know," Evil!Denethor said, and leaned forward, "they might appreciate Evil better if they had a few classy displays. Morgoth and Sauron are too busy bickering. But we."

"I like where this is going already," Evil!Thranduil replied, and opened his bottom drawer. "I have been saving this fine bottle of wine for an evening of Evil scheming. A glass, Lord Denethor?"

"Don't mind if I do, Elated King Thranduil the Evil."

"Now, you were saying..."

*****

Lina awoke with a start, and nearly managed to bang her head on the hanging garlic. For a moment
she was slightly disorientated, before remembering she was in Legolas's room and the garlic was to ward off fangirls. (How well it worked was another matter.) The candles were burning low, so she must have fallen asleep, and neither Gimli nor Legolas were back yet.

Hmmm.

Yawning, she pushed herself up and threw on a cloak. Maybe they’d been hold up by some silly fangirl ambush attempt again. Either way, it was best to find out.

Just as she exited the room, she heard a low 'woosh' and quickly sidestepped as a net came hurling down.

"Good evening," she said to the startled student. "You would be."

"H-Hathor," the girl stuttered. "I thought you were Legolas."

"And you thought you would catch him with a net."

"Yessss."

"And it did not strike you as odd that you managed to enter the staff section and get here without even a mini-Balrog about?"

"No."

Lina sighed. "I suppose you didn't notice King Thranduil quietly stalking you either?"

"No, I... Huh?"

Lina shook her head. "Good evening, King Thranduil."

"Good evening, Lina," the Elvenking replied from half a foot behind Hathor and smiled. "I suppose you are looking for my son and Gimli?"

"Yes," Lina acknowledged, and gave Hathor a comforting pat.

"I believe they are in the gardens watching my evil counterpart and Evil!Denethor 'entertain' the students."

"Oh dear," Lina muttered, mostly to herself. "Thanks. Good luck, Hathor."

"There is no such thing as good luck when I catch a 'Legoluster'," Thranduil said, nearly spitting the last word out. Hathor did not hear him. She was already running. Not that she'd get far, Lina reflected. They never did.

The hallways were quiet and deserted, and devoid of most mini-Balrogs. Most curious. Only Warfs, the Dwarf/Warg (no one was quite sure just what it had meant to be, so the mini-Balrog had a Warg tail and a Dwarven helmet) mini-Balrog was about, sleeping on top of its latest catch (which happened to be two students named Ellie and Steg, who seemed to be complaining loudly about being dipped in glue and feathers to make a comfortable mini mattress).

The reason for this became quite clear when Lina reached the gardens. All the minis were there. As were most members of the staff, it appeared. And all the students, gathered around Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor, grinning like two Cheshire Cats with five hundred chained-up mice at their disposal.
"And so you see, giving the minion whom gropes your beautiful captured Elf Maiden some gangrene will not only ensure that the groping does not repeat itself, but also give the minion a suitably rotting look," Evil!Thranduil was saying. "Giving the minion more time with the Elf Maiden, who only silly Evil would kidnap in the first place, is just plain dumb. Of course said minion would fall for her and help her escape. True Evil considers this."

"Indeed. And now we shall demonstrate Way of the Evil #26," Evil!Denethor went on. "This is one of my particular favourites and is appropriate to use on minions who betraye you and silly, silly 'good' girls who try to seduce your son alike. Miss Victoria, come this way."

"Can I have a last request?" the chosen student asked, eying Legolas and batting her eyelashes.

"No," Evil!Thranduil said severely. "Never give your victim a last request, students. We may be evil, but that does not mean we traded in our brain for gushy goo. Now come here."

Reluctantly, Victoria stepped up.

"Gimli, if you will?" Evil!Denethor asked. "I would not trust Legolas near this one. Victoria is the silly girl who thinks herself good, and Gimli will be Legolas, whom she is trying to seduce. Evil!Thranduil shall demonstrate how to properly discourage her - pay particular attention to his use of spiders, students."

"Why does he have to have Gimli demonstrate?" Heather Sandybanks complained loudly. "I'd rather have it be Frodo. Who likes a Dwarf?"

"I do," Lina replied, eyeing the student and quietly calculating how much force it would take to toss said student into a vat of butter.

"Gross!"

"If you say 'ew, he's a dwarf' I'll have Smaug drop you from a great height," Lina muttered between clenched teeth.

"I'm not afraid of you. Eeeeew, he's a dwaaaaaaaaaghhh!"

"Ah, Miss Lina," Evil!Denethor said cheerfully. "I believe you have just Way of the Evil #42, albeit a bit unorthodox. Really, I did not think it was possible to bend a student like that."

"I taught her that," Gimli said proudly, but there was something troubled in his eyes. Lina gave him a reassuring smile as she released Heather, who fell to the ground with a most satisfying 'thunk'. By Evil!Thranduil, Victoria seized the opportunity (happily ignoring Gimli) and to attempt a leap at Legolas.

She didn't get very far.

"Help, help, I'm being repressed! I want Legolas's firm Elfhood! Opmh!"

"As you can see, spider's silk works excellently for shutting up that pesky, screaming little trollop that wants to steal your son," Evil!Thranduil narrated. "Now the next trick involves the spider laying eggs inside her."

