



The Mirror Crack'd: Fear and Horror in JRR Tolkien's Major Works

Lynn Forest-Hill

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Fear and horror are an inextricable part of Tolkien's great mythology and his use of medieval sources for his evocations of fear and horror contribute to the distinctive tone of his work. This collection of essays shows how his masterly narrative techniques transform his sources, both familiar and unfamiliar, so that hitherto benign characters, objects and landscapes, as well as his famous monstrous creations, engage with deeply rooted human fears. The essays, by an international group of scholars, confirm Tolkien's worldwide reputation. They highlight the depiction of the fear associated with marginalised characters; explore the moral implications of light and its absence; consider the subtle distinction between secular and religious spiders; discuss the role of landscapes and natural disasters in the evocation of fear in Middle-earth; and address the spectacular significance of Tolkien's dragons, wolves, and Undead. While some of the essays presented here turn to modern science, psychology, and anthropology to deepen their analyses of fear and horror, they all add depth to our appreciation of Tolkien's most famous and frightening creations by defining their relationships to ancient and culturally significant images of fear and horror.

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