Compiler's Note

An account of the development of the final version of the Ainulindalë was included by Christopher Tolkien in Morgoth’s Ring, the tenth volume of The History of Middle-earth (X: 3-44). His study of related texts shows that the final version of the Ainulindalë was composed between 1948 and 1951 (X: 3-7), i.e. before the publication of The Lord of the Rings. The Ainulindalë published in The Silmarillion is based on the first half of this final version, while its second half was incorporated in "Of the Beginning of Days", the first chapter of the "Quenta Silmarillion". Christopher Tolkien made to the published Ainulindalë several minor editorial changes (see V: 164; X: 40).

This publication endeavours to restore the original text.

Author's note marked * is given at the bottom of a page. Other notes marked by numbers are collected at the end of the text.

AINULINDALË

The Music of the Ainur

This was made by Rúmil of Túna in the Elder Days.

It is here written as it was spoken in Eressëa
to Ælfwine by Pengoloð the Sage.
To it are added the further words
that Pengoloð spoke at that time
concerning the Valar, the Eldar and the Atani;
of which more is said hereafter.

These are the words that Pengoloð spake to Ælfwine concerning the beginning of the World.
First he recited to him the Ainulindalë as Rúmil made it.

There was Ilúvatar, the All-father, and he made first the Ainur, the Holy Ones, that were the offspring of his thought, and they were with him before aught else was made. And he spoke to them, propounding to them themes of music, and they sang before him, and he was glad. But for a long while they sang only each alone, or but few together, while the rest hearkened; for each comprehended only that part of mind of Ilúvatar from which he came, and in the understanding of their brethren they grew but slowly. Yet ever as they listened they came to deeper understanding, and increased in unison and harmony.

And it came to pass that Ilúvatar called together all the Ainur and declared to them a mighty theme, unfolding to them things greater and more wonderful than he
had yet revealed; and the glory of its beginning and the splendour of its end amazed the Ainur, so that they bowed before Ilúvatar and were silent.

Then said Ilúvatar: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I win sit and hearken, and be glad that through you great beauty has been wakened into song.'

Then the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words, began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar to a great music; and a sound arose of endless interchanging melodies woven in harmony that passed beyond hearing into the depths and into the heights, and the places of the dwelling of Ilúvatar were filled to overflowing, and the music and the echo of the music went out into the Void, and it was not void. Never since have the Ainur made any music like to this music, though it has been said that a greater still shall be made before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days. Then shall the themes of Ilúvatar be played aright, and take Being in the moment of their utterance, for all shall then understand his intent in their part, and shall know the comprehension of each, and Ilúvatar shall give to their thoughts the secret fire, being well pleased.

But now Ilúvatar sat and hearkened, and for a great while it seemed good to him, for in the music there were no flaws. But as the theme progressed, it came into the heart of Melkor to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar; for he sought therein to increase the power and glory of the part assigned to himself. To Melkor among the Ainur had been given the greatest gifts of power and knowledge, and he had a share in all the gifts of his brethren; and he had gone often alone into the void places seeking the Imperishable Flame. For desire grew hot within him to bring into Being things of his own, and it seemed to him that Ilúvatar took no thought for the Void, and he was impatient of its emptiness. Yet he found not the Fire, for it is with Ilúvatar. But being alone he had begun to conceive thoughts of his own unlike those of his brethren.

Some of these thoughts he now wove into his music, and straightway discord arose about him, and many that sang nigh him grew despondent, and their thought was disturbed and their music faltered; but some began to attune their music to his rather than to the thought which they had at first. Then the discord of Melkor spread ever wider, and the melodies which had been heard at first foundered in a sea of turbulent sound. But Ilúvatar sat and hearkened until it seemed that about his throne there was a raging storm, as of dark waters that made war one upon the other in an endless wrath that would not be assuaged.

Then Ilúvatar arose, and the Ainur perceived that he smiled; and he lifted up his left hand, and a new theme began amid the storm, like and yet unlike to the former theme, and it gathered power and had new beauty. But the discord of Melkor rose in uproar and contended with it, and there was again a war of sound more violent than before, until many of the Ainur were dismayed and played no longer, and Melkor had the mastery. Then again Ilúvatar arose, and the Ainur perceived that his countenance was stern; and he lifted up his right hand; and behold, a third theme grew amid the confusion, and it was unlike the others. For it seemed at first soft and sweet, a mere rippling of gentle sounds in delicate melodies, but it could not be quenched, and it grew, and it took to itself power and profundity. And it seemed at last that there were two musics progressing at one time before the seat of Ilúvatar, and they were utterly at variance. One was deep and wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with an
immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came. The other had now achieved a unity of its own; but it was loud, and vain, and endlessly repeated; and it had little harmony, but rather a clamorous unison as of many trumpets braying upon a few notes. And it essayed to drown the other music by the violence of its voice, but it seemed that its most triumphant notes were taken by the other and woven into its own solemn pattern.