"Ew!" the students said as one, all shuddering.
"That's not evil, that's just gross," a student objected.

"Evil does gross, Miss Ilandere," Evil!Thranduil said patiently. "Just as it does nefarious, vicious, unfair, cruel, seductive and smart. Yes, even smart, hard as it is to believe. Evil is and does a lot of things, but it is not simply pedophilic, abusing, alcoholic gits who weren't loved by their mothers. That is your society's idea of evil, not ours. It is not the measure of an evil tyrant just to do bad things."

"But we can write evil any way we like!" Catherine complained loudly. "You just stick an AU label - you know, Alternate Universe - on it."

Evil!Denethor tsk'ed loudly. "There's AU, my dear, and then there's the U so A it hurts deep down in my wicked, wicked bones. Now shut up and learn. Painfully."

"Yes, let us head straight to the finale," Evil!Thranduil interjected. "Ways of the Evil are all well and good, but they do not help you understand purpose. Rape, murder, sticking spider eggs in a scheming trollop. These are things Evil do. They are not things Evil is."

"So why are you evil?" Ellie Dragonstar asked in a low voice.

"When you truly understand that... That is when you join us," Evil!Denethor said chillingly and it was deadly silent in the gardens for a long time.

"And while you consider this," Evil!Denethor finally said, smiling, "we introduce the finale of our little seminar on Evil. Inspired by Morgoth and Sauron's never-ending epic battle for Dominant Evil Alpha Male, we are happy to introduce - The Clichés of Evil versus the Evils of Purpose Deathmatch! In your right corner shall be Smacking!Legolas!About!Thranduil (sponsored by alcohol-makers everywhere), and in your left, give it up for Evil!Thranduil of Purpose and Style! The winner will get to face Whoring!Out!My!Second!Son!Denethor the Slimy in the second round."

It was very late when Lina and Gimli finally went back, and even then Arranging!Marriages!Pointlessly!Thranduil the Senile was still throwing chairs at Tylliria. Perhaps shouting that an arranged marriage between her and Legolas was a thing of pure good hadn't been the brightest idea.

All things considered.
It was, all in all, a spectacular wake leading into a spectacular party. Sure, there had been some ‘accidents’ of the not so accidental kind, but that was to be expected when staff and students gathered together.

Of course, there were some disagreements over what the wake was for and what the party was for. The students insisted the party was for celebrating the viewing of the third movie (at last!) and the wake for the end of the movies. The staff held the opposite view. But since the party and the wake both had a lot to drink, this was easily smoothed over.

Jess did quite enjoy herself. First there had been the viewing itself, which had gone along swimmingly (and for the students, droolingly) until Denethor had attempted to torch the movie reels, citing defamation of character. While that was being cleared up, Tylliria had attempted to sneak up on Legolas – alas for her, an Elf in the darkness is another Elf alike and Fëanor was not an Elf easily amused.

With Tylliria tied up as a mini-Balrog ‘put the tail on the pig’ toy, the screening had continued and Jess had let her Inner Luster indulge in some serious Legolas Lusting. She figured it might knock it unconscious for the rest of the year. It was after all a dangerous movie for Inner Lusters. Ellie Dragonstar, who had occupied a seat nearby, had nearly gone comatose at Pippin’s adorable Woeful Singing O’Death. Nancey in the seat below had swooned over Frodo’s chest and dribbled on her shoes. Scott Dibler had dribbled on his shoes (and poor Emilee, in the seat below him) whenever … owyn had passed by. All in all, it had been a great indulging of the more hormonal kind.

But like all things, the movie had come to an end and the Canon Characters had cheered and popped the champagne. And so the party (or wake, depending on one’s viewpoint) had started and soon moved to the great hall.

“Good party,” Kat remarked to Jess, attempting to open yet another bottle of wine.

“You’re just saying that because you got a clear view of Faramir,” Jess replied

“Shut up.”

“Nope.”

Kat just rolled her eyes, but not in particularly hostile way. “Why is Faramir talking to Sunsong anyway?”

“He wants all oils of any kind to be put under special security in the kitchen. I guess FaraFindel shouldn’t have tried to dump Extra Virgin Oil on him after the viewing. I heard him mutter angrily about it.”

“Ah.” Kat took a moment to sip from the bottle. “He was really, really, really hot with oil though.”

“He also really, really, really belongs to Éowyn, who is likely to roast you in Extra Virgin Oil if given the chance. Really sis, you could have picked a better Object O’Lusting,” Jess snorted.

“Hah. And Thranduil is just so kind towards those lusting after his son.”

“Good point. Is there anyone it’s safe to lust after?”
“The Witch-Wall,” Melje shot in, gliding up next to the sisters with a slight grimace. “Although I suppose that has its own dangers. Have any of you seen Rusco?”

“Last I saw her, she was drowning her sorrows of Elrohir not being in movie three by the tank of Durin’s Dwarven Daiquiri Draught,” Jess replied. “Speaking of drinking, where is all the tequila gone?”

No one had a chance to answer, as a hush fell over the crowd. Galadriel had stepped forward on the podium, looking grim.

