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J. R. R. TOLKIEN'S

The Hobbit

dramatized by
PATRICIA GRAY

This dramatization of
"The Hobbit"
is authorized by
PROFESSOR J. R. R. TOLKIEN



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY



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(THE HOBBIT)

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THE HOBBIT

A Play in Two Acts

For Twenty-six Characters
(fewer with doubling) and Extras

CHARACTERS

BILBO BAGGINS	<i>a Hobbit</i>
GANDALF	<i>a great Wizard</i>
DWALIN and BALIN	}
KILI and FILI	
DORI, NORI and ORI	
OIN and GLOIN	
BIFUR and BOFUR	
BOMBUR	<i>Dwarves</i>
THORIN	<i>Leader of the Dwarves</i>
GROCERY BOY	<i>a Hobbit lad</i>
BERT	}
ESSIE	
TOM	
THE GREAT GOBLIN	}
ATTENDANT GOBLIN	
GOLLUM	<i>a slimy creature</i>
THE ELVEN QUEEN	}
TWO ELF GUARDS	
SMAUG	<i>the Dragon</i>

Other Hobbits, Goblins, Elves, etc. may be added as desired, or the number may be easily reduced.

PLACE: *From Underhill, through the Wilderland, to the Lonely Mountain.*

TIME: *Long ago in the quiet of the world.*

NOTES ON CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

BILBO BAGGINS: He is a Hobbit in his middle years, short, compact, with a well-stuffed stomach. His head is covered with thick, curly brown hair, as are his shoeless feet. He is impeccably outfitted in a bright yellow waistcoat and pea green trousers, and wears a pointed cap, as do any hobbit extras used. He is every inch the proper country gentleman delighting in hearty meals and peace and quiet. He loves his quiet home, but something deep inside longs for adventure. Bilbo's Hobbit habits of caution and conservatism make him at times seem cowardly, but actually he is very brave, loyal and resourceful about getting the group of adventurous dwarves out of trouble. They do not realize this until near the end, so they are apt to make fun of him. To call him "The Burglar" is part of the delightful humor of the book from which the play is made. Bilbo is honest—though when he finds the Ring of Power he keeps it, sensing its importance to their quest. The Ring should not be garish. It is a magical ring and its importance lies in its magic, not in its substance. Any plain band ring will serve. For the journey, Bilbo wears a short warm jacket or cloak, and trousers (or shorts or knickers) held up by somewhat gaudy suspenders. He may or may not wear shoes—hobbits seldom wear shoes as they like the feel of the ground on their feet. At the last Bilbo puts on a gold coat (made of gold paper or an ordinary coat sprayed with gold glitter).

GANDALF: He is a great Wizard. No one knows how old he is, nor even the half of his wisdom. He wears a high-peaked blue hat, painted with mysterious signs, and carries a long staff which can emit blue fire at the end. He wears a long gray cloak with a silver scarf wound around his neck, over which his long white beard hangs

down below his waist. He wears large black boots. His keen eyes are shaded by bushy eyebrows, which he uses effectively when matters displease him. He can look about him in time as well as space, so he is sometimes impatient with the follies of those about him. Yet in spite of all his wisdom (or is it rather because of his wisdom?) he is understanding and helpful and kind.

THE DWARVES: They are bearded, and all wear the traditional dwarf clothes. Their belts may be painted with gold or silver paint.

DWALIN: He is a dwarf with a blue beard tucked into a golden belt. He wears a dark green hood and costume.

BALIN: He is the eldest dwarf and brother to Dwalin. His white beard is scraggly and he walks with an aged stoop. He wears a scarlet costume with a golden belt.

KILI and FILI: They are look-alikes and should be dressed accordingly. They wear blue hoods, silver belts and have yellow beards. Each carries a bag of tools. They are young and bouncy, and have high, excitable voices.

DORI: He has a blond beard, a dark purple hood, and a gold belt.

NORI: He has a blond beard, a pale purple hood and a silver belt.

ORI: He has a brown beard, an orange hood and a gold belt.

OIN: He has an auburn beard and brown hood and a gold belt.

GLOIN: He has a gray beard and a gray hood and a silver belt. He is the doubter always.

BIFUR: He has a very slight chestnut beard, a pale yellow hood and a silver belt. He is the youngest of the dwarves.

