Time and J.R.R. Tolkien's "Riddles in the Dark"

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Abstract

Close reading of the two riddle games in The Hobbit—the first between Bilbo and Gollum, and the second a three-sided game where both Smaug and the reader try to decode Bilbo's riddling self-references. Discusses "priming" in riddling, how riddles work as a speech act, and the sources of riddles used in these games. Includes a translation of Bilbo's riddles to Smaug into Old English.

Recommended Citation

Available at: https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol27/iss1/7

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ISSN: 0146-9339

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