“The world is changed. I feel it in the air. I feel it in the water. Much that once was, is lost, for few who now live bother to read the book. Movie three has come.”

She paused. The crowd of students didn’t look particularly impressed at her speech, most being too busy trying to catch the eye of their chosen Lust Object. A few had tried to catch more than the eye, but the mini-Balrogs were out in force this day and lead by a *very* energetic Elvis the Elven Rock Mini, who was legendary for using his captives as music instruments. Currently, he was using Godforsaken Celbrinêl Hatshpsut-khenmetamun (who had attracted his ire just by having such a long name) as a drum and Bronwyn’s arms for drumsticks (her punishment for “lusting” the Library – which wasn’t in itself a problem, but the Librarian discovering drool on the books was). On the bright side, his music was brilliant.

So was Legolas, though. So stern he looked tonight, dodging handkerchiefs tossed at him with an inborn agility and…

“HEY!” Galadriel suddenly barked, and Jess jumped and nearly spilt her drink all over Kat. Several students dropped their glasses and looked around wildly, half expecting to be asked to drop and do twenty. “Attention on *me* when I speak to you, please. Eyes of Elves, Hobbits and Men. NOW! I see your thoughts and they are not pretty. It will not be ‘Raining Elves’ tonight, Emy and Lómédith, so stop picturing it.”

Several students started looking into their drinks, muttering darkly about the unfairness of vision abilities. Not all seemed to have been shaken out of drooling, however.

The Elven Lady cocked her head and looked down at Rivaran, who were still looking dreamily in the direction of Elves.

“Rivaran, you know how Lord Elrond feels about inappropriate thoughts about his sons. How would he feel if I told what you are envisioning to do to both sons – simultaneously?”

Some sniggered, but most wisely kept their mouths shut. Elrond had already taken up a notebook and scribbled down something. Rumours had it that was where he kept his charge list for the Court of Canon Grievances. Rivaran gulped down the rest of her drink nervously.

“Now that I have your attention,” Galadriel went on, “there are a few things concerning the movie you just saw we wish to address. To make sure there are no misunderstandings about Canon and most importantly, to ensure such misunderstandings do not fester, mate and create a monster, we shall have a little chat. Let us talk about The Return of the King.”

“I thought it was brilliant,” The Amazing Maurice said dreamily.

“You would, not having to watch yourself plummet from Minas Tirith like a burning torch dropped,” Denethor said bitterly.

“That is different!” Denethor snapped, stepping up on the podium with barely controlled rage. “I stood on the pyre and let myself burn with the palantir in my hands! That’s very different! I didn’t trip like some drunken fool off the edge of my own palace grounds! Yes, I went a little… Eccentric there at the end, but I am the Steward of Gondor and I had dignity in death!”

“I also have an issue which I wish to address,” Faramir said calmly, stepping up as well. A sigh went through the crowd. Faramir’s star had certainly risen after the movie – it was odd what being doused in oil could do for your sexy rating. Kat made a small moan, but quickly ducked when she saw Denethor look up sharply in her direction.

“Despite the movie not addressing this, I am in fact married to Éowyn,” Faramir went on. There were more sighs. “The movie might also give the impression that I am slightly… How shall I put this…?”

“A wimp,” Denethor cut in.

“Yes, thank you, father. Perhaps some of you therefore labour under a misunderstanding. I do not love the sword or the arrows, as I said to Frodo, but it does not mean I cannot use them. I am a Captain of Gondor, a country which borders Mordor and therefore knows constant warfare. Do you think a wimp and a man who could not defend himself would live long in Gondor?”

“I have an issue to address as well,” Boromir shot in after a moment of silence. “As movie three points out, I am dead. Happily rotting in my watery grave where no one can resurrect me to attempt to win my love. Do you understand? D-E-A-D. Devoid of life. Not a whiff of breath to pass my lips. No good for sex. Dead. Get it? Dead! Leave me alone!”

Denethor gave him a comforting pat while Héthien sniffled loudly into a handkerchief.

“It’s not fair that the pretty die young,” she muttered.

“At least then they die before they turn ugly,” Melody pointed out. “I love Merry, but I prefer him young. Ugh, wrinkles and grey hair.”

“Pfff!” Aaliyah replied, waving her arm and nearly spilling some of her drink on Melody (who was a Hobbit, and therefore quite short, which was an eternal invitation to get spilled on). “You just don’t have enough sense to pick an Immortal Lust Object. They never age. Legolas will be pretty, pretty, pretty forever!”

“Shhh!” Nimriel cut in. “Legolas just made a move towards the podium!”

An expecting hush fell over the crowd as the prince of Mirkwood, the Elf of Choice by three out of four ‘Book? What book?’ fangirls and the hottest archer of Middle-earth stepped up. Jess tried not to stare and fought back her Inner Luster vehemently.

My, but he looked hot when he was stern.

“I am not a girl,” Legolas began softly. “Thus, I am blond, not blonde. I am also not Captain Obvious who repeat everything in such simple words that even Sauron could have caught on to the plot.”

“His lines are not *that* great in the book to begin with,” Kat whispered and Jess just nodded.

“Hey!” Sauron injected. “I am great at understanding!”

