

C.S. LEWIS'S *NARNIA* AND J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *MIDDLEEARTH*: REALMS OF EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT CHARACTERS

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Abstract

Reading fantasy literature is always a challenge to the reader's imagination and ability to understand events and characters. Reading such works from the psychological perspective of the Emotional Intelligence may challenge the reader to an even deeper insight into the human nature and the way people respond to various situations when their emotions are triggered by different stimuli. The Emotional Competence Framework devised by Daniel Goleman may be a useful tool when approaching the works of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as they offer such richness of contexts in which emotions may be conflicting and it is up to the characters to find a path of bringing things under control and restoring harmony.

Keywords: *emotions, emotional intelligence, emotional competence, emotionally intelligent characters*

The drive towards power is not only a common topic in literature but it has always been an issue with the psychologists and all those who wanted to understand the mental mechanisms behind it. A person's thirst for power may not only be a drive from within, born naturally and unmediated in the mind and the heart of that person but may as well be kindled by the context itself, by the interaction with the material world or with various creatures that embody this thirst for power. C.S. Lewis's *Narnia* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *Middle-earth* are realms where there is one character that desperately wants to have the Power in his or her own hands: The White Witch in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Sauron in *The Lord of the Rings* are the most blatant embodiments of such a gnawing wish. Nevertheless there are other characters whose psychological profile is augmented by this overwhelming and consuming desire: Edmund and Frodo.

At the other extreme there is one character in each work who counterbalances the power of evil, represents *hope* and is able to intervene positively in the course of action and rescue other characters: Aslan in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings*.

However, in order for the good to be victorious there must be a conflict of any sort—internal or external. The conflict in both books is triggered by a great need for someone to go on a quest and through many adventures in order to ensure the destruction of evil forces and the restoration of the land: Frodo, The Pevensies, Aslan. What makes both books challenging from a psychological point of view is the awareness the characters have of themselves, of the others and of the contexts they are put through, a perspective professionally clarified by the recent psychological studies focusing on Emotional Intelligence. Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence, Why it can matter more than IQ* (1995) states that Emotional Intelligence comprises abilities such as: “*being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; being able to control impulse and delay gratification; being able to regulate one’s mood and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; being able to empathize and to hope.*” (*Emotional Intelligence*, p. 36)

The **Emotional Competence Framework** devised by Daniel Goleman in the book *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998) offers a comprehensive perspective on what is desirable to happen in the field of emotions. Goleman distinguishes between *personal competence* and *social competence*, each with its corresponding areas:

Personal Competence – these competencies determine how we manage ourselves:

1. Self – Awareness

Knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions

- **Emotional awareness:** Recognizing one’s emotions and their effects
- **Accurate self-assessment:** Knowing one’s strengths and limits
- **Self-confidence:** A strong sense of one’s self-worth and capabilities

2. Self-Regulation

Managing one’s internal states, impulses, and resources

- **Self-Control:** Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
- **Trustworthiness:** Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
- **Conscientiousness:** Taking responsibility for personal performance
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility in handling change
- **Innovation:** Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information

3. Motivation

Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals

- **Achievement drive:** Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence
- **Commitment:** Aligning with the goals of the group or organization
- **Initiative:** Readiness to act on opportunities
- **Optimism:** Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

Social Competence – these competencies determine how we handle relationships:

1. Empathy

Awareness of others' feelings, needs and concerns

- **Understanding others:** Sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
- **Developing others:** Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities
- **Service orientation:** Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs
- **Leveraging diversity:** Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people
- **Political awareness:** Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships

2. Social skills

Adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others

- **Influence:** Wielding effective tactics for persuasion
- **Communication:** Listening openly and sending convincing messages
- **Conflict management:** Negotiating and resolving disagreements
- **Leadership:** Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
- **Change catalyst:** Initiating and guiding individuals and groups
- **Building bonds:** Nurturing instrumental relationships
- **Collaboration and cooperation:** Working with others towards shared goals
- **Team capabilities:** Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals (Working with Emotional Intelligence, pp. 32-34)

As stated before, Goleman mentions the key competence which is essential in the delineation of an emotionally intelligent being: **hope**. Hope, “*in a technical sense, is more than the sunny view that everything will turn out all right.*” (Emotional Intelligence, p. 98) Together with **optimism** or as an essential part of it, **hope** carries people across frustrations and setbacks and keeps them away from apathy and surrender.