BOFUR: He has a gray beard, a dark yellow hood and a silver belt.

BOMBUR: He is rather fat and a bit of a clown. He

wears a light blue beard, a pale green hood and a silver belt.

THORIN: He is the leader of the dwarves. He is arrogant, stiff-necked and regal. He wears a black beard and a sky-blue hood with a long silver tassel, and a gold belt. Around his neck is a gold-linked chain.

GROCERY BOY: He is a not-too-intelligent hobbit lad.

THE TROLLS: They are hideous, beefy creatures, rough-spoken and dirty. They are dressed in coarse brown rags and wear necklaces of bones and other distasteful tidbits around their necks.

BERT: He is uncouth and lumpish. He wears a rough, dark fuzzy jacket and trousers and workman's shoes. Pale make-up accented with dark accent lines emphasize his uncouth quality.

ESSIE: She is the feminine counterpart of Bert. She wears a long draggled skirt and a gray, much-worn cardigan. Her hair is drawn back in an untidy bun from which straggling wisps escape.

TOM: He is a slightly younger troll. His clothes and make-up are similar to that of the others.

THE VALLEY ELVES: They are merry folk with high, teasing voices. They are dressed in bright green suits and little pointed caps. They can be male or female.

THE GOBLINS: They are cruel, wicked creatures with over-sized heads, squashed features and large mouths. They are dressed in dark clothing (tights and leotards if desired) and carry chains, whips and clubs. As the scenes are dimly lit, it would be effective if their faces were decorated with day-glow paint. It can be purchased anywhere—just ask the nearest hippie.

THE GREAT GOBLIN: If a head mask is used, the head should be extra large; otherwise a repulsive mask will give the effect. His costume may consist of black close-

fitted trousers and a black turtleneck sweater on which strong zig-zags have been painted in white or silver paint. The leader of the goblins is more imposing than the others. He has a great, stony voice, and is easily roused into frenzies of anger and cruelty.

GOBLIN ATTENDANT and SOLDIERS: They may be dressed similarly to the Great Goblin, but perhaps with a design of linked chain painted across their sweaters.

GOLLUM: He is a black, slimy water creature with bulging “pale-green” eyes. He may wear a skin-tight black rubber suit with cap, but not flippers. The suit may be touched here and there with vaseline to give a wet effect and make it glisten. His make-up is greenish and his eyes may be covered with close-fitting goggles painted a watery green, or they may be outlined with white grease paint or ringed in pale green day-glow paint. He is repulsive and frightening in his coldly vicious way.

THE WOOD-ELVES: They are a different breed from the valley elves—good folk, but more distrustful and aggressive. They can be played by either sex. They are dressed in the colors of the forest, greens and browns.

THE ELVEN QUEEN: The queen of the wood-elves is beautiful and regal. She has great dignity and stage presence. In the beginning, she wears a trimly fitted suit of leaves, forest green in color. She also wears a crown of leaves and berries and carries a short scepter of carved oak. In the final scene, she appears as the Great Queen in a glittering court robe and crown.

SMAUG: He is a vast red-gold dragon. He has a huge coiled tail, sharp claws, and a long white belly encrusted with a diamond waistcoat. He may wear a dragon costume or simply a dragon head mask. The body-frame of his costume can be made out of light wood, as in an apple box or a grocery crate. Cardboard is then tacked on and covered with crepe paper or cloth (possibly iridescent

plastic cloth) with scales painted boldly on it, which can be sprayed with glitter or sequins. He wears a waistcoat of the same material, which has been sprayed with diamond glitter. It has a black patch on it just above his heart. Smoke can be made to come out of his mouth by placing incense in a little tin dish and placing it in the bottom part of the dragon's cardboard mouth. This makes marvelous smoke. Also, if a second person is used inside the costume, an atomizer filled with ordinary face powder can be used. The eyes can be made of painted plastic cups, and a tongue can be made simply from painted foam rubber.

PRODUCTION NOTES

CAST. As all experienced directors know, parts can be varied at will according to special circumstances. For example, if the stage to be used is small, the number of dwarves, trolls, goblins, etc. can easily be reduced by assigning speeches of characters omitted to those who are retained. Actually, six or seven dwarves will serve as well as thirteen. Also, the play may be presented by an all-boy or all-girl cast. However, if girls play the parts of Gandalf, Bilbo, or Thorin, they should be costumed as males.

