

Mitte der 90er Jahre war ich für eine Weile Teil eines rd. zwei Dutzend Leute umfassenden Teams von Tolkienfans, deren (reichlich utopisches...) Ziel es war, im Alleingang eine englischsprachige Neuvertonung des „**Lord of the Rings**“ als Hörspiel zu versuchen. Wir schafften es immerhin bis zu den ersten Amateurstudio-Probeaufnahmen und einigen in Drehbuch übersetzten Einzelkapiteln, bevor das Ganze unter der Last seiner Unmachbarkeit kollabierte. Immerhin hatten wir keinen einzigen native speaker oder auch nur einen wirklich professionellen Sprecher dabei, hatten uns keinen Deut um Copyrightfragen gekümmert, und der schiere Umfang des Vorhabens wurde uns auch erst nach und nach bewusst.

Ich fungierte dabei als einer der beiden Drehbuchschreiber und hatte mir schon heimlich Gollum/Sméagol als meine Traumrolle zurechtgelegt. Mein Ansatz für die Neuinterpretation des LOTR war dabei die noch stärkere Betonung der Hobbit-Perspektive. Während mein Autoren-Gegenpart wohl am liebsten jedes einzelne im Roman gesprochene Wort direkt zitiert hätte, wollte ich die Geschichte so erzählen, wie sie vielleicht Sam Gamgees Enkelin wiedergeben würde: mit stärkerer Betonung der Schicksale der Hobbits (z.B. hätte ich gerne Merry und Pippins Gefangenschaft bei den Orks angereichert) gegenüber den 'hobbitlosen' Handlungssträngen. Mein Arbeitstitel war denn auch tatsächlich „The Story of Nine-Fingered Frodo and the Ring of Doom“, so wie es sich die Hobbits im Roman an einer Stelle selbst ausmalen.

Am Blattrand meines Drehbuchs entstanden kurze Sprüche, Idiome, Sprichwörter der verschiedenen Mittelerde-Völker, die ich im weiteren Verlauf verwenden wollte. Während sich heute natürlich die Drehbuchfragmente selbst nur noch in den Harz kegeln lassen, mag ich einige der gesammelten Ausdrücke immer noch ganz gern...

Proverbs
of Hobbits, Elves, Men & other peoples
of Middle-Earth
- Part One -

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1.

The early hunter gets the early prey -
if he does not stumble over the early stone.

(Hobbit proverb)

2.

May the fiery dragons
That guard the gems of precious moments
bow their heads before you
(*or: call you their master*)
and let you pass
to take some of the finer jewels
from the hoard of time.

(Dragon blessing)

3.

What looks odd on a mare
Might look good on a mule.

(Hobbit proverb, probably from Michel Delving)

4.

Never start the day with riddles, but with breakfast.
(*or: Riddles are bad breakfast.*)

(Hobbit proverb, attributed to Peregrin Tuk)

5.

To run like a stung hobbit from the beehive.
(*i.e. to run like hell*)

(Hobbit proverb)

6.

If you are far away from your own corners,
and strangers advise you and warn you of dangers -
take it to heart and start with the warners.

(Hobbit proverb, attributed to Sam Gamgee)

7.

Is there a better gift for a friend than a good story ?
(the playful reply may be: And is there a better gift
for a story than a friend's ear ?)

(origins unknown, used by Elves, Hobbits & Men)

8.

Open the path of your heart wide, friend, when you
leave me - so my thoughts may go with you.

(Elvish proverb)

9.

You always chose the gecco's way.
(i.e. you are a coward)

(Dragon insult)

10.

Don't call every house a home,
that opens its doors to you.

(Human proverb)

11.

Everybody needs a place to go and say "I'm back."
(i.e. everybody needs a home)

(Hobbit proverb)

12.

There always is an easy way -
you just have to find the right mountain
to move aside.

(Dwarfish proverb)

13.

The three worst ways to gain things?
There's a saying:
bad is rowing, worse is riding, worst is paying.

(Dwarfish proverb, possibly imputed)

14.

He can't tell a coin from a pebble.

(Dwarfish proverb)

15.

Everybody loves gold in his own way:
dragons when it's piled up in masses,
dwarves when it's for free,
men when it's theirs
- and elves when it rises in the morning.

(Elvish proverb, first noted in Rivendell)

16.

To cut primroses with axes.

(i.e. to exaggerate)

(Hobbit proverb, from Bree)

17.

You are chalky.

(i.e. you are worthless)

(Troll swearword)

18.

Tell a man from Rohan that he looks like his own
horse - and he'll be pleased to hear it.

(Human proverb, probably from Minas Tirith)

19.

There are few things of worth
that are made, not either grown or eternal.

(Ents' saying)

20.

May not even the shadow of your enemies' wings
dare to touch what thou have gained.

(Dragon blessing)

21.

To hunt dead foxes.

(i.e. to do sth. useless)

(Hobbit proverb)

22.

To plant a tree while the forest is burning.
(i.e. to do sth. goodwillingly, but in the wrong
moment or place)

(Human proverb, probably from Bree)

23.