Nevertheless, the fiercest enemy on the path of self-development, self-awareness, assertiveness and social cooperation is **fear**. It may assume a whole

array of manifestations depending on the context: anxiety, apprehension, dread, fright, horror, panic, scare, terror, trepidation, nervousness, consternation, phobia and panic. It may either prevent someone from stepping into a dangerous zone or it may unexpectedly take over a person with such a force that one may hardly be self-aware and make wise decisions. Nevertheless, it can be a very conscious emotion if projected on one's moral values and beliefs: fear of harming others, fear as respect in connection with people worthy of all respect and honour and the fear that prevents one from upsetting the other.

The framework proposed by Daniel Goleman can be used by readers if they aim at perceiving the characters from a psychological and behavioural point of view. It opens up an insight into the mind and the heart of various characters in novels, traces paths of analysis of causes and reasons for actions, makes obvious the role of emotions in making decisions and embracing different ways of acting and stirs the readers to reflect on their own patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.

C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia—The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* may be read from the perspective of a famous psychological experiment that stirred a lot of interest among the specialists studying human behaviour from the perspective of the Emotional Intelligence—The Marshmallow Experiment (Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, pp. 91-94) The conclusion of the experiment is that children who are able to ward off **greed** and delay **gratification**, in this particular case that of receiving an extra marshmallow if they are able to wait for a given amount of time, will be more resilient and successful in life. In Lewis's case, the marshmallow is the Turkish Delight that the Queen of Narnia offers Edmund as a fulfillment of his wish. It all spins around **greed** and how much a person is ready to sacrifice in order to be **gratified on the spot**. Temptation comes to those who are prone to surrendering and C.S. Lewis seems to build a case around Edmund, the one who is fighting with frustration and a rejection of normal, harmonious relationships with his siblings. Edmund's **greed** - "*the more he ate the more he wanted to eat*" is the trap in which he falls helplessly: "*Edmund did not [know], that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves.*" (p. 28) The paradox is that Edmund goes against his own better judgement. When seeing the Queen—"*He did not like the way she looked at him.*" (p. 25), she cries and calls him an 'idiot'. She blatantly changes her approach and lures him. Edmund "*did not like this arrangement at all but he dared not disobey.*" (p. 27) He obeys out of **fear**—another key concept in the theory of the Emotional Intelligence. The cunning Witch/ the Queen takes Edmund's **greed** to an even higher level:

There are whole rooms full of Turkish Delight, and what's more, I have no children of my own. I want a nice boy whom I could bring up as a Prince and who would be King of Narnia when I am gone. While he was Prince he would wear a gold crown and eat Turkish Delight all day long; and you are much the cleverest and the handsomest young man I've ever met. I think I would like to make you the Prince – some day, when you bring the others to visit me.

(The Chronicles of Narnia, p. 29)

C.S. Lewis's authorial comments about Edmund are extremely telling: "*His face had become very red and his mouth and fingers were sticky. He did not look either clever or handsome, whatever the Queen might say.*" (p. 29) The question that arises: Is Edmund an emotionally intelligent or rather unintelligent adolescent? Attempting an answer in the light of Goleman's **Emotional Competence Framework**, concerning the Personal vs Social Competence, he seems to be a pretender—he "*was tired and pretended not to be tired, which always made him bad-tempered*" (p. 4), a grumbler—he was dissatisfied with the rain on the first day, a spiteful being—Peter is able to recognize that: "*it's just spite. You've always liked being beastly to anyone smaller than yourself...*" (p. 34)

Nevertheless, on entering Narnia, he is aware of his own feelings and of the feelings of others: "*She's angry about all the things I've been saying lately,' thought Edmund. And though he did not like to admit that he has been wrong, he also did not much like being alone in this strange, cold, quiet place.*" (p. 23) Overwhelmed by **fear**, he has the power to say "*I'm sorry I didn't believe you. I see now you were right all along.*" (p. 24) Unfortunately, Lucy can't hear him. The list of characterial flaws may continue with Edmund's inclination towards addiction—"*Edmund was already feeling uncomfortable from having eaten too many sweets, and when he heard that the Lady he had made friends with was a dangerous witch he felt even more uncomfortable. But he still wanted to taste that Turkish Delight again more than he wanted anything else.*" (p. 31) He dwells in lies—"he decided all at once to do the meanest and most spiteful things he could think of. He decided to let Lucy down [...] and said, 'Oh, yes, Lucy and I have been playing—pretending that all her story about the country in the wardrobe is true. Just for fun, of course. There's nothing there really.' " (p. 33) and be vengeful—when caught by Lucy that he had admitted he had been to Narnia before, he says: "*I'll pay you all out for this, you pack of stuck-up, self-satisfied prigs.*" (p. 42) There is not a big step till he becomes a traitor—the Beaver knows Edmund is a traitor from the moment he sees him: "*...the moment I set eyes on that brother of yours I said to myself 'Tracherous'. He had the look of one who has been with the Witch and eaten her food. You can always tell them if you've lived long in Narnia; something about their eyes.*" (p. 62)

