



The Lord of the Rings: Book Six

TEA WITH TOLKIEN BOOK CLUB CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Lord of the Rings: Book VI Summary

Book Six of The Lord of the Rings begins with Sam's desperate search to rescue Frodo from the Orc tower. As he nearly loses all hope, he realizes Frodo is being kept in a secret tower above and quickly climbs up to find him. Reunited, Sam returns the Ring to Frodo and they flee towards Mount Doom.

Despite their great weariness and thirst, they struggle on and finally reach the slopes of Doom. There, they are attacked by Gollum, though Frodo quickly flings him away and continues up the path. However, as he stands before the fire, Frodo is unable to let go of the Ring and instead claims it as his own, putting it on and disappearing. Gollum leaps toward him, biting off his finger and taking the Ring. Gollum stumbles and falls into the fire, destroying the Ring.

The book then returns to the Gates of Mordor where the final battle between the Men of the West and Sauron's forces rages on. As they fight, the Dark Tower falls and Gandalf cries, **'The realm of Sauron is ended!'** He calls one of the Eagles to carry him to Mount Doom, where they rescue Frodo and Sam and carry them to Ithilien.

When Frodo and Sam awake, they are summoned to the King and are surprised to realize it is their very own Strider. They are met with great honor, and reunited with the members of their Fellowship. In the Fields of Cormallen, the King prepares to enter into the city.

As the people of Gondor await news of battle, Éowyn and Faramir remain in the Houses of Healing. As they walk on the grass, they begin to care for one another. As King Elessar enters the city, he names Faramir Prince of Ithilien, and all is right within the realm of Gondor. Soon, Aragorn restores the White Tree to Minas Tirith and is wed to Arwen.

After a period of celebration, the members of the fellowship depart to return to their homes. First, they stop at Rohan for the funeral of Théoden and the betrothal of Faramir and Éowyn, and then on to Isengard to meet with Treebeard. After that, they go to Rivendell where Frodo is reunited with Bilbo.

Along with Gandalf, the hobbits return to Bree where they find things are altogether unwell. As they continue on to the Shire, Gandalf parts ways with them. When they find the Shire, they are horrified to see it has been overrun by ruffians. After a great battle, the hobbits take back the Shire and return to Bag End, looking for Lotho. Instead, they find Saruman and Wormtongue. After Saruman attempts to kill Frodo, Frodo pardons him, but after this Wormtongue kills Saruman.

After the Scouring of the Shire, the year 1420 brings great prosperity. Sam marries Rosie Cotton and they welcome their first daughter, Elanor. However, Frodo becomes very reserved, struggling through illness. He finishes his book, leaving the last pages for Sam, asking if he could join him on one last journey.

Along with Bilbo and many elves, they ride on through the Shire and towards the Grey Havens. Gandalf meets them, and Merry and Pippin join them as well. Frodo says goodbye and boards the boat, sailing away out of sight.

At length, Sam, Merry, and Pippin stand on the shore, but then they turn and ride home together. The Lord of the Rings draws to a close as Sam returns to home to the warmth of his family at Bag End.

Book Six, Chapter One: The Tower of Cirith Ungol

After realizing 'Frodo was alive but taken by the enemy' in the final chapter of *The Two Towers*, Sam finds himself alone in the tunnel of Cirith Ungol, desperately trying to rescue Frodo from the Orcs. Putting on the Ring, he scrambles through the tunnel in an attempt to find a passage into the tower. Sam hears cries from the utmost tower, fighting between the orcs, and his hope for Frodo's life is renewed. "His love for Frodo rose above all other thoughts, and forgetting his peril he cried aloud: I'm coming Mr. Frodo!"

As Sam wears the Ring, he already feels the weight and presence of Sauron. As he comes closer to Mount Doom, the power of the Ring grows and he is tempted to claim it for his own. Carrying the star-glass of Galadriel, Sam is able to pass into the tower and begins to climb the stairs. He climbs flight after flight of stairs until he comes to a dead end. At a loss, he sits down and begins to sing. "I will not say the Day is done, nor bid the Stars farewell."

As Sam finally finds Frodo, lying in a hidden tower, he reveals that he had taken the Ring and carried it for him. While Frodo is relieved that it hadn't been taken by the enemy, he demands that Sam return it to him. When Sam proposes that they share the burden of the Ring, Frodo is filled with rage, but soon calms down and apologizes. Together, they flee from the tower and begin the last gasp of their journey to Mount Doom.



Chapter Two: The Land of Shadow

Together, Frodo and Sam begin to cross through the Land of Shadow, narrowly escaping the gaze of the Nazgûl and a sudden rush of orcs and horsemen. They are desperately thirsty and tired, and the weight of the Ring upon Frodo has become unbearable. To ease their burdens, they cast off their orc-mail and Sam gives his Elven cloak to Frodo.

