

An excerpt from "Of the Silmarils" in *The Silmarillion*

In that time were made those things that afterwards were most renowned of all the works of the Elves. For Fëanor, being come to his full might, was filled with a new thought, or it may be that some shadow of foreknowledge came to him of the doom that drew near; and he pondered how the light of the Trees, the glory of the Blessed Realm, might be preserved imperishable. Then he began a long and secret labour, and he summoned all his lore, and his power, and his subtle skill; and at the end of all he made the Silmarils.

As three great Jewels they were in form. But not until the End, when Fëanor shall return who perished ere the Sun was made, and sits now in the Halls of Awaiting and comes no more among his kin; not until the Sun passes and the Moon falls, shall it be known of what substance they were made. Like the crystal of diamonds it appeared, and yet was more strong than adamant, so that no violence could mar it or break it within the Kingdom of Arda. Yet that crystal was to the Silmarils but as is the body to the Children of Ilúvatar: the house of its inner fire, that is within it and yet in all parts of it, and is its life. And the inner fire of the Silmarils Fëanor made of the blended light of the Trees of Valinor, which lives in them yet, though the Trees have long withered and shine no more. Therefore even in the darkness of the deepest treasury the Silmarils of their own radiance shone like the stars of Varda; and yet, as were they indeed living things, they rejoiced in light and received it and gave it back in hues more marvellous than before.

All who dwelt in Aman were filled with wonder and delight at the work of Fëanor. And Varda hallowed the Silmarils, so that thereafter no mortal flesh, nor hands unclean, nor anything of evil will might touch them, but it was scorched and withered; and Mandos foretold that the fates of Arda, earth, sea, and air, lay locked within them. The heart of Fëanor was fast bound to these things that he himself had made.