

Into a New Tongue



# Into a New Tongue



# Contents

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Introduction  | 1   |
| <i>Into a New Tongue</i>  |     |
| Editors and Contributors  | 2   |
| Editor-in-Chief's Introduction  | iii |
| Nick Hildenbrand  |     |
| <br>  |     |
| <u>Liberty</u>  |     |
| <br>  |     |
| Introduction  | 7   |
| Arielle Dunn  |     |
| The Effect of Modern Western Society on the Way We Perceive Art       | 8   |
| Margaret Rose Orford  |     |
| Florescence   | 10  |
| Mallory Travis  |     |
| Springtime Songs  | 11  |
| Barbara P. Rousseau   |     |
| Midnight Library  | 14  |
| Jared Simmonds  |     |
| Spider  | 15  |
| Jared Simmonds  |     |
| <br>  |     |
| <u>Identity</u>   |     |
| <br>  |     |
| Introduction  | 19  |
| Brianne Harper  |     |
| Girlhood  | 20  |
| Koraleigh Ahearn  |     |
| the moon (as object)  | 22  |
| Jared Simmonds  |     |
| Sounds Queer: Linguistic Perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Gender | 23  |
| Keridwen B Campbell   |     |
| <br>  |     |
| <u>Mythology</u>  |     |
| <br>  |     |
| The Dead Sea Shanty   | 33  |
| Aurora Ryder  |     |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| A Lord of More Renown than Arthur: Tolkien's Corrective and Compensatory Approach to the Arthurian Tradition in his Legendarium | 39 |
| Kate Jensen   |    |
| The Man Out of Time   | 47 |
| Austin W Lynds  |    |
| Pores of the Earth  | 48 |
| Kylee Bustard   |    |
| The Legend of the Devil's Punchbowl   | 49 |
| Kylee Bustard   |    |
| <br>  |    |
| <u>Connection</u>   |    |
| <br>  |    |
| Introduction  | 53 |
| Jacob Durden  |    |
| How Canada Would Benefit from Maglev Trains   | 54 |
| Ethan Drake   |    |
| Late Afternoon Commute  | 63 |
| Kylee Bustard   |    |
| Untitled  | 64 |
| Jared Simmonds  |    |
| The Sea   | 65 |
| Jared Simmonds  |    |
| There Came Darkness   | 66 |
| Jon Debly   |    |
| <br>  |    |
| Acknowledgements  | 73 |
| Oliver Chaffey  |    |

# *Into a New Tongue*

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Into a New Tongue

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# Editor-in-Chief's Introduction

NICK HILDENBRAND

## INTRODUCTION

“I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul,  
The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with me,  
The first I graft and increase upon myself,  
the latter I translate into a new tongue.”  
—Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself”

The works in this collection—although tonally, structurally, and topically diverse—all espouse a tangibly kindred and Whitmanic confluence of theme: the transformation of struggle into nourishment for the promise of liberative and capacious beauty. These pieces aspire to prove their own resilience. They seek to effuse a robust freshness of voice transmuted through the tumult of conflict, enacting a series of progressions both individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural. Despite the ineluctable din of infernal billow murking the heart, murking the eye—for these authors, the tongue proffers its own transcendent lucence. Into a New Tongue is the burgeon of novelty—the revivification of selfhood in the process of earnest dreaming.

“Liberty” is a celebration of the verdant potency of individual will. Each author suffuses the page with their unfettered voice in accordance with the variance of their own intrinsic colouration. These pieces contain both boisterousness and unabashed tranquility. They aspire to themselves, and in doing so, conjure an effervescent appeal to you, reader, to realize your own procreative capacity—to make manifest the nascent lushness of your spirit by whatever means, and by whatever design.

“Identity” is the culmination of the explorative announcement of self. It is the grasp of discovery enacted in the very first step of expedition. The works in this section delve the interstice of transient chaos and material order to brush the vague tangibility of their own ineffable meaning.

“Mythology” seeks to trace the cultural histories that permeate our collective and individual consciousnesses. The pieces contained in this chapter weave redolent echoes of indelible memory, bursting forth immortal in the recitations of their authors reconfigured in confluent presence

“Connection” serves as the coalescence of an array of multiform narrative traditions, catalyzed through the emergence and merger of this book’s profusion of unique perspectives and experiences. This chapter is the woven fulfillment of previous chapters. It is both succession and imbrication, binding each author in a community of voice, simultaneously distilled and expanded in a covenant of futurity. It is the final promise of translation: the enactment of a kindred understanding through art, the metamorphic diffusion of beauty through culture—sacrosanct and vast.

*Nick Hildenbrand*  
*Editor-in-Chief*



# LIBERTY



# Introduction

ARIELLE DUNN

## LIBERTY

Art is represented in “Liberty” as a necessary expression of human freedom. In the busyness of life, online presences, glowing headlines and radio-static can take up our head-space. Though we must acknowledge the chaos of the day-to-day, we must also recognize our personal freedom and our ability to all at once participate in the grander schemes of life while simultaneously regaining our own perspectives. By taking a step back into our own minds, to view the world through our own unique perspectives, we can begin to create and to grow.

The themes of beginnings, freedom, and growth are well-represented by the works included in “Liberty.” Margaret Orford’s essay, “The Effect of Modern Western Society on the way we Perceive Art,” opens the chapter with a wonderfully articulated argument for freedom of expression in art. Addressing the modern Western perspective, Orford stresses the need for society to recognize that the technicalities and rules of art are meant to be a tool to enhance the emotion and personal freedom of the artist. “Fluorescence,” a poem by Mallory Travis, artfully describes an encounter with nature and the growth that this experience initiates in the narrator, accentuating the freedom that follows in our recognition of nature’s lessons. Setting up beautiful scenes of new growth in her prose piece “Springtime Songs,” Barbara Rousseau creates a space for island spring and the wonders of nature, engaging with questions of human focus and distraction. Similarly, through his poem “Spider,” Jared Simmonds hints at the decline of the human mind and the human reverence for wisdom, while in “Midnight Library” he alludes to human curiosity, describing acquired knowledge as an entity unable to breach the innocence of mystery.

Each of the selections in this chapter comment on the human condition. With their unique voices, the authors of these works engage with themes of growth, beginnings, and freedom through multifaceted ways, complementing and building on their individual perspectives. Nothing short of wonderful, the works in “Liberty” emphasize a singular truth; that to grow, to express ourselves freely in art, is human.

*Arielle Dunn*  
*Editor*

# The Effect of Modern Western Society on the Way We Perceive Art

MARGARET ROSE ORFORD

The Effect of Modern Western Society on the Way We Perceive Art: A Position Paper

*by Margaret Rose Orford*

As I attended lectures, read the required readings, and completed assignments for an Introduction to French and German Philosophy class at UPEI, I noticed I was relating much of what was taught back to one significant and overarching observation—that there is a new and partially detrimental way we perceive art in a contemporary social context. Unfortunately, art in our Western society is widely perceived as a means to an end—as a science more than a method of expression.

When covering Hermeneutics, we learned that understanding requires art, and not just rule-governed science. In this context, “art” was not meant in the literal sense, but in the sense that to achieve understanding, we must relate what we hope to learn to our own personal experiences and greater historical contexts—much as we do with art. We were asked if all understanding requires this “art.” My answer is yes. I do not believe that science is exempt from this necessary part of understanding; I do not believe science is purely objective as others may wish to believe. To understand anything, regardless of whether or not that thing is science or art, we must relate or integrate said thing into a meaningful context. This context is always going to be skewed by our personal or cultural biases.

The emphasis on factuality and the fixation on objectivity that most have towards science is commonly applied to art as well. While studying music, I have been decreed the rules of composition and have been subsequently docked marks if I broke them—either by choice or accidentally. I have even been told that “the music tells you where it wants to go,” and, for a while, I believed this. But I do not believe that there is a magical musical entity, so now I must believe that music cannot have a mind of its own. Music is for me to write because I chose to write it. Therefore, I choose what it will do, or rather, what it will sound like.

This does not only apply to music: we are inculcated with many institutional dictates for all art forms. For example, when writing, we are taught that stories follow certain arcs or a certain pacing based on the successful literary works established before our time. When painting, we are taught the techniques of artists before us to become successful. Debord said that spectacles produce commodification and consumerism, and, because of this, everything becomes “a commodity to be shown.” The emphasis that our modern society places on consumerism has replaced genuine creativity and self-expression with the preferences of the masses—or at the very least, with what we are told the majority of people prefer.

I do not believe that words like “best” and “worst” can ever apply to art. When learning how to create, we study from those people that we’re told are the “best.” In actuality, we are studying how to maximize profits as an artist, while also ingraining the formulaic constraint of a homogenous intellectualism, bringing our perception of art closer to the way we perceive science instead of approaching science the way we should approach art. Debord said that people only appreciate the mythological dimension of art on a conceptual or intellectual level. I believe that our yearning for objective truth is often driven by a yearning to be perceived as an intellectual. Within a Western context, most regard intellectuals as individuals that know certain threads of information with 100% certainty. However, I posit that true intelligence lies in the questions we ask rather than the answers we can provide.

Byung-Chul Han believed that our emphatic engagement with consumerism led us to a detrimental hyperactivity. Living in a permissive society where we are told “yes more”—not only that we can do anything we choose but that we should choose everything we can—leaves us more fragmented and scattered. We have less time for meaningful contemplation (including the meaningful contemplation of art and creativity) when we live as commodities rather than in accordance with our expressive liberty. Consumerism incurs a hesitancy to participate in art that one has not studied

or practiced. With a focus on success and performance rather than enjoyment and expression, people are less likely to dance if they do not believe that they are “good.” They are less likely to paint if they have not painted before; they are less likely to write music if they have never studied how to create in a “successful” manner. This fear of improper creation leaves people without a basic method of expression. All people have access to art, but they do not practice art out of fear of judgment. Consequently, the fear of being “bad” confines art and prospective artists to a prison of inauthenticity.

All of this is not to say that the history and cultural conventions of art should not be taught. In fact, I believe that artistic conventions are necessary: it is only when we are taught the cultural ideals of art that we are able to decide whether or not we wish to break them. Even if not taught these ideals, we are bound to unintentionally create resonant art as we are constantly subtly affected by the culture we live in. Art must be practiced. I hope, in my future as a psychologist, to encourage people to reap the therapeutic benefits of creating whatever they wish, no matter their background. As Han believed, it is only in the moments of epiphany—in the moments we take to deeply consider the world around us—that the physical presence of the world breaks through all forms of mediation and reaches us on an emotional level. To create art as a catalyst for our own enjoyment and expression is to live in accordance with authenticity—an authenticity that we must reclaim for ourselves.

# Florescence

MALLORY TRAVIS

Florescence

*by Mallory Travis*

Hands outstretched, wind weaving between my fingers  
My back straightens as I reach away from myself  
I mimic your strength, your unwillingness to relent  
Withstanding the climate, unfazed  
I brace in my stance, rooted among my relations  
Gusts push against your branches, but you remain steadfast  
A November chill settles beneath my coat, along my spine  
Under your guidance, I endure  
The leaves lessen their rattle as the breeze shifts  
A long exhale clouds my vision; my shoulders soften  
My arms lower and the rigidness of my bones depletes  
Unrooting, the earth crunches beneath my boots  
I continue my journey, now carrying a lesson of nature  
Finding the strength to stand tall through changing weather

# Springtime Songs

BARBARA P. ROUSSEAU

## Springtime Songs

by Barbara P. Rousseau

“Spring had come once more to Green Gables – the beautiful, capricious, reluctant Canadian spring, lingering along through April and May in a succession of sweet fresh, chilly days, with pink sunsets and miracles of resurrection and growth.”

– L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

Spring arrives reluctantly on Prince Edward Island. It was always in such a rush at my former Ontario homes: one day snow, the next, summer. But here, like everything else, spring is slower, defined neatly between the vernal equinox and the summer solstice. Even the parade of bulbs appears slowly on the Island: snowdrops giving way to crocuses, to daffodils, to tulips, well after they have dropped their petals in other parts of the country.

But I don't plant spring bulbs at our cottage at St. Peters Harbour on PEI's north-east shore, and I would probably miss them anyway. For another sign of the spring freeze-thaw is mud. Thawed red clay mud that doesn't drain, with the frost layer below. Two-foot ruts of red muck that swallows boots and car tires. It is mid-April before I can drive down the cottage road.

The welcome chorus starts about this time, sometimes even with ice still on the pond. It begins with a few timid peeps, but by May has become a full-blown choir, singing twenty-four hours a day. It's the season of the aptly named, but next-to-invisible, Spring Peeper. Try as I might, I can't seem to spot the tiny sources of these mighty voices. They are only an inch in length and the colour of the pond's dead vegetation, seamlessly blending into the shadows of the shallows. The only peeper I have ever seen must have been lost, baking in the full July sun on a raspberry leaf – I had to encourage him to seek shade.

The peepers' May chorus is gradually joined by the occasional rasp of the Leopard Frog. This amphibian is more visible at three to five inches long, but it is no less surprising in terms of volume for its size. By July, the multitude of these yellow and green spotted offspring will be hanging out on the lawn, startled into the shade under the cottage by foot tread or the hum of the lawnmower. Soon after, the roadway will be littered with frog carcasses, the summer sun having slowed their pilgrimages until they become baked on the now dry red mud of the pond's causeway.

With the volume of the chorus, it seems difficult to believe that world-wide, the extinction rate of amphibians is one thousand times the estimated background rate of extinction. The cause – a rapidly spreading fungus – may not be of human origin, but is thanks to global human networks, with climate change allowing the fungus to travel further from the tropics. The fungus may not currently survive our winters, but with the increasing ice melt in the Arctic, I wonder how long our frogs will remain protected?

–

It's now springtime on our barachois pond. Once a salt-water channel between sandbar and island, the pond is now cut off from the ocean and fed by the water table. Before the marsh grasses grow in, it resembles a small lake, the ripples provide a weathervane. Because spring on PEI is also a season of wind: sighing through the trees, rattling windows, whistling in your ears, and carrying the roar of surf.

The ducks and geese take advantage of the wind on the pond, riding downwind, then flying back to the other end – announcing themselves – and starting the process again. But the one who seems to master the wind – silently – is the Marsh Hawk. Officially known as a Northern Harrier – yes, the one that the military aircraft is named after – she dances on the wind currents along the edge of the pond, scanning with both eyes and ears for small rodents and other snacks.

Like an owl, the Harrier's face has a facial disc around the eyes to focus sound on the ears. A hover, a dive, success ... or not. The return trip into the wind is more leisurely, tacking and hovering, always graceful. And it is most likely "she": the male is whiter, smaller, and a rarer visitor, since he is likely maintaining families in other locations.

—

By the beginning of May, there is another sound on the air, even before dawn: the hum of boat motors. It's lobster season on the north shore. The locals gather at the shore bright and early on Setting Day – the first day of lobster season when the fishers set out their traps – to watch the loaded boats parade out of Red Head Harbour; by the time the last boat has cleared the buoys marking the channel, the first will be back to load up with more. For the next two months, they'll be out daily (with the exception of Sundays), hauling and throwing traps until Landing Day; there is no longer a fall season on the Island's north shore. It's tough to make a living as a fisher – or even to finance fishing. With the increasing costs of fuel and the decreasing market price of lobster, many fishers have alternate incomes in construction or tourism.

A hundred years ago, the lobster boats sailed out of St. Peters Harbour instead. Then, the families moved to the shore for lobster season – June until August – and everyone took part in processing the catch. But since the sands closed that harbour, the fishers have chugged back and forth across the shallow channels at the mouth of St. Peters Bay to Red Head Harbour.

As I listen to the morning hum, I wonder about the sustainability of the lobster fishery, dependent on fossil fuels and dwindling stock. Lobsters migrating north as the New England waters should be a boon to Canadian fishers, but the lack of sea ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence offers less protection and more churn for the lobsters, and now the mackerel used for baiting lobster traps are also in short supply.

Full disclosure: I don't even like lobster. But the industry is unique, colourful, and key to Atlantic identity. After a while, even the boat motors become white noise amidst the increasing avian chorus.

—

I used to think that the first songbird of spring was the Song Sparrow. Later, I discovered that it was the Black-capped Chickadees, alternating a pure DEE-DO with the typical raspy, deep DEE-DEE-DEE. The melodic Song Sparrows, with the telltale spot in the middle of their striped chests, are not in residence until May. The sparrows are shy at first, darting about the marsh grasses, but gradually gain courage to belt out their trilling tales from the top-most branch of the trees at the pond edge, the most visible spot available. The smaller rust-capped Chipping Sparrows, so named for their "chip-chip" call, cautiously hop along the edge of the grass, taking refuge in the bushes at the slightest movement, or zipping under the cottage where they are seemingly nesting. Come summer, the oversized young will be trailing after their parents in the grass, loudly demanding whatever food their parents have found.