He can talk a dwarf into dancing.
(or: ...an elf into digging)
(i.e. he's very good at convincing people)

(Human proverb, probably from Rohan)

24.

To smell green.
(i.e. to stink [like an elf])

(Orcs' swearword)

25.

You're talking leaves!
(i.e. You use many words and don't say anything.)

(Dwarves' expression, probably from the Iron Mountains)

26.

Always look on the rocky side of life!

(Trolls' saying)

27.

He's shooting arrows in the dark.

(i.e. he is careless)

(Elvish expression)

28.

A Saruman's lullaby.
(i.e. sth. which sounds right, but feels wrong.)

(Human expression, from Rohan, 4th Age)

29.

To stuff the story pipe.
(i.e. to prepare to tell a story)

(Hobbit expression)

30.

That was a hit with a wizards' staff to me.
(i.e. You have told me an uncomfortable truth.)
(Hobbit expression)

31.

He's thinking in orchards.
(i.e. He's a slow, but at least occasionally
"fruitful" thinker.)
(Hobbit expression)

32.

You are growing nightshade words.
(i.e. You use nice words to hide venomous thoughts.)
(Elvish term)

33.

To go on a dungheaps' holiday.
(i.e. to leave the house untidy and unclean.)
(Hobbit expression, from Frogmorton)

34.

Don't use a word, where a hit or a slash can do.
(or: Don't use a word when you can hurt.)
(Orcs' proverb)

35.

As sure as the feasting under the Ponies' sign.
(Human expression from Bree, referring to the renowned Prancing Pony inn,
famed for its beer and food)

36.

Fulfill your tasks without delay,
but do not hesitate to stray
And rob and rack and hack and slay
the roadside ones along your way !
(Orcs' proverb)

37.

Do not praise the river of gold flowing
above the stream of blood that is likely to follow.
(Human proverb from Lake Town, attributed to King Bain,
son of Bard the Bowman)

38.

One cannot shake hands with sword and shield.

(Human proverb of unknown origin, known all over Gondor, Rohan & Eriador)

39.

Him what's His, and mine the share.

(Orcs' expression, said to have been used in Mordor, "Him" being Sauron)

40.

The fall of a feather can make the mountain shake.

(or: It's the small shovels that make the mountain
fall at last)

(Dwarfish term, the latter version being from Nogrod in the Blue Mountains)

41.

He's living a bit late, an hour or two.

(i.e. he's a bit slow in deeds & thoughts)

(Hobbit expression, from Hobbiton)

42.

One cannot touch the sunset.

(Elvish expression, from Mithlond)

43.

Some rubbish's got two legs and talks.

(Human swearword from Bree, i.e.: used *by* men and *for* men)

44.

Without any burden life would be hard.

(Elvish proverb, from Lothlórien, often used sarcastically)

45.

That's flat mountains to me.

(i.e. I don't understand)

(Dwarves' expression)

46.

Thoughts are workers,

dreams are dancers.

[Don't ever trust one to do the other's tasks.]

(Elvish expression; the second sentence being normally omitted)

47.

The hidden drum has stopped.
The captured wind has freed himself.
The fire of life has left this one.
He will fly no more.

May the shadowwinds that bear the soul of this one
prove strong. May they carry him far
to the island of the greatest treasures of all:
the golden souls of heroes, the fleece of open skies,
the crystal gem of freedom,
the woven velvet of the moonlit nights,
the flawless white satin of days,
the claw of stronger will,
but best of all -

The gift of tireless wings to all eternity.

(Dragon blessing in the present of a friend that has just died - archaic & very rarely used, for dragons do not often befriend each other - the 'hidden drum' being the heartbeat, 'the captured wind' being the breath and so on.)

48.

You're farting fog.
(i.e. you're talking rubbish)
(Orcs' insult)

49.

She knows the turtle's wisdom.
(i.e. she's very patient)
(Human proverb, probably from Umbar)

50.

He's touched the dragon's nostrils
and got off unroasted.
(i.e. he's escaped from a very dangerous situation)
(Woodelvish term)

51.

He likes a hammock and a mug between decisions.
(i.e. he likes to decide one thing after another,
without haste)
(Hobbit proverb)

52.

She's a hammock helper.
(i.e. she only helps when it's easily done)
(Hobbit term)

53.

May all that you desire
be but a wingbeat away.
(Eagles' farewell words)

54.

Poor is the wanderer
who cannot make himself at home in simplicity.
(proverb from Bree, used by Hobbits & Men)

55.

All that we do and all we are
is but a mayfly to a star.
(Elvish proverb, from Lothlórien)

56.

Thirst and wisdom
do not like each other.
(Hobbit proverb, said to have been invented by the innkeeper at the *Golden Perch* at Stock)

57.

The feet of lovers like to be
in feather beds and fours.
(Hobbit proverb, often cited in wedding nights...)

58.

The house of fear is full of spiral stairs.
(i.e. one cannot think straight while being too afraid)
(Wizards' proverb, attributed to Radagast the Brown.)

59.

She's afraid her feet might miss a word.
(i.e. she is very shy.)
(Hobbit term, used for someone too shy to look up while talking.)

[to be continued...]