“Yes, that’s why you were outsmarted by a hobbit,” Morgoth snorted. Sauron shot him a murderous
glare.

“Hey, are you blond in the first place?” Elenmire asked, ignoring the two Dark Lords, who were trying to stare each other to death.

Legolas groaned.

“King Thranduil was blond in the Hobbit,” Ciryattûre shot in. “Anyway, he’s hotter as a blond.”

“That branch of Elves should not have blond hair,” Nene replied and squinted. “And Legolas has never looked that blond to me.”

“Yes, well, perhaps we can let the great Legolas Hair Controversy ’01 rest for now?” Miss Cam suggested in a voice that wasn’t really a suggestion at all. “Here at OFUM the appearance of a character will be to you as your mental image dictates. Since Canon can be less than specific on looks at times, we thought it best this way. You see what you wish to see, miss Nene. Only sometimes do students see beyond their own mental image and see what is really there. If you can do that, you will truly have learned something valuable.”

“That’s interesting,” Jess muttered and gave Legolas a thorough look. He still looked the same, the image of Movie-Legolas blond and tall. She felt a sudden pang of desire to wash that image away and just see.

“Well, that would explain why someone would find Wormtongue attractive,” Kat replied calmly.

“And why we recognise characters on sight,” John Adam added and licked a paw (he was a Cat-Elf after yet another creative day at the Enrolment Office for Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor – they made one side cat, one side Elf after his wish to be enrolled as an ‘Elf Undent’).

“Moving on,” Miss Cam said calmly. “Saruman, I believe you had a few words to say…?”

Saruman stalked up on the podium, looking mightily annoyed. “Yes, I have a few words here – unlike in this movie, where I had none! I was cut! Me, the only non-eyeball villain of movie one and two! Even being stabbed to death by Wormtongue would have been endurable compared to just being *left* out!”

Wormtongue gave him a murderous glare and clutched the cake spade harder. Saruman seemed not to notice.

“Dead, I would at least be safe. Now, I shall be the villain in a thousand stories. I can see it already – I have caught the Fair Maiden Edheldel and Legolas has to save her from my evil clutches as I have fallen hopelessly in love with her and my brain has leaked out my ears and messed up my beard. No one shall ever know me as Saruman the Many-Coloured. Do you know how hard it is to make a gown that appears white at first, but really sparkles in many colours? Do you?”

“I have a question,” Renze said as soon as Saruman paused to breathe. “If you are Saruman of Many Colours, shouldn’t your beard be of many colours too?”

Saruman closed his eyes. “Can I kill her?” he asked Miss Cam, still with eyes closed and an intense look on his face.

“Maybe later,” Miss Cam said reassuringly, patting his arm. “Hobbits, the podium is yours.”

The four Hobbits of the Fellowship climbed up, Sam carrying a spade and eyeing any student who made a move towards Frodo.
“As the movie does show, I married Rosie. What the movie doesn’t tell you is that we had thirteen children,” Sam said calmly. “Does anyone here still think I did not love my wife?”

“Doesn’t mean you couldn’t have made sweet love to Frodo on the side,” Ria muttered, then tensed up as she suddenly felt hundreds of eyes on her. “Did I say that out loud?”

Frodo just sighed. “As you no doubt noted in the movie, Gollum takes a… Um, bite of me and that hurts as much as it looks like. I would just like to say that does not mean I need healing comfort sex afterwards.”

“And me and Pip are the tallest Hobbits, despite what movie three shows,” Merry said after Frodo had finished. “Speaking of which – Pippin?”

“Merry and I are proud to announce we are now offering Entdraught for sale for any student unhappy with her length. Its quality comes guaranteed by Quickbeam, an Ent of Good Standing. We’ll be selling it this week in the student eating hall and will come with a complementary Mushroom Muffin.”

“Thank you, Pippin,” Galadriel said wryly. “King Thranduil, did you wish to say a few words?”

It was silent for a moment, no Thranduil stepping up to the podium. In fact, Jess couldn’t see King Thranduil at all.

Legolas looked up sharply.

“Oh, he is not here,” Gandalf replied after a moment. “He borrowed my notes on our recent ‘accidental’ trip to Modern Earth. He was brushing up on his Earth knowledge.”

“Perhaps he will come by later,” Galadriel suggested, but she frowned slightly. “Next in line is our returned king, Elessar of Gondor.”

“Why’s Thranduil missing?” Kaiialyn asked in a low voice.

“Dunno,” Gwendolyn replied. “Last I saw him, he tried to choke me with part of the movie reel for calling Legolas for a ‘fine-assed Elven hottie.’ Honestly! It was a compliment on both him and his son.”

Kat sniggered. “That must be when he stalked past us, muttering darkly about the curse of Orlando Bloomgitis. I thought he would try to toss Jess at the screen when she made eyes at onscreen Legolas.”

“Oh, shut up,” Jess muttered. “I saw you take cover whenever Denethor swept the crowd.”

She paused for a moment, noticing Legolas and Miss Cam having a whispered conversation as Aragorn was trying to explain he didn’t just ‘get’ the throne of Gondor. Legolas was looking worried, but what was more ominous, was that Miss Cam was looking worried as well. Belatedly, she realised Aragorn was saying something important.