In the light of all the revealed sides of Edmund's personality there emerges the conflict between Edmund's awareness of what is true and what he

wants to be true, with a surprising discovery that his emotions are wiser than he is:

You mustn't think that even now Edmund was quite so bad that he actually wanted his brother and sisters to be turned into stone. He did want Turkish Delight and to be a Prince (and later a King) and to pay Peter out for calling him a beast. As for what the Witch would do with the others, he didn't want her to be particularly nice to them—certainly not to put them on the same level as himself; but he managed to believe or to pretend he believed that she shouldn't do anything very bad to them, 'Because,' he said to himself, 'all these people who say nasty things about her are her enemies and probably half of it isn't true. She was jolly nice to me, anyway, much nicer than they are. I expect she is the rightful Queen really. Anyway, she'll be better than that awful Aslan!' At least, that was the excuse he made in his own mind for what he was doing. It wasn't a very good excuse, however, for deep down inside him he really knew that the White Witch was bad and cruel. (*The Chronicles of Narnia*, p. 65)

Disappointed and miserable when he reaches the Queen's house he is received with coldness and sees that instead of Turkish Delight he gets stale bread, instead of being called 'clever' he is now called a 'fool' for not having brought his siblings with him, and instead of a warm place in the Queen's house he receives a cold place in her sledge and has to accompany her on the hunt for his own brother and sisters.

Nevertheless, Edmund is not irredeemable. There is a turning point in his journey through Narnia. After bitterly discovering the truth about the Witch's promises, and when taken by force to hand in his siblings to the evil queen, Edmund is filled with *compassion* (awareness of the suffering and feelings of others) for the Queen's victims: "*And Edmund for the first time in this story felt sorry for someone besides himself.*" (p. 84). He summons up his bravery and tries to stop the Queen from making victims. *Accepted* and *forgiven* by his siblings, he is filled with courage to fight evil, the Witch and her army and he destroys the Witch's wand. He is badly wounded in the attempt. Edmund's redemption is made possible through Aslan's sacrifice and his revival after the battle changes his appearance completely as his little sister Lucy remarks—Edmund was "*looking better than she had seen him look – oh, for ages; in fact ever since his first term at that horrid school which was where he had begun to go wrong. He had become his real old self again and could look you in the face.*" (p. 132) As a crowning of all these, Edmund ends up by being called King Edmund the Just.

In utter contrast to her sibling, Lucy is the embodiment of all the competences of an emotionally intelligent person. Her personal competence is made obvious by her initiative—she goes into the wardrobe and discovers that it is a rather big and queer wardrobe. To her amazement she has passed from the

wardrobe into a wood at night-time with snow under her feet, at which she *“felt a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well”* (p. 7). She has the ability to accurately assess herself and to be self-confident: she sticks to the truth based on her own experience: *“I don’t care what you think, and I don’t care what you say ... I know I’ve met a Faun in there.”* (p. 34)

As for her social competence, Lucy is ready to feel and show *empathy* towards Mr. Tumnus. Mr. Tumnus is about to betray her, admits to that and is really sorry for having intended it—*“the Faun’s brown eyes had filled with tears [...] at last it covered its face with its hands and began to howl.”* (p.14) to which Lucy’s reaction: *“ ‘Mr. Tumnus! Mr. Tumnus!’ said Lucy in great distress. ‘Don’t! Don’t! What is the matter? Aren’t you well?’”* (p.14) And on hearing the truth: *“ ‘Well,’ said Lucy rather slowly (for she wanted to be truthful and yet not be too hard on him), “well, that was pretty bad. But you’re so sorry for it that I’m sure you will never do it again.”* (p.16) When they part, Lucy’s reaction triggers the Faun unexpected repentance—he says: *“[...] c-can you ever forgive me for what I meant to do?”* To which Lucy’s answer is meant to reassure him of her affection and her *hope* of his well-being *“Why, of course I can,” said Lucy, shaking him heartily by the hand. “And I do hope you won’t get into dreadful trouble on my account.”*(p. 16) When back in Narnia Lucy wants to save Mr. Tumnus and all the other victims of the White Witch, is ready to fight against the evil and is given the healing cordial as a weapon in full accordance with her kind disposition. Brave in conflict, never surrendering in front of blatant lies, never ready to compromise and openly confronting the hypocrites, Lucy receives a title worthy of her inner grandeur: Queen Lucy the Valiant.

