

## **Faerie and the Imagination**

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It all began with my mother. Doesn't it always begin with our mothers? The lengthy car trips my family took around the Southeastern United States during my childhood were quite a feat for two brand new parents with four energetic urchins all in diapers. But, as could only be expected, my mother handled it beautifully. She made sure those days of travel were not a mindless and sleepy transition between destinations, but rather a canopy of time under which we huddled to listen intently to the stories. She started with finger puppets and, when with age our interest began to waiver, she moved to the picture story books like Winnie the Pooh and the marvelous wonders of P.D. Eastman. But my earliest memories are of the longer stories, the children's novels that hinted at the greatness of the larger genre.

Just as my mother will always be a woman of joyous ingenuity, so I will always be a child of the imagination. Films, music, art and literature have always moved me easily and deeply and they always will. But it was these stories of my mother's that first stirred in me the deep and enduring passion that later became an endless thirst for literature. Nothing ever excited my passions more than the unread pages of a book. I came to associate the smell and the texture of the pages with the ideas of mystery and hidden power. It's a fascination that I hope to expand as I grow older, and I've found the same appreciation in scholars wiser than myself.

Such devotion [to books] extends not merely to their contents but to the sheer physical sensations of handling them, taking pleasure in their binding and typography and paper. There is a certain temperament,

evident to a degree, probably, in every reader of this book, to which the dry odor of the stacks of a large library is a heady perfume. (Altick, 14)

The practical implications of my obsession with the imaginatively written word have grown into simple principles that speak to literature and its power. The relationships of literature to my life experiences have been dramatic and many-faceted. First, literature was established early on as the deepest intellectual passion of my life: it acts as a reference point for all of my life experiences; it is the point at which I begin and the basis to which I find myself returning for a greater understanding of my life. Second, literature has in the past and continues presently to introduce me to myself as I read of the lives and thoughts and actions of heroes that I find in the end to be very much like me. It presents me with goals for which to strive and with pitfalls to avoid. Third, literature, in a way that is closest to my own heart, serves as a refuge from the world; not only a refuge, but also a source of new realms that impose fewer restrictions upon my imagination than does reality.

I will first explain the framework I've been given by literature through the words of the author who has inspired my imagination the most:

Fairy-stories are not in normal English usage stories about fairies or elves, but stories about Fairy, that is Faerie, the realm or state in which fairies have their being. Faerie contains many things besides elves and fays, and besides dwarfs, witches, trolls, giants, or dragons: it holds the seas, the sun, the moon, the sky, and the earth, and all things that are in it: tree and bird, water and stone, wine and bread, and ourselves, mortal men, when we are enchanted. (Tolkien, 4)

In this essay "On Fairy Stories," J.R.R. Tolkien assigns a far greater depth and importance to the stories of Faerie than the role of mere pastime for children. In his mind, those who can walk furthest into those magical woods and drink the clearest draughts of its brooks are the grown up child-like who are capable of attaching the magic and the mystery to true articulate meaning. This distinction is evidenced in my own experiences with literature as the sensation that was stirred in my childhood has matured and deepened along with me. But, I forget myself. It is in those first years of inspiration that I must begin, I suppose. Tolkien speaks of the imaginary worlds of literature as *Faerie*. I will continue to refer to the lands of my imagination with this term through the rest of this essay because it is exactly those worlds to which I refer when I speak of the worlds entirely other that have shaped me since my youth.

Literature has always been my reference point, my beginning framework for understanding life. That framework became evident in the earliest days of my childhood, living in the suburbs of Paris, France, where we'd moved to share *The Story* and where the silver tinge of ancient worlds fed my hunger for Faerie. As a child, like many children, I played imaginary games with my sister in the forest that stood near our house. The stories that we read inspired our games, Faerie lent our imaginations the power which made the games seem real. When my siblings and I grew too old and too divergent in our tastes for my mother to continue reading to us all together, Sarah, the youngest of my siblings, and I began reading to each other in the back seat. During that time, she and I grew to love the same fairy tales, to long for the same worlds of our imagination to be made into reality.