In the midst of this strife, whereat the halls of Ilúvatar shook and a tremor ran out into the silences yet unmoved, Ilúvatar arose a third time, and his face was terrible to behold. Then he raised up both his hands, and in one chord, deeper than the Abyss, higher than the Firmament, piercing as the light of the eye of Ilúvatar, the Music ceased.

Then Ilúvatar spoke, and he said: 'Mighty are the Ainur, and mightiest among them is Melkor; but that he may know, and all the Ainur, that I am Ilúvatar, those things that ye have sung and played, lo! I will show them forth, that ye may see what ye have done. And thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined.'

Then the Ainur were afraid, and they did not yet comprehend the words that were said to them; and Melkor was filled with shame, of which came secret anger. But Ilúvatar arose in splendour, and he went forth from the fair regions that he had made for the Ainur; and the Ainur followed him.

But when they were come into the Void, Ilúvatar said to them: 'Behold your Music!' And he showed to them a vision, giving to them sight where before was only hearing; and they saw a new World made visible before them, and it was globed amid the Void, and it was sustained therein, but was not of it. And as they looked and wondered this World began to unfold its history, and it seemed to them that it lived and grew.

And when the Ainur had gazed for a while and were silent, Ilúvatar said again: 'Behold your Music! This is your minstrelsy; and each of you that had part in it shall find contained there, within the design that I set before you, all those things which it may seem that he himself devised or added. And thou, Melkor, wilt discover all the secret thoughts of thy mind, and wilt perceive that they are but a part of the whole and tributary to its glory.'

And many other things Ilúvatar spoke to the Ainur at that time, and because of their memory of his words, and the knowledge that each has of the music that he himself made, the Ainur know much of what was, and is, and is to come, and few things are unseen by them. Yet some things there are that they cannot see, neither alone nor taking counsel together; for to none but himself has Ilúvatar revealed all that he has in store, and in every age there come forth things that are new and have no foretelling, for they do not spring from the past. And so it was that as this vision of the World was played before them, the Ainur saw that it contained things which they had not thought. And they saw with amazement the coming of the Children of Ilúvatar, and the habitation that was prepared for them; and they perceived that they themselves in the labour of their music had been busy with the preparation of this dwelling, and yet knew not that it had any purpose beyond its own beauty. For the Children of Ilúvatar were conceived by him alone; and they came with the Third Theme, and were not in the theme which Ilúvatar propounded at the beginning, and none of the Ainur had part in their making. Therefore when they beheld them, the more did they love them, being things other than themselves, strange and free,
wherein they saw the mind of Ilúvatar reflected anew, and learned yet a little more of his wisdom, which otherwise had been hidden even from the Holy Ones.

Now the Children of Ilúvatar are Elves and Men, the Firstborn and the Followers. And amid all the splendours of the World, its vast halls and spaces, and its wheeling fires, Ilúvatar chose a place for their habitation in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the innumerable Stars. And this habitation might seem a little thing to those who consider only the majesty of the Ainur, and not their terrible sharpness — as who should take the whole field of Arda as the foundations of a pillar and so raise it until the cone of its summit were more bitter than a needle — or who consider only the immeasurable vastness of the World, which still the Ainur are shaping, and not the minute precision to which they shape all things therein. But thou must understand, Ælfwine, that when the Ainur had beheld this habitation in a vision and had seen the Children of Ilúvatar arise therein, then many of the most mighty of the Holy Ones bent all their thought and their desire towards that place. And of these Melkor was the chief, even as he was in the beginning the greatest of the Ainur who took part in the Music. And he feigned, even to himself at first, that he desired to go thither and order all things for the good of the Children of Ilúvatar, controlling the turmoils of the heat and the cold that had come to pass through him. But he desired rather to subdue to his will both Elves and Men, envying the gifts with which Ilúvatar promised to endow them; and he wished himself to have subject and servants, and to be called Lord, and to be a master over other wills.