“… therefore, by Royal Decree, you are all to listen to Tom Bombadil’s Poetic Illumination of the Differences of Books to Movies. If I see any earmuffs, thick caps or any other attempts to block hearing I shall personally dip you in Balrog earwax. Tom…”

“Hey dol! Merry dol! Tom Bombadil’s a merry fellow

Movie-o! No Tom-o! No boots so yellow!
The movies are long but the books are longer

And ever is Sauron the warmonger!

Merry dol! Eye-o! Ever a-looking!

Hey dol! Hobbit-o! Ever a-cooking!

The tale of the Dark Lord and his silly ring

Tom Bombadil the Merry will now sing,”

It was going to be a long night, Jess decided, and tried make her ears produce enough earwax to block her hearing.
When the Cat Is Away, the Students Dance on Legolas's Undergarments

At first there was silence.

No student stampede, no mini-Balrog chases, no Morgoth/Sauron insult-athon, no enraged Elrond lectures on Naturally Nine, no Silmarillion Elves on eagles pelting Silmarillion books on ignorant students.

Silence.

OFUM had been deserted by most of the Canon characters and after the shocked silence had lasted a whole afternoon, pandemonium erupted.

Morrigan the Nightmare Queen (who had, for claiming that title, earned a very special dream visit from Lórien) was the first to attempt to raid Legolas’s room, to have something ‘to remember him by’, as she sniffled bitterly. Alas, what she got to remember Legolas by was a rather interesting haircut courtesy of Legolass’s flaming whip. Kat didn’t really feel sorry for her, especially since she herself had suffered much worse.

Who would have thought Faramir’s horse could kick that hard? All she had wanted was to pat him. And maybe cut a little hair out of his mane for a souvenir. That wasn’t a kick-able offence. It wasn’t fair.

But then, as Miss Cam had many times pointed out, OFUM was not fair. It was education. Though Kat did sometimes wonder just what it was trying to teach aside from “be stupid, expect pain”.

Limping lightly, she made her way through the oddly deserted main hall, still muttering darkly about horses and their horses’ temper. In the distance, she could hear annoyed shrieks. Probably someone discovering Boromir’s delightful booby-trap on his tomb, which certain in denial students had a tendency to attempt to remove, as if that would make him alive. (Kat knew this as one of these students – Lady Eowyn, who had earned a special visit from Lady Eowyn for claiming that name - had been thrown in her window by one such booby-trap, but had luckily broken the fall by falling on Jess.)

“Kat, duck!”

“Huuuuuh?” Kat muttered, then felt something swing by her head and instantly ducked.

Two rather oddly shaped objects looking disturbingly like feet flew past over her. Large, hairy feet come to think of that. Hobbit feet.

When, after a suitable wait, nothing more came flying, she got up hesitantly only to get trampled down by two students fleeing in a hail of wine bottles.

“I told you to duck,” Jess’s voice came and Kat muttered several words that would have made paint run off the walls if there had actually been any paint around. Staggering a bit, she got up to see the backs of the two fleeing students and what looked like a very large cloud of dust (but was in fact a group of students) chasing after them. She made a mental note of how their backs looked so she could throw rotten mushrooms at them on a later occasion. How dare they trample her as if they were staff? How decidedly rude.

“What in the name of urple banditry is going on?” she declared as she heard Jess approach.
“That was Elrénia and Kryanna. Elves, you know? They were trying to infiltrate the Hobbit students.”

Kat paused and had a brief debate whether or not she asked. In her experience, answers often brought pain. “Why?”

“While you were playing in the stables, a bit of a war broke out,” Jess explained. Kat turned to face her, only to realise Jess seemed to have acquired a blue hair colour.

“Let me guess – this ties to why your hair looks like a Smurf pillow.”

Jess gave her a murderous glare. “No. I made one innocent remark about whether or not Hera, as part sugar vampire, would turn to dust of doused with tea. It’s not my fault Cynewyn would then test this suggestion.”

“Did it work?”

“Well, on her sugar vampire bit, yeah. But not on the Elf and Hobbit and Entwife and Giant Humourless Ego parts, it didn’t. She dipped my hair in blue paint as vengeance.”

“I feel your pain,” Kat replied, rolling her eyes. “You were saying about a war?”

“I was getting to that. The Elf students and Hobbit students are at war. I think they’re arguing over what is most worthy to write about or something. It started with Elf Pride and Hobbit Pride movements, but a fight broke out about who had the greatest pride and.... Well, it kind of escalated into Middle-earth War Five, or whatever number they’re up to.”

“And the staff having vanished, no one’s around to stop it.”

Jess nodded. “The mini-Balrogs just seem amused and are taking bets on who will win. I hear the odds are 2-1 on the Elves and 3-1 on the Hobbits after the Elves managed to sneak into the kitchen and alter the Hobbits’ favourite mushroom pie recipe to include cat hairballs. The Hobbits still haven’t recovered from breakfast.”

“I suppose it was only a matter of time before the students started rioting,” Kat remarked and winced as she felt for broken ribs.

