

Chester, a loathsome creature who has been everything but a pirate. He offers Jim a job that would exile him on a guano island for life because, as he says, Jim “is no earthly good for anything else.” He mistakes Jim for one of his own kind.

Cornelius, the former unsuccessful agent for Stein on Patusan. He resents Jim and finally aids Brown in causing Jim’s destruction.

Gentleman Brown, a renegade who with a cutthroat crew lands on Patusan to get supplies but remains to rob and plunder. In sympathy, not understanding Brown’s deceit, Jim makes a pact with him. Brown’s deception results in Jim’s death.

Doramin, the leader of Patusan natives with whom Jim makes friends. When Doramin’s son is killed because of Jim’s misjudgment, Doramin is bound by honor to kill Jim.

Dain Waris, Doramin’s son and Jim’s friend, killed treacherously by Brown. By his error in judgment, Jim is responsible for his friend’s death.

The Rajah, the ruler of the natives on Patusan; he unsuccessfully opposes Jim.

Tamb’ Itam, the faithful servant of Jim on Patusan.

Kossim, the confidant of the Rajah.

Sherif Ali, a wandering stranger, an Arab half-breed, who invites tribes from the interior to form a third force on Patusan.

The Captain, the German skipper of the *Patna*, who abandoned his ship and its load of passengers without remorse.

The Chief Engineer, who swears that he saw the ship go down.

The Second Engineer, who also seems to have no remorse for abandoning the ship.

Captain O’Brien, a large, noisy old man who says that abandoning the *Patna* was a disgrace.

Captain Jones, the first mate serving under Captain Brierly. He finds it hard to explain Brierly’s suicide, all the more because he did not like Brierly while the man was alive.

Captain Robinson, an old renegade who has done almost everything from opium smuggling to stealing. Chester takes him in on the guano deal because Robinson has some money.

Jewel, Jim’s native wife on Patusan. She finds it difficult to understand his ideals.

Lord of the Flies

Author: William Golding

First published: 1954

Genre: Novel

Locale: A previously uninhabited tropical island

Plot: Fable

Time: The future, during a nuclear war

Ralph, a British schoolboy who is the boys’ chief until Jack weans them away and turns Ralph into their prey. Ralph is the chief spokesman for civilized values in the novel. It is Ralph who finds the conch shell that comes to symbolize order and Ralph who advocates building shelter and keeping a fire going. The son of a naval officer, Ralph is dedicated to duty and the hope of eventual rescue. For Ralph, keeping a fire going is almost an obsession, and it is ironic that the fire set at the end of the novel to drive him out of hiding attracts the ship that lands to rescue the boys. At times, however, Ralph is tempted by the allure of barbarism, a conflict apparent early in the novel when he encounters Piggy. First taunting Piggy, then regretting his behavior, he foreshadows his later hesitancy in asserting the values he initially represents. In fact, Ralph is toying with the idea of giving in and joining Jack’s band when he learns that Jack is planning to kill him.

Jack Merridew, another schoolboy, Ralph’s antagonist. Jack is a charismatic leader unable to accept a subservient role in the society created by the boys. He revels in the hunt and the power it confers on him, and he relishes the anarchy accorded the group by the absence of adult supervision. Jack uses fear, ritual, and violence to secure the blind obedience of the other boys. For Jack, superior strength and weaponry, not rules, agreements, and elections, confer leadership. Early in the novel, he lashes out at Piggy, breaking his glasses. It is as if he realizes that Piggy provides the intellectual foundation for Ralph’s leadership and that, without Piggy, Ralph would be malleable.

Piggy, the intellectual of the group, an overweight, near-sighted, asthmatic boy. Piggy is an object of ridicule, suffering the group’s taunts and its contempt. He relies on Ralph for protection but also functions as Ralph’s adviser, refusing to let him forget that survival depends on rules and order. The breaking of Piggy’s spectacles—one lens at a time—symbolizes the breaking of the last link to civilized values, and Piggy’s death represents barbarism and evil triumphant. Moments before his death, Piggy seizes the conch (which, along with Piggy and his spectacles, is smashed by a boulder) and demands that the boys choose between rules and killing, between law and “breaking things up.”

Simon, a strange, introverted boy. Early on, Simon seems aware that something is amiss and withdraws to meditate in a secret hiding place. In a critical scene, he confronts the head of the pig (Jack's offering to "the beast") and struggles with the realization that civilization and its trappings are but a flimsy veil thrown over human depravity. Simon discovers the dead parachutist and returns to reveal the true identity of the beast, but he is killed by the frenzied, chanting hunters.