But the other Ainur looked upon this habitation in the Halls of Eä, which the Elves call Arda, the Earth; and looking upon light they were joyful, and their eyes seeing many colours were filled with gladness; but because of the roaring of the sea they felt a great unquiet. And they observed the winds and the air, and the matters whereof the Middle-earth was made, of iron and stone and silver and gold and many substances; but of all these water they most greatly praised. And it is said by the Eldar that in water there lives yet the echo of the Music of the Ainur, and many of the Children of Ilúvatar hearken still unsated to the voices of the Sea, and yet know not for what they listen.

Now to water had that Ainu whom we call Ulmo most turned his thought, and of all most deeply was he instructed by Ilúvatar in music. But of the airs and winds Manwë most had pondered, who was the noblest of the Ainur. Of the fabric of Earth had Aulë thought, to whom Ilúvatar had given skin and knowledge scarce less than to Melkor; but the delight and pride of Aulë was in the deed of making, and in the thing made, and neither in possession nor in his own mastery; wherefore he gives and hoards not, and is free from care, passing ever on to some new work.

Now Ilúvatar spake to Ulmo, and said: 'Seest thou not here in this little realm in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the innumerable Stars how Melkor hath made war upon thy province? He hath bethought him of bitter cold immoderate, and yet hath not destroyed the beauty of thy fountains, nor of thy clear pools. Behold the snow, and the cunning work of frost! Behold the towers and mansions of ice! Melkor hath devised heats and fire without restraint, and hath not dried up thy desire, nor utterly quelled the music of the sea. Behold rather the height and glory of the clouds, and the everchanging mists and vapours, and listen to the fall of rain upon the Earth! And in these clouds thou art drawn yet nearer to Manwë, thy friend, whom thou loveth.'

Then Ulmo answered: 'Truly, Water is become now fairer than my heart imagined, neither had my secret thought conceived the snow-flake, nor in all my music was contained the falling of the rain. Lo! I will seek Manwë, that he and I may
make melodies for ever and ever to thy delight!' And Manwē and Ulmo have from the beginning been allied, and in all things have served most faithfully the purpose of Ilúvatar.

But behold! even as Ulmo spoke, and while the Ainur were yet gazing upon this vision, it was taken away and hidden from their sight; and it seemed to them that in that moment they perceived a new thing, Darkness, which they had not known before except in thought. But they had become enamoured of the beauty of the vision and engrossed in the unfolding of the World which came there to being, and their minds were filled with it; for the history was incomplete and the circles not full-wrought when the vision was taken away*, and there was unrest among them.

Therefore Ilúvatar called to them, and said: 'I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be, not only in your thought, but even as ye yourselves are, and yet other. Therefore I say: Eä! Let these things Be! And I will send forth the flame imperishable into the Void, and it shall be at the heart of the World, and the World shall Be; and those of you that will may go down into it.' And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing: Eä, the World that Is.

Thus it came to pass that of the Holy Ones some abode still with Ilúvatar beyond the confines of the World; but others, and among them many of the greatest and most fair, took the leave of Ilúvatar and descended into it. But this condition Ilúvatar made, or it is the necessity of their love, that their power should henceforth be contained and bounded in the World, to be within it for ever, so that they are its life and it is theirs. And therefore, Ælfwine, we name them the Valar, the Powers of the World.

But behold! when the Valar entered into the World they were at first astounded and at a loss, for it was as if naught was yet made which they had seen in vision, and all was but on point to begin and yet unshapen; and it was dark. For the Great Music had been but the growth and flowering of thought in the Timeless Halls, and the Vision only a foreshowing; but now they had entered in at the beginning of Time, and the Valar perceived that the World had been but foreshadowed and foresung, and they must achieve it.

So began their great labours in wastes unmeasured and unexplored, and in ages uncounted and forgotten, until in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the vast halls of Eä there came to be that hour and that place where was made the habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar. And in this work the chief part was taken by Manwē and Aulē and Ulmo. But Melkor, too, was there from the first, and he meddled in all that was done, turning it, if he might, to his own desires and purposes; and he kindled great fires. When therefore Earth was young and full of flame Melkor coveted it, and he said to the Valar: 'This shall be my own kingdom! And I name it unto myself!'