GANDALF'S STAFF. The staff may be wired so that he can produce the blue light at the end at will. A piece of blue gelatine over an ordinary flashlight will give effective color.

THE TABLE-CLEARING SCENE. This scene may be enlivened by using inexpensive plastic plates which can be sailed from hand to hand by the dwarves as they chant their song. This scene should be carefully rehearsed to have an unstudied, casual effect.

OTHER LIGHT EFFECTS. Act One, Scene Three calls for lightning effects, also for electrical effects for eyes of different colors that seem to flick on and off in different parts of the stage. The thunder and rain effects are easily supplied by tape recordings.

THE ELVEN SWORDS. These may be cut out of tagboard and painted with bronze paint. A small, flat flashlight securely taped to the sword handle and shaded with a bit of amber gelatine will supply the glow that indicates that Goblins are near.

THE DWARF-GOBLIN BATTLE. This must be rehearsed carefully, with everyone assigned specific opponents and action, so that there is much stage action and excitement. Individual paired teams of opponents may work out and rehearse individually special business of

sneaking up on an opponent or rescuing a friend heavily attacked. Pantomimes of pleas for mercy and striking down the enemy are also effective.

THE TREASURE CAVE. This may be as simple or as elaborate as desired. The effect of piles of treasure can be achieved by mounding stuff on any light framework with a lighted bulb below and sheets of amber or gold gelatine above. If it is desired to have some set effects of court jewels, a stunning effect can be achieved by using boxes with cut-out shapes of jewel-set necklaces, tiaras, etc. Gelatine in appropriate colors of emerald, ruby, and sapphire can be pasted over the cut-outs and lighted from behind by Christmas tree lights strung from box to box.

In all scenes where several characters are on stage at once, it is important that actors not immediately involved should be trained to look with simulated interest at any action and never to disturb the attention of the audience by any movement.

PROPERTIES

GENERAL: Bag-End: (Exterior, in front of curtain): A round green door with brass knob in middle, stoop outside door, mailbox with several letters in it. (Interior): Large round door with sign hanging on its outside, door mat, pegged coat rack, long table with benches, fireplace, stool, small table, lamp hanging over long table. Along the Journey: Platforms, log, two elaborate swords, huge gnarled tree trunks, vines, sign reading "MIRKWOOD: PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK"; several signs reading, "THE PATH." Dungeon: Bars of cell (including private cell for Thorin), wooden stools, table and chairs on platform R; jackets, pad and pencil, dwarf bags containing drills and hammers, four barrels, pile of straw, on platform L. The Lonely Mountain: Blackened tree stumps, a few broken mining tools, mountain (see description on page 68). Dragon Cave: Helmets, shields, goblets, jeweled weapons, etc. hung on walls, treasure chests with jewelry (costume jewelry) hanging out. Treasure must include golden coat, casket of gold coins, jeweled robe and crown.

BILBO: Turntable or lazy Susan laid with four separate breakfasts (including jam and muffin in breakfast #2 and eggs in breakfast #3); large napkin; long wooden pipe in pocket; tea trolley laden with plates, mugs, glasses, silverware, etc.; platter of cakes; huge platter of food and drink; journal (earlier given him by Gandalf) and quill pen; jeweled sword (after goblin scene); ring.

GANDALF: Staff equipped to show blue light (see Production Notes); large sign which reads "BURGLAR WANTS GOOD JOB, PLENTY OF EXCITEMENT AND REASONABLE REWARD"; large map; key; Bilbo's handkerchief, pipe,

tobacco pouch, leather-bound journal and hat; string bag of small hard cakes (ginger snaps will do).

DWARVES: All the dwarves carry bundles on sticks, bags of tools, etc., and in addition: Balin carries a cane, Kili and Fili have spades, Bombur has a spare hood (very large) and later on, the bag of cakes (at least sixteen) given him by Gandalf. Bifur and Nori bring in huge platters of food and drink. In Act One Thorin acquires a sword which is later (in Act Two) to be exchanged for a bent one. Thorin also has a map.

HOBBIT BOY: Box of groceries.

