

Shine Bright LLCE Cycle Terminal

File 1 Timeless fantasy

Is Game of Thrones British or American? p. 21

The show is based on the books of American writer, George R.R. Martin, and is produced by American network HBO. [...]

If it's written by an American, produced by an American network and intended for a US audience, then it feels safe to say it's an American show. In reality though, the show often feels very British, in most part because of the characters' accents and the other influences behind the show. A lot of the main characters are from the UK, including Emilia Clarke (Daenerys Targaryen), Kit Harrington (Jon Snow), Sophie Turner (Sansa Stark) and Alfie Allen (Theon Greyjoy). Even the American actors such as Peter Dinklage (Tyrion Lannister), Jason Momoa (Khal Drogo) and Pedro Pascal (Oberyn Martell) have had to adopt European or British accents for the role. Moreover, the filming of the show takes place in Europe with a largely European production team. [...]

Finally, author George R.R. Martin has previously described the Wars of the Roses¹, taking place between 1455-1485, as the loose² inspiration behind the books. The wars were for control of the throne of England, which parallels parts of the War of the Five Kings, a key focus in the series. The medieval setting is also reminiscent of European history, and George RR Martin has said before that being an English-speaking writer meant it was easier for him to use British medieval history as a source, instead of German or Spanish history. In conclusion, it's an American production, shot in – and inspired by – European events. But it's all fantasy. Easy!

Anna Paul, *metro.co.uk*, May 19, 2019

1. civil wars between two competing royal families: the House of York and the House of Lancaster **2.** free

A very English village p. 22

We reached Horshaw as a church bell began to chime in the distance. It was seven o'clock and starting to get dark. A heavy drizzle blew straight into our faces, but there was still enough light for me to judge that this wasn't a place I ever wanted to live in and that even a short visit would be best avoided.

Horshaw was a black smear¹ against the green fields, a grim, ugly little place with about two dozen rows of mean back-to-back houses huddling together mainly on the southern slope of a damp, bleak hillside. The whole area was riddled with mines, and Horshaw was at its centre. High above the village was a large slag heap² which marked the entrance to the mine. Behind the slag heap were the coal yards, which stored enough fuel to keep the biggest towns in the country warm through even the longest winters.

Soon, we were walking down through the narrow cobbled³ streets, keeping pressed close to the grimy walls to make way for carts heaped with black cobs of coal⁴, wet and gleaming with rain. The huge shire horses that pulled them were straining⁵ against their loads, hooves⁶ slipping on the shiny cobbles. There were few people about but lace curtains twitched as we passed, and once we met a group of dour-faced⁷ miners, who were trudging up the hill to begin their night shift. They'd been talking in loud voices and suddenly fell silent and moved into a single column to pass us, keeping to the far side of the street. One of them actually made the sign of the cross.

"Get used to it, lad," growled the Spook. "We're needed but rarely welcomed, and some places are worse than others."

Joseph Delaney, *The Spook's Apprentice*, 2004

1. dirty mark 2. pile of residue from the mines 3. *pavées* 4. *briquettes de charbon*
5. struggle 6. *sabots* 7. gloomy

The origin of orcs p. 23

[...] So the Lord's men lived in joys,
Happily, until one began
To execute atrocities, a fiend¹ in hell;
This ghastly demon was named Grendel,
Infamous stalker² in the Marches, he who held the Moors,
Fen and desolate strong-hold³; the land of marsh⁴-monsters,
The wretched creature ruled for a time
Since him the Creator had condemned⁵
With the kin⁶ of Cain; that killing avenged
The eternal Lord, in which he slew⁷ Abel;
This feud⁸ he did not enjoy, for He drove him far away,
the Ruler, for this crime, from mankind;
thence⁹ unspeakable offspring¹⁰ all awoke:
ogres and elves and spirits¹¹ from the underworld;
also giants, who strove¹² with God
for an interminable season; He gave them their reward for that.

Anonymous, *Beowulf*, VII-X, 700-750, Translation by Benjamin Slade

1. demon **2.** hunter **3.** bastion **4.** swamp **5.** since the Creator had condemned him
6. family member **7.** kill **8.** quarrel **9.** from then on **10.** descendants **11.** "orcneäs" in
original version **12.** fight

Escapism as an act of courage p. 24

In Defense of Escapism: Tolkien's principles of fantasy #1

Commissioned in the Lancashire Fusiliers during WWI, Tolkien began writing “my nonsense fairy language” (“Letter to Edith Bratt,” 2 March 1916) amidst the miserable conditions of army life. During the next world war, he writes about his experience to his son Christopher, who finds himself in similar circumstances: “I first began to write the ‘History of the Gnomes’ in army huts, crowded, filled with the noise of gramophones— and there you are in the same prison. May you, too, escape— strengthened.” (“To Christopher Tolkien,” 30 April 1944).

