

Únati

The Boundaries of the Possible within Eä

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The High Elves of JRR Tolkien's Middle-earth call "únati" those impossibilities that would contravene Eru Ilúvatar's 'laws of nature' by which all beings are constrained – even the mightiest of the Valar, as proven by the vain attempts of the rebel Melkor Morgoth to defy Eru's Will.

Nothing Can Be Created out of Nothing, Nor Can Anything Be Truly Destroyed

No 'Creation' or 'Destruction'

No power within Arda allows the creation or destruction of anything: matter, energy or spirit, for the Flame Imperishable is with Eru alone.

Any magic that seems to create or destroy can only be achieved by sub-creation: converting, transforming or reshaping that which exists. 'Destroyed' spirits are merely reduced to permanent impotence.

Nothing Can Be Conjured From Beyond Eä

No 'Extraplanar Conjunction or Abjuration'

No power exists to summon up any being, matter, energy or spirit from any other plane of existence, nor to banish such from this world into any other.

Arda does include one or more "other worlds" sometimes collectively called "the Unseen" but they are as layers of this world and have neither time nor space of their own.

The Morgoth was finally banished from Eä by Manwe, but even the King of the Valar would not have had this power had not Ilúvatar heard him and sanctioned the deed.

No Placement In Eä Can Be Transcended

No 'Teleportation'

No power exists to cause any being, matter, energy or spirit to be relocated without passing normally through the space between one location and another.

Beings of pure spirit are able to travel very rapidly.

Bodily Injury Can Be Healed Only By The Body Itself

No 'Regeneration'

Severed body parts cannot be restored. Wounds cannot be magically closed, nor broken bones re-knitted.

All power to effect healing is achieved by enhancing the organic processes of the patient's hröa, either directly or mediately by strengthening their fëa.

Not even the Elves could "survive vital injuries, or violent assaults upon their structure; nor replace missing members (such as a hand hewn off)". -- Note 5 (JRRT) to Athrabeth, HoME X

Death is Irreversible

No Resurrection

Once an Incarnate is dead and their soul has departed their body, there is no way for them to be brought back to life.

A soul may be undeparted for a short period following what some would call death, and may be enjoined not to depart.

The souls of the Elves go to Aman when they 'die' and are given new bodies. It is not únat for them to return to Middle-earth, but the Valar do not permit it (except uniquely for (1) Beren and Lúthien, and (2) Glorfindel.) Gandalf was incarnated, but was a maia rather than an Incarnate by nature.

No Incarnate May Communicate with the Dead

No Communion with the Dead

The Vala Námo Mandos holds the Halls of Waiting inviolable, and permits none to communicate with the souls of the dead within them.

This is not únat but it is Mandos' sacred trust and none but he, even of the Aratar, may do so. It is also known that

souls in the Halls of Waiting are absorbed and solitary and communicate but little amongst themselves.

No Incarnate Can Defy Gravity

No Flying

No power affords the ability for an Incarnate to 'levitate' or fly if it cannot do so of its own body.

Beings of pure spirit may not be constrained to the surface of Arda, and bewinged creatures may fly upon the airs. 'Magic' can exert force at a distance as in 'telekinesis', but it has never been known to raise a living being.

Placement In Time Cannot Be Transcended

No Time Travel

It is not possible for any matter, energy or spirit to travel back or forwards in time, save by the normal persistence of its nature. Nor is any communion possible across time.

Perception can be extended backwards in time. The future, however, is not pre-ordained beyond the broad themes of the Song of the Ainur. Even perception cannot be projected into the future that has not yet come to pass, unless it be in speculation.

No Mind Can Know That Which Is Not In It

No Knowledge without a Source

All knowledge ultimately derives from memory of experience (previously forgotten or otherwise), deduction and extrapolation from existing knowledge, or from an external source.

No experience is ever utterly lost from memory, either in the mind of an Incarnate or in the history retained by inert matter, though it may be lost from ready command. Any mind with knowledge that is certain and which it cannot have known through its normal offices, must have received it from a source that does possess that certain knowledge.