I remember the cool, slick feel of those Parisian woods of Montigne where we

tried to act out the truths that we were as yet too young to articulate. Low, bare branches and our nameless longing for a doorway to Faerie led to intricate tales sprung from the stories our mother had read to us in ages past, from the worlds that had been born in the imaginations of older dreamers. The leaves dropped water onto our knees and necks as we crouched and ran up small, steep hills and we ran on, unaware of the unpleasant snap of water on our skin because it fit so well with the stories. The pull of the wet foliage against our steady gait only fed our longing to push faster, smoother, to keep up with the slender silver thread that was Faerie.

That thread was our only connection to a world that was our own, a world into which we blended easily because we were natives to the land that was world-over universal to the child-like. It was a world full of creatures to whom we, children so foreign to the world of France, were deeply related and by whom we were readily accepted. Those worlds and their creatures were the gift we'd been given by the stories we'd read. It was in those early doorways to Faerie, long before I was able to name or define what I was learning, that the first vestiges of my framework for interpreting the world were founded.

Young as I was, the articulation of deep meaning was as yet beyond my power, so I played my games to grasp them better. Through that act of childish application, the stories gained a meaning more intricate, calling my infant thoughts to greater themes even in the simplicity of the story that served as their vehicle. As G.K. Chesterton once explained, the very great things of the universe can be quite adequately contained in the simple:

Has not everyone noticed how sweet and startling any landscape looks

when seen through an arch? This strong, square shape, this shutting off of everything else, is not only an assistance to beauty; it is the essential of beauty. The most beautiful part of every picture is the frame. (Chesterton, 109-110)

Just so, those stories in the mini-van, simple and child-like, were the first to send whispers to my heart of the possibility of things which are both terrible and beautiful at once. It was a shaping idea that prepared my understanding for later lessons.

Time passed, my family moved back to the stranger woods and brooks of America and Sarah's passions changed while my thirst for Story remained insatiable. I read more and more on my own, stepping into the stories with a deepening sense of respect and awe. I found deeper truths and greater mysteries. I could neither name nor understand the nature of my longing for the magic that Sarah and I sought to play with in the woods of Montigne. I couldn't find that silver-tinted thread until I returned as a young adolescent to the books of my childhood and I read for myself of Aslan. Simone Weil once said,

There is a reality outside the world, that is to say, outside space and time, outside man's mental universe, outside any sphere whatsoever that is accessible to human facilities.

Corresponding to this reality, at the centre of the human heart, is the longing for an absolute good, a longing which is always there and is never appeased by any object in this world. (Phillips, 24)

It was through an appeal to this longing for truths not of this world that C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia and Aslan, that glorious lion, first introduced me to the doors which

Faerie provides into the world of faith. Lewis and his lion have guided me much ever since.

As I began to read The Chronicles on my own, the world of Narnia quickly exploded into the near reality that silence affords us and Aslan was at the heart of my solitary adventures. Lewis' Aslan was the dangerous and gentle lion of the land of Narnia who, beneath thin layers of analogy, represented Jesus Christ. It was Aslan who first portrayed for me of the person of the Savior of Christianity, who first lent a real tangibility to the God of Scripture. In this way, The Chronicles of Narnia were the first to guide me into a personal understanding of the faith I'd been raised to follow. This introduction was a slow process as I began to connect the love and affection I felt for the lion to the love and affection I was called to carry for the True Savior.

I still remember my first reading of the encounter between Aslan and the four children, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, and the longing it stirred within me. It was "what Coleridge calls [Faerie's] adunating power, that is, its power to bring many diverse elements into one. We have to believe in the work before, and as a condition of understanding it" (Coulson, 8). In other words, the lessons that had lain dormant from the stories that I'd read before were stirred to life by the depiction of Aslan given when first encountered by Sons and the Daughters of Eve:

But as for Aslan himself, the Beavers and the children didn't know what to do or say when they saw him. People who have not been in Narnia sometimes think that a thing cannot be good and terrible at the same time. If the children had never thought so, they were cured of it now. For when they tried to look at Aslan's face they just caught a glimpse of the golden

mane and the great, royal, solemn, overwhelming eyes; and then they found they couldn't look at him and went all trembly. (Lewis, 126)

As I read, I remembered the terrible beauty in the realms of Faerie I'd encountered as a child. Aslan's terrible beauty, a thing which ran deeper than the understanding of a child, was yet communicated to me so that I knew what awe and adoring terror felt like.