Of the small songbirds, the warblers are last to add to the chorus, arriving in time for the first Serviceberry flowers at the end of May. While the bright, streaked Yellow Warbler finds food on the spruces, the masked bandits, prosaically named Common Yellowthroat, favour the bayberries. Of course, it's only the colourful males showing off; the dull drab feathers of the females make them next to impossible to distinguish by this casual birdwatcher, even if they made themselves visible. I may occasionally use a smartphone app to identify birds by their songs, but somehow that feels to me like cheating. I'd rather just sit and listen.

—

Adding to the cacophony are the larger birds: the Northern Flicker, on its way further north, looking for ants in the dry grass, and scolding from treetops with its Kik-Kik-Kik; the year-round resident Blue Jay, with its squeaky clothesline call; the common American Robin, with its melodic "kee-woo"; the raspy Redwing Blackbirds; and the unique, aptly named Catbird. I was puzzled the first time I saw and heard this bird: it was the size of a robin, but sleeker, grayer, and with a

longer tail, and it was making the mewling sounds of a kitten. Like its Blue Jay cousin, the Catbird is a great imitator, so I'm never quite sure who I'm hearing.

It's sobering to think that if it hadn't been for Rachel Carson and her seminal work *Silent Spring* – first published over 60 years ago – we may never have been privy to this chorus. Without the subsequent bans on DDT, a water insoluble insecticide that bioaccumulates up the food chain, would we have any birds that feed on the insects – like yellow warblers – or caterpillars to feed their young?

How we become like our parents. My father was a life-long birdwatcher, but his interest was more focused on the identification and classification of birds ... and mushrooms ... and constellations ... than just enjoying them. My mother fancied cats more than birds, much like Montgomery, who, for all her description of the splendor of PEI, barely mentioned wildlife at all. But for me, getting to know the locals makes me feel a more grounded part of the place. Observing the apparent simplicity of their needs reminds me not to sweat the small stuff.

–

There is still some irritating larger “stuff” around though. Superior in size and sound are the crows, but I just can't cotton to the cawing, croaking, contemptuous, colourless corvids. I know that they are the most intelligent and social of birds ... and they know it too. They remind me of that smug classmate or colleague who is the smartest person they know, strutting about like they own the place.

In some ways, they do own the place. Crows are adaptable and opportunistic, one of the “urban exploiters” that are thriving in new environments, dependent on human food and the removal of predators. They even have a fondness for roof shingles, pecking the gravel off to help with their digestion – a new sound that is confusing and sleep-interrupting for the cottage dweller wondering what is knocking on the eaves.

Out at St. Peters Harbour, the crows start their nest-building in early spring, swooping over the roof on their way to the nearby spruce. In a matter of days, there is a large pile of sticks hidden in the upper branches, and in a few weeks, we will hear the demands of “feed me, feed me!” We will not see the youngsters, though, until they are impossible to distinguish from the parents, save for their behaviour: noisily trailing after their parents, snatching the occasional handouts.

–

From the largest and blandest to the smallest and most colourful, the ruby-throated hummingbird also arrives at the end of May. Perhaps they are also coming for the first blossoms, because there are no colourful summer flowers to speak of yet. Regardless, as soon as we put the feeder out, we are treated to the hum of wings and the occasional chitter of commentary. But where one goes, others are sure to follow, and soon there is competition, zipping in and out – despite the multiple ports on the feeder, it seems that hummingbirds don't share.

By June, the frog chorus is weakening, and other sounds start to herald the arrival of summer: the whine of mosquitoes, and the buzz of bumblebees enjoying the dandelions, violets, and strawberry flowers. It's peaceful, calm, and meditative. At least it is until the rest of the neighbourhood wakes up and the seasonal cleanup begins: the lawn mowers, the hammers, the chainsaws, the dump trucks ...

Fortunately, the human noises give way at dinnertime to the waning frog chorus, our evening serenade. Who needs the radio? [Image preview](#)

Illustration by Barbara P. Rousseau

# Midnight Library

JARED SIMMONDS

midnight library

*by Jared Simmonds*

a revelation is a victim.

timid visage, bullied  
to the lip of existence,  
it shivers  
like an acrophobic child

then crosses the threshold  
without so much as wincing.

voyeurs' temple, purged  
of all your missionaries,  
these reposed halls  
now reaffirm their sovereignty

sparing only  
some slow, majestic powerlessness

for everything and anything  
that remains

seductively indefinable,  
unknown  
and uncorrupted.

# Spider

JARED SIMMONDS

spider

*by Jared Simmonds*

I have scaled the lengths of our two atmospheres  
to watch without being watched  
this noble drama

(at the maraca of your scuttling legs,  
sinewy fibres unravel like a staff  
for the dead and living  
to etch their notes upon;

adorned in ceremonial ink,  
you consider the embalment  
of the ritual sacrifice,  
and resign to knowledge  
in place of theory;

fierce and patient,  
a silent Olivier;  
never has a role  
been so misinterpreted)

whispering of how we are born  
wiser  
than we become.



# IDENTITY



IDENTITY

At its core, identity evades complete capture or definition, embodying subjective experiences shaped by individual perspectives on how we relate to ourselves and others. In this chapter, the writers convey the universality of identity by uncovering themes such as growth, love, loss, perseverance, language, and the human experience. The narratives explored detail the diverse facets of identity—the places we navigate and the personas we choose to portray—all of which contribute to shaping our essence.

Koraleigh Ahearn’s poem “Girlhood” is a lighthearted reflection of the transition from “girlhood” to adulthood and how, through societal pressures, Barbie becomes a symbol of yielding to the inevitability of growing up. Jared Simmond’s “The Moon as Object” illustrates the moon as an entity beyond human comprehension, considering themes of subjectivity and perception. The speaker grapples with whether or not the moon’s beauty and existence stem from divine or natural evolution. Keridwen Campbell’s essay “Sounds Queer: Linguistic Perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Gender” examines how language and speech patterns are perceived and relate to sexual orientation and gender, discussing gender inversion theory and research findings on speech patterns. They analyze the concept of the “gay voice,” stereotypes, and the complexity of identity, suggesting further research into the web of connections between language, identity, and sexual orientation.

The sections of this chapter highlight the complexities and ebbs and flows of the human experience. Through the author’s distinct voices and personal narratives, the creative works and the critical essay demonstrate how identity is an ever-changing concept, shaped or constrained by societal pressures, culture, spirituality, love, loss, and philosophical reflections. A unifying thread running through the pieces is the exploration of transformation, transition, and growth, emphasizing identity as a journey in which challenges emerge and how we uncover more about ourselves by overcoming adversities. Lastly, these pieces address identity’s intrinsic ambiguity and subjectivity, challenging conventional notions and encouraging readers to grapple with the complexities of defining it.

*Brianne Harper*  
*Editor*

# Girlhood

KORALEIGH AHEARN

Girlhood

*by Koraleigh Ahearn*

You played with Barbies  
Making up foolish scenarios:

Ken cheated on Barbie,  
Barbie became an astronaut.

You dressed her up,  
Cut her hair, changed her shoes.  
You made her new.

Barbie was always there.

There when you got home from school  
Or when your middle school crush rejected you.

Until one day  
You picked her up

And played with her  
For the last time

Tossed aside,  
Her novelty has  
Finally worn off.

No shoes or clothes or accessories  
Could make them want her anymore.

She lay there lost,  
Searching for her girlhood you tossed aside.  
Cobwebs collect on her delicate head  
In some dusty corner of the basement.

The place

*Unwanted*  
*Unappreciated*  
*Unloveable*

Objects get discarded,  
Donated for someone else's use.

This is girlhood.

# the moon (as object)

JARED SIMMONDS

the moon (as object)

*by Jared Simmonds*

you rest there, a beauty  
perhaps installed by evolution  
or a product of divinity:  
(puzzled generations  
lapping fires, gazing at you  
like a god);  
a pearl upon Venus' necklace, dangling  
amongst an eternity of onyxes.

a beauty  
so virtuous and tranquil  
that I know you are neither of those things:  
you are greater,

richer, heavier, purer than the Word,  
and I'm left dazed:  
searching, scrabbling for a definition,  
escaping even the beholder.

# Sounds Queer: Linguistic Perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Gender

KERIDWEN B CAMPBELL

Sounds Queer: Linguistic Perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Gender

by Keridwen B. Campbell

The search term “gay voice” (quotations included) brings up ~164,000 results on Google, ranging from academic articles to opinion pieces, from government websites to people asking questions on Quora.com. Clearly, whatever the “gay voice” is, it is not a phenomenon relegated to the consciousness of queer people but something many people are aware of and curious about. As sociolinguist Erez Levon notes, “there is a popular belief that speech is a reliable marker of an individual’s sexuality, and linguists have long been interested in identifying the particular acoustic features that cue such perceptions” (2014, p. 541). The so-called “gay voice” as it relates to gay cisgender men has been increasingly researched in recent decades, but the amount of research into the voices of cisgender lesbians, bisexual people of various genders, and transgender people of various sexual orientations has grown as well. This paper will touch on the idea of a “gay voice” for various constructed orientation categories – from both physiological and psychosocial perspectives – as well as how a “gay voice” is linguistically constructed and perceived by listeners. Rather than an immutable feature of queer identity, the “gay voice” is fluid and dependent on interpersonal identities and the larger social milieu; I argue that gender inversion theory does not fully capture this understanding.

Sedivy (2020) describes the tendency for listeners to make split-second assumptions about speakers based on auditory features such as accents and dialects. While accents are usually associated with region or socioeconomic class, the same process can be applied to the various ways queer people might speak differently than their non-queer majority counterparts. Stereotypes that inform the listener as to the identity of the speaker can be critical in terms of actually processing auditory linguistic input, as some acoustic features of speech may be closely tied to the identity of a given speaker; these cues can vary wildly between identity categories, gender included (Sedivy, 2020). For example, the F1 frequencies of /s/ and /ʃ/ (like shop) tend to vary significantly between men and women (Sedivy, 2020; Tripp & Munson, 2021). Thus, “if listeners are optimally sensitive to the structure inherent in speech, they should pay attention to certain aspects of a talker’s identity when interpreting some cues” (Sedivy, 2020, pp. 280-281) However, such perceptions can also lead to the stigmatization of certain speech patterns and discrimination against the people who exhibit those patterns (Fasoli et al., 2021). For example, one study found that participants were less likely to evaluate gay men as hireable and assigned lower salaries to gay than to heterosexual candidates, but this was only true when participants made their evaluations based on the candidates’ voices – there were no significant differences when participants made evaluations based on the candidates’ faces (Fasoli et al., 2017). By analyzing the linguistic features often associated with queer identity, we can better understand attitudes and perceptions of queerness.

Gender inversion theory, which has Freudian origins, is intertwined with long-standing stereotypes of queerness, in which queer members of one sex will exhibit behaviours more similar to that of heterosexual members of the opposite sex (Kachel et al., 2018; Kite & Deaux, 1987), and this has informed many psycholinguistic inquiries into the gay voice (Kachel et al., 2018; Daniele et al., 2020). Importantly, gender inversion theory is not relegated to the domain of speech and speech perception. However, for the purposes of this paper, non-linguistic aspects of the theory are largely irrelevant.

**“[I]t is linguists in particular who can . . . broaden the scope of investigation by looking at queer people’s phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse structures.” (Gaudio, 1994, p. 31)**

An article by Rendall et al. (2008) offers a variation of gender inversion theory with a biosocial hypothesis, in which the distinctive features of gay speech can be viewed as incidental products of broader behavioural distinctions between

gay and straight people, arising from the biological traits of homosexuality. This differs from sociocultural framings of gender inversion theory, which stress the selective and sometimes purposeful uptake of certain speech features to signal part of their identity (Gratton, 2016; Kite & Deaux, 1987; Rendall et al., 2008). “It’s no secret among ethnographers that people often tailor their appearance and consumption habits in a way that signals their identification with a certain social group or ideology. The same seems to be true of accents” (Sedivy, 2020, p. 276). Their study, which included men and women of both heterosexual and bi/homosexual orientations in southern Alberta, measured the height and weight of participants as well as voice-acoustic variations. Results indicated overall non-significant body size variation between same-gender groups (although gay men were significantly shorter than straight men on average ( $p = <0.01$ )); within the voice-acoustic measures, they hypothesized a correlation between body size, sexual orientation, and pitch, but pitch was also not a significant indicator of sexual orientation (Rendall et al., 2008). However, they did observe significant differences in formant frequencies of certain vowels. In regard to gender inversion theory, they note that results across current literature “do not yet fully endorse the stereotypes but they do not entirely discount them either; nor do they cleanly favor any single mechanistic hypothesis” (Rendall et al., 2008, p. 188). Although gender inversion theory fails to account for the robust psycholinguistic factors at play, the theory persists, and the idea that sexual orientation can be detected phonetically remains a compelling one across cultures.

### **The Issue of Gender**

Gender can be defined as the behavioural, psychological, social, and cultural traits typically associated with one biological sex group (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Gender nonconformity, then, is an outward expression of gender that defies the typical norms associated with the gender one identifies with (Merriam-Webster, 2023; White, 2020). Queer communities may be disproportionately gender nonconforming (Kachel et al., 2020) – and the argument could be made that homosexuality is an inherently gender nonconformist trait since traditional Western gender roles assume heterosexual partnership (heteronormativity). Where does sexual orientation fit into the picture? This question is surprisingly difficult to answer and poses many problems when researching the gay voice and auditory gaydar. Fundamental questions must be asked to remain aware of potential biases in researching queer populations. Whom do we include in our sample? What are we trying to predict? How do we define “gay”, “lesbian”, “bisexual”, “queer”, et cetera? With a broad overview of relevant literature, it becomes evident that there are very few consistencies in the results across studies, save for the fact that differences are (often but not always) there and may be studied.

It is common knowledge that men have lower voices than women, statistically. This is due to physiological differences spurred by estrogen- versus testosterone-dominant puberties, in which the latter spurs a lengthening of the vocal tract (Listen Lab, 2020). Although some arguments have been made as to correlations between overall body size (see Rendall et al., 2008), sex hormones have a much greater impact on vocal pitch in humans than height or weight, and the voice of a 6’2” woman is still likely to be higher than the voice of a 5’2” man (Listen Lab, 2020). However, the correlation between vocal tract length and body size is relatively stable in women as compared to men, whose body sizes do not systematically correlate with the sizes of their vocal tracts; further, gender differences in voice resonance are statistically disproportionate to the average difference in vocal tract shape and length between men and women (Listen Lab, 2020). As Sedivy (2020) says, “language is the result of an intricate collaboration between biology and culture. It’s extremely unlikely that all of the features of language are genetically determined, or conversely, that all of them are cultural “inventions” (p. 46). Many gendered patterns of speech and vocal production are acquired in childhood – well before puberty spurs physiological differences in the vocal tract—sometimes as young as three or four years old (Zimman, 2017).

We also know that gender is phonetically indexed in differing ways depending on the language, culture, and individual (Zimman, 2017) and may overlap with other social identity categories such as class (Gratton, 2016) and, of course, sexual orientation. Additionally, Tripp & Munson (2021) stress the role of heteronormativity and gender sexuality entanglement in psycholinguistic perception, claiming that “perceptual systems for social categories demonstrably rely on interdependent cognitive processes”

[I]n becoming linguistically competent, the child learns to be a fully fledged male or female member of the speech community; conversely, when children adopt linguistic behaviour considered appropriate to their sex, they perpetuate the social order which creates gender distinctions. (Coates, 1968, p. 121)

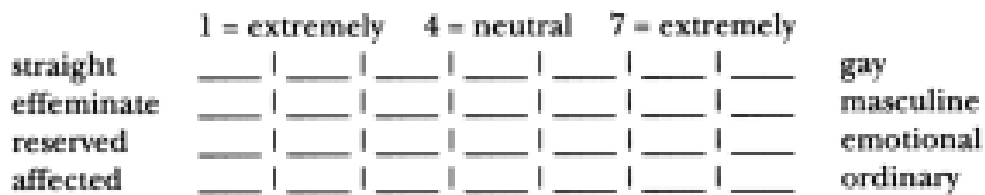
(p. 1). Gratton (2016), researching the speech of nonbinary participants from a Toronto queer community, calls on us to consider that “gender identity . . . is not something that exists prediscursively but rather individuals construct through linguistic and other kinds of semiotic practices” (p. 52). Although young children may pick up on gendered language patterns unconsciously, there is ample evidence that adults and older youth engage in metalinguistic practices, consciously changing aspects of their speech depending on the context, and this may be due to a variety of reasons including signalling one’s position as a member of a particular in-group or obscuring that position (Daniele et al., 2020; Gratton, 2016). There is very little reason to believe that the gay voice would differ from gender in terms of being constructed as an element of sexual orientation identity, rather than an inflexible trait as suggested by Rendall et al. (2008). Gender inversion theory does not inherently dispute this view.