Sam and Eric, twins whom the boys call "Samneric." They are Ralph's last followers, loyal to the end. Only when captured by Jack and his hunters and subjected to torture do they switch sides. Even then, they warn Ralph of the fate Jack has in mind for him. They are later forced to reveal Ralph's hiding place.

Roger, one of Jack's first followers. It is Roger who tips the boulder that crushes Piggy. Although the act itself is a product of a "delirious abandonment" born of the violence and excitement of the moment (Ralph and Jack fighting), it confers on Roger the status of executioner, a role he seems to accept and even relish.

—Ron Carter

The Lord of the Rings

Author: J. R. R. Tolkien

First published: 1955 (includes *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 1954; *The Two Towers*, 1954; *The Return of the King*, 1955)

Genre: Fantasy

Locale: Middle-earth

Plot: Fantasy

Time: The Third Age

Frodo Baggins, the principal protagonist. Frodo is a hobbit, a member of a diminutive, peace-loving race that inhabits the Shire, a rural area in the northwest of Middle-earth. From his Uncle Bilbo, Frodo inherits a magic ring that confers the power of invisibility upon its wearer. Although he at first regards it as merely a useful toy, he comes to learn that it is in fact the Ruling Ring, an enormously powerful talisman created and lost by Sauron, the malevolent Dark Lord, ages before. Should Sauron recover the Ring, he will become powerful enough to plunge Middle-earth into an age of darkness. The Ring is a potent weapon that enables its wearer to control the wills of others, but it is inherently evil, inevitably corrupting its possessors. Rather than attempt to use it to defeat Sauron, therefore, Frodo seeks to destroy it. This, however, can be done only where the Ring was made: in the volcanic fires of Mount Doom, in the heart of Sauron's kingdom. Pursued by Sauron's emissaries—including monsters such as

Orcs, Trolls, and the terrifying Ringwraiths—Frodo and a handful of companions undertake the apparently hopeless quest of carrying the Ring to Mount Doom. Along the way, Frodo bears the colossal burden of the Ring, which exerts an inexorable pressure upon his mind and spirit. He yields to its temptation only when he is on the point of accomplishing his quest, claiming the Ring for himself as he stands by the fiery fissures of Mount Doom. He is saved at the last moment by Gollum, who bites the Ring—and a finger—from Frodo's hand and falls into the abyss, destroying the Ring and vanquishing Sauron. A small, unassuming member of an obscure race, Frodo is outwardly ordinary, an unlikely hero in a titanic struggle for world supremacy, yet his simplicity and essential goodness give him the ability to resist the Ring's pull far longer than a seemingly more powerful character could. Although he is terribly worn, Frodo is ennobled by his long ordeal. A somewhat bourgeois and self-interested country squire at the story's beginning, he becomes a saintlike figure by its conclusion.

Samwise (Sam) Gamgee, Frodo's faithful servant and companion, who accompanies him for the duration of the quest. Like Frodo, Sam begins the story as a cheerful but simple character and unlikely hero; he too gains in dignity and stature over the course of the tale. Although he leaves the Shire as a working-class gardener's son, he returns vastly broadened by his adventures. He becomes the mayor of Hobbiton, the Shire's principal community.

Meriadoc (Merry) Brandybuck, a young hobbit, one of Frodo's companions. Merry earns renown by helping to kill the chief Ringwraith during the major battle of the War of the Ring. Upon returning, he leads the hobbits in freeing the Shire, which has fallen under the control of a band of evil men.

Peregrin (Pippin) Took, another of Frodo's companions, also a young hobbit. In Gondor, Pippin helps to save the life of the Lord Faramir; in the climactic battle, he kills a huge Troll and is nearly killed himself.

Gandalf, also known as Mithrandir, a wizard, an old-looking but seemingly ageless man with various magical skills, notably a control over fires and lights. Accompanying Frodo and the others, he is pulled into an abyss by a powerful demon and apparently killed. He returns from death with heightened powers, and it becomes clear that he is in fact an angelic emissary sent to Middle-earth to oppose the forces of darkness. The leader of the resistance to Sauron, Gandalf is the principal architect of the allied victory in the War of the Ring.

Aragorn, initially known to the hobbits only as Strider, a wandering man expert in the ways of the wild. After Frodo,

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