Peter, the elder brother, the one in charge with the younger siblings, is an *optimist*—he is very much open to adventure and happily accommodates the thought that *“This is going to be perfectly splendid. That old chap will let us do anything we like.”* (p. 3) His personal competence also comprises the ability to adapt to novel and unexpected situations—he takes the *initiative* and while exploring the rooms in the house the children discover a room with only one wardrobe. He is fully aware of the feelings of others—*“ ‘Look here,’ said Peter, turning on him savagely, ‘shut up! You’ve been perfectly beastly to Lu ever since she started this nonsense about the wardrobe, and now you go playing games with her about it and setting her off again. I believe you simply did it out of spite.’ ”* (p. 34), is committed and has initiative—*“This Faun saved my sister at his own risk, Mr. Beaver. We can’t just leave him to be—to be—to have that done to him.”* (p. 58). Socially competent, Peter is aware of his own impact on the life of others. In Aslan’s presence Peter himself feels the need to acknowledge his fault in behaving badly towards his younger brother, a behaviour that has influenced Edmund’s behaviour and his fall into treachery: *“That was partly my fault, Aslan. I was angry with him and I think that helped him to go wrong.”* (p.

94). The title he receives from Aslan reveals his inner character: King Peter the Magnificent.

Susan, the motherly figure is both personally and socially competent. She is cautious: “*I—I wonder if there’s any point in going on,’ said Susan. ‘I mean, it doesn’t seem particularly safe here and it looks as if it won’t be much fun either. And it’s getting colder every minute, and we’ve brought nothing to eat. What about just going home?’*”, ready to help: “[...] *I think we must try to do something for Mr. Whatever-his-name is—I mean the Faun.*” (p. 44), and overprotective—empathic maybe:

Does he know,” whispered Lucy to Susan, “what Aslan did for him? Does he know what the arrangement with the Witch really was?”

“Hush! No. Of course not,” said Susan.

“Oughtn’t he to be told?” said Lucy.

“Oh, surely not,” said Susan. “It would be too awful for him. Think how you’d feel if you were he. (*The Chronicles of Narnia*, p. 132)

Susan takes the initiative and is courageous: “*Then in the name of Aslan,*” said Queen Susan, “*if ye will all have it so, let us go on and take the adventure that shall fall to us.*” (p. 137), is capable of showing compassion for the ones in distress and in the end is called Queen Susan the Gentle.

Narnia is the perfect realm to put beings to test, be they humans or animals. Nevertheless, this place is not completely hopeless and its inhabitants are not helpless. Like a mighty shadow from the past and in the dreariest of moments there comes Aslan, the embodiment of **Hope**. The mention of Aslan gave Edmund “*a mysterious and horrible feeling just as it gave others a mysterious and lovely feeling.*” (p. 64) and when the beaver mentions the name of Aslan, the text confronts the reader again with the imminence of emotional reactions: “*At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer.*” (p. 50-51) Although, he is the perfect one, the invincible who offers his life in Edmund’s stead, he himself needs compassion in moments of distress: “*I am sad and lonely. Lay your hands on my mane so that I can feel you are there and let us walk like that.*” (p. 109)

In Narnia, the clash between the good and evil forces brings to light emotional reactions in the titans themselves: “*She [the Witch] stood by Aslan’s head. Her face was working and twitching with passion, but he looked up at the sky, still quiet, neither angry nor afraid, but a little sad.*” (p. 113) And even if Aslan seems defeated, his most powerful act of empathy turns the tables and the victory of Good has miraculous consequences: “[...] *when a willing victim who*

had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backward." (p. 120)

J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis's kindred spirit and a master in majestically depicting the universal conflict between Good and Evil, also introduces a lure in his book *The Hobbit* and the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*. Compared to Lewis's book, the lure here is represented by the Ring of Power, the ring that makes the possessor *love* it and *hate* it at the same time. It is a love for the power that it can offer, giving the illusion of invincibility, and a hatred for the overwhelming *evil* that wears the carrier out.