“You know what they say - when the cat is away, the mice dance on the table.”

“Or in OFUM’s case – when the staff is away, the students dance on Legolas’s undergarments.”

“Hey! I would not!”

“Wouldn’t you?”

Jess seemed to think. “Okay, but only if the DJ was good.”

“I’m sure. Where the heck is the staff, anyway? They’ve vanished into thin air as if by an act of God.”

“Act of Eru, you mean. No one knows where they’ve gone. King Thranduil vanished first, so maybe they’ve all gone to save him from something.”

“Right. So what else is going on?”

“What makes you think there is more?”
“You mean besides the fact that just one thing never goes wrong in this place in addition to the look on your face that usually means you’ve found a secret stash of lollipops?”

“Hmpf. You’re no fun.”

“Just tell me and get it over with, Jess.”

Jess needed no other encouragement. “Some of the students are trying to ransack the Enrolment Office and figure out how students are decided to be what they are. They’re hoping to then change their forms and make their Lust Objects actually be in love with them and so when they come back... Lusting heaven! I heard it from NenyaQuende, she’s one of the planners.”

“Devious. No one around watching Canon so they’re going to fiddle with it.”

“That’s the plan. Only problem is that it’s in the middle of the war zone, so Nenya kinda asked me for this teensy-weensy favour in return for making me one of Legolas’s harem girls.”

“Jess!”

Jess tried to look the poster girl for innocence. “You’ll get Faramir. You just have to help me do this one tiny, tiny thing.”

Kat groaned, but already, she could feel her Better Judgement slip away like leaves caught in a current. Surely, this would backfire. When the staff returned, everything would be brought back to normal and the culprits punished, Kat had no doubt. But that might take a little while and if there was the slightest chance of it working, even for a little while... Mmm, Faramir.

“What is this tiny, tiny thing?”

Jess grinned happily. “We must make peace between the Hobbits and Elves.”

It was here Kat should have walked away. If she still had her Better Judgement, she would have. Instead, she merely nodded.

And in the distance, the Hobbit Pride Parade marched on, carrying their newest Weapon of Mass Destruction to unleash upon the Elves – a little spell-enhanced alcohol out of Saruman’s holding to replace the Elven wine with that should deal a devastating blow.

There would be no more singing or poetry for the Elves as THE CAPITAL LETTER SPEAKING CURSE TOOK EFFECT.

Welcome to Middle-earth War Five. Please duck.
Cunning Plans Revealed and the Nature of Canon and Kraken

War.

A simple word for a lifetime of trouble and a backside of bruises. And about as easy to fix as knocking a Rohirrim of a horse with a toothpick. Yet here Jess sat, in the relative silence of the study hall, trying to dissect a war with her sister so that she could bring peace about and go through with her very ambitious plan.

She hadn't quite dared to tell Kat the part about the cunning extra plan. She wasn't even sure it was really her plan, for surely her brain would never think up such a thing when it could settle for admiring Legolas's firm buttocks.

Come to think of it, he did have the loveliest... No! She was not going there. Not again. She could resist even fabuloso backides. She could, she could, she could.

And the Kraken could grow pink-fluffy wings, a part of her mind thought dryly. She promptly shut it up. Best not to think of the Watcher in the Water and its kraken ways. It had never quite forgiven her for that time she had called it 'Watcher in the Pond'. She still couldn't look at tentacles without wincing.

"So we think the argument started with what's better of Elf fanfic or Hobbit fanfic," Kat said, interrupting Jess and her painful train of thoughts. Kat was hovering over their notes, looking annoyed. "Which means we can maybe get them to settle on both being good in different ways."

"Okay," Jess replied and tried not reply 'bloody likely'. She knew her Elven-obsessed friends. They thought Maeglin the hight of all art ever. Those who weren't lusting after Legolas/Glorfindel/Elrond/Haldin/Figwit/RandomElf anyway. Which she supposed strictly speaking included her.

"Then there's the issue of Fiora Flagraton the Elf and Alenia the Hobbit and their... Incident," Kat went on, the paused. "Why did you talk me into this again?"

"Hot oiled Faramir."

"Ah, right. Hot oiled Faramir. I can do this. I can. Hot oiled Faramir, hot oiled Faramir. Right. The Incident, as it's known, involved Fiora and Alenia and the argument over who had the sexiest hair in the film. Fiona wanted Hobbits disqualified since they were by nature cute and not sexy. This spurred Hobbits into starting a Hobbit Pride movement."

"Which several slashers joined before discovering it wasn't actually gay pride," Jess injected.

"Yes."

They both paused to remember that scene. It would be a small miracle if the garden ever recovered from the "Sam loves Frodo - yeah, like *that* - no, not like that, you pervert - but they hold hands! - platonic hands!" fight that had broken out. Amanduriel was still in the Healer's Wing trying to have her Hobbit feet removed from her nostrils.

"Okay, so that started the Elf Pride, well, after that minor leader fight between Avihn Mason and Nelloth. Who won, anyway?"

"Neither," Jess replied. "One of the minis glued their ears together so that they would stop shouting..."
at each other. Only they didn't and now they're both walking around with shattered eardrums."

"Ow."