As they journey across broken earth, they see a growing light and change in the sky, and sense that the war isn't going well for Sauron. Frodo and Sam share a wafer of lembas and are able to find a bit of water, filling their water bottles for the last gasp of their quest.

They turn East and rest a little in the midst of the brambles, where Sam tells Frodo to sleep first. As Frodo sleeps, Sam crawls out from their hiding place to survey their surroundings. There, he is comforted and filled with peace at the sight of a twinkling white star far above the mountains. After this, Sam rests without fear. They continue to wander, at least forty miles from Mount Doom.

As Frodo carries the Ring through Mordor, its power continues to weigh on him, causing him to move even more slowly. They hear talk of Gollum being about and Sam catches a glimpse of him, warning Frodo. After being mistaken for deserting orc soldiers, they are forced to walk alongside the orcs for many miles until they manage to sneak away. After escaping, they struggle on a bit longer until they collapse into a short rest. "Come on, Mr. Frodo!" he whispered. 'One more crawl, and then you can lie still.'



Chapter Three: Mount Doom

As they draw closer to the Cracks of Doom, Frodo and Sam have become too weary for fear or care. Sam cares for Frodo with all that they have left, giving him a whole wafer of lembas and as much water as he can. Even upon realizing that there will be no return journey, Sam refuses to fall into despair.

Recognizing Frodo's desperate weariness, Sam offers once again to carry the Ring for Frodo. Frodo is filled with rage at the thought, yet quickly returns to his senses, reminding Sam that it is his burden alone. At last, Frodo is unable to go on, and Sam carries him toward the mountain.

As they reach the foot of the mountain, they notice a path and struggle towards it. Suddenly, Gollum knocks Sam to the ground and charges at Frodo. Yet in his withered age, Gollum is frail and Frodo flings him away. Frodo continues up the path toward the Cracks of Doom, while Sam turns, ready to kill Gollum. Yet as Gollum pleads for his life, Sam wavers and his heart is troubled. He spares Gollum his life and quickly turns to follow Frodo.

Sam finds Frodo standing at the Cracks of Doom, unwilling to cast the Ring into the fire. "But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!" And suddenly, as he set it on his finger, he vanished from Sam's sight."

Striking Sam to the ground, Gollum attacks Frodo, biting off his finger and taking the Ring. He cries, "My Precious! O my Precious!" until he accidentally falls off of the cliff and into the Fires. The Ring, with Gollum, is destroyed.



Chapter Four: The Field of Cormallen

"The Eagles are coming! The Eagles are coming! The hosts of Mordor looked up and wondered what this sign might mean."

As the Eagles join the final battle between the Men of the West and the forces of Mordor, a terrible call is heard from the Dark Tower. The ground begins to shake, filling the hosts of Mordor with terror; the Dark Tower wavers and falls, the Black Gate crumbles. "The realm of Sauron is ended!" said Gandalf. "The Ring-bearer has fulfilled his Quest."

Gandalf calls to Gwaihir, the Eagle, asking him to bear him to Mount Doom. At the Cracks of Doom, Sam urges Frodo to move away from the Fire and down the path. At last, as they can go no further, they stand on an island amidst the flames. Gwaihir finds them and carries them away from Mount Doom.

When Sam wakes, he finds himself safely in Ithilien. Frodo is beside him, and to their surprise, so is Gandalf. After a while, Gandalf says that the King wishes to see them. When they approach the field, Tolkien writes "swords were unsheathed, and spears were shaken, and horns and trumpets sang, and men cried with many voices in many tongues: 'Long live the Halflings! Praise them with great praise!" As Frodo and Sam are brought to the King, they are again surprised to be greeted by their very own Strider!

The hobbits, including Merry and Pippin, are gifted great garments and held in high honor. They talk deep into the night with their old friends, and prepare for the new day when the King will "enter his gates with the rising of the Sun."



Chapter Five: The Steward and the King

The people of Gondor await the return of their soldiers, still gripped by fear and unaware that the war has been won. Arguing that she has been healed, Éowyn refuses to remain in the Houses of Healing. She requests to speak with the Steward of the City and is met by Faramir.

Faramir quickly falls in love with Éowyn, though she is reluctant to accept his care. He asks her to walk with him on the grass, and they begin to spend each day together. After many days, the great shadow fades behind coming sunlight and an Eagle flies toward Minas Tirith bringing tidings of their victory against Sauron.

Faramir takes up his duties as Steward, leaving Éowyn in the Houses of Healing where she refuses to leave despite Éomer's pleading. Faramir calls to her, asking why she remains and confessing his love for her. At this, "the heart of Éowyn changed, or else at last she understood it. And suddenly her winter passed, and the sun shone on her..." Faramir asks Éowyn to marry him, and they kiss.