TROLLS: Camp fire (dummy), meat on long spits of wood, hefty wine jug, club (dummy), two swords.

GOBLINS: Whips.

GOLLUM: Rubber float, paddle, rubber fish.

ELVEN QUEEN: Wand.

ELF ATTENDANTS: Bows and arrows, jeweled sword on purple pillow.

FIRST GUARD: Large ring of keys fastened to belt by chain; pencil.

SECOND GUARD: Tray with bowl of soup, spoon and piece of bread; pad of paper.

What People Are Saying...

“Well received by the community. Great theater experience for the youth.” *Vicki Halstead, City of Dinuba Parks and Recreation, Dinuba, Calif.*

“*The Hobbit* was a challenge and a wonderful production. With a cast of forty-one with lots of Gollums and Elf attendants for the Elven Queen. It was a joy to work with young people from five to eighteen. Thanks for helping to make our show a great hit.”

*Bebe Abel,
Spotlight Youth Theatre, Waynesville, N.C.*

“Solid writing—excellent notes in rear of text. Audiences loved wry humor embedded in dialogue. Solid responses from audiences.”

*Ed Cornely, Cornely Productions,
Westboro, Mass.*

“Excellent adaptation of Tolkien’s book. My actors went out for the play because of their love of the book, and they commented how close to the story it was. Easy to find flashing staff and glowing swords on Internet because of *Rings* movies.”

Linda Hasbrouck, Gibraltar Area Schools, Fish Creek, Wis.

“This was a play that was easily accomplished by middle-level students. It was flexible enough to accommodate varied students, number of cast members. The set needs were workable in either a small or large space.”

*Earlene DeLeon,
Cedar Rivers Middle School, Maple Valley, Wash.*

“I read several different versions when deciding to direct *The Hobbit* with our high-schoolers. This version, although not entirely true to the original book, does seem to be the closest to matching the SPIRIT of the book. And DOES give student actors rich characterizations to create.”

*Darlene Lentz,
Sands Center/Storybook, DeLand, Fla.*

ACT ONE

Scene One

SCENE: The houselights dim. The lights come up in front of the curtain, revealing an imaginary part of the world called Middle Earth. We are in the Shire, Underhill, home of the Hobbits. It is a pleasant morning. The Shire is the picture of rural perfection.)

At L sits a well-appointed little Hobbit by the name of BILBO BAGGINS, Esq. He is sitting on the stoop outside his round green door which has a shiny yellow brass doorknob in the exact middle. At the side is a mailbox with several letters in it. Before him is a turntable or lazy Susan, laid with four complete breakfasts. BILBO has just eaten the first of these and lets out a deep sigh of satisfaction. He carefully dabs his mouth with a huge napkin. Emitting another sigh, he turns the table so that breakfast number two is before him. He digs in with determination after a brief hesitation over which jam to spread his muffin with.)

From R an extraordinary old man [GANDALF] enters. He is tall, with a flowing white beard and bushy black brows, out of which gleam deep, piercing eyes. On his head is a tall, peaked hat covered with strange designs. He wears a long gray cloak, a silver scarf, and immense black boots, and carries a staff.)

GANDALF (regarding the scene with relish, taking a deep breath of the sparkling air). Ah, the Shire! How delicious the morning is in this part of the world! The air is stuffed with comfort! It feels like nothing exciting has happened here for ages--all green and still---- (Crosses to BILBO, who is well into his third breakfast.) --rather like the inside of one of those fresh eggs you're eating--don't you think?

BILBO (looking up, startled). Oh! I wouldn't know. It's hard to look at a place from the outside when you live in the inside! But then you're a stranger here. Welcome! I still have a breakfast or two left if you'd care for some.

GANDALF. Thank you, I haven't the time--and I am not a stranger anywhere unless, of course, I choose to be.

(A HOBBIT with a green, pointed cap peeks down at them from a window flap in the curtain. Immediately, two more HOBBITS pop out from the two sides of the curtain.)

BILBO (confused). Oh, yes? Well, how do you do, sir---- (Offering his hand).

