

Journey to the Lonely Mountain

In a hole in the ground, there lived a hobbit called Bilbo. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort. Of all the hobbits, Bilbo was the greediest and most cunning. One night, Bilbo was disturbed from his slumber by three hard knocks on his door.

“Who disturbs me at this late hour?” he snapped.

“Bilbo Baggins,” boomed a voice, “I am here to make you an offer.”

“An offer?” queried Bilbo.

The voice continued, “My name is Gandalf and I need a fine hobbit, like yourself, to help me steal treasure from The Lonely Mountain.”

Of course, being greedy and cunning, Bilbo agreed. They travelled for many days and nights until they reached a forest. Relieved their journey was near its end, they entered the dense trees. As they got deeper into the forest, the trees began to close in on Bilbo and Gandalf, hiding the path ahead and behind. Bilbo realised they were lost. Fortunately, Gandalf used his magical staff to clear a route out of the forest.

Soon after, they reached the foot of the Lonely Mountain. It loomed large over Bilbo’s head.

“We can’t climb that!” exclaimed Bilbo, hopelessly.

Out of the corner of his eye, he spotted an opening in the rock face. A path. One big enough only for a hobbit. Triumphant, Bilbo squeezed through the gap.

Through the winding tunnel, Bilbo journeyed, until he reached a cavern. He could see a faint shimmer of gold before him. The treasure! He had found it.

All of a sudden, a roar disturbed the silence. He was not alone. Fiercely perching on top of the pile of gleaming gold, stood a red-eyed dragon, glaring at him. Slowly backing towards the exit, Bilbo felt something hard under his foot. A ring with strange letters carved into it. Bilbo, who thought he might as well take something home, slipped the ring onto his finger. Shocked, he noticed that he could no longer see his hands.

Clearly, the dragon could not see him either, as it was still glaring at the entrance. Bilbo took his chance: filled his pockets with gold, made his way out of the mountain and returned home, rich beyond his wildest dreams.