One of the earliest major undertakings in queer linguistics, a study by Rudolf Gaudio (1994) examined what he then described as the “oft-repeated . . . yet largely unexplored” (p. 31) stereotype that the voices of gay men should be effeminate. In congruence with gender inversion theory, he hypothesized that they would exhibit both higher pitch and greater pitch variation than straight men. He did this by analyzing the speech of four openly gay men and four straight men from the San Francisco Bay Area, each of whom was asked to read various non-fiction and fiction passages ranging in emotionality in addition to a recorded interview with the researcher. The audio from these was spliced into 16 clips, which were rated by undergraduate students using a set of Likert scales according to the features Gaudio identified as being stereotypical of the gay male voice (see Figure 1).

Surprisingly, although the raters’ guesses about sexual orientation were generally accurate, there were no significant findings in relation to the speakers’ pitch or pitch variation (Gaudio, 1994) – perhaps due to linguistic accommodation on the part of straight speakers in a densely queer part of the U.S. (Law, 2016), or perhaps due to inaccuracies in the measures taken to index sexual orientation in the study. While the gay voice is no longer unexplored territory by any means, Gaudio’s early work remains influential in the sphere of queer linguistic studies and goes to show gender inversion theory’s long-lasting hold on perceptions of queer voices.

**Figure 1**

*Rating Scale from Gaudio (1994)*



### Queer-Sounding Qualities

As I noted in the previous section, Gaudio’s (1994) work sought to investigate stereotypical features of the gay voice, including pitch and pitch variation. However, pitch is not the only feature associated with sounding queer. Just as gender

is indexed differently according to language and culture (Zimman, 2017), so is sexual orientation — and as I will illustrate, sexual orientation is also indexed differently according to gender, sometimes in alignment with gender inversion theory, and sometimes not. In this section, I will describe various features associated with queer voices.

### **The Gay Voice**

When most people think of “the gay voice”, it is that of a white (likely cisgender) man from psychology’s favourite WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, Democratic) population. That may be for a good reason; unsurprisingly, these particular iterations of the gay voice are most well-defined and replicated across psycholinguistics research. In addition to higher global pitch and fundamental frequencies (Law, 2016), linguists have observed: a more negative spectral skew of /s/ (Munson et al., 2006; Willis, 2021); longer /s/ duration (Linville, 1998); higher peak frequencies of /s/ (Law, 2016; Linville, 1998); higher F1 frequencies on some vowels including /ε/ (like bed), /æ/ (like cat) (Munson et al., 2006; Rendall et al., 2008), and /a/ (Sulpizio et al., 2015); higher F2 frequencies on some vowels including /u/ (Munson et al., 2006), /ε/, /a/ and /l/ (Sulpizio et al., 2015); lower F1, F2, and F4 frequency of the /ə/ vowel (Rendall et al., 2008); and increased /s/-fronting (Van Borsel et al., 2009), which is a surprisingly popular stereotype. Other features commonly associated with the gay voice are nasality, especially for German speakers/listeners (Kachel et al., 2018), and longer vowel duration, especially for Italian speakers/listeners (Sulpizio et al., 2015). Despite strong stereotypes, the results of psycholinguistic studies are often conflicting and vary based on region, culture, and language.

### **The Lesbian Lexicon**

When it comes to lesbian language, the results are even less clear than for gay men, and gender inversion theory seems to fall short of any explanation. As stated above, replications in the gay voice of white men are not uncommon, and gay male culture has usually been given more attention, though not necessarily for poor reasons. As Gaudio explained in his work:

A similar study to Gaudio’s (1994) was undertaken with lesbians in the same area of America several years later with similarly vague results (Waksler, 2001). Gender inversion theory predicts that lesbian women will have speech patterns and features more similar to those of heterosexual men than to heterosexual women. More often than not, linguistic studies of gay women come up with no significant differences between the speech of lesbians versus straight women at all (Kachel et al., 2017; Moonwomon, 1985; Sulpizio et al., 2019).

Overall, it seems that differences in lesbian speech may differ more so lexically than phonetically (Queen, 1997) For example, lesbian communities — notably discrete from gay male communities in many parts of Canada and the U.S., as noted by Gaudio (1994) — have in recent history been associated with radical politics and thus may be associated with a unique vocabulary. In a guest chapter of the influential queer linguistics book, *Queerly Phrased* (Hall & Livia, 1997), Robin Queen writes a methodical review of several lesbian comics in an attempt to understand lesbian speech.

**My focus is on openly gay male speakers in particular. The exclusion of women is principled: lesbians and bisexual women constitute communities that are in many ways distinct from, though often allied with, those of queer men. To treat male and female speech under the single rubric gay would inevitably lead to a privileging of certain (almost always male) speech communities over others. (Gaudio, 1994, p. 31)**

These representations of lesbian speech are not necessarily accurate to how lesbians talk, as Queen acknowledges, but it does give some insight that is lacking in more contemporary psycholinguistic research. The author more readily acknowledges the relativity of the term “lesbian” than contemporary researchers (see: Kachel et al., 2017; Sulpizio et al., 2019), cautioning readers of the differences between externally imposed definitions of lesbianism, which can be problematic and exclusionary, versus the experiences of lesbians within queer communities. Thus, “one of the problems with previous research on the language of lesbians may have been the result of the ways in which the researchers imagined the lesbian speech community” (Queen, 1997, pp. 237-238). Queen goes on to explain various stereotypes of lesbian language that may or may not be supported by linguistic research: cursing; use of [in] or [en] as opposed to the more “proper” [ɪn]; postvocalic /r/ deletion; “flat” intonation; contracted verb forms; and purposely inflammatory expressions, especially regarding (their) male anatomy (Queen, 1997).

Interestingly, an ethnographic study by Levon (2009, 2010) found that Israeli lesbian (and gay) activist groups were more likely to display a greater range of stereotyped and pitch-related variance when discussing queer-related topics as compared to other topics of discussion. However, the difference was far greater for members of more liberal or mainstream groups than for members of radical groups; the radical groups had more consistent phonetic properties of speech across all topics, suggesting a lesser degree of identity compartmentalization (Levon, 2010). Regarding the motives of the ethnography, Levon notes:

Queen makes arguments for a more political understanding of lesbian language. Is it possible that much of contemporary psycholinguistics research has neglected more insular lesbian communities in favour of more liberal/mainstream lesbian communities? If we set gender inversion theory to the side, there is little reason to think that lesbian identity/experience is a mere reversal of gay male identity/experience – nor is there reason to assume that lesbians are a homogenous group.

The characters are all created by lesbians for a predominantly lesbian audience, and thus the characters’ believability relies on social knowledge that is assumed to be shared. They are characters who are politically and socially positioned within a larger context that includes elements specific to lesbians, specific to women, specific to queers, and specific to a full range of groups marginalized on the basis of their ethnicity, their socioeconomic status, and/or their political beliefs. (Queen, 1997, pp. 223-224)

[M]y goal is not to describe a representative “gay-” or “lesbian-Israeli” style of speech, but rather to highlight the diverse and creative ways in which lesbian and gay Israelis use language to help constitute identities that are at once sexual and political. These identities, emerging as they do from a confluence of multiple and at times conflicting social identifications and affiliations, resist classification in static or binary terms, and instead force us to re-conceptualize the ways in which sexuality may be both experienced and linguistically materialized. (Levon, 2010, p. 1)

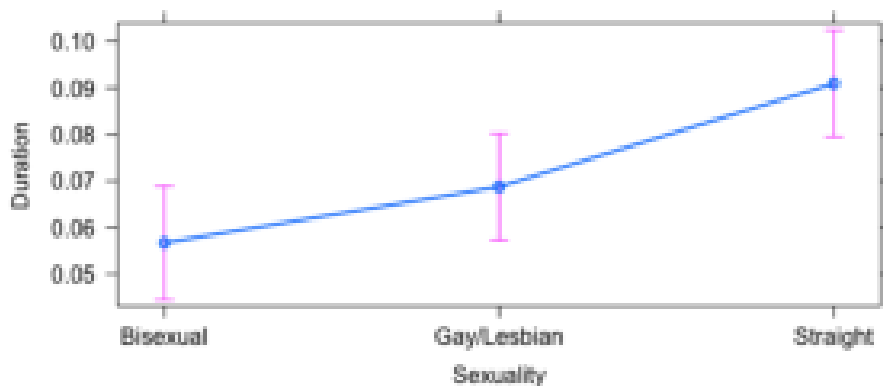
### Other Orientations

Though literature on lesbian voices is relatively limited compared to literature on the voices of gay men, even fewer studies have looked at bisexuality or other orientation categories. If asked to speak like a stereotypical bisexual person, how many of us would be able to? For many of us, conjuring a stereotype of bisexuality likely doesn’t include a particular way of speaking. In research, bisexual people are usually grouped in with either the gay group or the straight control group, or they’re excluded from studies altogether. However, a few researchers are starting to work with bisexual samples specifically. One such researcher, Chloe Willis, notes that bisexuality is more than a number on the Kinsey scale (2021). Willis (2021) looked at gender conformity and /s/ production among groups of straight, gay, and bisexual men and women. As I briefly touched on earlier, variations in /s/ production are widespread across queer linguistic studies. In terms of duration, a longer /s/ is usually associated with sounding gay. Willis (2021) measured /s/ production on several different aspects and found the most significant result was duration. Not only did her results conflict with the majority of studies that show a longer /s/ correlates with a queer speaker, but bisexual participants had even shorter

/s/ duration on average than their gay counterparts (see Figure 2). This goes against the common understanding of bisexuality being an identity based on its place “in between” the worlds of gay and straight. What these results hint at is that bisexuality is likely just as complex an identity as being gay or lesbian, with its own set of linguistic and cultural in-group markers.

**Figure 2**

*Sexuality effect plot from Willis (2021)*



### **Auditory Gaydar**

The phenomenon of “gaydar” is increasingly cited in popular culture as the visibility of queer people grows. Gaydar – a portmanteau of “gay” and “radar” – is the ability to identify someone as gay based on implicit cues (Smyth et al., 2002). The idea that a listener might identify someone’s sexual orientation by voice alone goes as far back in literature as the idea of linguistic markers of sexual orientation, if not further. Gaudio’s (1994) study demonstrated that undergraduate students of various sexual orientations were able to correctly guess the sexual orientation of speakers with greater-than-chance accuracy. Likewise, Linville (1998) and Smyth et al. (2002) found similar results, with the addition that listeners were able to guess the sexual orientation of straight speakers more accurately than gay speakers (Linville, 1998; Smyth et al., 2002).

A relatively recent study by Daniele et al. (2020) shows both that listeners can often accurately identify the sexual orientation of speakers, as well as that sounding queer is something that can be purposely exaggerated or toned down in certain contexts – perhaps to combat unwanted gaydar, which could result in discrimination. They did this by first comparing the phonetic features of openly gay men speaking to three different conversation partners: a receiver with whom they had not come out and with whom they would not feel comfortable to come out, a receiver with whom they had come out and who had reacted in a positive way, and a receiver with whom they had come out but who had reacted in a negative way. Between all three conditions, phonetic indications of sexual orientation were highest when the receiver was someone to whom the participants had come out with no negative repercussions. The researchers then edited and spliced the audio and presented clips to a group of listeners (similar to Gaudio’s 1994 procedure). Listeners accurately predicted above chance, performing better when hearing clips from the positive coming out condition, and sexual minority listeners were slightly more accurate in guessing than their straight peers (Daniele et al., 2020).

### **Conclusions and Further Directions**

Although a convenient (and thus attractive) explanation as to the atypical features of many queer voices, gender inversion theory is largely insufficient when considering the wide array of results across studies. Further, there is a lack of evidence supporting the theory in lesbian, bisexual, and asexual populations. Ultimately, gender inversion theory is inseparable from the harmful and discriminatory interpretations of the gay voice, but there are nevertheless

many potential differences in the way queer people speak – enough so that listeners have an above-average chance of correctly guessing sexual orientation based on stereotypes. Acknowledgement of the vast array of intricate social factors that influence the gay voice can help remedy the gaps left by the still-popular gender inversion theory. Psycholinguists should continue broadening the scope of queer phonetic research to include more sexual orientation groups such as bisexuals and asexuals (the latter of whom I could find no research at all). It is clear that no one set of phonetic differences set queer populations apart; a focus on how and why such differences are indexed rather than what those differences are will serve to benefit future inquiries and generate insights as to how queer populations communicate within and between in-groups.

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# MYTHOLOGY



# The Dead Sea Shanty

AURORA RYDER

The Dead Sea Shanty

*by Aurora Ryder*

I hold a fist of spices,  
And wonder at the cost,  
How many souls will make it?  
How many will be lost?

We started out with twenty,  
a brave and noble crew.  
Half of us were sea-trained,  
the other half were new,

But that's the way with sailing,  
no matter what you do,  
you'll always bury someone,  
'neath the unforgiving blue.

So raise a glass in mem'ry,  
and raise your mighty sails.  
Chart a course worth sailing,  
and pray for steady gales.

And mind you watch your footing,  
when you're climbing up the mast,  
'else you'll end like Patrick,  
who fell down awful fast,

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Seven days of sailing,  
sees Alfred down and dead,  
heart attack and fever,  
took the old man in his bed,

So we raised a glass in honor,  
and danced in candlelight.  
Buried Hal at dawn,  
'cause he drank all day and night.

We started out with twenty,  
and now we're seventeen.  
Captain says we've bad luck,  
the worst he's ever seen.

And fate or sea or fortune,  
soon will prove him right;  
we found him dead this morning,  
from "pufferfish delight."

We had to hang the chef then,  
for as good sailors know:  
"A man who kills his captain,  
reaps that which he sows."

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Marcus is made captain,  
but he cannot choose a mate.  
Jenny kills Tobias,  
and settles the debate.

And for a bit it's peaceful,  
but then we hit a storm.  
The spices fell on Emma,  
And crushed her little form.

We started out with twenty,  
now it's three and ten.  
I've taught them all the chorus,  
but still I'll sing again:

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,*

*This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Mara has gone missing...  
We're losing more and more.  
She cannot sing the chorus,  
'cause her body's on the floor,

Seems she had the blight,  
'cause her eyes and skin are blue.  
Seems she got around,  
'cause four men have it too.

We leave them on an island,  
and pray it is enough,  
I 'spose they could be living,  
but the odds are looking rough.

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Cali's man was on the island,  
and she won't leave him behind.  
She takes a shot at Marcus,  
but Jenny sends it wide.

And in the bout that follows,  
neither one survives.  
We started out with twenty.  
Now we're down to five.

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,*

*sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Suicide took Marcus;  
When I looked him in the eyes,  
he blew a shot between them,  
and sailed into the skies.

We barely have enough now,  
to man the mast and oars.  
Ships are manned in twenties,  
but all we've got is four.

Jacob was our hope—  
The doctor of the ship.  
He saw the signs of scurvy,  
But never let it slip.

He gave his slice to Lisa,  
And with it she survived.  
I wonder if he'd kept it,  
Would he be alive?

When Allen buried Jacob,  
He buried Allen too,  
cause when your lover's dead,  
well, what else do you do?

I sing tonight for all 'them,  
as I gaze upon the blue.  
We started out with twenty,  
and now we're down to two.

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

And now it's me and Lisa,  
but she is not the same.  
She who laughs no longer,  
and clothes herself in shame.

She says she will not perish.  
She says she will not die.  
She has the look of Marcus,  
and all she does is lie.

I hear her after midnight,  
praying to the sky.  
When I raise my blade in mercy,  
she doesn't even cry.

Now I 'spose I'm captain,  
but of what, I have no clue.  
For I've barely got a ship now,  
And I haven't got a crew.

Guess I'll sing the chorus,  
cause there's nothing else to do.  
I'm sailing on a ghost ship,  
on the unforgiving blue.

*And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.  
You'll die before you cross her,  
This I guarantee.*

*Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the sunset,  
'til the sailors number one.*

Then sing out sorrow sailor,  
sing out while you cry.  
Weep and wail and wonder,  
and pray one day you'll die,

Sing out sorrow sailor,  
while you bury all your crew.  
Weep and wail and wonder,  
as they sink beneath the blue.

