



In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Chapter Four, "A Conspiracy Unmasked", Merry tells Frodo: "But you cannot trust us to let you face trouble alone, and go off without a word. *We are your friends, Frodo.*" My friends, behold! In Chapter Twelve, "Flight to the Ford," Frodo shows the same loyalty to those very hobbit-friends for whom Merry had been speaking.

He [Glorfindel, a high-elf from Rivendell] searched the wound on Frodo's shoulder with his fingers, and his face grew graver, as if what he learned disquieted him. But Frodo felt the chill lessen in his side and arm; a little warmth crept down from his shoulder to his hand, and the pain grew easier. The dusk of evening seemed to grow lighter about him, as if a cloud had been withdrawn. He saw his friends' faces more clearly again, and a measure of new hope and strength returned.

'You shall ride my horse,' said Glorfindel. 'I will shorten the stirrups up to the saddle-skirts, and you must sit as tight as you can. But you need not fear: my horse will not let any rider fall that I command him to bear. His pace is light and smooth; and if danger presses too near, he will bear you away with a speed that even the black steeds of the enemy cannot rival.'

'No, he will not!' said Frodo. '*I shall not ride him, if I am to be carried off to Rivendell or to anywhere else, leaving my friends behind in danger.*'

Glorfindel smiled, 'I doubt very much,' he said, 'if your friends would be in danger if you were not with them! The pursuit would follow you and leave us in peace, I think. It is you Frodo, and that which you bear that brings us all in peril.' [J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 238. Emphasis mine.]

Glorfindel, a very wise elf, is pleased with Frodo's proclamation of friendship and loyalty. That's why he smiles. And so the hobbit-friends do make it safely to Rivendell, because their love is so great.