***The Hobbit***

***Chapter 1- An unexpected Party***

***Summary***

* Bilbo Baggins is a well-to-do, well-respected hobbit living in a cozy hole in The Hill.
* (Hobbits are about half the size of humans. They enjoy eating, drinking, and generally being happy and comfortable at home. Sounds plenty human to us!)
* One day, Bilbo is sitting outside his front door smoking when a wizard comes by: Gandalf.
* Gandalf comes to The Hill every now and again and stirs things up by telling wild stories and bringing young hobbits on adventures.
* Bilbo is uncomfortable and flustered so he panics, asks Gandalf to come to tea the following Wednesday, and runs inside.
* Gandalf laughs and makes some kind of strange mark on Bilbo's door.
* Bilbo totally forgets that Gandalf is coming over for tea on Wednesday, so when the doorbell rings, he's surprised.
* He is even more surprised when thirteen dwarves show up on his doorstep: Bifur, Bofur, Bombur, Oin, Gloin, Fili, Kili, Dori, Nori, Ori, Dwalin, Balin, and Thorin Oakenshield, their leader.
* Gandalf also turns up.
* So now Bilbo has an unexpected party of fourteen strangers on his hands: how will he feed them all?!
* The evening goes on and, eventually, it comes out that the mark Gandalf put on the door was an ad.
* Gandalf is the one who told all the dwarves to turn up at Bilbo's home for tea on Wednesday.
* The mark on the door means, "Burglar wants a good job, plenty of Excitement and reasonable Reward" (1.98).
* The dwarves hesitate to believe that Bilbo would be a good addition to a treasure quest.
* But Gandalf insists that Bilbo is "as fierce as a dragon in a pinch" (1.93).
* He also promises: "There is a lot more in [Bilbo] than you guess, and a deal more than he has any idea of himself" (1.104).
* Bilbo feels proud (and frightened) at Gandalf's recommendation, so he sticks around to find out what Gandalf and the dwarves want him to do.
* Thorin's grandfather Thror set up a huge, fine hall underneath the Lonely Mountain.
* Their family prospered, and they made lots of armor and jewelry and other fine things.
* All of this wealth attracted a dragon from the North, Smaug.
* When Smaug attacked the mountain under cover of night, these thirteen dwarves (along with Thorin's grandfather and father) barely escaped with their lives.
* They all vowed to return to the Lonely Mountain one day to take back the treasure from nasty old Smaug.
* Gandalf has a map showing a secret side door to the Lonely Mountain. He also has the key.
* He got both of these items from Thorin's father, Thrain, who was dying in the dungeons of the Necromancer when Gandalf found him.
* With this map and key in hand, the dwarves want to go to the Lonely Mountain.
* Then they want Bilbo, their professional burglar, to steal the treasure from the dragon Smaug.
* It's now late at night and everyone goes to sleep.
* Bilbo is still on the fence about whether he's going to go on this adventure or not.
* But he falls asleep listening to Thorin singing, "Far over the misty mountains cold / To dungeons deep and caverns old / We must away, ere break of day, / To find out long-forgotten gold" (1.143).

***Brief Summary:***

[Bilbo Baggins](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/character-analysis/#Bilbo_Baggins) is a simple hobbit with a simple life. His quiet life is interrupted when a group of dwarves and a famous wizard, [Gandalf](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/character-analysis/#Gandalf), show up at his home with a treasure map in hand. Gandalf reminds Bilbo of tales of goblins and giants and of people being lured into adventure. Shortly thereafter he lures Bilbo into one of those adventures. Gandalf and 13 rambunctious dwarves devise a plan to use their map to find and steal a treasure hoard buried in a mountain guarded by a fierce and greedy dragon. They have chosen Bilbo as their burglar. Bilbo's innate Bagginsish nature (on his father's side) desires comfort and normalcy, but he also has a Tookish (Tooks are from his mother's side) desire to be fierce and heroic. Ultimately, his inner adventurer wins out.