Then raise the flag, surrender,  
and lift the sails up high,  
sail into the storm son,  
and sing out while you die:

“And so she takes another,  
that beautiful blue sea.

You'll die before you cross her,  
and then you'll sail with me.

Sail oh merry sailor,  
sing oh merry son,  
sail into the thunder,  
'til the sailors number none."

# A Lord of More Renown than Arthur: Tolkien's Corrective and Compensatory Approach to the Arthurian Tradition in his Legendarium

KATE JENSEN

“A Lord of More Renown than Arthur”:

Tolkien's Corrective and Compensatory Approach to the Arthurian Tradition in his Legendarium

by Kate Jensen

J. R. R. Tolkien is one of the most influential mythmakers of the twentieth century. He is widely praised for the originality of his grand creative work, known as the Legendarium, of which *The Lord of the Rings* is only a part, yet he also has a reputation for taking pre-existing legends and fairytales and incorporating them into his own created world. One such well of inspiration from which he draws is the Arthurian tradition, also known as the Matter of Britain. While Arthurian influences are apparent in many of the Legendarium's narratives, characters, and locations, Tolkien's relationship with these pre-existing legends is far from simple. He speaks highly critically of the Arthurian canon for its lack of grounding in the English language, its supposed incoherence, and its overt Christianity. Therefore, while he takes from this tradition, he transforms and “corrects” what he sees as the flaws of previous mythmakers and creates something uniquely tailored to his own tastes, yet with detectable Arthurian flavours. Tolkien's revisionary approach to the Arthurian tradition is apparent throughout many of the stories of the Legendarium, but I have found a surprisingly enlightening microcosm of Tolkien's wider approach in the story of Eärendil, one of the legendary heroes of *The Silmarillion*, whom Tolkien establishes as a mythical figure of grandeur (within the Legendarium) to rival even King Arthur himself.

## 1. Tolkien and the “incoherent and repetitive” Arthurian Canon

To provide context on Tolkien's attitudes toward Arthurian literature that manifest within the Legendarium, it is important to consult the author's letters. In Letter 130, Tolkien relates his motivations for the creation of his Legendarium. He states that he has always had an interest in mythology and fairy stories, finding pleasure in stories from many nations and cultures, but he claims that England is lacking in stories that are specifically tied to the English language, prompting him to create his own (*Letters* 144). He acknowledges the obvious presence of the “Arthurian world,” and concedes that it is “powerful,” but marks it as insufficient for his tastes and standards (144). He provides three crucial criticisms of this canon; he denigrates (1) its lack of connection to the English language, (2) its portrayal of “faerie” (a term Tolkien uses to refer to the magical elements of fairy-stories [*Tree* 10]), and (3) its treatment of Christianity (*Letters* 144). These three points are paramount for building an understanding of Tolkien's engagement with Arthurian matters in his own writings, and they each bear elaboration.

His first point, on the Matter of Britain's lack of Englishness, evidently alludes to the legends' Celtic (especially Welsh) origins and continental (particularly French) influences. This is not to say that Tolkien means to disparage Welsh and French legends; in his list of other cultures' legends he enjoys, he cites “Celtic, and Romance” stories as examples. The issue, as Tolkien sees it, is that whereas Welsh and French speakers have Welsh and French legends to call their own, English speakers largely only have retellings and appropriations of Welsh and French legends in the form of the Matter of Britain. The critique ties directly back to his wider point on his motivation to write his own legends; he attempts to provide something that he believes Arthurian literature, and therefore England as a whole, is lacking: a firm cultural grounding in the English language.

Tolkien's own contributions to the Arthurian canon bear out his desire for the foregrounding of the English language.

Tolkien translated the alliterative poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* into modern English, and his “main object” in doing so, as he states in his introduction, “is to preserve the metres” (*Sir Gawain* 3). He highlights the importance of the characteristically English nature of alliterative verse “descended from antiquity” as opposed to the rhymed French and Italian-inspired metres that gained traction in the Middle English period.<sup>1</sup> He speaks of the poem in the context of “the Alliterative Revival of the fourteenth century,” and laments the literary movement’s failure (*Sir Gawain* 3). It would not be a stretch to consider Tolkien to be, in intention, the spearhead of an attempted twentieth-century Alliterative Revival, and not only because of his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; he wrote many alliterative poems throughout his career, both within and outside of his *Legendarium*. Most notable of these works for present purposes is his unfinished narrative poem *The Fall of Arthur*. Tolkien mentions this work in a letter specifically as an example of the alliterative metre in which he loves to compose (*Letters* 219). His son Christopher Tolkien attributes the incompleteness of the poem largely to his father’s unsustainably perfectionist approach to the metre (*Fall*, Foreword 11-12), implying that, for the author, the importance of this English metre supersedes that of the Arthurian legends that are the content of the work. Taken together, we can view the translation and the original poem as attempted reclamations of any scraps of Englishness in the largely Celtic and French canon of the Matter of Britain.

After his discussion of language, Tolkien’s second point in Letter 130 is on the religiosity of the Matter of Britain. Although a devout Catholic himself, he laments that the Arthurian canon “explicitly contains the Christian religion,” arguing that “fairy-story” should “contain in solution elements of religious and moral truth (or error), but not explicit” (144). This prescription on the proper place of religion within the fairy-tale genre aligns with Tolkien’s description of *The Lord of the Rings* in another letter. He describes his book as “fundamentally . . . catholic,” but states that he avoids explicit inclusion of any religious practices because the work’s religious content “is absorbed into the story and the symbolism” (*Letters* 172). Verlyn Flieger argues that this approach protects the “inner consistency” of his stories, by refusing to use his created world merely “as a pointer to something outside itself” (37). For Tolkien, eschewing all overt references to the Bible, the Church, and Christian iconography need not mean abandoning all expression of theological ideas; rather, in his view, the fairy-tale genre holds potential for a unique form of religious expression, one which Arthurian Literature lacks the subtlety to achieve.

Tolkien’s third and final criticism of the Arthurian canon in Letter 130 concerns the logic of its fairy-tale elements, which he calls “incoherent and repetitive” (*Letters* 144). We can compare this statement to a point he makes in his essay “On Fairy-Stories.” Here, he claims that Arthur was likely an insignificant historical figure who was “boiled for a long time” in the soup of storytelling alongside other myths and histories “until he emerged as a King of Faërie” (*Tree* 28). Taken together, the letter and the essay present the notion that this age-long boiling process has resulted in a severely overcooked and therefore “incoherent” soup of Faërie. He does not, however, paint all Arthurian stories with one brush; in the same essay, He cites *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as one fairy-story that treats its magic “seriously” (*Tree* 11). Despite Tolkien’s generally critical attitude toward Arthuriana, Jane Beal highlights his interest in and “special love” for *Sir Gawain* and its anonymous poet (14, 17). Tolkien’s comment on the poem’s treatment of magic demonstrates that his interest in the work is not strictly metrical; he is as complimentary of its contents as its form. Still, this work seems to be the exception rather than the rule and does not contradict Tolkien’s wider assessment of the flaws of Arthurian Faërie.

## 2. Arthurian Elements in the *Legendarium*

Having covered, in broad strokes, Tolkien’s views on the Matter of Britain, I now wish to discuss how he draws on these pre-existing legends for his own created world while compensating for their perceived flaws. Let us begin with an examination of Tolkien’s use of languages and their connected literatures and cultures in the *Legendarium*, in light of his critique of the Arthurian canon’s lack of Englishness. The desire Tolkien expresses in Letter 130 to ground his myths in the English language is apparent in his choice, in early drafts, to frame his legends through the character of *Ælfwine*, an Anglo-Saxon sailor who meets various elves who tell him of their ancient history.<sup>2</sup> This character gradually fades into obscurity over years of successive drafts as Tolkien develops the *Legendarium* (*Christopher Tolkien, Book Part I* Foreword 5-6) and deemphasizes specific real-world connections. Still, Tolkien always finds a place for Anglo-Saxon in his tales. He even places an entire kingdom of Anglo-Saxon speakers into *The Lord of the Rings* through the Rohirrim

(although Anglo-Saxon is technically a placeholder for the hypothetical Rohirric language which Tolkien never, in reality, constructed).<sup>3</sup> He also incorporates elements of Anglo-Saxon legends; Bilbo's theft of a cup from the dragon Smaug's horde in *The Hobbit* (201) is lifted more-or-less directly from *Beowulf* (Rateliff 533). None of these creative decisions are particularly surprising coming from an Anglo-Saxon specialist and prominent *Beowulf* scholar, but they take on extra significance when we view them as a counterbalance to the overwhelmingly Celtic Matter of Britain.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to view the *Legendarium* as a rejection of Celtic influence in favour of Germanic culture and language; in fact, some readers have come to the opposite conclusion. In 1937 Edward Crankshaw read and evaluated drafts of *The Silmarillion* on behalf of the publisher Allen & Unwin; he writes that Tolkien's work has "that mad, bright-eyed beauty that perplexes all Anglo-Saxons in the face of Celtic art" (qtd. in *Letters* 25). Tolkien's response to these comments is somewhat defensive, claiming that neither his stories nor his names are Celtic, and expressing his "distaste" for the "fundamental unreason" of Celtic stories (*Letters* 26). In a later letter, however, he admits that he has constructed his elven language Sindarin to resemble Welsh (a Celtic language he greatly admires) and that this choice is appropriate for "the rather Celtic type of legends" of the Sindarin elves (*Letters* 176). Furthermore, Flieger notes the general Celtic flavour of much of Tolkien's world, full of mysterious forests and wondrous elven kingdoms (39). Both she and Jane Beal highlight in particular Tolkien's adoption of the Celtic name Broceliande<sup>4</sup> (a forest in Arthurian legend) in early drafts as the name of the land in which most of *The Silmarillion* takes place, although he would later change the name to Beleriand (Flieger 39) (Beal 15). While we may speculate that this Celtic "unreason" is partially the source of what Tolkien finds "incoherent and repetitive" about Arthurian Faërie, it is clear that he himself is more than willing to borrow heavily from Celtic languages and folklore, including the Celtic elements of Arthuriana.

When Tolkien draws on such disparate and, for him, "incoherent" Arthurian and broader Celtic sources, he attempts to unify them and bring them into his ostensibly more cohesive world. Tolkien has a wide-reaching reputation as an expert world-builder with a keen eye for consistency and detail. The *Legendarium* includes multiple interrelated constructed languages with roots from a common proto-language, detailed family trees spanning millennia, and copious historical annals and chronologies with the dates of important events. Nevertheless, Tolkien, as a perfectionist, constantly revised his tales throughout the years, and left many works unfinished, or in states that contradict other materials. Flieger even argues that Tolkien's *Legendarium* mirrors Arthurian literature most strongly in the multiplicity of its stories and variants (37-41). Both the Arthurian and Tolkienian canons are rife with works of poetry and prose, full, well-developed tales, mere sketches or summaries, finished works, and fragments (Flieger 37-41). Nevertheless, Tolkien's works contain one type of cohesion that the Matter of Britain cannot; the *Legendarium* is greatly unified by the sensibilities its singular creator, leading to a wide-ranging body of legends all conforming to the particular tastes of a writer who constantly seeks coherence and cohesion, even if this goal is never fully achieved.

The influences of Arthuriana are not, however, limited to the level of broad linguistic, cultural, and structural inspirations; Tolkien gives certain individual characters an Arthurian air. Flieger connects the powerful and mysterious Lady Galadriel to Morgan le Fay (35), while Clare Moore locates two separate Morgan figures in *The Silmarillion*; she compares the shapeshifting elven Princess Lúthien to Monmouth's Morgen (Moore 200-208), and the willful sister of King Turgon, Aredhel, to the French portrayals of Morgan le Fay (208-216). Richard J. Finn finds echoes of Merlin in Middle-earth's famous wizard Gandalf, who aids Aragorn in his journey to claim the Kingship of Gondor (23). Aragorn and his legendary sword Andúril, in turn, parallel King Arthur and Excalibur (Finn 24). Beal contrasts Arthur's disastrous fall with Aragorn's Christ-like ascension as King, connecting Tolkien's happy ending with his concept of eucatastrophe (26). "Eucatastrophe" is Tolkien's coinage to describe a sudden positive turn of events, particularly in fairy-tales (*Tree* 68-69), which ties into his views on the incarnation of Christ, which he calls "the eucatastrophe of Man's history" (*Tree* 72). Thus, Tolkien is able to rework the unsatisfactory aspects of Arthur's story through his own tales, all the while weaving implicit religious themes into his narratives without resorting to the explicit Christian references for which he denigrates the Arthurian tales.

Tolkien's reworking of the perceived flaws of Arthur's story is not limited to Aragorn; the ending of Frodo's story takes this revisionary approach one step further. In the final chapter of *The Lord of the Rings*, the physically and mentally wounded Frodo sails on a ship to the legendary elven lands of Tol Eressëa and the kingdom of Valinor (*Return* 1346-1349). This event quite obviously parallels the mortally wounded Arthur's journey to the mystical isle of Avalon, as Tolkien

readily admits, referring in a letter to Frodo's journey as "an Arthurian ending" (*Sauron* 130). This parallel is further heightened by Tolkien's mention of a haven on the island of Tol Eressëa named Avallónë (*Silmarillion* 268), clearly evoking Avalon. Still, the similarities to Arthur's story only go so far; Tolkien clarifies in another letter that the wounded Frodo journeys to the Undying Lands not to prepare for a return, but simply to rest and live out his mortal life, stating that in his *Legendarium* "the return of Arthur would be quite impossible" (*Letters* 198). This statement does much to elucidate Tolkien's revisionary and transformative approach to Arthurian influence; he draws on elements of Arthurian tales where they fit into his world and alters them according to his tastes where he finds contradictions between his own creative ethos and those of the sources from which he draws.

### 3. Eärendil the Mariner and the Problem of Analogues: A Case Study

In order to further demonstrate Tolkien's peculiar corrective approach to Arthurian literature, I would like to take a close look at the character of Eärendil the Mariner. He is one of Tolkien's first, most formative, and generative creations, being featured in some of the earliest poems and stories of the *Legendarium*, from which the rest of his tales later sprung (*Letters* 385-6). I wish to illustrate the wider points that I have highlighted in my general research on Tolkien's Arthurian influences with Eärendil as a case study, as I believe his story serves in many ways as a microcosm for Tolkien's attitude towards Arthuriana. My goal is not only to present my findings but also to demonstrate how my views have radically shifted throughout my research and, accordingly, I have structured this section to mirror the development of my thought process. I entered into my research on Eärendil with a specific direction in mind, seeking to find simple analogies between Tolkien's mariner and specific Arthurian characters, but what I have found is far more interesting, complex, and ambiguous, and it has given insight into how Tolkien both builds upon and writes against the Arthurian canon.

Although Eärendil is far from the most obviously Arthurian character in the *Legendarium*, there are palpable Arthurian qualities in Eärendil's story. Living about six thousand years before the events of *The Lord of the Rings*, Eärendil is a half-elven, half-human refugee embroiled in the hopelessly failing war against the Dark Lord Morgoth. He sets sail on his ship Vingilot across the sea to Valinor, which is ruled by the Valar (the pantheon of angelic beings who rule the Earth), to plead for help in the desperate war. He is ultimately successful in this endeavour, and the Valar raise him and his ship into the heavens to become the morning-star as a herald of the armies of Valinor, who vanquish the Dark Lord (*Silmarillion* 254-263). Though he is not specifically referred to as a "knight," through his voyage he becomes the quintessential figure of a knight-errant and would not feel out of place in the Matter of Britain. *The Lord of the Rings* features a poem recounting his "errantry"<sup>5</sup> as he is repeatedly lost on his episodic quest for Valinor (*Fellowship* 304-308); the poem even contains a catalogue of his weapons, armour, and gear (304-305) that would not be out of place in a chivalric romance such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. While Tolkien's presentation of the character arguably gives him a general Arthurian flavour, there is little in these observations to point towards *specific* Arthurian parallels.