"After all we've been through here you think shattered eardrums are ow?"

Kat seemed to think about this. "Well, minor ow. Like ow whispered."

"Ow lite."

"Pale ow."

"Now there's a name for a painkiller if ever there was one," Jess remarked. "Okay, so after that they basically went into war and my head hurts just trying to remember all that went on there."

"I don't think it matters," Kat said thoughtfully. "You know, I do think it really boils down to the first issue. Which is more worthy to write about; Hobbits or Elves? I'm not sure who has the superiority complex and who has the inferiority complex, but there sure are some complexes wandering about there and getting fat on bacon."

"And the humans got forgotten somewhere along the way."

"Yeah, where are all the more human-centered students, anyway?"

"Well, the Boromir fans who are on their second semester of hunger strike, demanding Boromir be declared Alive," Jess said thoughtfully.

"Oh yeah. They keep dying and Mandos keep sending them back, with complaints. Usually attached to their foreheads."

"Yeah. Alisha got back only yesterday. Even Mandos seems to have vanished, but he left an automatic bouncer."

"So thoughtful of him," Kat remarked dryly.

"Oh yes. The rest of the human-lusting students are sneak-peeking the Return of the King Extended Edition on Miss Cam's palanîr and ogling various males."

"Miss Cam will not be amused."

"Miss Cam is never amused."

"Except when laughing at our expense," Kat replied.

"Student adventures do seem to never cease to amuse our good staff."

"Yeah."

Jess looked down for a moment. "You know, I still sort of miss them."

"Even King Thranduil rolling you down Erebor in a winebarrel for coping a feeling of Legolas's behind?"

"Even that."

"Funny they should all go missing," Kat remarked, fiddling slightly with her pen. "I have a strange
feeling something is going on here that will all come to bite us terribly in the bum just when we
manage to achieve our objectives."

"Oh, that won't happen," Jess replied, the realised what she had said and closed her mouth so hard
she immediately had to open it to let out an ow lite.

"And how do you know that?" Kat gave her a murderous stare. "Jess! What are you not telling me? I
know that look on your face. It's as guilty as that time you replaced my English essay with my Ode
to Faramir which I proceeded to hand in and get an A from my equally Faramir lusting teacher."

Jess looked down. "I maybe wasn't totally truthful when I said I wanted us to change Canon and
have Faramir and Legolas."

"You WHAT?"

“They want to make permanent change to Canon, Kat. Permanently make Legolas some love slave
of theirs and make Aragorn leave Arwen and Faramir Éowyn. And it just doesn’t seem right. I mean,
it’s not love we feel, it’s…” She halted, not sure how to put it into words. "Legolas is just a symbol,
someone I could give all the attributes I thought I’d love in someone. A symbol. Do you understand
what I mean? Would you really want a Faramir that carelessly tossed Éowyn aside for you? Or for
that Faramir lusting Evil Sorceress student who likes to pretend her name is Lady Eowyn?"

The silence seemed to stretch on. Finally, Kat lowered her head. "No."

"No," Jess repeated. "And besides, it's not going to work."

"How do you know that?"

"I will show you."

Kat raised an eyebrow. "You've figured out - on your own - why a plan you would a few weeks ago
been at the head off will not work?"

"Yes. I know, I know, I'm as stunned as you are. Come on. We have to make our way into the
Enrolment Offices."

"But that's in the middle of the bloody warzone! Remember, our plan? Ending the war?" Kat waved
an arm in the air impatiently. "We can't go down there now, we'll be pelted with fermented lembas
and rotted mushroom cluster bombs!"

She paused suddenly, her arm mid-air. "Jess, we're so stupid. We don't need to stop the war, just
move it! Pretend the Hobbit students the secret location of the Elf HQ and the Elf students the secret
location of the Hobbit HQ and make sure the locations are real close. That'll keep them occupied."

"Sometimes Kat, you do have a brain."

"Oh, shut up. I'll do the Hobbits, you do the Elves. Then we meet in the entrance hall."

And then we'll see if my brain really does work, Jess thought.

*****

The Enrolment Office - or Offices, as was more accurate - had its own little section with OFUM. It
was usually the lair of Evil!Thranduil and Evil!Denethor, who students had long since learned to not
to run from. Evil!Thranduil was an excellent shot and always aimed for the real evil places. And
Evil!Denethor liked torching hair, preferably while still attached to the student's skull. But now the halls were quiet. Eerily so.

"Are you sure there's no one here?" Kat suddenly whispered, nearly giving Jess a heart attack in the silence.

"Yes, sis," Jess muttered, trying to get her heart down from her skull, where she was sure it didn't belong. "Last I saw, the Hobbits and Elves were charging each other on Pelennor Fields while trying to pelt the other to submission with rubber Mûmakil."

"That will only take forever."

"Grudges know no expiry date."

"True enough."

Carefully, they turned a corner and peeked into a soot-covered hallway. Some of the stones had turned dark and a funny smell lingered.

"Someone lit a fire," Jess remarked, rubbing some of the soot on her fingers. "Five guesses who."

"Must be that time after Evil!Denethor read that story where Frodo knocked up Faramir and decided to see if burning student enrolment forms would make students burn too."