But Manwē was the brother of Melkor in the mind of Ilúvatar, and he was the chief instrument of the second Theme that Ilúvatar had raised up against the discord of Melkor; and he called unto himself many spirits both greater and less, and they came down into the fields of Arda and aided Manwē, lest Melkor should hinder the fulfilment of their labour for ever, and Earth should wither ere it flowered. And

* And some have said that the Vision ceased ere the fulfilment of the Dominion of Men and the fading of the Firstborn; wherefore, though the Music is over all, the Valar have not seen as with sight the Later Ages or the ending of the World. Quoth Pengolođ.
Manwë said unto Melkor: 'This kingdom thou shalt not take for thine own, wrongfully, for many others have laboured here do less than thou.' And there was strife between Melkor and the Valar, and for a time Melkor departed and withdrew to other regions and did there what he would, but he did not put the desire of the kingdom of Arda from his heart.

But the Valar took to themselves shape and hue; and because they were drawn thither by love for the Children of Ilúvatar, for whom they hoped, they took shape after that manner which they had beheld in the Vision of Ilúvatar; save only in majesty and splendour, for they are mighty and holy. Moreover their shape comes of their knowledge and desire of the visible World, rather than of the World itself, and they need it not, save only as we use raiment, and yet we may be naked and suffer no loss of our being. Therefore the Valar may walk unclad, as it were, and then even the Eldar cannot clearly perceive them, though they be present. But when they clad themselves the Valar arrayed them in the form some as of male and some as of female; for that difference of temper they had even from their beginning, and it is but bodied forth in the choice of each, not made by the choice; even as with us male and female may be shown by the raiment but is not made thereby. But think not, Ælfwine, that the shapes wherein the Great Ones array themselves are at all times like unto the shapes of kings and queens of the Children of Ilúvatar; for at whiles they may clothe them in their own thought, made visible in forms terrible and wonderful. And I myself, long years ago, in the land of the Valar have seen Yavanna in the likeness of a Tree; and the beauty and majesty of that form could not be told in words, not unless all the things that grow in the earth, from the least unto the greatest, should sing in choir together, making unto their queen an offering of song to be laid before the throne of Ilúvatar.

And behold! the Valar drew unto them many companions, some less, some well-nigh as great as themselves, and they laboured together in the ordering of the Earth and the curbing of its tumults. Then Melkor saw what was done, and that the Valar walked upon Earth as powers visible, clad in the raiment of the World, and were lovely and glorious to see, and blissful; and that Earth was become as a garden for them, for its turmoils were subdued. His envy grew then the greater within him; and he also took visible form, but because of his mood and the malice that increased in him, that form was dark and terrible. And he descended upon Earth in power and majesty greater than any other of the Valar, as a mountain that wades in the sea and has its head above the clouds and is clad in ice and crowned with fire and smoke; and the light of his eyes was like a flame that withers with heat and pierces with a deadly cold.

Thus began the first battle of the Valar and Melkor for the dominion of Arda; and of those tumults we know but little; for know thou, Ælfwine, what I have declared unto thee is come from the Valar themselves, with whom we of the Eldalië spoke in the land of Valinor, and we were instructed by them; but little would they ever tell of the days of war ere the coming of the Elves. But this said Rúmil in the end of the Ainulindalë which I have recounted to thee: that the Valar endeavoured ever, in despite of Melkor, to rule the Earth and to prepare it for the coming of the Firstborn; and they built lands, and Melkor destroyed them; valleys they delved and Melkor raised them up; mountains they carved and Melkor threw them down; seas they hallowed and Melkor spilled them; and naught might come to peace or lasting growth, for as surely as the Valar began a labour so would Melkor undo it or corrupt it. And yet their labour was not all in vain; and though nowhere and in no work was their will and purpose wholly fulfilled, and all things were in hue and shape other than the
Valar had at first intended, slowly nonetheless the Earth was fashioned and made firm.

But of all such matters, Ælfwine, others shall tell thee, or thou shalt read in other lore; for it is not my part at this time to instruct thee in the history of the Earth. And now behold! here is the habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar established at the last in the deeps of Time and amidst the innumerable stars. And here are the Valar, the Powers of the World, contesting for the possession of the jewel of Ilúvatar; and thus thy feet are on the beginning of the road.