However, I became interested in pursuing Eärendil's Arthurian connections further when I recalled coming across an obscure note years ago in which Tolkien compares the character to Sir Lancelot. This note comes from one of Tolkien's outlines for a planned section of his poem *The Fall of Arthur*, in which he plans to write of Sir Lancelot, after Arthur's passing, sailing away to seek his late King in Avalon, with Tolkien explicitly comparing this wandering knight to Eärendil (*Fall* 136). My case would be far simpler had Tolkien used the note to show Eärendil as a Lancelot figure, but in essence he does the opposite, conforming the pre-existing Lancelot to fit the shape of a character from his own mythology. In *The Fall of Arthur*, Tolkien abides by Lancelot's long-established narrative of an adulterous entanglement with Queen Guinevere and consequent civil strife with Arthur, but he then gives Lancelot an Eärendil-inspired mariner's ending. Eärendil's tale has absolutely no equivalents to Lancelot's traditional narrative centring around his love triangle,<sup>6</sup> and Tolkien's comparison between the two characters only seems to function in the context of his rewriting of Lancelot as an Eärendil figure.

This strange Lancelot-Eärendil link only becomes more muddled when read alongside a related outline for *The Fall of Arthur* in which Tolkien refers to Sir Gawain having a ship named Wingelot (*Fall* 129). Though it is impossible to prove, I believe this detail to be a nod to the theory of scholar Israel Gollancz, who posits that the traditional name of Gawain's

horse Gringolot derives from a boat named Guingelot in Germanic folklore, belonging to the giant, Wade (Gollancz 104-107). In one marginal rewrite of a line from an early alliterative poem about the mariner, Tolkien considers changing the name of Eärendil's father Tuor to Wade (Christopher Tolkien, *Lays* 143), and elsewhere states that the Name of Eärendil's ship Vingilot is directly inspired by Wade's Guingelot (J. R. R. Tolkien, *Peoples* 371).<sup>7</sup> Taken altogether, it is clear that Tolkien intentionally links both his own creation Eärendil and the Arthurian Gawain with the non-Arthurian legend of Wade. The connection evidently runs deeper still, linking Eärendil and Gawain directly; the spelling of "Wingelot" for Gawain's ship in *The Fall of Arthur* is highly significant, as this is the spelling that Tolkien uses in earlier drafts for Eärendil's Vingilot (Christopher Tolkien, *Book Part II* 272). As intriguing as this connection is, this Gawain-Eärendil parallel drastically complicates or even undermines Tolkien's Lancelot-Eärendil link. Tolkien even seems to express hesitation over the parallel he draws between the characters, placing a question mark in the outline after the line about Gawain's ship Wingelot (*Fall* 129), perhaps perceiving a tension between the Lancelot-Eärendil and Gawain-Eärendil Analogies.

Making sense of these obscure and muddled parallels requires a comparative analysis of the narratives of Gawain and Eärendil. Considering Tolkien's interest in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, it is reasonable to posit that this poem is a particularly suitable Arthurian well of inspiration from which Tolkien can draw. With this thought in mind, we can see that both Gawain and Eärendil set out on perilous journeys and get lost for extended periods along the way. For both characters, their journeys' ends seem certain to end in death; Gawain believes that he heads toward his imminent beheading, while Eärendil seeks the immortal land of Valinor which is forbidden to him on pain of death as a descendent of mortal men and exiled elves. Both characters are ultimately spared execution, but whereas Gawain is able to return home to Arthur's court, albeit changed by his experience, Eärendil becomes a star and is forbidden to set foot on the mortal lands of Middle-earth ever again (*Silmarillion* 257-258). When we take these narrative similarities into consideration, it is easy to view Gawain as a far more appropriate Arthurian analogue than Lancelot.

It is where Eärendil's story diverges from that of Gawain (with the former's ascension into the sky) that it aligns with the story of another Arthurian knight: Sir Galahad. Through his wife Elwing, Eärendil is the inheritor of one of the three Silmarils, magical elven jewels lit with the holy light of the Two Trees of the Valinor. Flieger notes the similarities between the Holy Grail and the Silmarils (35), and with this analogy in mind, it is not difficult to construct a reading of Eärendil as a sort of Galahad figure. Galahad seeks the Fisher King's castle in order to find the Grail whereas Eärendil already possesses the Silmaril and carries it back to Valinor (its point of origin). Despite this difference, these holy objects play similarly central roles in the characters' quests to mythical locations. Both relics even serve the function of measuring the worth of would-be possessors; Galahad reaches the grail through the purity and worth of his heart, while the Silmarils burn the hands of any unworthy of holding them; Elwing's Silmaril notably leaves Eärendil unscathed.<sup>8</sup> Through the power of the Holy Grail, Galahad is able to ascend to Heaven, and similarly, Elwing's Silmaril becomes the source of light for the Star of Eärendil when the Valar raise the mariner and his ship into the heavens (*Silmarillion* 257-258). While Eärendil, fitting with Tolkien's aversion to overt religiosity, does not literally ascend to "Heaven" as an afterlife, but instead is an immortal being who sails through the sky, the parallels to Galahad are nevertheless striking and appear to go beyond the realm of coincidence.

Having established Eärendil's Arthurian connections, it is useful to step beyond them to illustrate how Tolkien compensates for what he perceives to be lacking in Arthurian literature by drawing from other traditions. The name Eärendil is inspired by the Old English name Éarendel, which refers to the morning-star (the planet Venus) (*Letters* 385), which is, of course, the star that Eärendil becomes. Therefore, Tolkien's tale of the mariner sailing the sky with the holy light of his Silmaril functions as an aetiological myth of the morning-star, giving Tolkien's mythos a grander and more cosmological scope than that of the Arthurian legends. The Éarendel connection also accords with Tolkien's linguistic aims for the *Legendarium*; though he gives Eärendil a fictional etymology in his constructed elven language Quenya (*Letters* 385-6), the name is a major example of the grounding of his writings in the history of the English language (the same indeed can be said for the Germanic Vingilot-Guingelot connection). Tolkien, here as elsewhere, provides a linguistically English flavour to his mythology, compensating for the perceived lack of Englishness in Arthurian literature that he laments.

Eärendil also addresses another major complaint of Tolkien about Arthurian literature: its explicit inclusion of

Christianity. Tolkien was specifically inspired by the name Éarendel as it is used in the anonymous Anglo-Saxon alliterative poem *Crist I*, sometimes attributed to Cynewulf, (Hostetter 5), and it is generally accepted that in this poem Éarendel is a reference to John the Baptist, who heralds Christ as the morning-star heralds the sunrise (Hostetter 7-8). Tolkien explicitly states in a letter that the Old English representation of Éarendel as Christ's herald is "alien to [his] use" (Letters 387).<sup>9</sup> He then elaborates, stating that Eärendil lives during a time in between the "Fall" and the "Redemption of Man," in which knowledge of Eru (the name of God in the *Legendarium*) is not widespread (Letters 387). In the *Legendarium*, the Fall is a vague, distant legend (J. R. R. Tolkien *Morgoth's* 345-349), and the eventual incarnation of Eru a scarcely whispered "hope" of which I have located only one mention in Tolkien's entire body of work (*Morgoth's* 321-323). On the other hand, the Arthurian tales are set in an era in Britain wherein Christianity is so ubiquitous that it is entirely taken for granted. Tolkien intentionally writes against this aspect of Arthuriana, side-stepping what he sees as the problematic inclusion of Christianity within the world of myth and fairy tales by placing his legends in an imaginary era long before the incarnation.

Though he is far removed from the Christian knights of the Round Table, and further still from John the Baptist, Eärendil is still undoubtedly a herald of salvation. He does not presage capital-S Salvation in a Christian sense, which, in Tolkien's view, can come only through Christ, but rather a major victory in war. His story serves as a prime example of the narrative trajectory of eucatastrophe, the ultimate realisation of which, for Tolkien, is Christ's incarnation (*Tree* 72). Therefore, Eärendil's tale (like all of the *Legendarium's* stories of eucatastrophe, to a certain extent) structurally echoes the foundational story of Christianity while avoiding allegory (which Tolkien famously rejects [*Fellowship* xxvi]) and explicit mentions of Christianity. Thus, Tolkien can express his Christian faith through his writings while avoiding what he views as the deeply detrimental overt Christianity that permeates the Arthurian legends. We can view Eärendil's story as a model for what Tolkien views to be the appropriate treatment of religious themes and imagery within the world of fairy tales. Tolkien's subtle and often implicit treatment of religious matters in his fiction, of which Eärendil's story is emblematic, is one of the clearest cases of Tolkien writing directly *against* the norms of the Arthurian tradition.

Eärendil, as the herald of eucatastrophe, is also a figure who brings cohesion to the *Legendarium*. While Tolkien speaks of Arthur and his world as an overly boiled jumble of influences with "incoherent" results, the same could scarcely be said for Eärendil. As the descendent of many of the most important characters in *The Silmarillion*, both elven and human, the inheritor of one of the legendary Silmarils, and one of the last survivors of the war that has consumed the land of Beleriand, he becomes the emissary of the hopes and sufferings of all those who came before him. Therefore, although he is only born in the second-to-last chapter of the *Quenta Silmarillion*<sup>10</sup> (*Silmarillion* 249), he becomes a central unifying figure of the story cycle, and the eucatastrophic victory against Morgoth that he helps achieve brings the legends of the First Age to a close. His importance extends into the later ages of legend, as the father of Elrond, the distant ancestor of Aragorn, and the source of the starlight that Frodo carries with him to protect him from evil on his perilous quest. Samwise even speaks explicitly to Frodo about Eärendil's role as a connecting thread between the legends of old and their present quest, reminding him that they "are in the same tale still!" (*Two* 931). Eärendil occupies a place in the folklore of Middle-earth comparable to Arthur in our modern world; In fact, Tolkien refers to Eärendil's son Elrond as "a lord of more renown than Arthur would be, were he still king at Winchester today" (*Return* 1491). The same, and far more, could easily be said of Elrond's father, destined to sail the skies as a bright symbol of hope until the world's end.

Although it can be tempting to look for a one-to-one Arthurian analogue, Eärendil embodies a much broader point on Tolkien's attitude toward Arthurian literature. Ultimately, any one connection is in itself a small component of his character; Eärendil is not Lancelot, Gawain, Galahad, Wade, Éarendel, or John the Baptist, but is rather a new and unique figure in Tolkien's mythology. Ironically, it is the multiplicity of the diverse sources that have contributed to Eärendil's creation and characterization that puts him in league with the characters of Arthurian legends, whose influences span Celtic folklore, French romances, Biblical sources, etc. Eärendil's story also demonstrates Flieger's point about Tolkien's textual development mirroring the Arthurian canon in its complexity and layering (Flieger 37-41); Tolkien wrote many unique, often contradictory, versions of Eärendil's story in both poetry and prose throughout his life, many of which are left intriguingly incomplete. What remains consistent throughout these many versions, however, is Tolkien's grounding of the legend in the history and folk traditions of English and the Germanic languages more broadly (through the

references to Éarendel and Guingelot), as well as Tolkien's characteristic religious subtlety and aversion to explicit Christian allusions. Thus, we can see, through the microcosm of one character, Tolkien's inspiration from specific Arthurian figures and tales, his rivalling of the scope, breadth, and complexity of the Arthurian canon, and his corrective and reactive habit of seeking to compensate for the perceived flaws of Arthuriana.

As his letters and essays demonstrate, Tolkien views the Matter of Britain as a highly flawed body of literature that nonetheless contains some works of high literary merit; therefore, he draws on those elements which accord with his tastes to incorporate into his own canon and alters or discards those that do not. For instance, he gives readers a new Avalon in the form of Avallónë, yet no new returning Arthur figure. He also leaves behind the overt Christianity of characters like Galahad, and yet retains more implicit Christian imagery in the character of Eärendil, as a herald of salvation. Eärendil also ties together the many tales of the Legendarium into a cohesive whole while hearkening back to Celtic Arthurian legends and the Anglo-Saxon language and folklore that Tolkien so dearly loved. Tolkien's attempt to correct the perceived shortcomings of the mythmakers of the past through his selective reuse and reshaping of Arthurian motifs and elements leaves readers with a new and unique body of myth, one that is fit to stand alongside the monumentally renowned Matter of Britain.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Sir Gawain and the Green Knight exists at a fascinating liminal point between the ancient traditions of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and the growing French influence of post-Norman-conquest Middle-English. The poem alternates between alliteration and rhyme with its distinctive bob-and-wheel style. Tolkien obliquely refers to this mixture of forms with his use of the plural "metres," but it is telling that he only speaks specifically about the poem's use of alliteration, and not its use of rhyme, showing the former to be far more significant in his estimation.

<sup>2</sup> See Christopher Tolkien's discussion of the character (*Book Part II* 278-334).

<sup>3</sup> Tolkien's logic behind this decision is that Rohirric is related to the Common Speech of Middle-earth, which is rendered as Modern English, and therefore using Old English as a stand-in for Rohirric preserves the sense of familiarity between related languages (*Return* 1493).

<sup>4</sup> See Christopher Tolkien (*Lays* 160).

<sup>5</sup> Not only does this poem refer to Eärendil's adventuring as "errantry" (*Fellowship* 306), but the work itself is developed out of one of Tolkien's earlier poems entitled "Errantry" (see Christopher Tolkien *Treason* 84-109).

<sup>6</sup> Flieger notes the absence of adultery in the Legendarium and links this to Tolkien's comment that his works are intended to be "purged of the Gross" (*Letters* 144), arguing that he is reacting against the adulterous elements of Arthuriana that he may find distasteful (Flieger 38).

<sup>7</sup> Vingilot, which sails the sky as a star, is sometimes described with wings (*Fellowship* 307), further paralleling Wade's Guingelot, the first element of whose name has the same root as the English word "wing" (Gollancz 107). Gollancz notes Wade and Guingelot's folkloric association with swans and swan wings in particular (107), and even this detail is mirrored in Tolkien's works; Vingilot has a swan-shaped prow (*Fellowship* 304).

<sup>8</sup> The *silmarils'* power to test the worth of their bearers not only mirrors that of the grail but can additionally be seen as an instance of the worth-measuring "sword in the stone" motif.

<sup>9</sup> While I am willing to take Tolkien at his word that he is not attempting to evoke the specific Christian associations under which the author of *Crist I* operates, there is, nevertheless, an undeniable general air of saintliness around the character as he is referenced in *The Lord of the Rings* that parallels *Crist I*. Not only does Frodo carry the light of Eärendil's star to protect him from evil on his quest, he even invokes Eärendil's name as he shines his light, as one might call on a saint: "Aiya Eärendil elenion ancálima!" (*Two* 942). This is a Quenya (elven) phrase which Tolkien translates as "Hail Eärendil brightest of stars," and is, as he admits, a paraphrasing of "Éala Éarendel engla beorhtast" (*Letters* 385). This Old English line comes directly from *Crist I* and translates to "Hail Éarendel, brightest of angels" (Hostetter 5).

<sup>10</sup> The *Quenta Silmarillion* is the part of *The Silmarillion* that covers the events of the First Age of Middle-earth and constitutes the vast majority of the text.

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# The Man Out of Time

AUSTIN W LYNDS

The Man Out of Time

*by Austin W Lynds*

Or,

*Sir Clarence the 5th*

Step by step

Does he wade the River.

Ethereal waves of glowing wisps of possibility,

Each leading into a stream of moments, dancing, winding, aging linearly.

Time carries her elusive waves with dignity and an unapologetic authenticity.

He respects her for it,

The man with wit sharp as bladed steel.

A mind as relentless as a storm,

And a heart as weary as weathered gold.

The man in black and silver,

Top hat adorned, cane in hand,

He steps with purpose and grace,

Watching the cobblestones age before him.

As the endless river carries and erodes all,

He remains.

Endless, like her.

He who slayed one monster,

And apologizes for another.

How very **British**.

# Pores of the Earth

KYLEE BUSTARD

Pores of the Earth

*by Kylee Bustard*

The mountain giant slumbers near the sea.  
Her skin of silver moss<sup>1</sup> and jewel orchids  
bloom as fast as youthful Pele<sup>2</sup> can gather the  
green beads of her grapevine locks.  
Her face spans a rocky plain and her dimple a crater.  
The depression flares—  
molten pus pours from her pores;  
Lava spills in streams, searing her soil and charring her cheeks.  
Callused clunky fingers try to slow the flow,  
Only to burst the welts of fire at every touch.  
Her tears come like soft rain,<sup>3</sup> soothing the pain,  
Flooding the skeletal scene.  
She weeps; the rock cools.  
Obsidian scars blemish her face like a battlefield.  
Over centuries, her tears soften the harshest marks,  
Eroding the igneous rock into sand and soil for the ohī'a lehua.<sup>4</sup>

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> A plant common to the Hawaiian landscape. These fine strands of silvery green are locally associated with Pele's hair.

<sup>2</sup> Hawaiian goddess. Creator and destructor of the Hawaiian Islands. Deity of fire and volcanoes.