[Tolkien](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/author/) creates a whimsical world of hobbits, fire-breathing dragons, and intense but comical dwarves who sing. Even with the occasional death and its mayhem, it is a story written for children. Tolkien believed in the wisdom of children, and while he didn't want to scare them, he did want them to see that they could work through difficult circumstances and not need to be sheltered from every negative experience. The Hobbit, when examined closely, is brilliantly written not only to fascinate children but also to entertain adults.

Bilbo represents the status quo. His life is quite good, with little reason to risk what has been an entirely comfortable and normal existence. This cozy beginning to the story represents the first step of the hero's journey: the ordinary world. But The Hobbit is a tale of heroism, so the hero must receive the call to adventure. An optional step (refusal of the call) appears in [Chapter 1](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/chapter-1-summary/) when [Gandalf](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/character-analysis/#Gandalf) and the dwarves ask Bilbo to accompany them to claim [Smaug](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Hobbit/character-analysis/#Smaug)'s treasure and he declines the request. Also in this chapter, the narrator implies that Bilbo has a bit of adventurer innately swirling around inside him from his mother's side of the family, the Tooks. Bilbo certainly has a conflict of desires and emotions. He mainly wants to stay in his comfort zone, where he has a routine but good life.

However, after hearing Gandalf express that Bilbo is indeed quite fierce, something inside Bilbo desires to live up to Gandalf's view of him. He accepts the call to adventure: to search out and burglarize the gold treasure that was stolen from Thorin's people by the dragon Smaug. Tolkien takes the characters on a journey that is the ride of a lifetime—breaking them out of the everyday ritual and throwing disbelief to the winds.

***Brief Analysis:***

Hobbits, the narrator explains, are little people, roughly half the size of humans, with thick hair on their feet, round bellies, and a love of good food, comfort, and security. Though some hobbits live in houses, they traditionally live in holes in the ground. The holes are not dank and smelly but comfortable, cozy underground dwellings with all the amenities of their aboveground counterparts. The hole occupied by the hobbit known as Bilbo Baggins is called Bag End. It is quite a pleasant dwelling, with comfortable furniture and a well-stocked kitchen, nestled in a snug little village under a hill.

Bilbo’s ancestry is somewhat noble by hobbit standards: his father was from the well-to-do, conventional Baggins family, but his mother was from the Tooks, a wealthy, eccentric family infamous for their unhobbitlike tendency to go on adventures. Despite his Took blood, however, Bilbo prefers to stay at home and live a quiet life.

On the day the story begins, Bilbo is enjoying a pipe outside his front door when an old man with a long cloak and a staff arrives. After the old man introduces himself, Bilbo recognizes him as the wizard Gandalf, who has created spectacular fireworks displays on holidays in Hobbiton, but Bilbo still looks on the old wizard with a suspicious eye. When Gandalf asks if Bilbo would be interested in going on an adventure, Bilbo declines and quickly excuses himself. He invites the wizard to come over for tea sometime but only so as not to seem rude—in reality, he wants nothing to do with Gandalf and his adventures.

When the doorbell rings the next afternoon, Bilbo assumes it is Gandalf. To his surprise, a dwarf named Dwalin pushes past him and promptly sits down to eat. Soon, other dwarves begin to arrive, and as Bilbo’s neat little home becomes crowded with dwarves, Bilbo becomes increasingly confused and annoyed. At last, Gandalf arrives with the head dwarf, Thorin. The thirteen dwarves and the wizard nearly clean out Bilbo’s pantry before finally settling down to discuss their business.

It soon becomes clear that Gandalf has volunteered Bilbo to be a “burglar” for the dwarves on their adventure. The hobbit protests, and the dwarves grumble that the soft little hobbit does not seem suited to their adventure. Gandalf, however, is certain that Bilbo is useful, and insists that there is more to the hobbit than meets the eye.