*Words of Pengoloð*

And when he had ended the *Ainulindalë*, such as Rúmil had made it, Pengoloð the Sage paused a while; and Ælfwine said to him: Little, you say, would the Valar tell to the Eldar of the days before their coming: but do not the wise among you know more of those ancient wars than Rúmil has here set forth? Or will you not tell me more of the Valar as they were when first your kindred beheld and knew them?

And Pengoloð answered: Much of what I know or have learned from the elders in lore, I have written; and what I have written thou shalt read, if thou wilt, when thou hast learned better the tongue of the Noldor and their scripts. For these matters are too great and manifold to be spoken or to be taught in speech within the brief patience and heedfulness of those of mortal race. But some little more I may tell to thee now, since thou askest it of me.

This tale I have heard also among the loremasters in ages past. For they tell us that the war began before Arda was full-shaped, and ere yet there was anything that grew or walked upon earth, and for long Melkor had the upper hand. But in the midst of the war a spirit of great strength and hardihood came to the aid of the Valar, hearing in the far heaven that there was battle in the Little Kingdom. And he came like a storm of laughter and loud song, and Earth shook under his great golden feet.

So came Tulkas, the Strong and the Merry, whose anger passeth like a mighty wind, scattering cloud and darkness before it. And Melkor was shaken by the laughter of Tulkas, and fled from the Earth; and there was peace for a long age. And Tulkas remained and became one of the Valar of the kingdom of Arda; but Melkor brooded in the outer darkness, and his hate was given to Tulkas for ever after. In that time the Valar brought order to the seas and the lands and the mountains, and Yavanna planted at last the seeds that she had long devised. And since, when the fires had been subdued or buried beneath the primeval hills, there was need of light, Aulë wrought two mighty lamps for the enlightenment of the Middle-earth which he had built amid the Encircling Seas. Then Varda filled the lamps and Manwë hallowed them, and the Valar set them upon high pillars, more lofty far than are any mountains of the later days. One lamp they raised near to the North of Middle-earth, and it was named Illuin; and the other was raised in the South, and it was named Ormal; and the light of the Lamps of the Valar flowed out over the Earth, so that all was lit as it were in a changeless Day.

Then the seeds that Yavanna had sown began swiftly to sprout and to burgeon, and there arose a multitude of growing things great and small, mosses and grasses, and great ferns, and trees whose tops were crowned with cloud as they were living mountains, but whose feet were wrapped in a green twilight. And beasts came forth and dwelt in the grassy plains, or in the rivers and the lakes, or walked in the shadow of the woods. As yet no flower had bloomed nor any bird had sung, for these things waited still their time in the bosom of Palúrien; but wealth there was of her imagining, and nowhere more rich than in the midmost parts of the Earth, where the
light of both the Lamps met and blended. And there upon the Isle of Almaren in the Great Lake was the first dwelling of the gods when all things were young, and new-made green was yet a marvel in the eyes of the makers; and they were long content.

But at length Melkor returned in secret, and far in the North, where the beams of Illuin were cold and dim, he made a hidden dwelling. Thence he sent forth his power and turned again to evil much that had been well begun; so that green things fell sick and rotted, and rivers were choked with weeds and slime, and fens were made, rank and poisonous, and the breeding place of flies; and forests grew dark and perilous, the haunts of fear; and beasts became monsters of horn and ivory and dyed the earth with blood. And when he saw his time, Melkor revealed himself, and he made war again on the Valar his brethren; and he threw down the Lamps, and a new darkness fell, and all growth ceased. And in the fall of the Lamps, which were very great, the seas were lifted up in fury, and many lands were drowned. Then the Valar were driven from their abode in Almaren, and they removed from the Middle-earth, and made their home in the uttermost West, in Aman the Blessed, and they fortified it against the onslaught of Melkor. Many mansions they built in that land upon the borders of the world which is since called Valinor, whose western marges fall into the mists of the Outer Sea, and whose fences against the East are the Pelóri Valion, the Mountains of Valinor, highest upon Earth.

Thence they came at last with a great host against Melkor, to wrest from him the rule of the Middle-earth; but he now had grown in malice and in strength and was master of many monsters and evil things, so that they could not at that time overcome him utterly, nor take him captive; and he escaped from their wrath, and lay hid until they had departed. Then he returned to his dwelling in the North, and there built for himself a mighty fortress, and delved great caverns underground secure from assault, and he gathered to him many lesser powers that seeing his greatness and growing strength were now willing to serve him; and the name of that evil fastness was Utumno.