<sup>3</sup> In reference to the short story "There Will Come Short Rains" written by author Ray Bradbury.

<sup>4</sup> Hawaiian native trees that emerge from lava rock.

# The Legend of the Devil's Punchbowl

KYLEE BUSTARD

The Legend of The Devil's Punchbowl

*by Kylee Bustard*

Well once there was farmer's son we'll call him John Gallant  
His neighbour asked him for a job and though the pay was scant  
John took the work for knowing well the fields were all dried out  
He led his horse and wagon out and trodded down the route

Through the valley and far from shore  
Poor Gallant best get home before  
The Devil robs him in a blink  
Of the moonlight's ink, the Devil's drink

Well John Gallant arrived in town in time to buy a crate  
The moonshine sloshed and made a clink! with the horse's gait  
John hid the prize beneath the hay and prayed no one would see  
The Devil's drink, the moonlight's ink, hidden behind his seat

Through the valley and far from shore  
Poor Gallant best get home before  
The Devil robs him in a blink  
Of the moonlight's ink, the Devil's drink

Young John was not the brightest son he realised soon enough  
For when he reached the old valley the Devil saw his bluff  
In the earth a hole appeared and John let out a squeal  
The Devil took the poor man's soul and said "let's make a deal"

Through the valley and far from shore  
Poor Gallant best get home before  
The Devil robs him in a blink  
Of the moonlight's ink, the Devil's drink

That night when John came stumbling home, his horse all out of breath  
With bloodshot eyes and clammy skin he looked near close to death  
The neighbour asked "what happened, boy?" and John wept at his knees  
"The Devil stole the old moonshine and barely let me free"

Through the valley and far from shore  
Poor Gallant best get home before  
The Devil robs him in a blink  
Of the moonlight's ink, the Devil's drink

If you walk out toward Granville way you'll see the scar made on that day  
The land pulled in like a bowl, the Devil's Punchbowl, is what we say  
And if you find yourself at night alone and near the Devil's Punchbowl  
If you dare, then a bring a drink to give the Devil to save your soul

Through the valley and far from shore  
Poor Gallant best get home before  
The Devil robs him in a blink  
Of the moonlight's ink, the Devil's drink

# CONNECTION



# Introduction

JACOB DURDEN

## CONNECTION

We never exist in solitude. Time never exists in solitude. People and things always link up, following one after another in a succession. The pieces of writing in this fourth and final chapter of *Into a New Tongue* all, in one way or another, reflect this simple fact. These pieces all concern themselves with the world and with existences that go beyond ourselves. They remind us that we are never alone, whether or not we like, or even accept, that inescapable fact. They remind us of our interconnectedness. They remind us that we always exist within systems that are larger than any one individual.

“Untitled” deals with the burden of such an existence and how even in such a world, we can still sometimes find ourselves feeling completely and utterly alone. There is validity in that. “There Came the Darkness” also flirts with the all-too-familiar feeling of alienation in a world that seems to work as one machine-like entity, a makeup of thousands of tiny cogs all moving in a manner that we often cannot comprehend. However, this story also demonstrates the power of finding and embracing connectedness. It shows that the indelible marks of connection are not something to run or hide from. However, “Late Afternoon Commute” complicates this. It forces us to reckon with the fact that, for many of us, being alone is often a matter of practical safety. There are those in the world that wish us harm; this is also inescapable. Leaning into the inherent connectedness of the world can bring us so much, and yet, there are those who will always seek to exploit that which we cannot wholly remove ourselves from.

“The Sea” demonstrates an entirely separate angle to connectedness. This poem illuminates the knowledge and power that can come with connecting oneself to the living, breathing universe. There is something pure, unfiltered and primal about embracing a connectedness to nature and “The Sea” perfectly demonstrates this. It is another part of our connected spider-web of a world that we cannot remove ourselves from entirely, no matter how much we sometimes try. Finally, “How Canada Would Benefit From Maglev Trains” perfectly explores the practical applications of technology that can further our connectedness. It forces us to recognize how much thicker our web of connection has become with modern technology, and how it may become thicker still. Yet, this essay also embraces this inescapable reality. Choo! Choo!

*Jacob Durden*  
*Editor*

# How Canada Would Benefit from Maglev Trains

ETHAN DRAKE

How Canada Would Benefit from Maglev Trains

by *Ethan Drake*

## **Abstract**

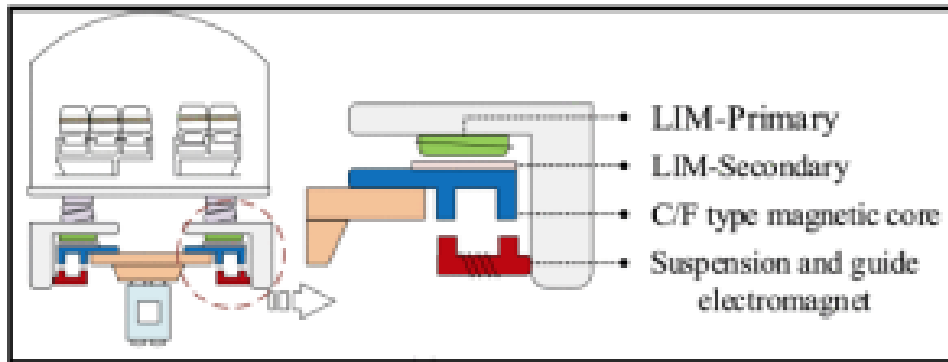
Maglev trains are trains that work using the principle of magnetic attraction, where instead of using wheels to move along a rail, magnets levitate the train above the rail and propel it forward. This paper compares Maglev trains to automobiles, planes and alternative train types. Maglev trains are brought up in a Canadian context, looking at the social, environmental and economic benefits presented. Includes potential reasons as to why Canada hasn't already developed Maglev trains as well as potential partnerships that could be made to implement them.

## **Introduction**

Maglev trains and high-speed rail are being developed across the world as a form of transportation, with key countries being China, Japan, South Korea and Germany. These countries, to various levels, have emphasized the importance of fast transportation by implementing these systems domestically to increase economic growth, lower carbon emissions, and decrease economic and technological disparities. Maglev trains are a marvel of modern technology, and their development is a path to futures dreamed about for decades. With the implementation of maglev train infrastructure also comes the opportunity for urbanization and further development in all sectors. By implementing this technology in Canada, amenities will become more accessible, economic inequality will decrease, technological advancements will be at the forefront, and the country will be more united and accessible to the entire population. This paper acts as a brief introduction to what maglev trains are, how they work, and their benefits in a Canadian context. Additionally, this paper will briefly touch on potential reasons as to why development has yet to commence in Canada, and potential partnerships that could be made to implement maglev trains.

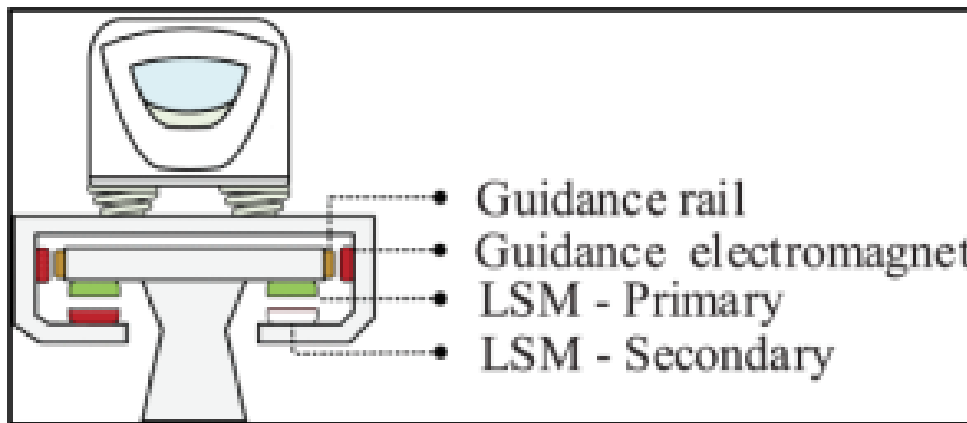
## **How Maglev Trains Work**

As the development of urban centers has widely increased worldwide, countries such as Japan, China, Germany and South Korea have recognized the requirement and importance of fast and efficient transportation between different regions [1], [2]. Maglev trains help to fill this need by providing fast and efficient transportation along with low amounts of noise pollution. These trains differ from conventional wheel-rail high-speed trains as they are frictionless, only requiring three key principles to effectively function, namely propulsion, levitation and guidance, or PLG. One of the ways maglev trains are engineered to complete these PLG functions is by electromagnetic suspension or EMS [1], [3]. Existing EMS maglev trains typically use either linear induction motors (LIM) which are present in low to medium-speed trains or linear synchronous motors (LSM) which are present in high-speed trains [1]. In an LIM-based system, a primary motor is attached to the train while a secondary motor is attached to the track. Propulsion is achieved by the operation of LIM, while levitation and guidance are achieved by an electromagnetic system installed between the train and the track [1]. The structure of the LIM-based system is shown in **Fig. 1**.



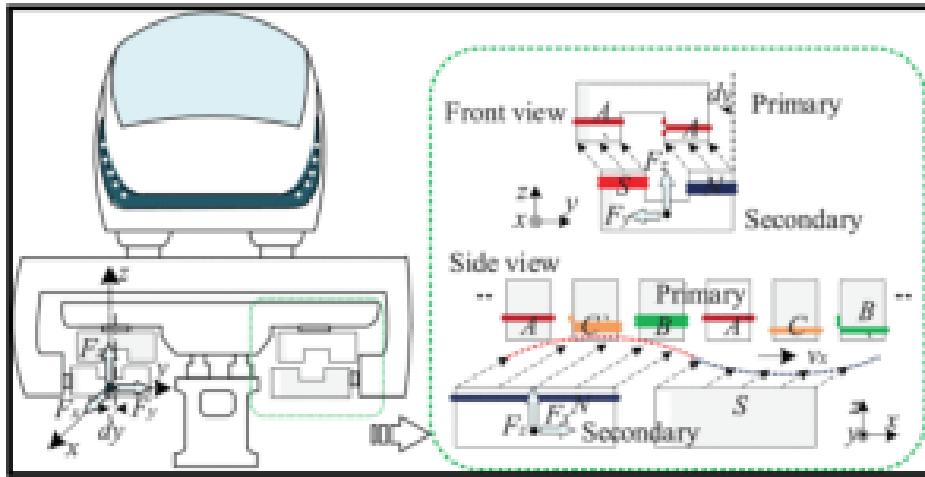
(Fig. 1) LIM-based EMS maglev, suited for low to medium-speed travel [1].

In an LSM-based system, the primary motor is installed on the track, while the secondary motor is installed on the train. The propulsion and levitation forces are realized by the interaction between the onboard electric excitation secondary motor and long primary motor laid on track, while guidance forces are provided by electromagnets installed on the train [3]. The structure of the LSM-based system is shown in Fig. 2.



(Fig. 2) LSM-based EMS maglev, suited for high-speed travel[3].

One of the shortcomings of current maglev trains is the cost of producing the maglev rail required for the trains, accounting for 60-80% of the whole investment of the magnetic levitation train system [2]. At present, new developments in China have been focused on creating a system that can manage the PLG simultaneously to lower costs and streamline maintenance, called a Transverse Flux Linear Synchronous Motor or (TFLSM) [1], [3]. "TFLSM eliminates the expense of guiding induction panels along the track as well as onboard guiding electromagnets and guiding control systems." [1]. The TFLSM system works by attaching the primary motor to the underside of the rail, and the secondary motor to the undercarriage of the train. The primary and secondary motors both adopt a U-shape to best produce a magnetic current [3]. The structure of the TFLSM-based system is shown in Fig. 3. At present, this system has not been used in any large-scale projects, as it is still in development.



(Fig. 3) TFLSM-based EMS maglev [3].

## Comparison to Alternatives

### Comparison to Automobiles

When comparing maglev trains to conventional automobiles, there are a few key aspects that should be noted, specifically speed, reliability, upkeep costs and versatility. Maglev trains can attain much higher speeds than any automobile, with the Shanghai Longyang Road airport line able to attain a speed of 600 km/h in China [1], with the average speed sitting around 300km/h. The fastest automobile, the Koenigsegg Jesko Absolut comes in at 530km/h [4], with the average speed limit in Canada at 100km/h [5]. On average, Canadians will need to bring their automobiles in for maintenance every 8000 to 12000 km, with maintenance costs annually around \$1400-\$1500 [6]. Maglev trains generally receive service every month to ensure everything is functioning to standard [7], and costs are almost exclusively funded by passengers. Each train on the Shanghai Longyang Road airport line can accommodate 959 passengers, with tickets ranging from \$9.50-\$20 when converted to Canadian dollars [8]. Most automobiles only have enough room for 4-6 passengers, with monthly gas costs sitting around \$300 [9]. Automobiles are much more versatile when compared to trains, as they vary extensively when it comes to shape and size, with many having lifted suspensions to more effectively drive on rough terrain, while maglev trains are limited to the tracks available. If maglev trains were to be implemented in Canada, the role of automobiles would change significantly, rather than a catch-all transportation machine, they would be relegated to much more specific roles such as use in more rural areas, and in heavy industry, while maglev trains would take the place of general ground transport in urban population centers.

### Comparison to Planes

When comparing maglev trains to planes, the main aspects to consider are speed, cost for individuals, and application. The fastest commercial plane is the Boeing 747, reaching speeds of up to 1130km/h, and the fastest maglev train is the Shanghai Longyang Road airport line able to attain a speed of 600 km/h in China [1], [10]. With current infrastructure, automobiles are becoming increasingly popular when compared to air travel due to the rise in fares, with 45% of Canadians reporting that bus travel was much more affordable [11]. With maglev infrastructure, air travel will likely wane much more; maglev trains come much closer to the top speeds of planes compared to buses, while also keeping prices per ride low, with tickets for the Shanghai Longyang Road airport line ranging from \$9.50-\$20 when converted to Canadian dollars [8]. If Canada were to adopt maglev infrastructure, planes would still have an important role, namely allowing for safe and efficient transportation between oceans, while maglev trains would become the primary transport throughout the country.

### Comparison to Alternative Train Types

When comparing maglev trains to alternative train types, the main factors to consider are speed, application, and

maintenance costs. At present there is a proposed high-speed rail project that will connect Toronto to Montreal being discussed provincially and federally [12]. The proposed project would have projected speeds up to 300km/h [13]. This is a great development plan for Canadian infrastructure, with many projecting that this will stimulate the economy and help put into perspective the positive change that would come from the development of maglev train systems throughout Canada [14]. The Shanghai Longyang Road airport line can attain a speed of 600 km/h in China [1], much faster than the proposed high-speed rail. One reason for this relates to their key difference, as maglev trains are frictionless while high-speed trains require wheels on the track, creating friction, and limiting the speed of the system. Maglev trains offer less expensive operating and maintenance costs when compared to high-speed rail trains while also offering higher speeds, more comfortable riding environments and low noise [1], [3], [15]. Maglev trains can be developed with lower speed options in mind, better for urban environments with more stops, or higher speeds for longer distances. If maglev trains were to be implemented in Canada, slower-style trains would be relegated to use in hauling freight as maglev trains are not currently optimized for that task; maglev trains would have primary usage as general ground transport for the population.

### **Maglev Trains in a Canadian Context**

#### **Social Benefits**

Maglev trains would revolutionize transportation, as with enough investment into their infrastructure, Canadians would be able to get across the country in a matter of hours instead of days. Having Canadian society become more connected would more easily allow Canadians to seek work anywhere in the country, as with the current infrastructure there is a steep monetary barrier to movement within Canada, preventing less-fortunate Canadians from exercising their Mobility Rights as laid out in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms [16]. Connecting the nation via maglev trains would more easily allow for the urbanization of the country; currently, there are stark differences between the more urbanized parts of the country and the more rural parts, with rural areas sometimes not even having acceptable access to healthcare, internet, and in some cases, running water [17]. Maglev Trains would be a first step in connecting the country and giving every Canadian equal access to amenities. Maglev trains are also much safer when compared to conventional automobile transport, whereas the last major maglev incident occurred in 2006, with 23 fatalities, and 11 total injuries, in Canada, in 2021 there were 1,768 motor vehicle fatalities, and 108,018 total motor vehicle injuries [18].

