

Press Release

J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *THE CHILDREN OF HÚRIN* TO BE PUBLISHED IN 2007

Houghton Mifflin has acquired U.S. rights to publish the first complete book by J.R.R. Tolkien since the posthumous *Silmarillion* in 1977. HarperCollins UK acquired the project from The Tolkien Estate in a world-rights deal. Presented for the first time as a fully continuous and stand-alone story, the epic tale of *The Children of Húrin* will reunite fans of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* with elves and men, dragons and dwarves, and the rich landscape and characters unique to Tolkien.

The Children of Húrin, begun in 1918, was one of three "Great Tales" J.R.R. Tolkien worked on throughout his life, though he never realized his ambition to see it published. Though familiar to many fans from extracts and references within other Tolkien books, it has long been assumed that the story would forever remain an "unfinished tale." Now reconstructed by Christopher Tolkien, painstakingly editing together the complete work from his father's many drafts, this book is the culmination of a tireless thirty-year endeavor by him to bring J.R.R. Tolkien's vast body of unpublished work to a wide audience.

Christopher Tolkien said: "It has seemed to me for a long time that there was a good case for presenting my father's long version of the legend of *The Children of Húrin* as an independent work, between its own covers, with a minimum of editorial presence, and above all in continuous narrative without gaps or interruptions, if this could be done without distortion or invention, despite the unfinished state in which he left some parts of it."

Having drawn the distinctive maps for the original *The Lord of the Rings* more than fifty years ago, Christopher has also created a detailed new map for this book. In addition, it will include a jacket and color paintings by **Alan Lee**, illustrator of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* Centenary Edition and Oscar®-winning designer of the film trilogy.

The Lord of the Rings was already acclaimed worldwide as the most popular book of the twentieth century before the blockbuster films in 2001 through 2003 broke new ground and inspired millions more to read J.R.R. Tolkien's books — an additional 50 million copies were sold, leaving new fans wanting more. *The Children of Húrin* will be published in the United States by Houghton Mifflin in April 2007, on the same day as HarperCollins' international editions.

Victoria Barnsley, CEO and Publisher of HarperCollins Publishers UK, said: "This epic story of adventure, tragedy, fellowship, and heroism stands as one of the finest expressions of J.R.R. Tolkien's skills as a storyteller. With a narrative as dramatic and powerful as anything contained within *The Lord of the Rings*, it can now be read and enjoyed as Tolkien originally intended, and will doubtless be a revelation for millions of fans around the world."

Janet Silver, Vice President and Publisher of Houghton Mifflin, said, "As J.R.R. Tolkien's original American publisher, dating back to *The Hobbit*, we are extremely proud to be bringing this project to Tolkien's devoted readership in the United States. Christopher Tolkien has done a great service in realizing his father's vision for *The Children of Húrin*."