GANDALF (ignoring the gesture). Magnificently, of course! (Slowly and deliberately.) But at the moment, I am looking for someone to share a great adventure---- (Pauses to see Bilbo's reaction, which is sheer horror.) --a stupendous adventure that I'm arranging--and it's very difficult to find anyone---- (The three HOBBITS who have been listening suddenly vanish. We hear sounds of doors and shutters slamming offstage.) What was that?

BILBO (standing up, taking from his pocket a long wooden pipe and tapping it impatiently). That was neighbors slamming doors and shutters.

GANDALF (sadly). On adventure. Tch, tch.

BILBO. You, sir, are in the neighborhood of Hobbits.

GANDALF (feigning ignorance). Hobbit? Hobbit? What's a Hobbit?

BILBO. We're just plain folk--have no use for adventures. (Shudders.) Nasty, uncomfortable things! Adventures make you late for dinner! Can't think what anybody sees in them! (GANDALF continues to stare at BILBO with a strangely disturbing gleam in his eye. BILBO nervously crosses to the mailbox and removes some letters. He sits on the stoop and examines them.) Good morning, we don't want any adventures here. You might try across The Hill or over The Water. (BILBO devotes himself to his letters.)

GANDALF. You should be ashamed of yourself, Bilbo Baggins!

BILBO (sitting up alertly). That's my name! How did you know----

GANDALF (cutting in). You know mine, too, although you don't know that I belong to it. I am Gandalf, and Gandalf means me! To think that I should have lived to be good-morninged by Belladonna Took's son--as if I were selling buttons at the door!

BILBO (beside himself with excitement). Gandalf! Gandalf! Good gracious! Not the wandering wizard who used to tell such wonderful tales at parties about dragons and giants and goblins----

GANDALF (merely yawning). The same, dear boy.

BILBO. And about the rescue of princesses and the unexpected luck of widows' sons! And the fireworks! I remember those! Old Grandpa Took used to send them up on Midsummer's Eve. What a display!

GANDALF. Naturally.

BILBO. Up they rose, like great lilies and snap-

dragons, and hung in the twilight all evening, falling at last like silver and gold rain! . . . Dear me! Are you the same Gandalf who led so many of our quiet lads and lasses off on mad adventures? Bless me, life used to be quite inter----I mean, you used to upset things quite badly in these parts! I beg your pardon, but I had no idea you were still in business.

GANDALF. Where else should I be? Tch, tch. Well, for your Grandfather Took's sake and for the sake of your poor mother, Belladonna, I'll give you what you asked for.

BILBO. But I haven't asked for anything!

GANDALF. Yes, you have. My pardon--I give it to you. In fact, I will be so kind as to send you on an adventure--very amusing for me, very good for you--and profitable too, if you live through it.

BILBO. If I live through it? Sorry. No adventures, thank you. Good morning! (Starts for his door, then remembers his manners.) I'd ask you in to tea, but----

GANDALF. How kind of you to ask me--I hate to think alone! (Propelling him through the door.) You go along in and fix the tea. I'll be in shortly--I have a little business to attend to. (Gives BILBO a final shove through the door, then chuckles slyly to himself, rubs his hands, and hangs a large, colorful sign on the door. The sign reads BURGLAR WANTS GOOD JOB, PLENTY OF EXCITEMENT AND REASONABLE REWARD. He looks off R.) Ah, here they come! (Goes through door.)

(The curtain opens to reveal the main hall at Bag-End, residence of B. BAGGINS, Esquire. UC is a large round door with a mat in front. To the left of it is a pegged coat-rack. Downstage is a long table, with benches. To the right of

the table is a fireplace with a stool before it.

GANDALF, at C, looking around the room, calls off to BILBO.)

GANDALF. A fine place you have here, Bilbo.

(BILBO bustles on L with tea trolley.)

BILBO. Yes, I love my quiet home.

GANDALF. I haven't been this way for a long time-- not since your grandfather Took passed on----

BILBO. Yes, well, I don't expect there's much to amuse you around here----

GANDALF. True--but you Hobbits make a relaxing change from those dwarves and elves with their hard-headed hustle and light-headed bustle. Do you know the most amazing thing about Hobbits?

BILBO. No, what?

GANDALF. That you remain gentlefolk in spite of everything. I mean I just dropped in and yet you insisted I stay to tea.

BILBO (protesting weakly). Well---- (Doorbell rings. BILBO starts in surprise.)