The recent discussions around implementing high-speed rail between Toronto and Montreal are important in acknowledging the need for better infrastructure in Canada. The greater Toronto area and Montreal metropolitan area account for approximately 10 million Canadians, with Toronto and Montreal being the first and second largest cities in the country, with roughly 27% of the population living in or near these cities [19]. These cities also house many university students; (totalling the student populations from McGill University [20], Université de Montréal [21], Concordia University [20], Université du Québec à Montréal [23], School of Higher Technology – University of Quebec [24], OCAD University [25], University of Toronto [26] and Toronto Metropolitan University [27] there are over 300,000 university students within the area where development is being proposed. Having reliable transport throughout large cities is essential for improving the quality of life of students, lower-income families, people with disabilities and commuters. These improvements would affect many more people if maglev infrastructure were implemented throughout Canada, creating more time for leisure, work, and community development.

With maglev infrastructure built throughout the country, urban planning would become significantly easier, creating opportunities for integrating environmental friendliness, social inclusion, innovation-driven economics and smart urban governance.

#### **Environmental Benefits**

As maglev trains are powered by electromagnetism, they do not emit carbon dioxide and are a green form of transportation [28]. In our current infrastructure, automobiles are a primary source of transportation, with planes being used for longer distances. The average car emits approximately 4600kg of CO<sub>2</sub> every year, with approximately 26 million vehicles in use [29], [30]. “Canadian air operators released approximately 22 megatons (Mt) of carbon dioxide

equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions in 2019, from both domestic and international operations; this is roughly equivalent to the GHG emissions generated from driving 4.8 million cars for a year.” [31]. As both of these transportation sources produce heavy emissions, maglev trains would be a large step in the direction of carbon neutrality in the transportation industry, as the reliance on automobiles and planes would decrease significantly with enough investment into its infrastructure.

During the development of maglev and high-speed rail in China, increases in emissions were found and projected. These emissions have increased during the construction and development stages, primarily due to the energy consumption of equipment and materials such as steel and concrete [32].

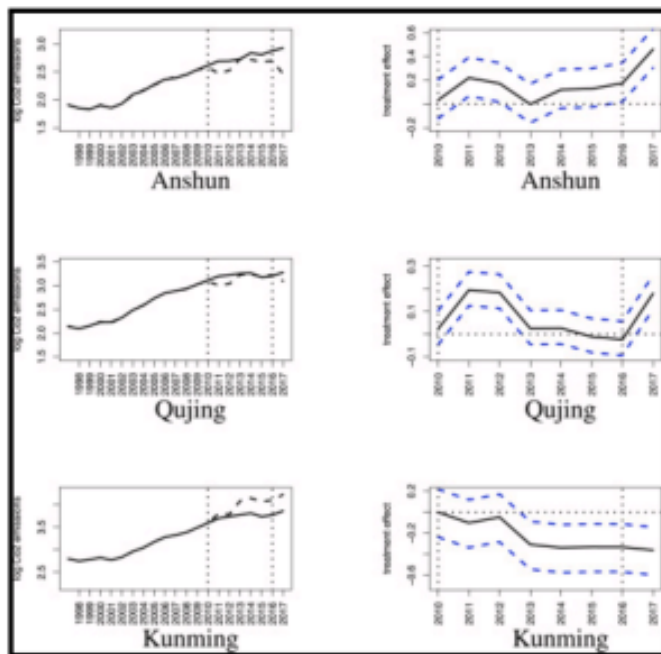
Li et al. note:

(1) high-speed rail can significantly improve urban carbon emission efficiency and that this conclusion is still valid after alleviating the endogenous problem and carrying out a number of robustness tests. (2) The heterogeneity study finds that the improvement effect of high-speed rail on urban carbon emission efficiency is more significant in non-resource-based cities and large cities. (3) The analysis of the mechanism shows that high-speed rail can improve urban carbon emission efficiency by promoting technological innovation, strengthening environmental regulations, improving industrial structure and weakening market segmentation. [32].

After an analysis of the study by [32], [33] it has been projected that during the development of maglev and high-speed rail, emissions increase due to the increased use of fossil fuel-based transport, as well as energy consumption from equipment and heavy materials such as steel, iron and concrete. Once finished, high-speed rail helps significantly in lowering carbon emissions in cities that do not rely on heavy industry, and moderately decreasing carbon emissions in cities that do rely on heavy industry [32], [33]. Some recommendations from [30] include an emphasis on accelerating the development of high-speed rail throughout the country to connect the nation, enhancing development in technologies aided by the new rail system, and absorbing knowledge and technology from developed regions.

The results from [33] show the projected carbon emissions during the given year and show the effect that the completed high-speed rail infrastructure had on emission intensity.

Canada can and should learn from these reports, as developing a maglev transportation system would help our country lower emissions in the long run, and provide ample opportunities for scientific development throughout the process.



(Fig. 4) Estimated treatment effect of HSR station on Chang–Kun segment.

Notes: Solid lines are actual series of log CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and dashed lines are predicted counterfactual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The two vertical lines denote the cut-off point T +1 when HSR projects started construction and the year when they started to operate, respectively. 3/6 stations shown [33].

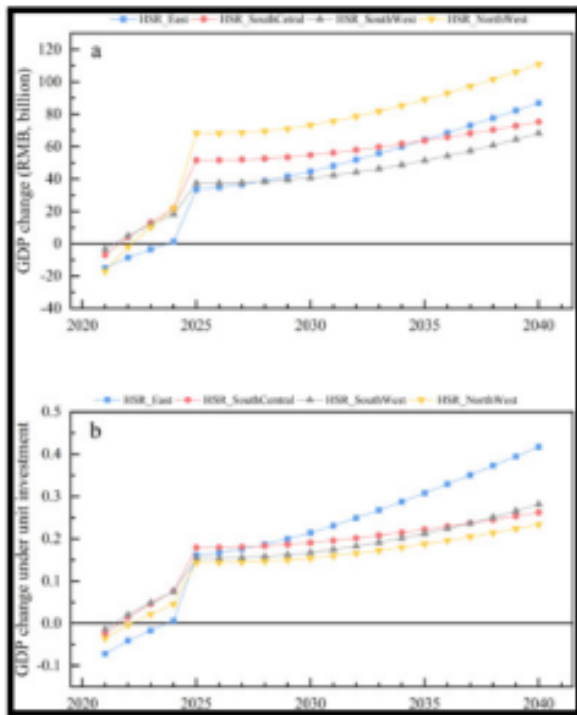
### Economic Benefits

Although there would no doubt be a steep cost for the development of infrastructure to support maglev trains, this cost would be offset by the savings on gas for vehicles and plane tickets by everyday Canadians. With about \$1510 per person per year spent on gas for vehicles, and approximately 26 million vehicles in use, an estimated \$39.2 billion is being spent by Canadians to use their vehicles [29], [30]. The average plane ticket in 2019 cost \$239.30, with 162.8 million passengers that year, an estimated \$38.9 billion was spent on plane tickets [34]. These numbers don't account for vehicle upkeep costs, vehicle repairs, or luggage costs, and there is already an estimated \$78 billion being spent by Canadians annually on transportation that produces heavy emissions. With the infrastructure to support maglev trains, there is no doubt these costs will go down as Canadians switch to greener transportation. A study was conducted in Massachusetts that found that nearly \$64.1 Billion was being spent annually to uphold a car-centric infrastructure, with more than half coming from public funds[35]. Taking this data along with the population of Massachusetts being 6.985 million people [36], it can be calculated that each person was spending approximately \$9176.80 to uphold this infrastructure. To compare this to a Canadian example, the population in Ontario is 15.6 million people [37], and if each person was paying the same amount as in the Harvard study, that would amount to \$143.2 Billion being spent to uphold a car-centric infrastructure each year. This number would include gas, car maintenance, road maintenance, labour costs, costs of developing land for parking lots, etc. This rough estimate is only a snapshot of the total cost to Canadians that a car-centric infrastructure currently poses.

Throughout the development of maglev and high-speed rail in China, the Chinese community has kept a close eye on both their economy and the disparities throughout the country and has noted the positive effects of development.

Yang et al. note that:

*“Economists have highlighted the importance of the high-speed rail (HSR) network in China to economic development. They have noted that in the HSR era, the distance is no longer the physical length between points but is measured according to the travel time. Based on an evaluation of traffic cost savings, it has been concluded that HSR construction improves the accessibility level and gross domestic product (GDP) of the cities along the lines (Li et al., 2018; Liu and Wang, 2017).” [38].*



**(Fig. 5)** (a) the annual changes in GDP (RMB, billion) and (b) the annual GDP changes per unit investment cost under different scenarios compared to the baseline (i.e., no HSR construction). Colours indicate different scenarios, including

HSR\_East (high-speed rail investment in eastern China), HSR\_SouthCentral (high-speed rail investment in South-central China), HSR\_SouthWest (high-speed rail investment in Southwest China), and HSR\_NorthWest (high-speed rail investment in Northwest China). [38].

The above graphs in **Fig. 5** illustrate the economic effects of high-speed rail infrastructure in China. Decreasing disparities between different regions, bringing technological advancements to regions that previously did not have the capabilities, increasing the efficiency of allocation of resources, and promoting growth in all industries.

Canada would benefit significantly by adopting maglev and high-speed rail infrastructure throughout the nation, helping to decrease the disparity between provinces, increasing the efficiency of travel, allocation of resources, and bringing to the forefront national collaboration.

## **Why Aren't Maglev Trains Already In Canada?**

### **Political Discussion**

One of the potential reasons why maglev and high-speed rail infrastructure is not widely in development throughout Canada is likely due to lobbying by industries that would stand to benefit from preventing their development. The Oil Lobby, Automotive Industry Lobby and Airplane Lobby would all lose out on large pieces of the market if maglev trains and high-speed rail were in wide usage throughout Canada, as automobiles would be in use much less, as would fossil fuels, and planes would be needed much less. These lobbies are all quite large and have a lot of sway in both the Canadian political system as well as the American political system. During this year's UN Climate Summit, a record number of fossil fuel lobbyists were present, with the main goal of undermining talks about climate change and lowering emissions [39]. It will always be difficult to enact positive change when profit is the primary concern. Canadians need to understand the control these groups have over the government and work toward enacting change to save our planet and our species.

### **Potential Partnerships**

One of the potential partnerships that could be made to develop maglev and high-speed rail in Canada would be with China. China has been at the forefront of the development of high-speed rail and maglev trains, with their Shanghai Longyang Road airport line able to attain a speed of 600 km/h [1]. This partnership would also be a road toward a more positive relationship with China. In Canada, the Trudeau government has been steadily attempting to improve relations with China, though increasing tensions between the United States and China have slowed the improvement of relations significantly [40]. An agreement around maglev and high-speed rail development would be economically beneficial for both parties and would be a great way to build a lasting relationship between China and Canada.

Canada could also partner with Japan in developing maglev and high-speed rail throughout the country, with Japan and Canada already having a positive relationship, as well as a positive trade relationship [41]. Japan currently has the record for the fastest maglev train in the world, with their L0 Series SCMaglev able to attain speeds of up to 603km/h [42]. A deal regarding the future development of maglev trains and high-speed rail in Canada would benefit both countries economically, and potentially pave the way for more infrastructure deals between the two nations.

### **Conclusion**

After analyzing the benefits presented by maglev infrastructure being adopted in Canada, it is clear that the nation will benefit from economic growth through efficiency of resource allocation, further advancement of technology in all fields and further urbanization. Maglev trains, along with high-speed rail, are technologies that will lead Canada on the road to success, cementing a large first step in creating a net-zero economy, and bringing to the forefront technological advancements. Canada has many potential partners for the development of maglev infrastructure, and regardless of whether Canada decides to look for assistance in development or complete development domestically, development must commence. The future is now, we have only to build it, and provide a better tomorrow for our communities, our nation, and the world.

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# Late Afternoon Commute

KYLEE BUSTARD

Late Afternoon Commute

*by Kylee Bustard*

Her sweatshirt is plain, no chain lines her neck  
yet lingering eyes drop down to her chest.  
She shrugs on her coat and pulls on a toque,  
disguising her hair in chance of a fluke.  
The 4:30 trail is fading in dusk—  
She can't help but hear the gravel's faint hush;  
The street lamps — stepping stones on a pond.  
The jarring echo of boots spurs her on.  
The figures drift her way. "Is she alone?"  
It all makes her wish she were already home.

# Untitled

JARED SIMMONDS

untitled

*by Jared Simmonds*

all the colours are emaciated,  
grudgingly stripped of life  
yet burdened with existence.

the world beyond sits plainly organised.  
simple angles, basic psychology,  
and my body,  
that heavy plague,  
is dead.

inertia has equalised  
the hierarchy of dreams.

I know no anaesthetic, not even your  
suffering, to silence the foreignness  
of waking.

I am alone.

your presence and care  
dropping like acorns  
to the pavement.

# The Sea

JARED SIMMONDS

the sea

*by Jared Simmonds*

your clouds of volume surge  
in, then out, of being;  
soft ruptures  
to an otherwise ubiquitous nothingness.

sentrying a vacant shoreline,  
for years i've studied, callous as a surgeon,  
to pry from churning depths the phantom element  
which aggrandizes your totality.

your secrets,  
a passage to madness:  
anemones, serpents, so many thousand kilograms;

i no longer interpret,  
but continue to listen.

you bellow a message bereft of language,  
but a message nonetheless.

knowing this requires no philosophy.

# There Came Darkness

JON DEBLY

There Came Darkness

*by Jon Debly*

In the late autumn of my thirteenth year, I was told that an acquaintance of my father's would be coming to stay with us. I was never offered any account of his connection to my family, nor did my parents ever explain, in any substantial way, the reason for his arrival at our door on a certain cold November morning.

Though large, our home was hardly extravagant. It was an old farmhouse perched on the outskirts of a small village which was, itself, a great distance from the nearest town.

Perhaps he encountered it as I always had. Maybe, after making his way along its long, winding path and rounding the bend that brought the house into view, he had been struck by the way the snow softened it into the natural contour of the landscape, moulding its shape to the fields of wild grass and great layered walls of spruce, pine, and white birch, which followed the swelling mountains and blushed eventually into the obscurity of the horizon. If the equator did hold the monopoly on heat and languid passion that my mail-ordered adventure books suggested it did, then the north, I thought, was distinguished by a wild and terrifying hunger—the visceral sense that trees and valleys and rivers, in all their expansiveness, might consume you.

Whether our guest felt this upon his arrival, I do not know; I was more than sufficiently puzzled by his decision to visit us in the first place. Why a man who “came from money”—a detail my father had made a point of revealing some days earlier—would have any interest in a country home so far from the beaten path perplexed me. I half believed that he would never arrive and that I had been made to tidy the house in vain.

But arrive he did.

At the time, my mother was fetching something from the cellar, and my father was going over the Book of Esther in the reading room. I had once read the Book of Esther and decided I did not like it. I did not like that there was no God, and I hated to hear about a man being hung on gallows that he, himself, had prepared. I figured that would be far worse than hanging on someone else's gallows. In any case, I never made it past the seventh chapter.

I was in the sitting room drying my winter clothes by the fireplace when there came a knock at the front door. The snow was melting off my boots and making minuscule rivers in the grooves of the brickwork. I watched it drip and fall as I heard my mother rushing up the basement steps and the scrape of my father's chair above me. I loathed to hear that chair disturbed. Nothing good ever came from it.

“Welcome. Come in,” said my mother, holding the door open after a short, fumbling bout with the latch. Cool air rushed into the drawing room.

“Come in, put your shoes here; no, I'll grab that, dear; oh, you can put your suitcase right here.” She rushed away with his bags, and then with his jacket, and then came back once more for his shoes as my father made his way down the stairs in his usual stiff stride.

Soon after, when the bustle died down a little, and my mother had gone off to the kitchen to continue making supper, I was able to get a better look at the young man whose hand my father was grasping.

I was not sure what to make of his appearance, nor was I certain just what I had expected. Elias, or so I had heard my mother call him, cut a strange figure against the plainness of the entryway. He was taller and thinner than my father, and his hair, long and coppery brown, was combed back from his forehead, below which the thin and narrow profile of his face was set at odds with the vividness of his blue eyes.

I was struck somewhat by the unfamiliar expensiveness of his clothing but decided, at once, that whatever gentility it lent him was tarnished by the curious hollowness that coloured his features. He walked cautiously, as if to keep from

trembling, and it seemed to cost him great effort to placate my father with polite nods as he was shown around the house.

After my father introduced us, I followed them for some time, but when they retired to the reading room before supper, I returned to the parlour directly below it. There, sharpening a dry stick that I had cut from an alder tree, I could hear the sound of voices above—my father’s deep tenor and the soft, unevenness of Elias’s.

In the kitchen, my mother was muttering verses to herself as she often did. “Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope,” I heard her say. And then dishes clattered on the dining room table, and I heard nothing more.

