

Well, I've found a printing error in the Ace edition of The Fellowship of the Ring. They omitted line six of Bilbo's poem about Eärendil. I'm not such a perfectionist that I compared Ace's version with Houghton Mifflin's line by line, or such a great intellect that I can spot any single word's deviation from the Original Version, but I once memorized this particular poem and besides the omission destroys the rhyme-scheme entirely, so anyone can tell that something has gone wrong at this point even if they have never seen the original version. All of which provides an excuse for the two following random excursions:

First, we have the following interesting quote from Norse Mythology: Legends of Gods and Heroes by Peter Andreas Munch (1840), revised by Magnus Olsen (1922), translated from the Norwegian by Sigurd Bernhard Hustvedt (1927), 2nd edition - The American-Scandinavian Foundation, New York 1942, pages 319-320. [The character, Aurvandil, being discussed is called Örvandill the Brave in another reference on Norse mythology, namely Gods of the North by Brian Branston, Vanguard Press, New York c1954, pages 246 and 255. He is referred to as "the archer" and one of his toes, having been frostbitten and broken off, was converted into a star and placed in the sky by Thor. The constellation thus identified with Örvandill is generally identified as Orion.] "The masculine name Aurvandil, which obviously is of literary origin, occurs also among the ancient Germans: Auriwandalo in Longobard sources, Orentil in Frankish and Bavarian sources; furthermore, Orendel, in a Middle High German epic poem, half legend, half romantic tale, of the same name. A corresponding common noun appears in Anglo-Saxon, Earendel, glossed with Latin jubar, meaning "effulgence" and "morning-star". [emphasis mine -P] These circumstances seem to point to a legendary hero named Aurvandil (cf. the addition "Froekni": the brave), concerning whom, however, no accurate information is available. He has nothing but the name in common with Horvendillus (a tributary king in Jutland, father of Amleth [Anlódi, "Hamlet"]; killed by his own brother Fengi) in Saxo, the hero of an islet duel in the Viking manner. A. Heusler ... summarizes his conception of the Aurvandil story as follows: "A mythical Aurvandil has left memorials among the Germanic peoples, both the southern and northern, and a star has taken its name from him; it is not certain whether he had a place in heroic literature, and whether the High German epic, supplied with materials from sources so numerous, had any other connection with him than that of the name."

Second, I have been wanting a few copies of this particular poem for various purposes for some time now, so I'll take this opportunity to put it on a ditto master.

THE LAY OF EÄRENDIL

by Bilbo Baggins
translated from the Westron by J. R. R. Tolkien

Eärendil was a mariner	1
that tarried in Arvernien;	
he built a boat of timber felled	
in Nimbrethil to journey in;	
her sails he wove of silver fair,	5
of silver were her lanterns made,	
her prow was fashioned like a swan,	
and light upon her banners laid.	8



In panoply of ancient kings, 9
 in chained rings he armoured him; 10
 his shining shield was scored with runes
 to ward all wounds and harm from him;
 his bow was made of dragon-horn,
 his arrows shorn of ebony
 of silver was his habergeon, 15
 his scabbard of chalcedony;
 his sword of steel was valiant,
 of adamant his helmet tall,
 an eagle-plume upon his crest,
 upon his breast an emerald. 20

Beneath the Moon and under star 21
 he wandered far from northern strands,
 bewildered on enchanted ways
 beyond the days of mortal lands.
 From gnashing of the Narrow Ice 25
 where shadow lies on frozen hills,
 from nether heats and burning waste
 he turned in haste, and roving still
 on starless waters far astray
 at last he came to Night of Naught, 30
 and passed, and never sight he saw
 of shining shore nor light he sought.
 The winds of wrath came driving him,
 and blindly in the foam he fled
 from west to east and errandless, 35
 unheralded he homeward sped. 36

There flying Elwing came to him, 37
 and flame was in the darkness lit;
 more bright than light of diamond
 the fire upon her carcanet. 40

The Silmaril she bound on him
 and crowned him with the living light,
 and dauntless then with burning brow
 he turned his prow; and in the night
 from otherworld beyond the Sea 45
 there strong and free a storm arose,
 a wind of power in Tarmenel;
 by paths that seldom mortal goes
 his boat it bore with biting breath
 as might of death across the grey 50
 and long-forsaken seas distressed:
 from east to west he passed away. 52