"Oh yeah. I remember. Only worked somewhat. It didn't hurt, but we all looked like boiled hummers for a week."

Kat chuckled. "Wouldn't have been so bad if Gollum hadn't kept trying to nibble us."

"Or Faramir spotting you when you tried to sneak up on him and consequently laughing so hard he nearly choked on his apple bite, making a bunch of lusters tried to rush him to do the Heimlich maneuver."

"Didn't Kaela try to convince him it was done with tongue?"

"Mmm-hmm. Sadly for her, Éowyn overheard and let poor Kaela demonstrate this amazing new version of the Heimlich - on an Olog-hai."

"True ow," Kat remarked and they shared a snigger, easing carefully further into the dark hallway. Distantly, a scream was heard.

"What was that?" Jess asked, peeking around uneasily.

"You're asking ME?"

"Who else is here?"

"Me," a male voice said, causing both Jess and Kat to leap into each others arms (which of course worked rather badly since both expected the other to catch. Ow lite). "You should not be here."

"Well, I was... Um. Eh. Just... Øh," Jess stuttered, nudging Kat to say something.

"Yeah, yeah. Just... Ah..."

"When you would like to converse in English, do let me know," the voice said from somewhere in the darkness, sounding slightly amused.
"JESS! You did it!" came another voice screaming, and Nenya leaped into the hallway, followed by several students. "You got the area cleared! Canon is ours!"

"Frodo is mine!" Victoria squee'ed squeeingly.

"Legolas is mine!" Dragonlet yelped.

"Oh, *bugger*," Jess muttered and realised that perhaps she should have realised the people she had meant to double-cross didn't actually trust her not to change Canon to make Legolas all hers. They'd probably kept an eye on where she went. Maybe she should wait a little longer before she started trusting her brain too much.

"You cannot change Canon," the man said calmly and all the students rushing in halted, smacking into each other somewhat pale ow-y.

"But... I want TURIN-WURIN, my chibi-Mormegil!" Furry Banana wailed. The man just shook his head, and for a moment, light fell across his face. And Jess knew. She had been right. Canon was protected by the most potent force there was. Its creator. And he sounded pissed.

"Oh dear," Jess said quietly and crunched down, a moment later yanking her sister down as well.

"I am Canon," the Headmaster said quietly and the world shook. "This world was born with a sentence. It lives in my words, words that live in the hearts of millions now. Can you match the power of that?"

"Don't reply to that," Kat muttered between clenched teeth and Jess found herself nodding ferociously. Unfortunately, some of the others didn't seem to be listening.

"Leggy-chan's love give me power," Amanduriel said and stuck her nose up. "You're in the way. Go away before I kick you with my awesome grrl-powers."

For a moment, it was silence. Then the Headmaster laughed. "You know nothing of power. Nothing of war even as you pretend to have one outside. Would you like to understand? Would you like to see?"

The world shifted. There was no other word for it. Darkened hallways became a valley circled by mountains and white stone in city streets. Silence became screaming and the clang of metal. And the smell of death was everywhere.

"Where the hell are we?" asked Jess, feeling a strange sort of dread beset her. She didn't look down, but she could see slain Elf in the corner of her eye.

"You should pay more attention in Hail, Idiot-proof Silmarillion Training for Oblivious Reading-challenged Yawners," Sherri said calmly. "This is Gondolin. This is war. Gondolin is falling. Morgoth's forces have found the Hidden Kingdom at last."

"Who wins?" Ithil asked fearfully.

"Morgoth."

They all looked at each other for a moment, hearing the distant roar of fire.

"Well," Kat said calmly and picked up a broken piece of white stone, "I guess we charge then. For the Free People of the world."
"For Leggy-chan," Amanduriel said and sniffed.

"No one's charging anyone," Miss Cam said calmly and stepped out of a house, looking slightly worse for wear. "You are merely seeing events long passed. War is no place for children. You're still in the Enrolment Office. Next time, though, don't talk back to the Headmaster unless you really wish to earn a Darwin award."

As she spoke, the white turned to black and the sky to roof. Gondolin became OFUM again, but with no sign of the Headmaster. With a slight 'ew', Kat dropped the melted fish she'd been clutching.

"Miss Cam?! You're back!" Jess replied. This day was getting odder and odder and something like a headache had started shaking her brain merrily.

"Yes. I need a few spare hands of someone who will not think Elves a hallucination they can shag. You're here, so you're it. You're going to help me get everyone back from Earth and to where they belong. Hopefully without any more major international incidents."

She paused. "Well, too many of them, anyway. France and Germany are already at war with Sauronland/Morgothistan and I think a few actors have had some... Interesting meetings, but I think we can fix all that if we just get the world drunk enough to think it all weird dreams. And then I will throttle two certain Hobbits. Come on. The portal to your world is just down the hall."

As the students, somewhat baffled and shell-shocked, followed Miss Cam obediently, Kat leaned towards Jess.

"I guess we know where everyone went now."

"I guess we do."

Exchanging a look, they walked on, Jess trying to ease the headache out of her head and wondering how much weirder this day could get.

An in the distance, the Kraken spread its pink and fluffy wings and flew proudly.

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