At dinner, my father was in a disagreeable mood. Instinctively, mother and I tried to fill the silence with anecdotes about the days and weeks prior: I had seen a bobcat in the fields. I had witnessed my mother being startled by an absurdly large rat that had darted out from a kitchen cupboard. Mrs Lee, my mother explained, had given a homemade centrepiece to Mrs Fields, who then gave it to the Russells, who also passed it along, until Ms Gray was forced to explain, upon receiving an unexpected visit from Mrs Lee, why an object eerily similar to the centrepiece was being used as a scratch post for her cats.

None of our ramblings elicited any reaction from my father. He hardly even looked up as he chewed. This worried me less than usual. There was little risk of him losing his temper when we had company.

For some time, my mother and I barely succeeded in keeping an awkward, jolting conversation afloat, but eventually, she capitulated and fell silent. I did no such thing. Just as I was providing our guest with a terribly long-winded explanation of the waterfowl that could often be seen skittering across a frozen pond near the foot of our hill, I was interrupted by the sound of my father’s knife clattering onto his plate.

“So, Elias, why did you go in the first place,” he said. “I have never heard of a man withdrawing when a semester is nearly over. Have you, Mary? Could you not have waited?”

His appeal to my mother, who was categorically unfamiliar with higher education, was obviously nothing but a reflex brought on by decades of cohabitation.

“I could not,” said our guest, setting his fork down softly and wiping his lip with a Handkerchief.

“It was the exams then?”

I could feel my ears and face becoming red.

“You know already that’s not the case. I would have finished the term with a First.”

A long pause on the part of my father spoke to the truthfulness of this claim. Prior to Elias’s arrival, he had made a great deal to my mother of his intelligence. The “young man,” he said, had read and understood, to the extent one could, *The Critique of Pure Reason* at thirteen; he had taught himself French, German, Latin, and Old English by the time he had finished secondary and maintained a decent understanding of the natural sciences as well. While I was uncertain of what kind of English might be classified as old and curious about the possibility of unnatural sciences, I gathered enough, by overhearing their conversation, to gain an impression of Elias’s brilliance.

My father sighed and rubbed his stubble. “Your parents won’t be pleased,” he said. “Felix will want a better explanation than the one that you’ve given me . . . and I still can’t comprehend why you would waste your time in England in the first place if you were only going to come back empty-handed.”

Elias’s face whitened. He pushed his chair back evenly and stood up. “My father wouldn’t be bothered if I studied in Timbuktu. As for Oxford, I have said already that I travelled there for an acquaintance. Excuse me.”

“An acquaintance,” muttered my father, stabbing at his food. He looked up to find my mother glowering at him.

Not a word was spoken for the rest of dinner. I had every intention of getting as far from the dining room table as possible when I had finished eating, so I quickly slipped off my chair and excused myself. As I was leaving, however, I heard my mother do something she had rarely ever done: rebuke my father.

“Oh, you fool!” she said. “Can’t you see that he went there for a girl?”

Very quickly, I began to feel that Elias’s presence dispelled much of the heaviness that usually pervaded our home and went some way in counteracting the soberness that emanated from my father’s study. Though I was seldom beaten very badly, my time at home was nevertheless characterised by an overwhelming feeling of oppressiveness, as if peace and

tranquillity were crystalline modes of being, able to be shattered by the most innocuous sound—or else as if the place were one big mousetrap ready to come down on the neck of anyone but my father.

I decided many things about Elias during that period. First, he was, indeed, rich. This was solidified in my mind when I snuck into his room and, inspecting an elaborate silver timepiece, nearly dropped it on the floor. Second, he was a genius—not the dry, musty sort of genius I would expect to find wandering around a place like Oxford, but a living encyclopaedia who could narrate to me an endless number of such tales as the Peloponnesian War and Antony and Cleopatra. Sitting on the floor next to the hearth, I could ask any question—why use an asp?—and he, sinking crookedly into the couch and staring intermittently out the windowpane, would answer: that is only Shakespeare; it was really a dose of poison. And we would fall into longer conversation, wherein I might say that I was glad it was not a snake—an asp sounds too funny to kill you—and he, smiling patiently, might assent to my point.

Third, and most interestingly of all, I found that Elias had loved a girl and been loved by her. Not the stuffy, formalistic love that my parents exhibited but something foolish and wild. This was proven to me fully one afternoon when I overheard my mother speaking softly in the kitchen. It was nearly evening, and amber threads of sun were piercing through the North-Western windows, casting shadows throughout the halls.

As I was coming through the parlour, I heard my mother say, “She’ll come around, dear. I’m certain she will.”

“I wish I shared your optimism,” came his answer.

Elias was sitting at the far end of the room, supporting his temples with both hands, as if he were trying to see something three hundred meters beyond the floorboards. “It has all been too much, I’m afraid.”

Afraid. He wasn’t saying so superficially; he really did look afraid. When they saw me, the subject was dropped, and Eli, as he soon acquiesced to my calling him, asked if I had seen any stoats in the fields.

While chivalric romances and fairy-tale books were my sole authorities on the subject of romantic love, I knew enough to realise that Eli had cared for someone very much in Oxford—enough to flee it without looking back—like Lot leaving Sodom.

Sometimes, it felt as if the subject of Eli’s adoration occupied my mind as much as she did his. It wasn’t infrequent that, laying alone beneath my bedsheets, I would close my eyes and find her features conjured before me. Some nights, she was tall and elegant, blond with sharp cheekbones and eyes that stared right back at me. Other times, I would fall asleep to visions of dark skin and hair as black as ravens’ feathers.

Yet, I never broached the subject to him. My mother had sat me down, some days after he had arrived, and said, “You mustn’t ever speak of Oxford. You mustn’t. He was at Oxford, but now he is here, and that is that. There is no sense in dredging up old stories. You wouldn’t like it if someone brought up an old melancholy story if you were feeling down, now, would you?”

I answered that I would not, and my mother smiled and pulled my toque down over my head. “That’s a good young man,” she said, “but do spend time with Elias. Time with us, with you, is what he needs. Reading upstairs is no good for that boy right now.”

Why she called me a young man and him boy was strange. I felt she had things backwards. But in a sense, I understood her delicacy; Elias was always drifting in and out of life, and he had been since arriving. I could demand a story or, outdoors, call his name from across the yard to catch his attention, but a moment later, his eyes would go wider, and I would see that he was no longer here.

“Neurosis,” I once heard my father say concerning his condition—flippantly and much to my mother’s protestation. “He lurches around like he’s half dead, and we must shake it out of him. Melancholia and neurosis.” Yet my father was no doctor.

Even if my mother had not so often urged me to “play” with him, I would have clung to Eli like a bad cold. Very rarely were we apart those days. In the mornings, we ate together, and if time allowed, he would read to me over his morning tea, sitting in a rocking chair that had only ever been occupied by boxes despite its ancient and hallowed place in the dining room corner. My mother liked to hear him read as much as I did. She said that he did not have the intonation of a person his age.

We were together most evenings as well. Outside, he watched me build forts and castles—cities of rock and snow—and

when I, feigning madness, would breach their walls and smash their aqueducts to pieces, he would help me build them up again, muttering something like, “at least you did not salt the earth.”

Yet I had not the slightest idea how he spent his days outside our mornings and evenings together. Sometimes, I was given the impression that he only came alive, only existed behind those sharp, blue eyes, when I shook the snow off my boots and called to him. Then, the stairs would groan under his steps, and he would be there in the hallway, looking like he’d spent the entire day in a deep sleep without having a moment’s rest.

By the time Christmas break came, our guest, at least to me, had established himself as a permanent fixture in our home. I came to expect his presence, and with that expectation came a certain sureness that I would not return one day to find him gone.

As much to my father’s dismay as my mother’s elation, our house was soon beset by an endless cycle of visiting relations. The air became thick with the rich scent of burning wood—of cinnamon, ginger, and cloves—and was filled, nearly always, with the sound of childish voices and the trampling of woollen feet.

Yet, the holidays, with all their optimistic bustle, seemed to do Eli no good—perhaps because they precluded any prospect of solitary rumination. And despite the festivities, sweets, and company, I saw that he found it impossible to shake the melancholy disposition by which we had come to know him.

Some mornings, he would not even descend from his room; he would read to me little and speak to me less, and when he did come down in the evening, he would seem as empty and insubstantial as the closed bellows that sat before the hearth. Often, even in the brightest moment of a Christmas fête, he would retreat to a vacant, windowed corner only to fix his pale gaze on the falling snow. “He’s staring all the way to England,” I, against my better judgment, once said out loud to my mother. She sent me to my room over the mere fear that he might have heard.

Oxford, Oxford, Oxford, became profane to me. I dwelled much on the name but dared not speak it. And as much as I thought of love and Oxford, my mother worried about Eli, so that one afternoon, after witnessing a particularly harrowing bout of melancholia on his part at a party the night before, my mother pressed me to include him in whatever winter adventures I would find myself that day.

“But around the house,” she said, “because the wind is picking up, and it will be a bad night.”

Utterly thrilled to be given this sort of licence, I had no intention of squandering it in the immediate vicinity of our home. The nearby ditches, drives, and fields had, to me, outlived their appeal. For weeks, I had been raving to Eli about the Cutlass Downs, a series of mounds and shallow depressions that, beyond a shallow belt of evergreens, unrolled towards the horizon. I had invented the moniker myself, and it no doubt bore some relationship to my recent completion of *Treasure Island*.

Eli was less than eager to put down his book and set out on what had previously—perhaps hyperbolically—been described by me as a perilous trek through the snow. He hardly looked up as he pulled on the boots and trousers he had borrowed from my father, and only my most solemn assurances that my mother had absolutely commanded him to go with me wherever I so chose kept him from turning back.

Outside, a rusted weathervane spun and whined atop the house. The bright orange hues of the evening sun, having so often in recent days made us squint and avert our eyes, were nowhere to be found, obstructed, no doubt, by the great ceiling of pale grey that had descended since noon. It was a sky that deepened and intensified the crystal blueness of the powdered snow to the point of translucence.

My hat pulled down and my mittened hands stretched out for balance, I waded with Eli through the creases and folds of snow before us, shattering with every step the thin, crisp layer of ice atop them.

Now and then, I looked to find him trudging awkwardly a few metres back. Unlike me, he was no more than shin deep in the snow—it hardly rose above the tops of his boots—but his difficulty in moving forward was evident from the great, halting steps he took and the thick cloud of vapour that, every few seconds, obstructed his face. He was wearing a scarf around his neck, and when it began to snow lightly, he pulled it up like a balaclava and squinted.

For some time, neither of us said anything; we were accompanied only by the rhythmic crunching of our own footsteps. When reached the trees, however, Eli spoke up.

“It’s okay,” he said, having found me glancing back from the edge of the forest. “Keep going.”

I waited anyway.

When he caught up to me, we went into the woods, stepping over dead logs and protruding sticks and ducking past a multitude of sagging boughs that left needles on our jackets and tossed blankets of snow upon us if we so much as touched them. I tried to hold the branches steady as Eli came through, but I had to apologise more than once when he was caught in the face with a stray.

It smelled cold as we walked—cold, I thought, as the colour white. Everything was filled with the scent of the dark and frozen ground—not earthy and manurish as it is when it thaws but clean and bare as the smell of firewood before it has been burned. It dried out my nose and made it feel nearly bloody, so that I had to check it just to be sure.

“Hurry, Eli,” I said. Thick flakes had begun to fall again under a sky that looked no better than it had before.

“Are you sure we shouldn’t turn back?” He was struggling to free his pant leg from a jagged log without removing his other hand from the scarf across his face.

“No, no,” I said, leaning into a wind that was still biting despite having its path obstructed by tree trunks. It burned my face and froze any skin that showed between the layers of my clothing.

The snow was so deep now that I felt as if I were treading water instead of taking huge, arching steps. The only difference was that, here, I was forced to be cautious around the hidden twigs and bushes that might easily tear my pants.

“Look, I am walking in cursive,” I called to Eli, rocking back and forth. He wiped his nose and uttered something. I couldn’t tell if he had heard.

“Was there snow in Oxford?”

We had emerged from the belt of trees and were walking nearly abreast of each other. The snow had become far shallower. The earth felt much closer—alarmingly close—and my legs were not ready for its solidness when we stumbled onto hard-packed ground.

“Of course. Oxford is in England. Why are you concerned with Oxford?”

It had been a rather stupid question. I had known all about snow in England and only wanted Eli to say something instead of trudging forward with his head down.

“Do you miss it?”

“England?”

“English snow.”

“I imagine it’s no different than the Canadian stuff,” he said, “but I wouldn’t know. I left before it started.”

“Oh. But the leaves had fallen.”

“All of them.”

“I love the fall,” I said, turning around backwards as we were buffeted by a particularly frigid gust of wind. “Do you? It means Christmas is nearly there.” He said nothing, and I could see that he was trying not to grimace in the face of the numbing cold.

“Have you gotten anyone a present this year?”

“Not yet. Would you like one?”

“Yes,” I cried happily. But I did not believe he hadn’t bought her something. I didn’t believe him at all.

It had grown darker. The sun was setting much too fast, and warmth was leaving our bodies as if it would never return. I was forced to think only of movement: the rhythm up and down that would keep my limbs from freezing.

“I’m cold,” I said.

“I would think so,” shouted Eli above the wind, which had picked up. “It feels like the damned ninth circle. We’re mad to be out here at this hour. Your mother will have my head for being such a fool. I think—”

“Look!” I was pointing towards the horizon. “The Cutlass Downs. And the weather is clearing!”

“It is.” Eli rested his hand on my toque. “It is improving, and I can see why you brought me to your . . . what do you call it?”

“Cutlass Downs,” I said proudly.

“But look out there, a little farther out. It seems as if it might get worse.”

We had finally come to the broad ridge that gave way to an expanse of undulating whiteness—a lowland smoothed by

the winter but nevertheless dimpled in appearance. Behind us, and even more so to the east, it was framed by a wall of evergreens, while in all other directions, the rolling hills prevailed, stretching, like an ocean, into the darkness.

On a better day, the sun, crimson, would be descending. It would show the outline of the land in violent red, and the line between the earth and sky would look to have been drawn by a knife. Yet there was no such division now; it was a great mouth yawning, a spine of black that rushed across the countryside like an inkwell overturned.

They overcame me suddenly, those clouds, and without warning I felt their coldness bearing down on us. I reckoned that I could count the distance, the paces, the breaths, that separated us from my mother, from the warmth of the hearth and the comfort of my own bedroom.

But I was glad, too, I realised. I was happy to be numb and hungry—to have my hands in fists so as to keep them warm and my toes curled under. I was glad that Eli would be forced to feel this way as well and be forced to feel his body here and now and see the shadow of a storm impending.

When I looked up at him, though, I found the same blank look on his frost-bitten face.

He looked into the storm and saw nothing.

“Eli, what is love like?” I said, grabbing at his arm. I would have said anything—anything at all—even something more wicked and embarrassing. I wished to make him speak.

“What?” he said, starting back away from me. It was the first time I had ever seen him look terrified, and for some reason, I was not surprised by his fear. Perhaps it was why I’d said it.

“Where did you learn to talk about things like that?”

“I’m sorry.” I felt my face grow hot despite the cold. Don’t you cry, I said to myself. Don’t you dare cry like a baby because you have nothing to cry about. And it was true.

Somehow, it was not his words that had hurt me.

“All right,” said Eli, regaining his composure a little. “I can tell you only what I think, and only if you will come back with me now. We’ll freeze out here.”

I nodded, and we turned away from the Cutlass Downs, hand in mittened hand.

“I’m sorry,” I repeated before we passed into the shallows of the trees. The deep snow, again, was crushed beneath our feet, and a new taste was put in the air by the coming of the night.

After some time in thought, when we were colder and more weary, Eli described love to me. He did not qualify or otherwise introduce his words, and he spoke softly. But despite the blowing wind, I heard him.

He said that for some—those who are good and trusting as children of Abel and can therefore feel the emotion in its raw and genuine form—it bears all things, believes and hopes and endures all things without failing. “It will never vanish away,” he said. But for others, for he who is short on hope and cannot bring himself to have faith in the selflessness of another, as he does not imagine he might ever find such a virtue in himself, it is poison. For him, love is fear and sickness unto death.

And the storm came suddenly after that, long before we had reached my home. The snow became thick and solid—impassable as the chalk-faced cliffs of England. So he held me. In the deep vastness of the winter night, he held me close in his arms and, in a nook between the roots of a great oak tree, shielded my face from the bitterest gusts of the squall.



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OLIVER CHAFFEY

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