GANDALF. You expecting someone?

BILBO (crossing to door). No----oh, maybe the groceries.

(BILBO opens the door U C, and in pops a dwarf /DWALIN/ with a blue beard neatly tucked into his golden belt. He wears a dark green hood.)

DWALIN (executing a low, sweeping bow). Dwalin, at your service!

BILBO (baffled, looking for groceries). Why--Bilbo Baggins, at yours! Ummm--I was expecting groceries.

DWALIN. I was told you set a great table.

GANDALF. Ask the fellow in to tea, why don't you?

BILBO. Yes, yes, certainly. Uh, would you care to join us? The kettle's on the boil----

DWALIN. Delighted! (Hangs his hood on a peg and seats himself expansively at table.)

BILBO (sitting down beside DWALIN). Well, now! (Laughs nervously.) Tell me---- (The doorbell rings again.) Oops, excuse me. (Goes to the door, saying while opening it.) I have no idea who it could---- Oh!

(There stands an elderly dwarf /BALIN/ with a white beard and scarlet hood.)

BALIN (hobbling inside, gesturing at the coat rack with his cane). Ha! I see they have begun to arrive already! (Hangs his hood next to Dwalin's.) Balin, at your service! (It is difficult for him to execute a bow. He groans.)

BILBO. Thank you. Uh, you said "They have begun to arrive"?

GANDALF (calling). Groceries, Bilbo?

BILBO. Actually, no---- (Taking a deep breath, to BALIN.) Won't you join us for tea?

BALIN. A glass of buttermilk would suit me better, if it's all the same to you, my good sir. But I don't mind some cake--seed cake, if you have any. (Crosses to table.)

BILBO (automatically). Oh, lots! Excuse me. (Hurries off L to get the cake.)

DWALIN. No hurry. (To BALIN.) Fine lodgings here, eh, brother?

BALIN (seating himself). Ummm. These Hobbits have the cream. A big thing this is we're setting out for.

(Doorbell rings, bringing on BILBO from L with platter of cakes.)

DWALIN. But dangerous. Terribly dangerous!

BILBO. Not again!

GANDALF (crossing to BILBO). Allow me to unburden you---- (Takes platter from BILBO and passes platter to others. DWALIN takes two cakes and downs them rapidly and is shortly back for more. BALIN takes one and nibbles at it and puts it down on small table. Later BALIN eats it unnoticed.)

(Bell rings again. BILBO rushes to the door and opens it. There stand two dwarves /KILI and FILI/, look-alikes with blue hoods, silver belts and yellow beards. Each carries a bag of tools and spades.)

KILI. Kili!

FILI. Fili! (Both sweep off their hoods and bow.)

KILI and FILI (together). At your service!

BILBO. Baggins, here---- (Weakly.) At yours . . . uh, and your families!

KILI. Dwalin and Balin here already, I see. Let us join the throng! (KILI and FILI hang up their hoods, cross to table and sit down.)

BILBO (horrified). Throng!

GANDALF. Why, Bilbo, I really am surprised! I didn't think that Hobbits mixed with dwarves.

BILBO. They don't!

GANDALF. No? That's odd, since you have so many dwarf friends.

BILBO (confidentially, to GANDALF). I've never laid eyes on them before! If my neighbors knew, they'd be scandalized! Dwarves here! At Bag-End! (Bell rings, and then there is the lively rat-a-tat of a stick on the door.)

DWALIN. That'll be Dori, Nori, Ori, Oin and Gloin!

BILBO (horrified, crossing to door). Who?

(Hurrying to the door as the rat-a-tat continues.)
The nerve!

(BILBO opens the door and there stand no less than five dwarves /DORI, NORI, ORI, OIN and GLOIN/, their broad hands stuck in their gold and silver belts. They bow upon introducing themselves.)

DORI (has a blond beard, dark purple hood, and gold belt; doffing his hood). Dori!

NORI (has a blond beard, pale purple hood, and silver belt; doffing his hood). Nori!

ORI (has a brown beard, orange hood, and gold belt; doffing his hood). Ori!

OIN (has an auburn beard, brown hood, and a gold belt; doffing his hood). Oin!

GLOIN (has a gray beard, gray hood, and a silver belt; doffing his hood). Gloin!