The characters that fall under the spell of the Ring of Power are as diverse as the worlds created by Tolkien in his book. First of all there is Sméagol, the hobbit that is instantly attracted to the ring and the one that is attributed the name of Gollum due to the sound he makes as a consequence of his deep fall into the pit of enwrapping temptation. The effect of the Ring on everyone: the *good* is shaken and the temptation to choose *evil* is great. On Smeagol this ***on the spot gratification*** leads to an immediate act of murder; he later "*used it to find out secrets, and he put his knowledge to crooked and malicious uses*" (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 52). The Ring robbed Gollum of his will, for he hated and loved the Ring and he could not get rid of it.

Another candidate to the test of the Ring is Bilbo Baggins. Unlike on Gollum, the effect is temporary though significant. Gandalf, the Wizard, realises that his friend Bilbo has not told him the truth about the Ring from the start—"*he also thought it important, and disturbing, to find that the good hobbit had not told the truth from the first: quite contrary to his habit.*" (*The Lord of the Rings*, p.13) When Bilbo decides to leave the Shire and commit the Ring into the hands of Frodo, he wavers a lot, even if Gandalf tells him that by keeping to this intention of his, he will be free. The force is so tremendous that Bilbo cries—just like Frodo later on—"*It is my own. I found it. It came to me.*" (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 33) and then much in Gollum's own way of talking: "*It is mine, I tell you. My own. My precious. Yes, my precious.*" (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 33) and then "*Bilbo took out the envelope, but just as he was about to set it by the clock, his hand jerked back, and the packet fell on the floor. Before he could pick it up, the wizard stooped and seized it and set it in its place. A spasm of anger passed swiftly over the hobbit's face again. Suddenly it gave way to a look of relief and a laugh. 'Well, that's that,' he said. Now I'm off!'*" (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 34)

The conflict between ***good*** and ***evil*** can only be resolved by a victorious quest on which Frodo is chosen to go: the destruction of the Ring. The temptation in Frodo's case is to put on the Ring and disappear. Gandalf's warning to Frodo when he returns after many years is meant to raise his awareness as to its power: "*It is far more powerful than I ever dared to think at first, so powerful that in the end it would utterly overcome anyone of mortal race*

who possessed it. It would possess him.” (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 45) When Frodo finds out that this is the One Ring lost by the Dark Lord, Sauron the Great, who will set off in search for it, he is dumbfounded and can sense a feeling of **fear** overwhelming him. The intense emotions of **fear** and **dread** overcome Frodo as he hears Gandalf speak of the Enemy who has found out where the One Ring is: “O, Gandalf, best of friends, what am I to do? For now I am really afraid. What am I to do?” (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 58) **Fear** is also generated by the places he has to cross, places mutilated by *evil*, and by the creatures that seem to lurk in the dark, messengers of the Enemy spying on him and on his company.

Courage is what Frodo needs to help him overcome **fear**. And Gildor gives him a good insight and advice: “‘*Courage is found in unlikely places,*’ ... ‘*Be of good hope!*’ ” (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 83) In his utmost despair when he sees his friends swallowed by the willow-tree in the Old Forest—“*he felt desperate: lost and witless*” (*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 116) —he cries for help and the best help, Tom Bombadil, shows up. He takes them to his home where they meet Goldberry, daughter of the River, who welcomes them and offers them good lodging. In her presence, Frodo feels “*his heart moved with a joy that he did not understand*” (*The Lord of the Rings*, p.121). She seems to be a giver of peace, as Tom is a giver of courage, one who admits to having no fear. Tom is the one in whose presence Frodo is filled with wonder and is able to sense “*the silence of the heavens*” around him. He is not overcome by the power of the Ring because he is his own master. The Ring has little power or none on those who are inclined towards *good*, as is the case of Tom Bombadil and Sam Gamgee, Frodo’s trustworthy companion on his quest.

Wisely advised by Gandalf, Frodo takes Sam Gamgee as companion. Sam will follow him when he tries to sneak away and will be his loyal companion all along the way. Under the spell of the Ring Frodo is inclined to distrust everyone around him, a feeling that will overwhelm him to the point of distrusting his own faithful friend and close companion. When Frodo reaches the Seat of Seeing, on Amon Hen:

The two powers strove in him. For a moment, perfectly balanced between their piercing points, he writhed, tormented. Suddenly he was aware of himself again. Frodo, neither the Voice nor the Eye: free to choose, and with one remaining instant in which to do so. He took the Ring off his finger. ... A great weariness was on him, but his will was firm and his heart lighter. He spoke aloud to himself. ‘I will do now what I must,’ he said.