The wizard then brings out an old map of a great mountain and points to a mysterious secret entrance, a door to which Thorin holds the key. Bilbo demands some clarification about the point of the whole expedition. Thorin explains that his grandfather, Thror, mined the mountain shown on the map and discovered a wealth of gold and jewels. Thror then became King under the Mountain, but his fantastic treasure attracted unwanted attention. Before long, the dragon Smaug came and killed or scattered all of Thror’s people. The dragon has been guarding the treasure ever since. Thorin and the dwarves are out to reclaim their rightful inheritance, even though they are unsure of what to do with Smaug when they find him.

Bilbo suspects that the dwarves want him to play a part in slaying the dragon. Although his Baggins side would like nothing better than to sit at home with his pipe, the Took influence in him fuels his curiosity about the adventure, and he is reluctantly excited by the tales of dragons and treasure and great battles. After looking at the map and discussing the adventure with the company, the hobbit makes up beds for all his guests and then spends the night in troubled dreams.

In The Hobbit, Tolkien presents us with a fantasy world of his own creation, complete with its own races, languages, and geography. Tolkien was a language scholar, and he was partially motivated to write his stories by his desire to invent other languages. He implies at the beginning of Chapter 1 that this fantasy world, which he later dubbed Middle-Earth, is somehow connected to our own world, saying that hobbits “have become rare and shy of the Big People,” which is why we no longer see them around.

In The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien implies that Middle-Earth is our Earth as it existed millions of years ago, when the continents had very different forms. Thus, Tolkien’s world is as much mythological as it is fantastic. Its larger purpose, like that of Greek and Roman mythologies, is often to reflect truths about our own world that may be better seen when presented in a mythical context. In fact, Tolkien first wrote about Middle-Earth with the intention of creating an entirely new mythology for the English people, and the story’s form is based on the ancient heroic epics that Tolkien taught and studied at Oxford. But The Hobbit is only tangentially connected to Tolkien’s history of Middle-Earth and to the larger mythology that Tolkien would explore in his longer and more ambitious works.

The Hobbit’s tone is much warmer and more humorous than that of most heroic epics, such as Beowulf. Tolkien tested out The Hobbit as he wrote it by reading it to his sons, and the manner of narration is, at times, very much like a children’s story. Its style is extremely playful and conversational, with frequent asides and jokes directed at the audience, including one famous quip about how an ancestor of the Tooks invented the game of golf when a goblin’s head he had chopped off in battle rolled into a hole.

The unlikely pairing of Bilbo with wizards, dwarves, and dragons in the first chapter establishes the contrast between the novel’s historically inspired, mythological subject matter and its lighthearted, modern tone. Much of the humor in the novel’s early chapters stems from this contrast. For example, as the dwarves hold their great feast, Bilbo worries that they will chip his plates and furniture—both Bilbo and the dwarves end up looking slightly ridiculous. The hobbit’s skeptical outlook on his guests and on the adventure mirrors our own outlook, and it enables the story’s more fantastic elements to be introduced in a manner that is more entertaining than explanatory. Tolkien eases us into his fantasy world, so that as Bilbo develops into a bolder and more heroic figure, we also become more familiar with the magical landscape of Middle-Earth.

In the preface to The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien conveyed his distaste for allegory. In the decades after writing The Hobbit, however, he openly acknowledged the link between hobbits and the English people of his own time. There are even many similarities between Bilbo and Tolkien. Like Bilbo, Tolkien enjoyed middle-class comforts—simple food, a pipe, and a quiet life. Like Bilbo, Tolkien had “adventurous blood”—his mother was from a family known for its extensive escapades. In a more general sense, Bilbo can be seen as a gentle caricature of the English—a reserved, quiet people who, nevertheless, can be roused to action when the situation calls for it, a trait Tolkien witnessed firsthand during his service in World War I.

***Critical Study:***

Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit, a small, beardless creature with hairy feet who is quite sociable and loves the comforts of home. His mother was a member of the Took family, who are considered a little irregular because they were rumored to have intermarried with a fairy and because they love adventure. Bilbo himself is very well off and fond of food and clothes. His house is a beautifully furnished hole in the ground.