BILBO. Oh!

DORI, NORI, ORI, OIN and GLOIN (together).

At your service! (They hang up their hoods.)

BILBO. Where do you all come from? (Crossing to GANDALF, frantically.) There's just no end to them! I must be having a nightmare!

(GANDALF pinches BILBO.) Ouch!

GANDALF. You're awake. (DWARVES have been whispering among themselves.)

BILBO (coughing importantly to get the Dwarves' attention). Ahem, ahem. Honored Dwarves, I'm sorry but I'm afraid you've mistaken this for a restaurant. This is a private home.

(DWARVES laugh politely at what they think is an attempt at humor.)

DORI (slapping BILBO on the back good-naturedly).

Oh-ho, jolly good! Bring out the food.

ORI. Hot cocoa for me, please.

DWALIN (from the table). And more cakes! We're fresh out. Please! (Shows empty plate. There is a terrific banging on the door.)

BILBO (fuming). Stop that pounding! What are you

trying to----

(BILBO pulls the door open with a jerk, and in tumble four dwarves, /BIFUR, BOFUR, BOMBUR, and THORIN/, one on top of the other.)

GANDALF (laughing). Careful, careful! It's not like you, Bilbo, to keep friends waiting on the mat, and then open the door like a popgun! (The DWARVES pick themselves up and bow as they announce themselves, except for THORIN, who was at the bottom of the heap, directly under BOMBUR, the fattest of the lot.)

BIFUR (has a very slight chestnut beard and pale yellow hood; he is the youngest of the dwarves). I'm Bifur!

BOFUR (has a gray beard and a dark yellow hood and a silver belt). Bofur!

BIFUR and BOFUR (together). At your service!

BOMBUR (has a light blue beard and a pale green hood. He is the fattest of the dwarves and is a natural clown. He scrambles off THORIN and bows deeply.) Bombur, at your service! (He indicates THORIN, who was at the bottom of the heap and who stands apart brushing himself off indignantly.) Our great leader, Thorin. (THORIN has a black beard and a sky blue hood with a long silver tassel.)

THORIN (snarling at BOMBUR). Sir! (BOMBUR cringes. They all hang up their hoods.)

BILBO (interceding). My fault. I'm terribly sorry.

THORIN (grunting). Don't mention it. (Gazes regally up at the ceiling, looking at row of thirteen hoods.) I see we are all here.

GANDALF. Quite a merry gathering! (Door bell rings.)

THORIN. Who can that be?

BILBO. Well, I certainly wouldn't know!

(BILBO crosses to door, and opens it, and there stands a Hobbit BOY with a box of groceries.)

GROCERY BOY. Your groceries, Mr. Baggins.

BILBO (quickly). Thank you, lad, I'll take them----

(Takes box and attempts to shut door on boy.)

GROCERY BOY (peering over Bilbo's shoulder).

Having a party, Mr. Baggins?

BILBO. Humph.

GROCERY BOY. Dwarves! Cheez, Mr. Baggins--

hundreds of 'em! Wait till they hear of this down the road. Dwarves! Like locusts!

(BILBO shuts the door rudely on the boy.)

BILBO (sadly). Oh, dear!

THORIN (crossing to table with new arrivals).

I trust there's food for the late comers.

BILBO (tight as a coil). Well--I may have a little tea left.

GANDALF. Tea? No, no, thank you. A little red wine and some cold chicken and pickles.

THORIN. And for me.

BIFUR. Apple pie--and coffee, if you don't mind.

BOFUR. And mince pie with cheese!

BOMBUR (already seated at the table, drumming on it with zest). Pork pie and salad! (THORIN gives BOMBUR a disgusted look.)

BIFUR. And raspberry jam and muffins.

GANDALF. Put on a few eggs, there's a good fellow.

DORI (from table). Cold tongue!

NORI. A side of ham!

ORI. Cupcakes!

OIN. Assorted cheeses--if you please!

DWALIN. More cakes and ale!

BILBO (dumfounded). More! (Sarcastic.) Oh, certainly, dig in, dig in! (Heading L for the kitchen with box of groceries.) Don't stint

yourselves! (Grumbling to himself as he goes off.) Seem to know as much about the inside of my kitchen as I do! (Calling back.) I could use some help!

