

GANDALF

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The Hobbit

Act I

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.