And in another letter to Christopher, a week later: “I sense amongst all your pains (some merely physical) the desire to express your feeling about good, evil, fair, foul¹ in some way: to rationalize it, and prevent it just festering². In my case it generated “Morgoth” and the “History of the Gnomes”. Lots of the early parts of which... were done in grimy³ canteens, at lectures in cold fogs, in huts full of blasphemy and smut, or by candle light in bell-tents, even some down in dugouts⁴ under shell fire. It did not make for efficiency and present-mindedness, of course, and I was not a good officer.” (6 May 1944). In this excerpt, we begin to understand ‘escapism’ as an act of courage, a way of holding onto one’s humanity amidst conditions which threaten it.

A month later, Tolkien explicitly uses the word escapism in a further attempt to convince his son to write as a means of survival: “So I took to ‘escapism’: or really transforming experience into another form and symbol with Morgoth and Orcs and the Eldalie (representing beauty and grace of life and artefact) and so on; and it has stood me in good stead in many hard years since...” (“From a letter to Christopher Tolkien,” 10 June 1944). Tolkien the dreamer, the lover of languages, trees, and gardens, is not destroyed by Tolkien the soldier. Rather, in the brutal ugliness of trench warfare, a defiant⁵ beauty emerges which will increasingly consume Tolkien’s life and imagination.

M.C. Shaffer, mcshaffer.com/blog, November 2016

1. very evil 2. becoming much worse 3. dirty 4. *tranchées* 5. provoking

The Dead Marshes p. 25

On their way to Mordor to destroy the Ring, Gollum leads Frodo and Sam through marshes.

Hurrying forward again, Sam tripped¹, catching his foot in some old root or tussock. He fell and came heavily on his hands, which sank deep into sticky ooze², so that his face was brought close to the surface of the dark mere³. There was a faint hiss, a noisome⁴ smell went up, the lights flickered and danced and swirled. For a moment the water below him looked like some window, glazed with grimy⁵ glass, through which he was peering. Wrenching his hands out of the bog⁶, he sprang back with a cry. 'There are dead things, dead faces in the water,' he said with horror. 'Dead faces!'

Gollum laughed. 'The Dead Marshes, yes, yes: that is their name,' he cackled. 'You should not look in when the candles are lit.'

'Who are they? What are they?' asked Sam shuddering, turning to Frodo, who was now behind him.

'I don't know,' said Frodo in a dreamlike voice. 'But I have seen them too. In the pools when the candles were lit. They lie in the pools, pale faces, deep deep under the dark water. I saw them: grim faces and evil, and noble faces and sad. Many faces proud and fair, and weeds in their silver hair. But all foul, all rotting, all dead. A fell⁷ light in them.' Frodo hid his eyes in his hands. 'I know not who they are; but I thought I saw there Men and Elves, and Orcs beside them.'

'Yes, yes,' said Gollum. 'All dead, all rotten. Elves and Men and Orcs. The Dead Marshes. There was a great battle long ago, yes, so they told him when Sméagol⁸ was young, when I was young before the Precious came. It was a great battle. Tall Men with long swords, and terrible Elves, and Orcses shrieking. They fought on the plain for days and months at the Black Gates. But marshes have grown since then, swallowed up the graves; always creeping, creeping.'

'But that is an age and more ago,' said Sam. 'The Dead can't be really there! Is it some devilry⁹ hatched¹⁰ in the Dark Land?'

'Who knows? Sméagol doesn't know,' answered Gollum. 'You cannot reach them, you cannot touch them. We tried once, yes, precious. I tried once; but you cannot reach them. Only shapes to see, perhaps, not to touch. No precious! All dead.'

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, Book 2, Chapter 2, 1954

1. stumble 2. soft mud 3. small lake 4. extremely unpleasant 5. dirty 6. swamp
7. deadly 8. Gollum's real name 9. black magic 10. planned

The Queen of the Elves p. 26

The Queen of the Elves sat in state on a diamond throne in her palace, surrounded by her courtiers, foundlings¹ and lost boys, and creeping² creatures with no names — all the detritus of the fairy folk.