THORIN. Bifur! Nori! (BIFUR and NORI go off L to help Bilbo.) Now! Lower the lamp, Balin. (BALIN pulls down the lamp, which hangs over the table. The lights dim.)

DWALIN (rubbing his palms together). Dark for dark business!

BALIN. Hush! Let Thorin speak!

THORIN (at head of table; standing and clearing his throat importantly). Gandalf, dwarves, and Mr. Baggins!

(BILBO, BIFUR and NORI bustle on L, laden with huge platters of food and drink.)

BILBO. Why so dark?

FILI. We like the dark. (FILI notices BILBO is not serving himself and begins to fill a plate for him.)

DWARVES. Shh----

THORIN. We are met together in the house of our friend and fellow conspirator----

BILBO (protesting). No, no!

THORIN. --this wise and brave hobbit----

BILBO (flattered). Dear me!

THORIN. May the hair on his toes never fall out! All praise to his food. (The DWARVES raise their mugs.)

DWARVES (toasting). Hear, hear! (BILBO has slunk over to his stool in front of the fire where he sits clutching his toes protectively. FILI brings him a plate of food, but BILBO shakes his head. His appetite is completely gone. FILI returns to his own place.)

THORIN. We are met to discuss our plans. We

shall start before dawn on a long, hard journey, so dangerous that some may not live through it or they may reach the misty mountain only to be eaten by the dragon ---- (BILBO lets out a piercing shriek, falling off the stool to the floor, where he lies shaking and twitching wildly. The DWARVES spring up and stare at him in dismay.)

GANDALF (producing * a blue light at end of his staff and crossing to BILBO, prodding him with his foot). Come, come. He's an excitable little fellow. He gets these queer fits, but he's fierce as a dragon in a pinch!

BILBO (shrieking). I'm struck by lightning! Struck by lightning! (DWARVES circle BILBO curiously.)

GLOIN (the doubter, snorting). Humph! It's all very well for you to talk . . . but one shriek like that in a moment of danger might wake the dragon and all his kin. They'd eat the lot of us fast as you'd swallow a dozen cupcakes.

THORIN. It did sound more like fright than excitement. In fact, but for the sign on the door, I'd have thought we'd come to the wrong house.

BALIN. Why, he just turned to jelly right before our eyes! He looks more like a grocer than a burglar!

BILBO (raising himself up with all the dignity he can muster). Pardon me, but I couldn't help overhearing your insults. Am I allowed a few words?

THORIN (condescendingly). By all means.

BILBO. First, I don't know what you're talking about. There isn't any sign on my door--unless of course, you're referring to the dents from all your banging!

GANDALF. Of course there's a sign. I put it there myself.

* by using camera flash equipment

THORIN. My good sir, the sign says: "Burglar wants good job, plenty of excitement and reasonable reward." Read it yourself. (Opens door and shows sign.)

BILBO. So! I've been deceived!

GANDALF (to THORIN). You asked me to find a fourteenth man for your expedition--and I chose Mr. Baggins here----

BILBO (incensed). Oh, you did, did you? Well, if you think that I----

GANDALF. --but I'm afraid I've made a sad mistake. This can't be the chap! No, no, I was looking for a member of the famous Took family. Imagine! I mistook him for a Took! (Glowers at BILBO.)

BILBO (stung). But I am a Took!

GANDALF. Really? Tch, tch, the blood must have thinned then.

BILBO. Why, my greatuncle, Bull-Roarer Took----

GLOIN (cutting in). Yes, yes, but we're talking about you!

GANDALF (melodramatically). I said to myself, now here is a hobbit with desires beyond his next cup of tea--but alas, he's just an ordinary run-of-the-Shire hobbit. When adventure knocks, he locks his door and hides under the bed.

BILBO (highly insulted, standing up). Really, this is too much!

GANDALF (to DWARVES). Well, dwarves, you can go back to shoveling coal. The hobbit is afraid to go and you certainly can't set out with thirteen! That's too unlucky!

BILBO (with great dignity). Sir, I must tell you that to uphold the honor of the Took family, I would cross mountains and deserts and fight a hundred dragons! I would----

GANDALF (cutting in). Splendid! Mr. Baggins is with us! (Shakes Bilbo's hand.) Now,