

CHAPTER 14 SUMMARY

How It All Goes Down

Fire and Water

- Meanwhile, back in Lake-town, they observe a red glow from the Lonely Mountain.
- They think it's a good thing: "The King beneath the Mountain! [...] His wealth is like the Sun, his silver like a fountain, his rivers golden run! The river is running gold from the Mountain!" (14.8).
- But one grim-voiced guard warns them: it's actually the dragon coming!
- This grim fellow is Bard, and he's a descendent of the old lords of Dale. We'll be coming back to him in a second.
- Smaug flames the town from a distance while the men of Lake-town pepper him with arrows.
- Because Bard's ancestors were the lords of Dale, he can understand the language of thrushes. (...Right.)
- So when a thrush flutters up and starts talking to him – the same thrush that showed Bilbo where the side door's keyhole was – Bard understands the bird.
- The thrush explains, "The moon is rising. Look for the hollow of the left breast as [Smaug] flies and turns above you!" (14.20).
- The thrush tells Bard everything that he's heard from Bilbo and the dwarves.
- So Bard takes his great bow and his finest arrow and shoots Smaug in his weak spot as he flies overhead.
- Smaug's body falls directly on Lake-town. So Smaug and Lake-town are both dead.
- The people are so impressed with Bard that they want to make him king of Lake-town.
- The Master of Lake-town doesn't want to let go of power, though.
- The Elvenking, meanwhile, has heard the news of what's going on in Lake-town from his own messengers.
- The Elvenking travels quickly to Lake-town to help the people rebuild their home.
- All of the able-bodied soldiers from Lake-town and the troops of the Elvenking march to the Lonely Mountain to see if Thorin is still alive.

CHAPTER 15 SUMMARY

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The Gathering of the Clouds

- Thorin notices that there are huge flocks of birds flying to the mountain. Something strange is happening.
- The old thrush appears and keeps singing meaningfully at them.
- None of them can understand, but Thorin mentions that he can follow the speech of the ravens.
- So the thrush flies off and comes back with an ancient raven, Roäc.
- Roäc explains that Smaug has been killed (yay!).
- But, "many are gathering hither besides the birds" (15.19).
- The elves are marching to the Lonely Mountain in hopes of gaining a share of the treasure.
- And the Lake-men aren't too happy with the dwarves. They want some cash to rebuild their town.
- Thorin sends Roäc to bring all this news to his cousin, Dain. The dwarves need reinforcements.
- The dwarves return to the mountain and block off as many gates as they can to prepare for war.
- The dwarves are feeling braver and braver: even though there are only thirteen of them (well, plus one hobbit), they're fighting from their old home.
- Also, they now have tons of treasure – that would make anybody feel better about things.
- The elvish and human armies eventually arrive to camp in front of the Lonely Mountain.
- The dwarves sing their song with a new, inspiring twist: "*The king is come unto his hall / Under the Mountain dark and tall / The Worm of Dread is slain and dead, / And ever so our foes shall fall!*" (15.35).
- Bilbo is starting to feel really depressed: all of the dwarves' talk is so *warlike*.
- The next day, Bard of Lake-town goes to address Thorin.
- He reminds Thorin that Lake-town has been destroyed in part because Thorin got Smaug all riled up.
- What's more, it was Bard who shot the arrow to destroy the dragon.
- So doesn't Thorin owe the men of Lake-town a little something?
- Thorin admits that there is some truth to this.
- Still, he won't negotiate with an army on his doorstep.
- And Thorin especially won't negotiate while the Elvenking is nearby – he hates that guy.
- Bard replies, "The Elvenking is my friend, and he has succoured the people of the Lake in their need, though they have no claim of friendship on him" (15.47).
- In other words, unlike *you*, Thorin, the Elvenking has helped us out now that our whole town has been crushed under a dragon corpse.
- Then, the armies of the Lake-men announce that the Lonely Mountain is under siege. They won't actively attack the dwarves, but they won't let them leave without giving the Lake-men a portion of their gold first.
- They hope to starve Thorin out.

