Side 1: GANDALF + BILBO

(Enter GANDALF)

BILBO: Good afternoon to you.

GANDALF: You have grown fatter since I saw you last.

BILBO: I should hope so: I’m no pauper, after all. But you have the advantage on me: when was it you saw me last?

GANDALF: Some thirty years ago, I’d hazard a guess. I’ll hazard as well you’ve forgotten who I am.

BILBO:  You have me there. But once I know your name, I’ll apologize grandly. You are…

GANDALF: Gandalf.

BILBO: Gandalf the wizard! Really! Well I *am* and I *do* apologize. How could I have failed to recognize Gandalf? Where have you been these last thirty years?

GANDALF: Wandering Middle Earth, Mister Baggins, on roads and not on roads, as is my profession.

BILBO: Oooh, I’ll bet you ‘ve seen some things!

GANDALF: I have indeed. I seem to remember, when you were a young hobbit some thirty years ago, you had a taste for adventure.

BILBO:For hearing about them, at least, though I’m more inclined to listen over bread and tea these days. I hope you’ll stay for late second supper?

GANDALF: *(blandly)*  Delighted to. Though I’m with a friend.

BILBO: Invite him in!

GANDALF: You’re very gracious, But, in fact, it’s not just one friend…

BILBO: They’re both welcome.

GANDALF: Nor just two…

BILBO: Room for all! Never let it be said that Bilbo Baggins turned away company!

Side 2:  BILBO+GANDALF+THORIN

THORIN: And this is your Mister Baggins?

GANDALF: It is.

THORIN: Looks more like a grocer than a burglar to me. Soft as the mud of this Shire he lives in.

GANDALF: He has gotten a little thick round the middle, I grant you. But there’s more about him than meets the eye.

THORIN: There would have to be. What meets the eye is pathetic.

*(BILBO enters, panting, carrying stacks of foodstuffs.)*

BILBO: Well, your friends certainly have healthy appetites, Gandalf, all twelve. If you include Master Oakenshield, thirteen-

THORIN: DON”T say that number, Mister Baggins.

BILBO: Sorry.

THORIN: Terrible luck. I would think someone in your profession would know better.

BIBLO: My profession?

Side 3: GOLLUM + BILBO

GOLLUM: Does itnow? Has a nassssty little dagger, does it?

BILBO: Yes, I do, if by “it” you mean me. So you just keep your distance, if you please

GOLLUM: Well blessss us and ssssplash ussss, my precioussssss. A dagger and ooooo so brave. We musssst keeeeeeeep our distancesssssssse, mussstn’t we.

BILBO: Yes, you must.

GOLLUM: Why then, we will, oh yesssssssss, we’re happy to, we’ve just eaten. But what is t, my preciouss? It’s not a goblin, oh no it isssn’t.

BILBO: Indeed I am not a goblin. I am MIster Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit.

GOLLUM: Hobbit, my precioussss?

BILBO: Yes, a well-respected hobbit with many friends in the Shire, let me tell you, who won’t take kindly to anyone who does harm to me.

GOLLUM: No, no, nothing like it, no my precioussssss. But we’re so lonely here, p’raps we sits here and chats with it a bitsy my precious, p’raps we does. It likes riddles, p’raps it does, does it?

BILBO: Riddles?

GOLLUM: Oh, precious,  it guesses eeeeeeeeesy, it doesss. It must have a contest with suss, it mussst.  Ask us a riddle, yessssss, a contesssssst.

BILBO: Er… what’s the prize in this contest?

GOLLUM: If it asks us, and we can’t answer then we does whatever it wants

BILBO: Show me the way out of this place?

GOLLUM: If it likesssss, yesssssss, of courssssssse.

BILBO: All right then. What if you ask and I can’t answer?

GOLLUM: Then it sets down its nasssty dagger and does what we wants.

BILBO: Such as what?

GOLLUM: Ask then Riddle us, riddle us.

BILBO: Um….*(Turns to audience.)*  Don’t have much choice do I? Do you  know any riddles? Oh! *(To GOLLUM)* Thirty white horses on a red hill: first they champ, then they stamp then they stand still.

GOLLUM: Oooooooh, an ooooooooold one, precioussssss. Teeth is the answer, but we only has six. Heeere, now, my precious, we assssks him: It cannot be seen, cannot be felt, cannont be heard, cannot be smelt, it lies behind stars and under hills, and empty holes it fills. It comes firsssst and follows after, ends life, kills laughter. What issssss it?

BILBO: Not seen, not felt, not heard, not smelt…some huge monster….behind stars, under hills, empty holes…*(To us.)* What is it?

GOLLUM: Not cheating is it, precioussssss?

BILBO: No no! Under hills, empty holes...Dark! The answer is dark

GOLLUM: Sssssss.

BILBO: All right then: A box without hinges key, or lid, yet a golden treasure inside is hid. *(To us.)*  I know it’s an easy one, but I need to think of a better.

GOLLUM: Sssssss ssssss nasssssty riddles with words like “golden.”

BILBO: Well what’s the answer then? It’s not a kettle boiling if that’s what you’re imitating.

GOLLUM: Sssssss!! Give us a chance, let it give us a chancsssse, my preciousssss. Golden treasure inside a box, no key, no lid….eggses! Eggses, it is! Nasssssty egges, from long ago when we lived in sunlight.

