

THE HOBBIT – A MUSICAL

A musical based on the well-loved story by J.R.R. Tolkien
Script and Music by JOHN MILLS

1) What is *'The Hobbit – A Musical'* all about?

Who doesn't love a fantasy adventure, with an unexpected hero, a wizard, goodies and baddies, dragons and treasure? These are just some of the ingredients of this musical which has catchy songs and plenty of scope for dance and creative staging. Based on Tolkien's delightful story this is a terrific opportunity for performers and backstage teams to produce something magical and memorable for audiences of all ages. *'The Hobbit – A Musical'* is an engaging and, at times, frightening quest for our hero – Bilbo Baggins – who steps out of his comfort zone into the challenges of finding treasure with the Dwarves. A happy ending is assured but there's sadness and excitement on the way to pull audiences through many emotions. *'The Hobbit – A Musical'* pares back the sometimes-complex world of Tolkien into an adventure with flexible staging and cast numbers for Youth Theatres of varying sizes and ages.

2) Synopsis

Bilbo Baggins is a Hobbit – a diminutive figure with large, hairy feet – and a bit of a 'home-bird'. He lives a simple life and loves his food and home comforts. One morning he meets Gandalf The Grey – a wizard with a bit of a temper who is looking for someone to go on an adventure. They sing *'Roads Go Ever Ever On'* to set the scene for Bilbo's reluctance to go on the adventure, whilst Gandalf is determined that Bilbo will go.

Bilbo dismisses Gandalf rather abruptly, but happily offers an open invitation for tea – which is taken up by a dozen hungry and thirsty dwarves led by Thorin Oakenshield. Food is prepared and the drink is freely flowing as the dwarves sing of their quest, *'Over The Misty Mountains'* to seek their long-forgotten gold. Gandalf introduces Bilbo to the dwarves as a useful 'burglar' as he's so small a creature. Gandalf also give Thorin a map and a key to the secret Halls full of dwarves-treasure under the Lonely Mountain which is guarded by the dragon Smaug.

Bilbo's first challenge involves three rather dim, mutton-eating Trolls, who argue about whether to roast or boil or mince the travellers. Gandalf saves the day by turning the Trolls to stone and siezing their swords.

They next meet with the Elrond and the friendly Elves who sing *'Listen In Dark To Our Song'* with an invitation to eat 'bannocks of bread' and stay. They learn about hidden Moon-letters from Elrond and decide to press on as time is short. It begins to rain heavily so they all take shelter in a small cave nearby.

They are suddenly disturbed by a terrifying troop of goblins who sing *'We're The Greedy Goblins'*. The Giant Goblin has no time for the squiggling Bilbo, so throws him away, and becomes particularly animated when he discovers the swords which were taken from the Trolls. They are goblin-cleaving swords! Amidst great excitement Gandalf casts the spell 'Be stone to you' and the goblins are silenced. The dwarves gather up the swords and escape.

Bilbo is lost and alone! Where are Gandalf, Thorin and the dwarves? It is still raining so he finds shelter inside the cave. Bilbo searches in the dark and discovers a magic ring which he puts in his pocket. He ventures further into the cave and gets very lost. What is he to do?

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The cave is inhabited by a strange creature of the half-light named Gollum. It is Gollum's ring that Bilbo has found and Gollum is bereft at having lost it. The story of Gollum's love for the 'Preciouss' ring is told with his Gloomers in '*Gollum's Preciouss Dance*.' Gollum trips over Bilbo and can sense his Preciouss' nearby, so challenges Bilbo to the Riddle-game. After several rounds, Gollum loses patience and becomes focused on eating Bilbo!

Bilbo puts the ring on his finger which makes him invisible and manages to escape. He follows the icy underground river out to the other side of the Misty Mountains into Mirkwood and daylight. There, he discovers Gandalf and the dwarves. Gandalf announces he has urgent business south so has to leave them so they journey on without him.

The travellers are increasingly hungry and they smell luscious food and rush towards the smells. They realise too late that it is the Goblin's feast and find themselves captured! The Dwarves are tied up and Thorin is thrown into jail. Bilbo manages to steal the prison keys and release Thorin and the dwarves who make good their escape by floating down the river in wine barrels whilst singing '*South Away!*'

They have reached the Secret Halls under the Lonely Mountain, the home of Smaug The Dragon who guards the treasure. Bilbo puts on the 'Preciouss' ring, becomes invisible and steals some of the treasure including the special Arkenstone which is very special for Thorin. Bilbo also discovers a chick in Smaug's armour. Smaug is furious when he discovers the theft and flies from his cave to wreak havoc on the village nearby. Whist Smaug is away from his cave the dwarves gather the treasure whilst singing '*Under The Lonely Mountain*'. A skilful archer called Bard from the village manages to wound and kill Smaug. With the dragon dead, the treasure in the cave is open for claims from all-comers.

