

The Riddles of The Hobbit

By Adam Roberts

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Riddles are threaded through The Hobbit , and are key to Tolkien's creative imagination. The Riddles of The Hobbit situates this novel and the rest of Tolkien's writing in the context of Old English riddling culture, and more modern day examples; it sets out to solve the many riddles of the novel in original and often surprising ways.

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The Riddles of The Hobbit By Adam Roberts Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

“A riddling book about a riddling writer, a philological exercise concerning the works of a philologist. I wish there were more books like this. … The book offers much more sober insights into Tolkien’s tale-telling and language-playing habits, too, but it always wears its critical hat at a rakish angle. I loved it and felt that it did more to get me thinking tolkienially (to coin a term) than almost anything I’ve read about old JRRT … .” (Professor Alan Jacobs, The New Atlantis Text Patterns, thenewatlantis.com, January, 2017)

“Roberts’s The Riddles of The Hobbit displays a great deal of erudition in the knotty tradition of Anglo-Saxon riddle lore, and effectively brings to bear Old Norse and Old Icelandic riddling texts as well … . specialists will want a copy for their shelves, and libraries will do well to make this available to advanced students.” (Don Riggs, The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts, Vol. 26 (1), 2015)

"He's known as an SF writer of no mean skill, but Adam Roberts is also a professor. Here he applies his mighty mind to a dissection of The Hobbit. Roberts is keen to emphasise the subjectivity of interpretation, stating that there are many ways to read riddles and stories. This is a strength, as the chief pleasure to be had here is seeing The Hobbit through the eyes of someone who loves it dearly. 5 stars." SFX

"Riddles Of The Hobbit is an intriguing and fun reading of Tolkien's work. Fascinating from a historical and literary perspective, Roberts may well be an academic writer, but the text is no worse for it. Rather this is a very enjoyable journey into the puzzles that make reading 'The Hobbit' so memorable. There is plenty here to interest the most ardent Tolkien reader and casual fan alike." - SFCrowsnest

" the book does a wonderful job of illustrating the depth and complexity of thought inherent in Tolkien's work, without ever losing sight of the deeply religious and conservative nature of that work. It is a fine example of the skill of distancing appreciation of literary craft from the nature of the literary work under examination . It is also amusing, intelligent, and rather sentimental about a well-loved literary favorite." - Cheryl Morgan

"Adam Roberts lays out his ideas in a straightforward, uncomplicated manner, so that one has neither to be a Tolkien scholar nor an expert at solving riddles to understand and appreciate this book. His wit and humor, along with his clever use of rhetorical devices, make The Riddles of the Hobbit an enjoyable read, as well as an informative one." - The Blog of The Hobbit

"There's much of interest in this book for the Tolkien enthusiast. Even aspects of Tolkien's work that might be familiar to most are presented and examined in a refreshing way." - mytolkienbooks.com

"If you're a more advanced literary or linguistic scholar or armchair philosopher and are looking for some interesting ideas to discuss around the gaming table, this book will spark much dynamic conversation." - Legendarium. Middle Earth Network

"Roberts applies great imaginative ingenuity to the reading of riddles. His book complements existing work on Tolkien by adopting a free interpretative approach which is justified, not by some abstract postmodern theory, but by a bold claim about the riddling, ironic, polysemous nature of Tolkien's texts." - Brian Rosebury, author of Tolkien: a Cultural Phenomenon

"Even the seasoned Tolkien fan can still learn new things from this excellent book . . . In this enlightening exploration Roberts uncovers the nature of Tolkien's handiwork and illustrates how the act of reading is in fact an act of unriddling." - Tolkien Library

"Two final words of sheer enjoyment: Adam Roberts's The Riddles of the Hobbit is a wonderful tear across open academic country, a fusion of scholarly and fannish writing which is an intellectual pleasure from first to last." - Strange Horizons 2013 round-up

"Roberts makes a compelling argument, but what I most enjoyed about the book is that it made me think about the text in another way adding another layer to what many consider just a book for kids. 9/10." - Sci-fi-online.com

"The Riddles of the Hobbit is a loving look at the use of riddles in The Hobbit (and, to a lesser extent, The Lord of the Rings)

as well as a scholarly rumination on the significance of riddles in life and literature." - SciFi Bulletin

"You are wondering, as I was, how much can be said about the riddles from The Hobbit. What I didn't understand is that the conversation between Bilbo and Gollum are not the only place where riddles are found in the book . Roberts understands, as, of course, Tolkien did, that the Anglo-Saxon world loved riddles, and saw life (and death) as a riddle." - HollywoodJesus.com

"I was worried that the author would have failed to take account of what are often considered to be the foremost analyses of the Tolkien's riddles . However, this turned out to be a false worry: Roberts not only includes references to all of these, but also expands upon and, at times, questions certain aspects of their work all of which makes for a rewarding read." - Mythoi

'Roberts does a good job of covering the background of riddle games in the Anglo-Saxon and Norse cultures...This fascinating book is for anyone interested in the background and roots of The Hobbit. Summing up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers' - CHOICE

About the Author
Adam Roberts is Professor of Nineteenth-century Literature at Royal Holloway, University of London, UK. He is also the author of more than a dozen science fiction novels: his most recent, Jack Glass (2012) won the BSFA and Campbell awards for the year's best science fiction novel. He has published a number of critical and academic works on science fiction, 19th-century and other topics.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bill Underhill:

The book untitled The Riddles of The Hobbit is the guide that recommended to you to read. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to you actually. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of study when write the book, to ensure the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of The Riddles of The Hobbit from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

Regina Laporte:

The publication with title The Riddles of The Hobbit has a lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of advantage after read this book. This kind of book exist new understanding the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to yo7u to find out how the improvement of the world. That book will bring you throughout new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book with your smart phone, so you can read this anywhere you want.

Elizabeth Jamerson:

A lot of people always spent their own free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them household or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent the entire day to reading a publication. The book The Riddles of The Hobbit it is very good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

David Rivera:

On this era which is the greater individual or who has ability to do something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you should do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to get a look at some books. Among the books in the top checklist in your reading list will be The Riddles of The Hobbit. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking upward and review this reserve you can get many advantages.

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