BILBO: Drat.

Side 3: DORK + DOOF (GOBBILNS), GLOIN + THORIN + BILBO

DORK: Heyeyeyeye! You, you, you shuddup.

GLOIN: We’re only talking.

DOOF: *(whacking GLOIN’s cage).* He said shuddup. You stupid or something?

DORK: No talking.

THORIN: You’ll live to regret this treatment.

DORK: Ooooooooh, widdy biddy dwarfy gonna whacky smacky poor widdow usssums *(Dork and DOOF laugh raucously.)*

GLOIN: Go ahead, you can laugh now-

DOOF: Okaaaay! (*They laugh even harder.)*

DORK: I thinks it’s time for widdy dwarfies to sleepy weepy.

DOOF: I thinkums too. *(DOOF and DORK roughly slam shut the tops of the cells, still chuckling. DOOF locks the cells with a large key on a large key ring hanging on his belt. They relaz and sprawl about for a long night of guard duty. Dork pulls out a lunch sack.)* Glad I’m not them.

DORK: Yeah, me too *(Loud, for caged DWARVES to hear.)*  Wouldn’t want to go through what those goblin killers are gonna go through come morning!

DOOF: Hey, whatcha got?

DORK: *(Holding up a sandwich)* Usual. Ground marrowbone on bark.

DOOF: Mmmmmm, sounds good.

DORK: Yeah, well its is good and it’s all for me. *(DORK turns away to eat.)*

BILBO: *(To us)* I saw an opportunity. *(He steps near DORK, speaks in voice imitating DOOF.)* Oh yeah? Well you’re a biff.

DORK: *(Turns)* I’m a what?

DOOF: What?

DORK: Whad you call me?

DOOF: I didn’t call you anything.

DORK: Yeah, you did, you called me a piff or someting.

DOOF: Yer crazy.

DORK: Just because you didn’t bring lunch is no cause to-

 DOOF: I didn’t say anything! Just eat yer stupid barkbread and shuddup *(He turns away. DORK sulks, turns away too.)*

DORK: *(muttering).* Try ta eat a little lunch, get called stupid names… *(BILBO sneaks up to DOOF, kicks him, imitating DORK’s voice.)*

BILBO: Stupid gorf! *(BILBO steps away as DOOF whirls around.)*

DOOF: Hey!

DORK: Hey, what?

DOOF:*(kicks him)* Hey, that’s what!

DORK: Whad ya do that for?

DOOF: ‘Cuz you kicked me.

DORK: Whaddya, loony? I didn’t kick ya.

DOOF: You kicked me and called me a gorf.

DORK: I did not! What’s a gorf?

DOOF: I dunno; *you* called me it, you pidge.

DORK: Who you calling a pidge, you blink!

DOOF: A blink, am I? You thonk.

DORK: *Who’s* a thonk?

DOOF: *You’re* a thonk!

DORK: Oh yeah? I’ll give you thonk! *(Takes a swing at DOOF, who doedges, comes back with club, knocks DORK out.)*

DOOF:  Stupid gorf. *(Relaxes, looks at bark sandwich which DORK dropped. DOOF shrugs; sets down club, picks up sandwich, sits to eat it.)* Shame to waste it. *(Chuckles as he makes to bite in; but BILBO picks up DORK’s club, stands behind DOOF, lifts club.)*

BILBO: *(to us)* This magic ring is coming in *very* handy. *(Bonks DOOF on the head; DOOF stiffens, crumples, knocked out.)* Whew. *(Bilbo picks keys off DOOF’s blet unlocks THORIN’s cell door. Speaks in DORK’s voice.)* Let’s go, let’s go, step on out now.

Side 4: THORIN + BARD

THORIN: *(Calls out)* Who are you that come armed for war to the gates of Thorin son of Thrain, King Under the Mountain?

BARD: Hail, Thorin. We are surprised to see you alive, and your friens. We have come to parley. Why do you fence yourselves in like a gang of bandits?

THORIN: We are not the bandits here.

BARD: My name is Bard, and by my hand the dragon Smaug was killed, but not before he destroyed our town. I have been elected the new master of Laketown, or what is left of it, and I’m come to ask if you have no thought for the sorrow and misery of my people.

THORIN: And so you have come to put claim to our treasure.

BARD: We are not robbers. We ask for some honest share.

THORIN: Easy words. Now my answer: on my treasure here, no man has claim. None. The price of the goods and assistance we received from Laketown we will fairly pay, in due time. But nothing will we give, not a loaf’s worth, not a penny, under threat of force.

BARD: Do you refuse to parley with us?

THORIN: I will not parley with armed men at my gate. If you wish to treaty with us, lay down your arms or retreat fully to Laketown and come again in peace.

BARD: And get a similar response, I would guess, or worse. If you will not parley with  us, we may be forced to enter your gate against your will.

THORIN: You will find us waiting. Our number is small, but we are well-fortified; do not underestimate how much injury we can bring to you

BARD: The men of Laketown are well-armed and not fearful. We are desperate: our home has been destroyed, and our children will starve. Do not underestimate what *will* do if you force us.

THORIN: Bring on your petty spears and arrow and your skinny man-arms. You have never met true warriors from this kingdom..

BARD:  You have never met the men of Dale.