

Communion

In J.R.R. Tolkien's essay "On Fairy Story's" he lists two purposes of the realm of Faerie. His first reason (not to be discussed in this essay) is to survey the depths of space and time, and the second purpose is communion with other living things. There are many examples of this purpose in his books The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings and it is exemplified in the relationships between his characters.

The most obvious example of this is with in the fellowship of the ring. Gimili, a dwarf, Legolas, prince of the elves of Northern Mirkwood, and Aragorn, a man, are among the different "living things" that make up the fellowship. Generally, elves and dwarves do not associate with one another and this is one of the things that cause the fellowship to be unique.

Most of the towns in Middle earth are inhabited by one type of creature. The Shire for example is inhabited by the hobbits, and men inhabit Gondor and Rohan. There is, however, one town where cultural mixing occurs. This is the town of Bree home of the Prancing Pony inn. This town men and hobbits live side by side and even intermingle at the Prancing Pony bar.

In my opinion, the best example of communion with other living things comes from the character Treebeard. This ancient creature resembles a tree but has the ability to speak and think. He spends his time tending to the other trees in the forest of Fangorn until they march on Saruman and tend to his imprisonment. Treebeard and his followers play a critical role in The Lord of the Rings but it is that trees and humans working together that demonstrates my point.

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The communion between living things is essential to the final outcomes of both the Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. Without the combined efforts of Dwarves, Wizards, Hobbits and the men of Lake Town, Smaug might never have been slain. Without Treebeard and all other good creatures of Middle earth Sauron might never have been defeated. Thus the purpose of communion between living things is not only displayed in Tolkien's work but also essential to the plot.