Bilbo keeps the Arkenstone hidden from Thorin and in the parley that follows offers it to Bard as a peace-offering. Thorin is very angry and challenges Bard to a fight. A noisy melee of battle follows and Bard is seriously wounded but manages to land a fatal blow to Thorin who dies having first made his peace with Bilbo. The Dwarves and Elves carry Thorin in a funeral procession leaving Bilbo and Gandalf to journey home with a reprise of '*Roads Go Ever Ever On*'

Bilbo returns home by himself with new feelings about his adventures. He finishes writing his memoirs '*There and Back Again, A Hobbit's Holiday*' just before celebrating his birthday. Gandalf, Hobbits, Elves and Dwarves all sing a joyous '*Happy Birthday, Mr Baggins*' to round off their amazing adventure!

3) Cast of Characters

There are 24 named characters with many opportunities for doubling-up roles:

Bilbo Baggins	A Hobbit, our unintentional hero. A diminutive character with big, hairy feet and a great love of food.
Gandalf The Grey	A grey-bearded Wizard with a bit of a temper and some amazing spells! Often arrives in the nick of time.
Gollum	A pitiful, creepy riddler who lives in an underworld world of gloom. Fixated by his 'Preciouss' ring.
Smaug	(<i>Pronounced Smaowg</i>) An enormous fire-breathing Dragon with glorious clattering armour.
Bard	Leader of the village. A great archer.

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The Dwarves*

Thorin Oakenshield Chief of the dwarves and great friend of Bilbo Baggins
Dwalin, Balin, Kili, Fili, Dori, Nori, Ori, Oin, Gloin, Bifur, Bofur, and Bombur.

**If using limited cast numbers these dwarves can double-up or use made of puppets/dolls.*

The Trolls

Bill Slow-speaking and rather dull. Local, yokel accent.
Bert Slow-speaking and more dull. Local, yokel accent.
Tom Slow-speaking and very dull!. Local, yokel accent.

The Elves

Elrond A friendly Elvin chief

The Goblins

Great Goblin
Goblin Henchman

Company of Hobbits, Elves, Goblins, and Gollum-Gloomers.

4) Notes For The Director

'The Hobbit – A Musical' is a fantasy story with myriad opportunities for magical staging and effects. It should have a different 'feel' to the recent movies of the same name in that it is more centred on story-telling and relationships rather than huge fight scenes i.e. the contrast between the little Hobbit managing to negotiate difficulties with a sometimes-angry wizard; being sat on and almost eaten by trolls; dealing with greed and the loss of a close friend. There is much to explore in this musical.

Both Gandalf and Bilbo need to disappear and reappear in an instant. The Greedy Goblins might suddenly appear behind members of the audience. The Elves are magical, serene, peaceful and intelligent characters, in direct contrast with the cackling Goblins. Smaug, the gloriously wonderful but deadly Dragon should create a hugely dramatic and scary scene.

The story allows scope for great creativity – travelling over mountains, into a gloomy underground cave, in dark scary woods, escape in wine barrels down a roaring river, inside a cave full of treasure.

There should be frequent use of song extracts which are hummed, sung, marched to by the various players throughout the story. This will add greatly to the folksy, story-telling nature of the piece.

Audience participating should be encouraged to cheer for Bilbo and boo the Goblins, and to join in the Happy Birthday song at the end.

5) Music

An arrangement is available for four-piece band of keyboard, drum, guitar and bass. A compilation of songs from *'The Hobbit – A Musical'* can be heard on our website

<https://stuffandnonsensethemusical.com> MP3 backing tracks are available for all music.

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6) Scenes and Musical Numbers

ACT 1

- Scene 1 An Invitation Not Accepted
 #01 Roads Go Ever Ever On
- Scene 2 An Unexpected Party
 #02 Over The Misty Mountains (Dwarves' Drinking Song)
- Scene 3 Roast Mutton
- Scene 4 The Valley Of The Elves
 #03 Listen In Dark To Our Song
- Scene 5 The Goblins From Under The Hill
 #04 We're The Greedy Goblins!
- Scene 6 Riddles in the Dark
 #05 Gollum's Preciouss Dance

ACT 2

- Scene 1 The Underground River
- Scene 2 Pangs Of Hunger
- Scene 3 Afloat In A Barrel
 #06 South Away
- Scene 4 Into The Lonely Mountain
- Scene 5 The Death Of Smaug
- Scene 6 The Battle For Treasure
 #07 Under The Lonely Mountain
- Scene 7 The Death of Thorin
 #08 Roads Go Ever Ever On - Reprise
- Scene 8 Bilbo's Birthday
 #09 Happy Birthday, Mr Baggins

For more information including performing rights please email:
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