But for now there was other troubling news to deal with. Goblins! Mere worms, who should be grateful if an elvish lord or lady even looked their way, but who were now foolishly refusing to do her bidding³. She would show them all, she thought. [...]

The goblin prisoner was brought into the audience chamber under guard. The whole effect was visually stunning, the goblin thought sourly⁴. Exactly as a fairy court would look in a human child's storybook. Until you looked at the faces and realized that there was something not quite right about the eyes and the expressions of the beautiful creatures in the scene. [...]

"Well, Queenie, it's like this, you see. Goblins⁵ is now treated as upright citizens in human world. Humans say goblins useful. We likes⁶ being useful. We gets paid for being useful and finding out things and making things."

The Queen's beautiful visage slipped and she glared at the cheeky⁷ creature in front of her.

"That's impossible," she shouted. "You goblins are the dregs, everyone knows that!"

"Ah ha!" laughed the goblin. "Queenie not so clever as she thinks. Goblins riding on hog's back now. Goblins know how to drive the iron horses."

Terry Pratchett, *The Shepherd's Crown*, 2015

1. babies who have been left by their parents **2.** *rampantes* **3.** orders **4.** bitterly **5.** are (in proper English) **6.** we like (in proper English) **7.** insolent

The Priory of the Orange Tree p. 28-29

Tané, a strong-willed young woman, has been studying and practising for years in the hope of becoming a dragonrider and approaching her gods, the sea dragons.

Upon reaching the steps, the apprentices formed two lines, knelt and pressed their forehead to the ground. Tané could hear Ishari breathing.

Nobody rose. Nobody moved.

Scale¹ rasped against stone. Every sinew in her body seemed to tighten.

She looked up.

There were eight of them. Years she had spent praying before statues of dragons, studying them, and observing them from a distance, but she had never seen them this close.

Their size was breathtaking². Most were Seiikinese³, with silvery hides⁴ and lithe⁵, whiplike forms. Impossibly long bodies held up their splendid heads, and they each had four muscular legs, ending with feet with three claws. Long barbels swirled from their faces and trailed like the lines of kites. The majority were quite young, perhaps four hundred years old, but several carried scars from the Great Sorrow. All were covered with scales and ringed with sucker marks – keepsakes⁶ from their quarrels with greatsquid⁷.

Two of them possessed a fourth toe. These were dragons from the Empire of the Twelve Lakes. One of them – a male – had wings. Most dragons were wingless and flew by means of an organ on their heads, which scholars had named the crown. The few that did grow wings did so only after at least two thousand years of life.

The winged dragon was largest. If Tané has stretched to her full height, she might not even have been able to reach between his snout⁸ and his eyes. Though his wings looked fragile like spidersilk, they were strong enough to whip up a typhoon. Tané spied the pouch beneath his chin. Like oysters, dragons could make pearls, one in a lifetime. It never left the pouch.

The dragon beside the male, also Lacustrine, was close to its stature. Her scales were a pale, clouded green, like milk jade, her mane the golden-brown of riverweed.

“Welcome,” the Sea General said.

His voice rang out like the call of a war conch.

“Rise,” he said, and they obeyed. “You are here today to be sworn to one of two lives: that of the High Sea Guard, defending Seiiki from sickness and invasion, or a life of learning and prayer on Feather Island. Of the Sea Guardians, twelve of you will have the honour of becoming dragonriders. [...] Today you will learn your destinies.” The Sea General took a scroll from his surcoat and unravelled it. “Let us begin.”

Tané braced herself. [...]

It seemed a lifetime before she heard her own name:

“The honourable Tané, of the South House.”

Tané stepped forward.

The dragons watched her. It was said they could see the deepest secrets of a soul, for human beings were made of water, and all water was theirs.

What if they could see what she had done?

She concentrated on the placement of her feet. When she stood before the Sea General, he looked at her for what seemed like years. It took all her strength to remain standing.

At last, he reached for a blue uniform. Tané breathed out. Tears of relief pricked her eyes.

“For your aptitude and dedication,” he said, “you are raised to the noble ranks of the High Sea Guard, and must swear to practise the way of the dragon until you draw your final breath.”

1. plate protecting the dragon skin 2. very impressive 3. from the island of Seiiki, a fictitious territory 4. animal skins 5. moving easily 6. souvenirs 7. giant sea creature 8. muzzle