As the city is prepared for the coming of the King, Faramir meets Aragorn as he enters. Faramir asks the people if they would have Aragorn as their king and they all answer yes. As Aragorn is crowned, he requests the Ring-Bearer to bring the crown to him and for Gandalf to place it on his head. The king has returned. The members of the Fellowship remain in Minas Tirith together for a time. After replacing the withered tree in the Court of the Fountain, Aragorn is wed to Arwen Evenstar on Midsummer's Eve.



Chapter Six: Many Partings

As the days of rejoicing draw to a close, the members of the Fellowship prepare to return to their homes. Before leaving, Aragorn assures Frodo that he will always be welcome in all the lands of the West, and Queen Arwen gifts him with a "white gem like star that lay upon her breast hanging upon a silver chain, saying "When the memory of the fear and the darkness troubles you, this will bring you aid." She also tells him that he may pass into the West, in her stead, when the time comes.

Three days later, they depart to Rohan with the body of Théoden. They come to The Golden Hall where his funeral is held and Faramir and Éowyn are betrothed. From there, they ride to Isengard where they are met by Treebeard. He informs them that he has released Saruman, and then Aragorn leaves the lands of Isengard to the Ents for their care and protection. Before leaving, Merry and Pippin share one last draught with Treebeard.

As they continue on, they cross paths with Saruman and Wormtongue, who now travel as beggars. Saruman once again rejects their mercy, and they leave him and continue to Rivendell.

There, Frodo is overjoyed to see Bilbo, who has reached the age of 129. He spends nearly a fortnight with him, but knows he must return to the Shire. In his old age, Bilbo has become very sleepy, fading away into a peaceful rest. At one point, Bilbo asks if he happened to still have his old ring, and Frodo simply replies that he'd lost it. As Frodo prepares to return home, Elrond tells him that he will come to the Shire with Bilbo when the leaves are golden before they fall.



Chapter Seven: Homeward Bound

The hobbits, along with Gandalf, journey back towards the Shire. They make for Bree, where they find everything changed and altogether uneasy. They come to the Prancing Pony where Mr. Butterbur welcomes them, confessing in private that "things were far from well". All sorts of bad folk have taken to their area, bringing with them trouble and even violence. Gandalf and the hobbits tell Butterbur that the King of Gondor has returned, and he is in fact Strider who holds a great fondness for The Prancing Pony.

After spending the night, they leave The Prancing Pony and continue towards the Shire. On their way, Gandalf tells the hobbits that he will not return with them and instead, is going to visit with Tom Bombadil. Together, the four hobbits return to the Shire.

Chapter Eight: The Scouring of the Shire

The Hobbits return to the Shire only to find it overrun by ruffians. Their fellow hobbits are living under a new, oppressive government, fueled by violence and greed. Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin lead the resistance, filling the hearts of their fellow hobbits with hope enough to stand against the ruffians. After a great battle, they are victorious, and begin to piece the Shire back together.

After the battle, they travel to Bag End, where Lotho—called the Chief—is said to be residing. However, they soon realize he's been murdered by Gríma with Saruman, who has been going by the name Sharkey and living at Bag End.

"This is worse than Mordor!" said Sam. 'Much worse in a way. It comes home to you, as they say; because it is home, and you remember it before it was all ruined.'
'Yes, this is Mordor,' said Frodo. 'Just one of its works.'"

Frodo demands Saruman to leave, and as he goes he unsuccessfully attempts to stab Frodo. Filled with mercy, Frodo pardons Saruman, which enrages him. As he calls for Gríma to come with him, Gríma is filled with rage and kills him.



Chapter Nine: The Grey Havens

"All things now went well, with hope always of becoming still better."

The year 1420 was a year of great prosperity and growth for all of Middle-Earth. After Lotho's death, Lobelia returns Bag End to Frodo and leaves to be with her family. Together, Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin work to restore all of Hobbiton.

In the spring of 1420, Sam marries Rosie Cotton and together, they move in to Bag End. Merry and Pippin take up residence together in Crickhollow and are held in high esteem amongst the hobbits. On March 25th of the following year, Sam and Rosie welcome their first daughter, Elanor.

While the rest of Hobbiton is busy with newfound life and prosperity, Frodo becomes very reserved, growing ill every March and October. He finishes his book, leaving the last few pages for Sam, and asks Sam if he could join him for one last journey.

As they travel, they are joined by Gildor, Galadriel, Elrond, Bilbo, and many other elves. To Sam's surprise and dismay, Frodo tells Bilbo he is coming with them to the Havens. Together they ride on through the Shire and towards the Grey Havens. Gandalf meets them, and Merry and Pippin soon join them as well. Frodo says goodbye and boards the boat, sailing away out of sight.

At length, Sam, Merry, and Pippin stand on the shore, but then they turn and ride home together. The Lord of the Rings comes to a close as Sam returns home to the warmth of his family at Bag End.