101 Through Evernight he back was borne 53
 102 on black and roaring waves that ran 55
 103 o'er leagues unlit and foundered shores
 104 that drowned before the Days began,
 105 until he hears on strands of pearl
 106 where ends the world the music long,
 107 where ever-foaming billows roll
 108 the yellow gold and jewels wan. 60
 109 He saw the Mountain silent rise
 110 where twilight lies upon the knees
 111 of Valinor, and Eldamar
 112 beheld afar beyond the seas.
 113 A wanderer escaped from night 65
 114 to haven white he came at last,
 115 to Elvenhome the green and fair
 116 where keen the air, where pale as glass
 117 beneath the Hill of Ilmarin
 118 a-glimmer in a valley sheer 70
 119 the lamplit towers of Tirion
 120 are mirrored on the Shadowmere. 72

121 He tarried there from errantry, 73
 122 and melodies they taught to him,
 123 and sages old him marvels told,
 124 and harps of gold they brought to him. 75
 125 They clothed him then in elven-white,
 126 and seven lights before him sent,
 127 as through the Calacirian
 128 to hidden land forlorn he went. 80
 129 He came unto the timeless halls
 130 where shining fall the countless years,
 131 and endless reigns the Elder King
 132 in Ilmarin on Mountain sheer;
 133 and words unheard were spoken then 85
 134 of folk of Men and Elven-kin,
 135 beyond the world were visions showed
 136 forbid to those that dwell therein. 88

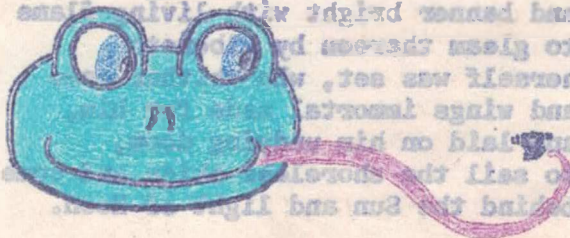
137 A ship then new they built for him 89
 138 of mithril and of elven-glass 90
 139 with shining prow; no shaven oar
 140 nor sail she bore on silver mast:
 141 the Silmaril as lantern light
 142 and banner bright with living flame 95
 143 to gleam thereon by Elbereth
 144 herself was set, who thither came
 145 and wings immortal made for him,
 146 and laid on him undying doom,
 147 to sail the shoreless skies and come
 148 behind the Sun and light of Moon. 100



88 From Evereven's lofty hills 101
 89 where softly silver fountains fall
 90 his wings him bore, a wandering light,
 91 beyond the mighty Mountain Wall.
 92 From World's End then he turned away, 105
 93 and yearned again to find afar
 94 his home through shadows journeying,
 95 and burning as an island star
 96 on high above the mists he came,
 97 a distant flame before the Sun, 110
 98 a wonder ere the waking dawn
 99 where grey the Norland waters run.
 100 And over Middle-earth he passed
 101 and heard at last the weeping sore
 102 of women and of elven-maids 115
 103 In Elder Days, in years of yore.
 104 But on him mighty doom was laid,
 105 till Moon should fade, an orbéd star
 106 to pass, and tarry never more
 107 on Hither Shores where mortals are; 120
 108 for ever still a herald on
 109 an errand that should never rest
 110 to bear his shining lamp afar,
 111 the Flamifer of Westernesse. 124

Note the implication in line thirteen that there were dragons before the fall of Morgoth, in contradiction to Arthur R. Weir's theory that "the Evil Worms -- dragons such as Ancalagon the Black ... or Smaug ... , fire-drakes and cold-drakes And other hideous brutes ... like to the shape of the spider-monster Shelob" arose as mutations when "at the end of the First Age the Morgoth-trained scientists set off at least two 'suicide bombs,' (i.e. nuclear fusion bombs with cases of either Strontium or Cobalt), thus deluging all the neighborhood of the explosions with radioactive fall-out" ["A Study of the Hithlain of the Wood-elves of Lórien", I PALANTIR #1, pages 8-14]

So OK Bjo, here's two items from me in the same distribution, neither having anything to do with either Comics or Diplomacy. And furthermore, here's a Beastie for you, namely a Toad drawn in the style made famous (in a very select circle) at Cal Tech by my friend Ed Buchman:



Nandrië!

-Y