ELVES (returning the bows). At yours! (Elvish laughter.)
GANDALF. The dragon cannot be wounded except for one spot! He wears a diamond waistcoat that protects him from danger, but there is a bare spot just over his heart.
THORIN (excited). Then that's the place to strike.
GANDALF. Quite so. You will only have one chance--if any--and you must use the Elven blade and no other.
ELVEN-QUEEN. He shall have it. (Claps her hands. The ATTENDANTS offer THORIN the sword.)
THORIN (taking it). Many thanks, O Elven-Queen. (Brandishes sword.) Blade! I shall not disgrace you! I shall drive you home to your destiny! (Suddenly realizing.) But how?
GANDALF. Quite simple. Bilbo, you will go in first, wearing your ring. Thorin, you follow, but only as far as the inside of the door, and don't move a muscle or Smaug will see you. Once inside, Bilbo must somehow get Smaug to expose his bare patch.
BILBO. How?
GANDALF. You'll find a way.
BILBO. But---
GANDALF (cutting in). And when you do, signal to Thorin, who will fall upon Smaug and slay him. Good luck to you both. (BILBO slips on his ring and is no longer visible to them.)
BILBO. I'm going in now, Thorin.
THORIN (gesturing to BILBO). I follow, Mr. Baggins. (BILBO steps inside the door, followed by THORIN.)

(Lights dim down in front as they come up in the cave behind the scrim. The den is bathed in a golden red light. The walls and ceiling are covered with every kind of treasure: crowns, coats

Smaug

of silver mail, jeweled goblets, shields, etc. SMAUG lies asleep on a vast pile of precious gems. Bubbling noises and vapors emanate from him. BILBO enters from R. He is dazzled by the light and glittering jewels and rubs his eyes. Suddenly he sees SMAUG and jumps.)

SMAUG (stirring, in a thundering voice). Thief! I know you're there. I smell you and I hear your breath. Thought you'd catch me napping, did you? (Vapors and bubbles increase.)
BILBO (summoning up all his courage). Oh, no, O Smaug. I did not come to rob you. I only wished to have a look at you and see if you were truly as great as tales say. I did not believe them----
SMAUG (somewhat flattered). Do you now?
BILBO. Truly, songs and tales fall far short of the reality! You are the greatest of calamities.
SMAUG. Nice manners for a thief and a liar. Come closer so I can eat--I mean, see you.
BILBO. I don't think that would be wise, O Smaug.
SMAUG. Hmmm, you seem familiar with my name, but I don't remember smelling you before. Who are you? Where do you come from?
BILBO (trying to sound formidable). I come from under the hill and over the hills. I am he that walks unseen. I am Barrel-rider and Ringbearer and Luckwearer and I am here to reclaim the rightful treasure of the King under the Mountain.
SMAUG (snorting and belching smoke). The King under the Mountain is dead, and I have eaten his people as a wolf eats sheep. I laid low the warriors of old, when I was young and tender. Now I am old and strong! Thief in the shadows!
BILBO. I am the clue finder, I am he that buries his friends alive and drowns them and draws them alive again from the water. I am Ring-

winner and Luckwearer and Barrel-rider!

SMAUG (gloating). My armor is like tenfold shields, my teeth are swords, my claws spears, the shock of my tail is a thunderbolt, my wings are as a hurricane, and my breath is death!

BILBO (in a frightened squeak). I have always understood that dragons are softer underneath, especially in the region of the, er, chest, but that you are guarded by a diamond waistcoat, if those are real diamonds. I hear they are only fakes.

SMAUG (snapping). Your information is false and the jewels are real. Look at them, fool. My waistcoat is made entirely of diamonds which no blade can pierce! (SMAUG rears up and displays the glittering waistcoat. There is a black spot over the heart, bare of diamonds.)

BILBO (calling off). Now, Thorin!

(THORIN rushes on from R and plunges his sword into Smaug's chest. SMAUG thrashes about wildly, emitting bubbling noises and thick smoke, then collapses and lies still.)

BILBO. Well done, Thorin, well done!

THORIN. What a treasure! (He looks at it and removes a magnificent golden coat from the wall.) Mr. Baggins, here is the first payment of your reward! Cast off your old cloak and put on this! It was my grandfather's. (BILBO removes his cloak, and THORIN helps him into the gold coat.)

BILBO. Thank you! My, my, I feel magnificent! But I expect I look rather absurd. How they would laugh back home in the Shire. Still, I wish there was a looking-glass handy!

THORIN (surveying the treasure). Dividing all this will be a long task.

BILBO. I'll miss all that. I must be going home.

THORIN. But yours is a large share. Very large.

Wait for it.

BILBO. How would I get a large share safely back to the Shire and what would I do with it when I got there? The coat is enough for me.

THORIN. At least take this casket of gold coins. No one can question your right to that. Perhaps you may find good use for it on your return. Things change, and not always for the better.

BILBO (accepting the small casket THORIN offers). I thank you, Thorin Oakenshield, and await the day when you rap again on the door of your faithful burglar.

THORIN. And the Queen-- (Glances around, and his eyes light on a richly encrusted robe of state.) This robe is not dwarf treasure. (Takes it up.) And here is the ancient Crown of the Elves! (Picks up a jeweled crown.) Help carry them, Bilbo.

BILBO. Now let us leave this place. (They leave the cave and join the others. Lights come up again in front.)

DWARVES and ELVES (ad lib). Thorin! Mr. Baggins! Hooray!

THORIN. Rejoice, my friends! Smaug is dead!

ALL. Bravo, Thorin. Bravo, Mr. Baggins!

THORIN (to the ELVEN-QUEEN). Madam, your robe. (He puts it over her shoulders. Her ladies adjust it.) Your crown. (Places it on her head.)

DWARVES and ELVES. Hail Queen of the Elves!

ELVEN-QUEEN. I thank you all. You have grown in stature, Thorin Oakenshield. Dwarves, you have a brave and honorable chief.

THORIN. It was your sword that felled the dragon, Great Queen.

ELVEN-QUEEN (smiling). But your hand that wielded it!

GANDALF. Excellent! (Crosses R and slips out