Bilbo Baggins greets a passer-by, not recognizing him as Gandalf the wizard. Gandalf tells Bilbo that he is looking for someone to share an adventure with, but Bilbo firmly declines the invitation even after Gandalf reveals his identity to Bilbo and reminds him of Gandalf's longtime friendship with the Took family. Bilbo invites him to tea the next day; Gandalf makes a strange mark on the outside of Bilbo's front door and leaves.

The next day, Gandalf and thirteen dwarves — Dwalin, Balin, Kili, Fili, Dori, Nori, Ori, Oin, Gloin, Bifur, Bofur, Bombur, and Thorin — visit Bilbo and make themselves at home. They demand refreshments, and while they eat, they talk, smoke, sing, and play musical instruments.

The dwarves sing of seeking a treasure that lies buried under a mountain guarded by a dragon. Thorin, their leader, addresses the group, including Bilbo, whom he calls a fellow conspirator, reminding them that they are embarking the next day on a journey from which they may not return. Bilbo, who had not planned to join the group, becomes frightened and falls into a fit. When he comes to, he learns that Gandalf had advertised his services as a burglar — the meaning of the secret mark on the door — hoping that the dwarves would recruit him. Bilbo agrees to go on the journey, partly out of pride, because the dwarves are skeptical of his ability.

Gandalf takes out a map made by Thror, Thorin's grandfather, that shows where the treasure is hidden. He points to a secret entrance marked on the map and gives Thorin the key to it. Thorin tells the story of his ancestors, who lived in great wealth under the Mountain near Dale until Smaug the dragon invaded Dale and took control of the treasure of the Mountain. Bilbo asks about the business details of the adventure. They go to bed with plans for an early start the next morning.

The novel begins by introducing the story's main character, Bilbo Baggins, establishing the fantasy world of the story, and providing the premise for the journey that structures the plot.

Despite being a creature the reader has never seen — a hobbit — Bilbo Baggins is described in physical, psychological, and social terms that are quite understandable. He looks like an adult human, except that he is about half the height, is beardless, and has thick curly hair growing on his feet; a hobbit does not wear shoes. He is quite domestic and enjoys the comfort of his well-furnished hobbit-hole, good food, and a pipe. From his mother's side of the family, he has a model for adventurousness and also the financial resources to enjoy a life of leisure. The psychological conflict between his love of comfort and a certain inclination to adventure follows him throughout the story, and attempting to resolve it contributes to his character development. He is the protagonist of the story, but he does not appear in any way heroic, which is one of the themes of the story: how someone as ordinary as Bilbo, who does not at all seek adventure, can nevertheless find himself in an extraordinary situation in which he proves to be courageous and resourceful. Here you see him being drawn almost against his will into an adventure that he seems destined to experience.

Hobbits are not the only unusual creatures in this novel. The first chapter introduces a wizard, Gandalf, and thirteen dwarves. While these creatures are not real to the reader's experience, the narrator describes them in a matter-of-fact way as possessing a history and understandable character traits in addition to their unique physical appearance. The dwarves love beautiful material things; they like to make merry with food, drink, and song; and they can be fierce and vengeful. Their impulse to journey to the Mountain to seek revenge for Smaug's theft of their treasure contrasts with Bilbo's hobbit-like reluctance to leave his comfortable home. You are given this history to provide motivation for the journey. The details of the hobbits and dwarves' social life — pipe-smoking, breakfasts of bacon and eggs, tea-time — contribute an old-fashioned British tone to the setting, which enforces a sense of reality in this fantasy world.