Thus it was that the Earth lay darkling again, save only in Valinor, as the ages drew on to the hour appointed by Ilúvatar for the coming of the Firstborn. And in the darkness Melkor dwelt, and still often walked abroad, in many shapes of power and fear; and he wielded cold and fire, from the tops of the mountains to the deep furnaces that are beneath them; and whatsoever was cruel or violent or deadly in those days is laid to his charge.

But in Valinor the Valar dwelt with all their kin and folk, and because of the beauty and bliss of that realm they came seldom now to Middle-earth, but gave to the Land beyond the Mountains their chief care and love.

In the midst of the Blessed Realm Aulë dwelt, and laboured long, for in the making of all things in that land he had the chief part; and he wrought there many fair and shapely things both openly and in secret. Of him comes the lore and knowledge of the Earth and of all those things that it contains, whether the lore of those who do not make but seek only for the understanding of what is, studying the fabric of the world and the blending and mutation of its elements, or the lore of all craftsmen: the weaver, the shaper of wood, and the worker in metals; and the tiller and the husbandman also. Though these last and all that deal with things that grow and bear fruit must look also to the spouse of Aulë, Yavanna Palúrien. And Aulë we name the Friend of the Noldor, for of him they learned much in after days, and they are most skilled of the Elves. And in their own fashion, according to their own gifts which Ilúvatar gave to them, they added much to his teaching, delighting in tongues and alphabets and in the figures of broidery, of drawing, and of carving. And the Noldor it
was who achieved the invention of gems, which were not in the world before their coming; and the fairest of all gems were the Silmarils, and they are lost.

But Manwë Súlimo, highest and holiest of the Valar, sat upon the borders of the West, forsaking not in his thought the Outer Lands. For his throne was set in majesty upon the pinnacle of Taniquetil, which was the highest of the mountains of the world, standing upon the margin of the Seas. Spirits in the shape of hawks and eagles flew ever to and from his halls; and their eyes could see to the depths of the sea and could pierce the hidden caverns under the world, and their wings could bear them through the three regions of the firmament beyond the lights of heaven to the edge of Darkness. Thus they brought word to him of well nigh all that passed in Aman: yet some things were hidden even from the eyes of Manwë and the servants of Manwë, for where Melkor sat in his dark thought impenetrable shadows lay. With Manwë dwelt Varda the most beautiful, whom we Noldor name Elbereth, Queen of the Valar; she it was who wrought the Great Stars; and with them were a great host of fair spirits in great blessedness. Elves and Men revere Manwë most of all the Valar, for he has no thought for his own honour, and is not jealous of his power, but ruleth all to peace. The Vanyar he loved most of all the Elves, and of him they received song and poesy. For poesy is the delight of Manwë, and the song of words is his music. Behold, the raiment of Manwë is blue, and blue is the fire of his eyes, and his sceptre is of sapphire which the Noldor wrought for him; and he is King of the world of gods and elves and men, the vicegerent of Ilúvatar, and the chief defence against the evil of Melkor.

But Ulmo was alone, and he abode not in Valinor, nor ever came thither unless there was need for a great council: he dwelt from the beginning of Arda in the Outer Ocean, and still he dwells there. Thence he governed the flowing of all waters, and the ebbing, the courses of all rivers and the replenishment of springs, the distilling of all dews and rain in every land beneath the sky. In the deep places he gives thought to musics great and terrible; and the echo thereof runs through all the veins of the world in sorrow and in joy; for if joyful is the fountain that rises in the sun, its springs are in the wells of sorrow unfathomed at the foundations of the Earth. The Teleri learned much of Ulmo, and for this reason their music has both sadness and enchantment.

And in that time of dark Yavanna also was unwilling utterly to forsake the outer lands; for all things that grow are dear to her, and she mourned for the works that she had begun in Middle-earth but Melkor had marred. Therefore leaving the house of Aulë and the flowering meads of Valinor she would come at times and heal the hurts of Melkor; and returning she would ever urge the Valar to that war with his evil dominion that they must surely wage ere the coming of the Firstborn. And Oromë tamer of beasts would ride too at whiles in the darkness of the unlit forests; as a mighty hunter he came with spear and bow upon his tireless steed with shining mane and golden hoof, pursuing to the death the monsters and fell creatures of the kingdom of Melkor. Then in the twilight of the world he would sound his great horn, the
Valaróma, upon the plains of Arda, whereat the mountains echoed and the shadows of Utumno fled away, and even the heart of Melkor himself was shaken, foreboding the wrath to come.

