

BILBO 1

Act I

The Hobbit

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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!