(*The Lord of the Rings*, p. 392)

Frodo and Sam battle their way to Mount Doom but, as they have no guide to show them the way, they come to a point in which despondency overwhelms Sam. What’s more, Frodo accepts Gollum as their guide, which causes even

more distress. In the Tower of Cirith Ungol, where Frodo is taken by the orcs after he has been paralysed by the poison of Shelob, the dialogue between Sam and Frodo brings to light Sam's honest *empathy* and the powerful influence of the Ring on Frodo's mind and behaviour:

'They've taken everything, Sam,' said Frodo. 'Everything I had. Do you understand? Everything!' He cowered on the floor again with bowed head, as his own words brought home to him the fullness of the disaster, and despair overwhelmed him. 'The quest has failed Sam. Even if we get out of here, we can't escape. Only Elves can escape. Away, away out of Middle-earth, far away over the Sea. If even that is wide enough to keep the Shadow out.'

'No, not everything Mr. Frodo. And it hasn't failed, not yet. I took it, Mr. Frodo, begging your pardon. And I've kept it safe. It's round my neck now, and a terrible burden it is, too.' Sam fumbled for the Ring and its chain. 'But I suppose you must take it back.' Now it had come to it, Sam felt reluctant to give up the Ring and burden his master with it again.

'You've got it?' gasped Frodo. 'You've got it here? Sam, you're a marvel!' Then quickly and strangely his tone changed. 'Give it to me!' he cried, standing up, holding out a trembling hand. 'Give it to me at once! You can't have it!'

'All right, Mr. Frodo,' said Sam, rather startled. 'Here it is!' Slowly he drew the Ring out and passed his chain over his head. 'But you're in the land of Mordor now, sir; and when you get out, you'll see the Fiery Mountain and all. You'll find the Ring very dangerous now, and very hard to bear. If it's too hard a job, I could share it with you, maybe?'

'No, no!' cried Frodo, snatching the Ring and chain from Sam's hands. 'No, you won't, you thief!' He panted, staring at Sam with eyes wide with fear and enmity. Then, suddenly, clasping the Ring in one clenched fist, he stood aghast. A mist seemed to clear from his eyes, and he passed a hand over his aching brow. The hideous vision had seemed so real to him, half bemused as he was still with wound and fear. Sam had changed before his very eyes into an orc again, leering and pawing at his treasure, a foul little creature with greedy eyes and slobbering mouth. But now the vision had passed. There was Sam kneeling before him, his face wrung with pain, as if he had been stabbed in the heart; tears welled from his eyes.

'O Sam!' cried Frodo. 'What have I said? What have I done? Forgive me! After all you have done. It is the horrible power of the Ring. I wish it had never, never, been found. But don't mind me, Sam. I must carry the burden to the end. It can't be altered. You can't come between me and this doom.'

(The Lord of the Rings, pp. 890–91)

The climax of this inner struggle to oppose the force of evil is reached on Mount Doom, where Frodo surrenders his will: "*I have come, he said. But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!*" *(The Lord of the Rings, p. 924)* He fights for the Ring but loses it in the struggle

with a much greedier creature: Gollum, whose end is the end of the Ring as well. All along the quest, a reading of the events from the perspective of the theory of Emotional Intelligence surprisingly reveals the twists and turns of the human nature, its bursts and attempts of appeasing them, its struggles and victories.

The minds and the hearts of C.S. Lewis's and J.R.R. Tolkien's characters are the arena of conflicting emotions and the writers skillfully depict these inner struggles, revealing the moments of self-awareness and of motivation as well as the moments in which they are aware of their place in relationship with the others and attempt a reconnection with them by means of various social strategies. Reading from the psychological perspective of Emotional Intelligence means gaining a profound insight into the workings of the mind and hearts of the characters, a discovery of the situations that trigger various emotional responses and of the solutions various characters adopt in similar contexts, and a deeper understanding of what seems to be an appropriate course of action. Readers have the chance of discovering emotions they have experienced in their own lives, of projecting themselves in situations that may bear a resemblance to their own contexts, and of selecting emotional and behavioural responses that may prove to be successful in their own reality.

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