Now all is said to thee, Ælfwine, for this present, concerning the manner of the Earth and its rulers in the time before days and ere the world became such as the Children have known it. Of these thou hast not asked, but a little I will say and so make an end. For Elves and Men are the Children; and since they understood not fully that theme by which they entered into the Music, none of the Ainur dared to add anything to their fashion. For which reason the Valar are to these kindreds rather their elders and their chieftains than their masters; and if ever in their dealings with Elves and Men the Ainur have endeavoured to force them when they would not be guided, this has seldom turned to good, howsoever good the intent. The dealings of the Ainur have been mostly with the Elves, for Ilúvatar made the Eldar more like in nature to the Ainur, though less in might and stature, whereas to Men he gave strange gifts.

For it is said that after the departure of the Valar there was silence and for an age Ilúvatar sat alone in thought. Then he spoke, and he said: 'Behold I love the Earth, which shall be a mansion for the Eldar and the Atani! But the Eldar shall be the fairest of all earthly creatures, and they shall have and shall conceive and bring forth more beauty than all my children; and they shall have the greater bliss in this world. But to the Atani (which are Men) I will give a new gift.'

Therefore he willed that the hearts of Men should seek beyond the world and should find no rest therein; but they should have a virtue to shape their life, amid the powers and chances of the world, beyond the Music of the Ainur, which is as fate to all things else; and of their operation everything should be, in form and deed, completed, and the world fulfilled unto the last and smallest.

But Ilúvatar knew that Men, being set amid the turmoils of the powers of the world, would stray often, and would not use their gifts in harmony; and he said: 'These too in their time shall find that all that they do redounds at the end only to the glory of my work.' Yet we of the Eldar believe that Men are often a grief to Manwë, who knows most of the mind of Ilúvatar. For it seems to us that Men resemble Melkor most of all the Ainur, and yet he has ever feared and hated them, even those that served him.

It is one with this gift of freedom that the children of Men dwell only a short space in the world alive, and are not bound to it, and depart soon whither we know not. Whereas the Eldar remain until the end of days, and their love of the Earth and all the world is more single and poignant, therefore, and as the years lengthen ever more sorrowful. Memory is our burden. For the Eldar die not till the world dies, unless they are slain or waste in grief (and to both these seeming deaths they are subject); neither does age subdue their strength, unless one grow weary of ten thousand centuries; and dying they are gathered in the halls of Mandos in Valinor, whence often they return. But the sons of Men die indeed, and leave the World (it is said); wherefore they are called the Guests, or the Strangers. Death is their fate, the gift of Ilúvatar, which as Time wears even the Powers shall envy. But Melkor has cast his shadow upon it, and confounded it with darkness, and brought forth evil out of good, and fear out of hope. Yet of old the Valar said unto us that Men shall join in the Second Music of the Ainur, whereas Ilúvatar has not revealed what he purposes for the Elves after the World's end, and Melkor has not discovered it.
Notes

1 Here the original text of the Ainulindalë had:
   “And Manwë and Ulmo and Aulë were as Kings; but Varda was the Queen of the Valar, and the
   spouse of Manwë, and her beauty was high and terrible and of great reverence. Yavanna was her sister,
   and Yavanna espoused Aulë; but Nienna dwells alone, even as does Ulmo. And these with Melkor are
   the Seven Great Ones of the Kingdom of Arda.”

   This passage was omitted by Christopher Tolkien from the published Ainulindalë because in a
   later account of the Valaquenta Yavanna was not Varda's sister, and the conception of the Seven Great
   Ones was changed: among the Valar “Nine were of chief power and reverence; but one is removed
   from their number, and Eight remain, the Aratar, the High Ones of Arda: Manwë and Varda, Ulmo,
   Yavanna and Aulë, Mandos, Nienna, and Oromë.”

   2 The name Palúrien was replaced by Kementári in a later account of the Valaquenta (X: 157, 202).

   3 Here the original text of the Ainulindalë had:
   “…and dying they are gathered in the halls of Mandos in Valinor, whence often they return, and
   are reborn among their children.”

   Christopher Tolkien removed from the chapter "Of the Beginning of Days" in The Silmarillion
   the statement that Elves who die often reborn among their children, since Tolkien abandoned this idea
   in his later writings.