Finally, the plan for a journey to the Lonely Mountain and Smaug in this chapter sets in motion the framework for the plot. The journey plot is one of the oldest in narrative literature and is the basis for many myths and fairy-tales, as well as more modern novels. A plot based on a journey allows characters to encounter many different situations and people, which gives readers an opportunity to see different sides of their personalities and provides some suspense as they appear to succeed and fail at different times in reaching their goals. Frequently, the journey plot has an underlying psychological structure, as it does in this novel, whereby the protagonist or main character actually develops more fully by successfully handling the dilemmas he encounters. Additionally, in this novel, the journey begins quite specifically in April and lasts one year. The full seasonal cycle of the year provides a symbolic sense of completion to Bilbo's journey.

braces suspenders; straps hung over the shoulders to hold up pants.

throng a crowd; a large number of people.

larder pantry; a place where food is stored.

flummoxed confused.

runes characters from the alphabets used by the Germanic peoples from the third to the thirteenth centuries.

***Summary and analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

The narrator begins by describing the hole in the ground beneath a hill, in which a particular hobbit lives. The hole is highly comfortable: it has bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and dining rooms for entertaining the hobbit’s many visitors. The best rooms in the house have a view of the garden outside the hobbit’s home. Locals refer to the area as The Hill, located in hobbit-town.

***Analysis Part 1:***

The first paragraph of The Hobbit is a surprise to read, because Tolkien doesn’t begin by describing what a hobbit is—he begins by describing the hole. This is a clever strategy for immersing readers in the fictional world of the book: the hole Tolkien describes is actually a fairly ordinary-sounding home, comfortable and clean. In this way, we see the world of The Hobbit as both fantastical (populated with strange creatures we’ve never heard of) and familiar (full of cozy homes). It’s also important to note that the best rooms in this hobbit’s home—presumably the ones the hobbit itself prefers—have windows. The hobbit enjoys comfort and security, but it also longs for the exterior world, and, perhaps, for travel and adventure.

***Summary Part 2:***

The narrator turns to describing hobbits. Hobbits are small creatures that resemble dwarves, except without beards. They have no magical powers except for their ability to hide, especially from humans, who are loud and clumsy. Hobbits love to laugh and eat, and they wear bright clothing.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Tolkien simultaneously distinguishes hobbits from people, who he playfully criticizes for being big and loud, and compares hobbits with people, noting their love for food, their sense of humor, etc. Again, Hobbits are established as both fantastic and “normal”, in the sense of being like the normal, non-heroic, non-adventurous, everyday people likely to be reading the book.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) [Baggins](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins), the Baggins about whom The Hobbit is written, is the child of the hobbit Belladonna Took, who was herself the daughter of the famous Old Took. The Tooks were rumored to be distantly related to fairies, and they were said to go on adventures occasionally. Belladonna Took never went on adventures; instead, she married Bungo Baggins, who used Belladonna’s mother’s money to build the hobbit-hole where Bilbo lives. At the time when the story begins, Bilbo is fully grown—about fifty years old—and looks and behaves exactly like his father, though he seems to have inherited some qualities from his Took ancestors.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Tolkien’s suggestion that, despite Bilbo’s apparent comfort, he has some yearning for adventure is connected to his ancestors. Tolkien makes similar connections for other characters later in the book, and often sees character traits and even destinies as a kind of “birthright” that can be passed down without the person receiving them even really knowing it. It’s important to note that Bilbo is supposed to be “fully grown” when the story begins—in fact, he will change greatly during the story, and, in effect, grow up. Perhaps the point is that it’s never too late to become a different person, and that adventure is a means of discovering things about yourself you didn’t know.

***Summary Part 4:***

One morning, [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) is sitting outside his home smoking, when [Gandalf](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/gandalf) passes by. Gandalf, an old man who wears a grey cloak and carries a staff, is famous among hobbits. He was friends with Old Took, but hasn’t been by The Hill since Took’s death. Bilbo, doesn’t recognize Gandalf, but greets him; Gandalf tells Bilbo that he is looking for someone to accompany him on an adventure. Bilbo refuses, saying that hobbits don’t take part in adventures, and pretends to ignore Gandalf. Gandalf then introduces himself to Bilbo, who is impressed, having heard stories about how Gandalf would bring quiet young people on adventures.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Bilbo, revealing his dual nature, is both attracted to and repelled by Gandalf’s promises of adventure. He knows that Gandalf brings innocent people like himself on quests and tries to avoid him, and yet he doesn’t simply turn Gandalf away. This suggests that, deep down, Bilbo wants to go on precisely this kind of quest, even if he’s too peaceful and satisfied with his life to admit it (to others or to himself).