Through this first lesson, some of my deepest and most basic understandings of God were formed. I learned that yes, God was terrible and not tame, but that yes, He was also infinitely good. "Course [Aslan] isn't safe. But he's good. He's the king, I tell you" (Lewis, 80). I learned that the infinite could be fathomed in the very small and that this could be applied to God as well. I learned that the depth and complexity of the God of the universe could be explained in a parable, that both divinity and humanity could be contained in the person of a man called Jesus. All this was placed like a protective glass over the blinding light of the God of eternity, and I was able to gaze timidly up into His face.

These lessons have deepened with time. As a woman, I read Descent into Hell by Charles Williams:

"And if things are terrifying," Pauline put in, her eyes half-closed and her head turned away as if she asked a casual question rather of the world than of him, "can they be good?"

He looked down on her. "Yes, surely," he said, with more energy.

"Are our tremors to measure the Omnipotence?" (Williams 17)

My imagination was jolted from its adult lethargy at the words, and I remembered the joyful trembling of the children that stood before the Lion of my youth. The image of

Aslan was accented by new stories now, it had changed since last I'd read The Chronicles and I understood awe in a way that had escaped me as a child. This change in understanding was primarily due to the way in which the literature I'd read since my childhood had introduced me to myself.

Walker Percy made this comment on literature: "The function of fiction is to tell someone something about himself that he already knows but doesn't know he knows" (9). I would broaden this statement to say that new ideas are introduced to us as often as dormant understandings are awakened. As will be discussed later, both the ideas entirely new and the ideas awakened are vital. One of the powers of Faerie is her ability to bring to light the abstract and inarticulate in both the simplest and the greatest of minds, especially with concern to ourselves.

Any poet will confess that words often cheapen the mental image intended in his or her poetry. Prose is frequently shunned by the author when once an idea that had seemed great has been stated and found wanting. These frustrations in my own writing stem from a sensation that the Infinite has been cheapened by my choice of words or meter. It's not as though rewording it would save my efforts, the wrong has already been done when first I attempted to state an idea of Faerie openly. However, story bypasses the drudgery of linear verbalization, communicating ideas that are too grand to be confined in overt statements through an appeal to the imagination rather than directly through the intellect.

Both as a teenager, naive of the reality of love, and as an adult, seasoned now by past relationships, I've responded very similarly to the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. Both as a child and as a woman, I've wept and mourned the pointless loss. After nearly

four years of higher education, I may now be able to discuss the layers of hidden meaning, the word play and the symbolism that all contribute to the power of the piece, but I stand in community with my youth as we cry out in unison against the vial in Romeo's hand. Together, we grind our teeth at the irony which we feel so much more than we could ever express it as Juliet's eyes flutter to waking.

This involvement on the part of the reader is referred to by some scholars as "transportation." Patricia West reported an experiment on the impact of Story upon people's thinking and reported that, "Narratives are the basic mode of thought through which we make sense of our experiences and ourselves" (623). The deeper understandings afforded to me by the stories that I read are most revealing of myself. Literature reveals to me how much I am like both the heroes I admire and the villains I despise. I see my heart mirrored in the faces of Romeo and of Tybalt alike. The author's nature is revealed in his or her values as expressed in the characters and the imaginative world of the story. My own nature is revealed to me through my responses to these same characters and settings, through both the longings and repulsions I feel in response to what I read.

There need be no discontinuity between the empathy felt by the reader for both villain and heroine alike, though the two responses would seem to contradict. Neither is there necessarily a need for alarm when we find ourselves drawn by sympathy or even admiration to a story's antagonist. John Coulson put it this way:

"Although we know that the sins of which Macbeth is guilty are the deadliest, our imagination is most strongly engaged in those passages where we feel for him. But that feeling is not at variance with our

judgment of his actions: such opposed elements are, for the time being, held in unity... [It] provides a framework which gives substance and reality to the [reader's] sympathy" (Coulson 9).

Our sympathy, then, and our condemnation, all the responses we have in reaction to the Stories we read, offer a picture of our own hearts.

Stories, then, offer a revelation of our own character as we read. Further, our character is not only revealed, but also shaped by the heroism and the villainy of imaginary creatures. As my sister, Sarah, and I darted between the trees, dodging poisoned arrows and calling to one another to be sure that neither was lost, we were drawing toward the strength and courage, the concerned love and affection we'd seen modeled in our stories. We were fleeing the wolf-guards of the White Witch, then turning to face Smaug of The Lonely Mountain, armed only with clever riddles and a stick. The stories brought us alongside the participants to feel as they felt, helping us to know what they knew. And that made all the difference.

