

Hobbit Love

An Obsession with Furry Feet and Second Breakfast

BY PIPPIN

“Sam Gamgee ... shook his head, as if finding words useless, and murmured: ‘I love him. He’s like that, and sometimes it shines through somehow. But I love him, whether or no.’” – From *The Lord of the Rings*, by J.R.R. Tolkien

I recently saw a t-shirt for sale on some random website bearing the slogan “Pervy Hobbit Fancier.” When I went back to buy it, it was no longer on sale and I can’t help but think that perhaps the Tolkien estate didn’t approve of such language.

I admit it. I have a problem with *The Lord of the Rings*, both in book form and in film adaptation. I could use an intervention. A 12-step program might be in order. I obsessively read film news on line, and whenever I pass by Borders, I have to stop in and check out the movie magazines and the fantasy/sci-fi section to see if any new nuggets have arrived. I haven’t gone so far as to have the Black Speech of Mordor tattooed around my bicep but I am seriously considering saving my pennies for the next decade so I can travel to New Zealand for the Middle-Earth bus tour.

I’ve started to refer to my ever-expanding collection of photos of Elijah Wood (Frodo), Sean Astin (Sam), Dominic Monaghan (Merry), et al., as my “hobbit porn.” I don’t have any actual naked photos of any of them, but I do have a pic of Dom’s butt. Oh, and one of Sean Astin’s too. Ok, well, maybe I do have actual hobbit porn. Dom’s butt is really cute. A boy can dream can’t he?

My personal queer fantasy is for Sam to be my boyfriend and gardener, much the same role that he serves with Frodo. Gracious, he follows him everywhere, into dark caverns filled with cave trolls and giant spiders. He cooks all the meals and carries the cast iron pans around on his back. And just when everything is really going to hell, Sam rescues Frodo from the orcs just in time to carry his naked body down Mount Doom in order to get rescued by the eagles. You really can’t ask for much more than that in the way of a good boyfriend.

Here’s another excerpt from a point in the story where Sam is imagining Frodo being hacked to death by Orcs: “His love for Frodo rose above all other thoughts, and forgetting his peril he cried aloud: ‘I’m coming, Mr. Frodo!’” Charging into a dark tower filled with creatures that are trying to kill you definitely beats a reluctant agreement to pick up the dry-cleaning on the way home from the office.

Any discerning queer fan-boy can feed his obsession in any number of ways. For the straight up information junkie, just go to www.theonering.net. Chock full of info, it’s updated several times a day and their volunteer webmasters just published a book called *The People’s Guide to Middle Earth*. It even has a chapter on homoeroticism in *The Lord of the Rings*,

although mostly it’s about stating that Frodo and Sam weren’t actually fucking in the antechamber to the Cracks of Doom. Nevertheless, the writers ably take to task the homophobic fantasy geek-boys who go rabid with dismay every time anyone suggests that love and affection between same-sex hobbits might be a good thing. It acknowledges that, yup, same-sex love and affection actually is represented in the book.

For those who want more of a queer bent to their fan-boy obsession, definitely visit www.bagendinn.com, a site specifically designed for the queer *Lord of the Rings* fan. The Bag End Inn has photo galleries galore, plus some good gossip (Elijah Wood is Very, Very Gay), chat rooms for queer fans to talk to each other, and bulletin boards for posting steamy fan fiction. They also spent much of last year lobbying Peter Jackson and New Line Cinema to keep Frodo and Sam’s affection in the final film.

Finally, on the more serious side, Ian McKellen, the out and proud actor playing Gandalf in the film trilogy, has a fabulous website, www.mckellen.com, that talks about his queer activism in England, includes question-and-answer sessions with fans who often ask about his queer politics, and lots of information on his gay-themed films including *Bent* and *Gods and Monsters*.

As I count down the days to the world-wide release of *The Return of the King*, I’m starting to re-read the book for probably the twentieth time since my first reading at the beginning of my adolescence. I just hope the movie includes this scene:

“‘Frodo! Mr. Frodo, my dear!’ cried Sam, tears almost blinding him. ‘It’s Sam, I’ve come!’ He half-lifted his master and hugged him to his breast....”

“‘I can hardly believe it,’ said Frodo, clutching him. ‘There was an orc with a whip, and then it turns into Sam! Then I wasn’t dreaming after all when I heard that singing down below, and I tried to answer? Was it you?’”

“‘It was indeed Mr. Frodo. I’d given up hope, almost. I couldn’t find you.’”

“‘Well, you have now, Sam, dear Sam,’ said Frodo, and he lay back in Sam’s gentle arms, closing his eyes....”

Now, when does Sam get to be my boyfriend? Sigh ... ▼

Pippin is a radical faerie named after a hobbit. He is slowly going insane waiting for the opening of The Return of the King on December 17th. He can be reached at pippin@sover.net.

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