***Summary part 5:***

[Gandalf](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/gandalf) tells [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) that he will give him what he has asked for; when Bilbo says that he hasn’t asked for anything, Gandalf says that, in fact, he’s asked for it twice. Bilbo, rattled and a little afraid, invites Gandalf to tea tomorrow, and immediately goes inside his home, thinking that Gandalf is a powerful wizard, and that he’ll have to be careful. Gandalf is amused by Bilbo’s behavior, and marks Bilbo’s door with a strange sign before he leaves.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Gandalf seems to sense (and perhaps knew before even meeting Bilbo) that Bilbo secretly wants to go on an adventure, but can’t admit it. Bilbo’s invitation to Gandalf further suggests that he’s at least a little attracted to his offers of adventure. Gandalf also proves himself to be adept at manipulating language and signs—drawing a complex figure on Bilbo’s door—while Bilbo stumbles over his words.

***Summary Part 6:***The next day, [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) has almost forgotten about tea. So he’s surprised to hear a knock at his door and find a dwarf, who introduces himself as [Dwalin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), standing outside his home. Bilbo is flustered, but invites Dwalin inside for tea. A little later, he hears another knock on the door, and finds anther dwarf, [Balin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters)—Dwalin’s brother. Again, he invites Balin in. In this manner, he lets a total of thirteen dwarves into his house: [Dwalin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), [Balin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), [Fili](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), [Kili](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), [Dori](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), Ori, Oin, Gloin, [Bifur](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), Nori, [Bofur](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), [Bombur](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters), who’s very fat, and [Thorin Oakenshield](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/thorin-oakenshield), who is haughty. [Gandalf](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/gandalf) arrives along with the last four dwarves. All thirteen dwarves, except for Thorin, who’s too important to join in, ask for food and sing songs about ruining Bilbo’s home, though they actually treat it with great care.

***Analysis Part 6:***There is very little characterization of the twelve dwarves other than Thorin. This sets the tone for The Hobbit, in which the group often acts as a single entity. Thorin’s sense of honor verging on haughtiness is established here and remains important through the book. The dwarves’ boisterous singing and play along with the actual respect they pay to Bilbo’s home establishes them as fun-loving and disorderly but also as having a deep sense of honor and respect. The scene also portrays how to be both a good host and a good guest. The host trusts and is generous with his guests; the guests enjoy themselves but are also careful with the host and his home.

***Summary Part 7:***

The dwarves play music and sing of the dwarves of the past, who lived in a great hall beneath a mountain, where they mined gold and jewels. A dragon attacked the dwarves and drove them from their home, and now they must quest to reclaim their home and their treasure. As [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) hears this song, he’s momentarily filled with a desire to go on adventures, but this desire disappears soon after the music ends.

***Analysis Part 7:***Song is an important means of communication in Tolkien’s book—it allows a group of people to share the same stories and keep memories of the past alive. Bilbo’s reaction to the song implies again his secret yearning for adventure. The dwarves’ tale marks them as a group that has had their home, and wealth, stolen from them. Now the stakes begin to be set: Bilbo has a home with which he is content (both his hole and his life among Hobbits), but the dwarves are without a home, without their birthright, and must go on an adventurous quest to get it back and the implication is that Bilbo could choose to leave his own home to go on the quest.