By living vicariously through the adventures and mistakes of those impervious to the laws of our own world, I learned of my own longings and also gained new ones. As I grow older, I'm learning to verbalize what it is I've discovered or simply felt. All the same, the value of the lesson is no greater than when we were children who could only listen and not yet speak as the authors spoke. The deeper messages that were indubitably ingrained in my heart only came to my conscious understanding in the years that passed, but they'd been present nonetheless, shaping my thoughts and impacting my actions.

An example: as I read of Bilbo Baggins, Sherlock Holmes and the many princes

and princesses of different fairy-tales, I learned that cleverness and self-control were greater assets than any amount of beauty or wealth. And as I read the story of Job, the histories of Tolkien's elves, and the reign of Peter the Magnificent in Narnia, I learned that it was better to be good than to have any amount of wisdom or power or cleverness. And these quiet lessons were often but seedlings that lay quiet in my thoughts, lessons of which I was for some time, completely unaware. Still, as I grew past childhood and my tastes in fiction expanded with me, the conscious lessons grew also with the depth of the literature.

In reading the Silmarillion, a history of Tolkien's Middle Earth told by the elves, I felt the longing of the elves for the eternal countries of Valinor and I finally named my own ever-deepening longing for "home." The elves of Middle Earth were creatures banished from home, the silvery shores of their hearts' affection. If ever any elf, for all the ages of Middle Earth, caught the sound of seagulls or even once saw the ocean that parted them from Valinor, their spirits quickly succumbed to a longing unto death.

In that tragedy of Middle-Earth, I named the tangible and heart-breaking desire I'd had since childhood to return home at last to a place I've never known in living memory. I wept the first time I read of the sea in Middle Earth and I continue to read it again and again to draw out its full meaning. As a child of the Covenant, I grew from infancy in a home blessed with the salvation of the Gospel. Though I did not claim the faith as my own until these recent years past, I was told and grew to believe very young that I truly was an "alien in a foreign land" and would be so until my death (Exodus 2:22). If I was a stranger to this world, reasoned my childish heart, then "home" must be so much a sweeter and a safer place than this. Tolkien's elves spoke the longings of

my heart. The rending desire with which they regarded the horizon of the sea reflected the starving, homesick desire of my own heart.

Tolkien spoke and speaks still to the fantastic and the magical elements of my imagination; other authors have bored into my self-knowledge on a much more practical level. Charlotte Brontë and her ravishing Jane Eyre were the first to introduce me to the potential of dark and gentle power that can be found in the heart of a woman. I was jealous, when first I read the novel, of Jane's quiet nature and controlled wit. My avid imagination has always been quite evenly matched by my emotional passions. My parents used to pull me aside for long hours discussing self-control and a calm spirit. My exposure to Jane Eyre, however, was the first time the lessons sank home. To give an example, in the quote below Rochester and Jane are in the midst of an argument over whether Jane will remain with him despite her recent discovery of his wife, whom he has kept hidden all these years because of her madness.

"Jane! will you hear reason?" (he stopped and approached his lips to my ear) "because, if you won't, I'll try violence." His voice was hoarse; his look that of a man who is just about to burst an insufferable bond and plunge headlong into wild license. I saw that in another moment, and with one impetus of frenzy more, I should be able to do nothing with him. The present - the passing second of time - was all I had in which to control and restrain him: a movement of repulsion, flight, fear, would have sealed my doom - and his. But I was not afraid: not in the least. I felt an inward power; a sense of influence, which supported me. The crisis was perilous; but not without its charm: such as the Indian, perhaps, feels when he slips

over the rapid in his canoe. I took hold of his clenched hand; loosened the contorted fingers; and said to him, soothingly -

"Sit down; I'll talk to you as long as you like, and hear all you have to say, whether reasonable or unreasonable." (Bronte, 332)

In the face of losing all that she held dear, in the face perhaps of even physical harm at the hands of the man she loved, Jane remained entirely self-possessed. She thought clearly of the consequences to herself and to Rochester should she fail to act and, based on her love for him, did as she was required by her morality and her faith to do.

I stood embarrassed by comparison with such a woman and that embarrassment spurred me on to change, the intentional kind of change that Jane herself embraced. I look often still to Jane's quiet humility and unfailingly stubborn spirit as models for my own behavior. What's important to remember is that these models, though perhaps explicated better with the background of the long discussions with my parents, worked primarily without the involvement of my intellect, but spoke instead directly to my heart, calling me past the faults that I had seen as unconquerable. My parents told me that self-control was not only Biblical and right, but also beautiful and empowering and good. Jane acted those virtues out so that their reality was undeniable.

Literature, then, has formed a framework through which I understand and interpret reality. It has both revealed and shaped my character, drawing me out bit by bit through the development of its own characters and my reactions to the same. Through the introduction of new realities, it has enriched my own. Reality, however, often feels highly overrated. Escapism is dangerous as a habit, but valuable as a pastime. Literature consistently coaxes me into Faerie and her worlds that could not

exist in "real life." In that very impossibility lies my refuge. This root of my love for Story, particularly through the written word, has not yet been explained. I've explained how literature forms a filter through which I think day to day. I've told how it alters and enhances my understanding of my deepest self. But my love, my deep affection like a child's for the warmth of her grandmother's lap, is found in literature's quality as a Sanctuary.

I was an insomniac as a child. Whether a doctor would have agreed with my diagnosis or not, nearly every night I lay awake for hours on end, praying for morning to come more swiftly. I remember calculating the number of hours, the number of minutes, until I could get out of bed with everyone else and rejoice in the light of day that drove out the fears of the dark. I had to find a distraction from the shadows that came alive when I lay still too long. I shared a room with my sister, Sarah, and wasn't allowed to stay up late so I began reading by flashlight beneath the covers, not knowing till years later that the rustling of the pages gave me away to my sister feigning sleep nearby. When my parents confiscated the flashlight in hopes of driving me to sleep, I learned to read by moonlight, word by dim-lit word, until the book dropped to my chest and I slept the few remaining hours of the night.

Nothing but the complete immersion into a story in which the characters, awake in the daylight, were immune to the terrors of a child's dark bedroom could help me to pass those hours in peace. It was an escape from helpless fear into perilous but wonderful adventures that rescued me from the darkness of the moment. Whether I genuinely suffered from a condition or I was intentionally avoiding sleep in order to avoid my intense nightmares, I'm not sure. Regardless, it appears that I've simply

outgrown this condition with time.

But, true then and now, I need not have an immediate terror to assuage in order to require sanctuary. As a child and now even more as a woman, literature has been my heart's deepest refuge and support. In the darkest of moods I can lose myself entirely in a book and forget all but the world into which I am so sweetly drawn. This is not a gift unique to my mind. Literature has a power to draw and to distract, to alter our thinking and to enhance it. Words themselves are powerful, but when words are made to shape ideas entirely new to us or ideas sweetly familiar to us, to describe worlds that are completely foreign to all we have known thus far, our minds can add to and enhance the images until a universe is created in which anything and everything is possible. What distinguishes this from mindless, habitual escapism is that those possibilities enable deeper thoughts. The teenager who would scoff, dull-eyed, at lessons on the art of tragic writing will stand dumb-struck with the rest as Juliet falls on the knife over Romeo's corpse.

As Patricia West and her associates described our escape to Faerie, "Immersion will encourage the generation of deep thoughts, elaborations that move beyond elements of the [experience]" (West, 624). But, the type of refuge I require for immersion in deep thoughts varies vastly with the time, the place and the situation. To better explain my meaning, Dobby the house-elf describes a magical room in Harry Potter's school of witchcraft and wizardry which shares this attribute. (A note to avoid confusion: Dobby always speaks in the third person.)

"Dobby knows the perfect place, sir!" he said happily. "Dobby heard tell of it from the other house-elves when he came to Hogwarts, sir. It is known

by us as the Come and Go Room, sir, or else as the Room of Requirement... because it is a room that a person can only enter," said Dobby seriously, "when they have real need of it. Sometimes it is there, and sometimes it is not, but when it appears, it is always equipped for the seekers needs." (Rowling, 386-387)

Much like the Room of Requirement, literature caters to my needs, to my circumstances, to my emotional state. As a child I fled to my room after arguments with siblings or parents to read with tear-stained cheeks. I would read for fear of the dark and to assuage the sometimes relentlessly slow passage of time. As an adolescent, I looked to find characters who could express the violent emotion in me that, in this world, could find no appropriate outlet. I begged to borrow the lives of those more impressive and more powerful than myself that I might forget my own mediocrity. As a woman, I seek a book for all these reasons still and, too, for the simple pleasure of forgetting myself and the things I've become convinced are important in exchange for those undying lands of Faerie which never falter in reminding me of Home. I seek to remember the deeper themes, the drawn-out notes of Creation that sing clearly from between the lines of Stories greater than myself.