***Summary Part 8:***[Thorin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/thorin-oakenshield) rises from his seat and praises [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins), who he calls the dwarves’ co-conspirator, for his hospitality. He alludes to a great adventure on which Bilbo is to accompany the dwarves, and comments that Bilbo may never return. Bilbo is so shocked by this that he screams and faints. When Bilbo is revived, he overhears the dwarves wondering whether Bilbo, who they call a “little fellow” is capable of adventures. Bilbo indignantly says that he is capable of anything, an outburst that he is later to regret. The dwarves inform him that there was a sign on his door claiming that he is a burglar looking for employment; [Gandalf](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/gandalf) reveals that it was he who wrote this sign, but that the dwarves should accept Bilbo as their co-conspirator.

***Analysis Part 8:***At this point in the narrative, Bilbo is shy and timid, hardly the adventurer he will eventually become. Instead of actively choosing to participate in the quest, he’s forced to so by Gandalf, who manipulates language to fool the dwarves into treating Bilbo as their burglar. Nevertheless, Bilbo shows some signs that he wants to be part of the adventure—he angrily insists that he isn’t afraid. For the time being, though, Gandalf controls Bilbo’s fate, not Bilbo himself.

***Summary Part 9:***[Gandalf](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/gandalf) produces a map, which he tells [Thorin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/thorin-oakenshield) belonged to Thror, Thorin’s grandfather. The map shows a hall beneath a mountain, marked with the symbol of a red dragon. Gandalf explains that there is a secret passageway into the mountain, which is too small for a dragon to use itself. He had attempted to recruit warriors for the dwarves’ expedition, but found that warriors were too busy fighting, and for this reason chose a burglar, [Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins). He also gives Thorin the key to the secret passageway.

***Analysis Part 9:***Gandalf acts as a source of history and useful information for the dwarves during their quest. His discussion of the relative merits of warriors and burglars is a clue to the kind of heroism he believes in. Where others favor violence and strength, Gandalf seems to have more respect for cunning and cleverness. Gandalf’s motives in The Hobbit are never entirely clear—why is he helping the dwarves? Why does he seem so interested to include Bilbo?—though they are revealed more in Tolkien’s later Lord of the Rings trilogy.

***Summary Part 10:***[Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins), who loves maps, asks for an explanation of the dwarves’ quest. [Thorin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/thorin-oakenshield) explains that the fourteen dwarves in Bilbo’s house were the dwarves in their song. His grandfather, Thror, was King under the Mountain—King of a vast Dwarf city under the Lonely Mountain—and his subjects’ skill as miners and craftsmen brought trade, wealth, and prosperity to the surrounding area, and led also to the establishment of a large town for men, the Dale, which served as a hub of trade. A dragon, [Smaug](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/smaug), heard about the dwarves’ wealth, and drove them from their home, keeping the treasure for itself.

***Analysis Part 10:***Bilbo’s love of maps again suggests his yearning for adventure (though it also displays at this point a love of adventure contained within a very domestic world: Bilbo likes to imagine faraway lands from the safe comfort of his home). Thorin’s description of his family’s history sheds light on the interaction between the different peoples of Middle Earth, an important theme later in the novel: the homes of the dwarves and of men are interdependent.

***Summary Part 11:***[Bilbo](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/bilbo-baggins) suggests that the dwarves go to the Mountain and try to reclaim their treasure, and offers to fix them breakfast before they leave. [Thorin](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hobbit/characters/thorin-oakenshield) implies that Bilbo will be going with them, and, without waiting for an answer, asks Bilbo to fix him eggs for breakfast. The other dwarves ask for similar food and go to bed. As Bilbo falls asleep, he hears Thorin humming the dwarves’ song. He has vivid, unusual dreams that night, and wakes up late.

***Analysis Part 11:***Bilbo falls short of personally volunteering for the dwarves’ quest to the Lonely Mountain, but he continues to show signs that he’s secretly attracted to this quest. It’s as if Bilbo’s coming of age—from a passive homeowner to an active adventurer—can only be achieved if someone else—in this case, Gandalf—gives him a strong nudge.