There is an important distinction to be made here. Literature is no magical creature of sentient omniscience, sensing my needs and intentionally matching them. Nevertheless, Faerie does seem to share characteristics with the Room of Requirement as Dobby described it. I very often seek a book in search of the very solitude of which I've been speaking and am turned away dissatisfied. However, in my own experience, literature has been the one consistent and substantive sanctuary I've leaned upon and

there are stories, like those of my youth (The Chronicles of Narnia, The Hobbit and its sequels), which have never yet failed to provide just exactly what I needed to revive my mind and spirit.

There are two different genres of sanctuary that I've discovered thus far. First, there's what my mother's always called "popcorn" reading, stories that are effortlessly read but which offer little to no "nutrition" or deep meaning. During my teenage years of turbulent passions, I began rushing more often to the bookshelves for any kind of escape rather than meaning and it was then that my father began passing along the science fiction he'd always enjoyed as light reading. I devoured the 800 page Star Wars novels in a day and worked my way laboriously through the intricate workings of Frank Herbert's Dune series in a week. The significance of the Infinity, of that Terrible Good, was lacking in these books where it had abounded in The Chronicles of Narnia, but my imagination was fed and the hours passed quickly in the delightful forgetfulness of a clever story.

No one can object to a bucket of popcorn on occasion, but anyone would be worried if that's all one ate. The deeper stories, the ones ringing with the Terrible Good of the universe, are my true Sanctuaries. A true Sanctuary is in the lands where our hearts are reminded of Truth without the interference of our intellect, where stories paint vivid pictures of virtues for which we should strive and vices which we must heartily avoid. A Sanctuary provides intimacy and significance in the garb of a lovely drama the way that my childhood stories have continued to provide year after year. There is an obvious overlap here in the virtues of literature as a refuge with those of literature as a framework and an introduction to myself. What sets the Sanctuary apart from these

other qualities of literature is the forgetfulness it lends from the sometimes tedious or heartbreaking reality of the moment. We're not simply taught great things nor just given a mirror, we're drawn in and welcomed to a world of Faerie which is entirely other, in which the greatness of the Infinite can play more freely on our hearts.

In speaking of the powerful messages which can be conveyed through literature, G.K. Chesterton wrote,

"In the fairy tale an incomprehensible happiness rests upon an incomprehensible condition. A box is opened and all evils fly out. A word is forgotten, and cities perish. A lamp is lit, and love flies away. A flower is plucked, and human lives are forfeited. An apple is eaten, and the hope of God is gone" (Chesterton, 100).

Chesterton speaks here of stories both true and imaginary, linking the two and understanding the One through the others. It is no coincidence that the Savior spoke to us in parables. He knew that the greater realities of His Terrible Goodness could lay in ambush in the myriad paths of Faerie, waiting to leap on the shoulders of the infant and the wizened alike to whisper the secrets of the universe in our ears. He knew that those same ideas sometimes crawl into our thoughts and lie dormant for an age before they're roused to a vibrant life by some new discovery, when they then migrate from ear to heart.

It is those greater ideas that have continued to draw me inexorably back to the love of my youth, the stories of Faerie in which the greatness was first born. Literature will issue a lover's call to me for the rest of my life. Story has changed me: through the framework of my thinking, through my understanding of myself, and through the

sanctuary it has provided from the terror of the mundane. Though I am too old and too shy now to continue playing out those stories in the woods behind my house, yet still I hope to pass on those archetypes of my earliest stories to the imaginations of my children. I hope to pass on the repercussions of those stories first read to me by my mother in the back of an overloaded mini-van. I hope to tell of the Terrible Good to which I was there first introduced, and to tell of It through the stories. And I hope that, like me, as they grow the lessons will only grow with them, adapting to each new phase and new Story of Faerie. I will never forget the Stories. I will never grow so old that the child-like within me should die.