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A Thief in the Night

- Roäc the raven asks Thorin how he plans to make it through the winter alone in the mountain.
- Thorin reminds Roäc that it will be equally cold for the armies on the plain.
- Bilbo realizes Thorin is never going to change his mind without outside prodding.
- So Bilbo hatches a plan.
- He takes the Arkenstone (which he still has in secret) and goes to relieve Bombur of his watch duties.
- As soon as Bombur is asleep, Bilbo sneaks down to the human/elf camp.
- He meets with both the Elvenking and Bard.
- Bilbo explains that absolutely nothing will change Thorin's mind.
- What's more, the humans and the elves don't know that Thorin is waiting for reinforcements from Dain, Thorin's cousin.
- Bilbo wants peace and to save his friends.
- So Bilbo gives Bard the Arkenstone of Thrain.
- He wants Bard to use the Arkenstone to negotiate peace with Thorin.
- Bilbo heads back to the dwarves.
- On his way out of the human/elf camp, an old man in a dark cloak tells him, "Well done! Mr. Baggins!" (16.43).
- It's Gandalf! He's back!
- Gandalf promises Bilbo, "There is an unpleasant time just in front of you; but keep your heart up! You *may* come through all right" (16.45).
- Bilbo is confused but cheerful as he climbs back up the side of the mountain to his friends.

CHAPTER 17 SUMMARY

How It All Goes Down

The Clouds Burst

- The next day, Bard, the Elvenking, and "an old man wrapped in cloak and hood" (17.3) appear in front of Thorin's Front Gate.
- Bard shows Thorin the Arkenstone and demands that they negotiate terms.
- Bilbo admits that he was the one who gave the Arkenstone to Bard.
- Thorin agrees to give Bilbo's share of the treasure (one-fourteenth) to the elves and men in exchange for the Arkenstone.

- But he also casts Bilbo out of the Lonely Mountain, adding, "no friendship of mine goes with him" (17.19).
- Thorin sends his raven buddies to tell Dain what has been going on.
- Thorin is already starting to wonder if he can use Dain's forces to capture the Arkenstone without paying the agreed price for it.
- Dain and his men arrive. The humans and elves block their access to the Lonely Mountain.
- Bard refuses to let the dwarf army join Thorin, but the Elvenking doesn't want to wage a war for gold.
- The Elvenking advises, "Let us hope still for something that will bring reconciliation" (17.37).
- The dwarves launch a surprise attack on the elves and men.
- Suddenly, Gandalf cries out, "Halt! [...] Dread has come upon you all! Alas! [...] The Goblins are upon you!" (17.41).
- The goblins are everyone's enemies, so they immediately stop fighting each other.
- Bard, the Elvenking, and Dain all join together to make war plans with Gandalf.
- They gather against the Lonely Mountain and prepare for the goblins to attack.
- Then war breaks out. It comes to be known as the Battle of Five Armies.
- Throughout the day, the advantage goes sometimes to the elves', humans', and dwarves' side, sometimes to the goblins and their allies, the Wargs.
- Thorin makes a plunge into the goblin army from the Front Gate of his mountain, armed with all his fine armor and backed by his twelve companions.
- But the tide of the battle seems to be going against the good side.
- Suddenly, Bilbo (wearing his invisibility ring and up out of the way) sees the Eagles flying in from far off.
- But just then, Bilbo gets clobbered on the head by a falling rock.
- He loses consciousness and totally misses the end of the battle.

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The Return Journey

- Bilbo wakes up all alone on the battlefield.
- He takes off his ring of invisibility and a man who has been sent to find him carries Bilbo down to the camp (much easier to locate a guy when he's not invisible).
- Gandalf is glad to see Bilbo.
- He quickly brings Bilbo to Thorin, who's dying.
- Thorin tells Bilbo that he wants them to be friends again. He adds, "If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world" (18.19).
- Thorin passes away, and Bilbo cries.

- Bilbo learns later that the Eagles came upon observing that the goblins were massing their armies for attack.
- Following the Eagles, Beorn appeared alone in his bear shape, seeming "to have grown to almost giant-size in his wrath" (18.22).
- Beorn attacked the goblins and Wargs from the rear and fought right through their ranks.
- With the help of the Eagles and Beorn, the men, elves, and dwarves rallied and fought back the goblins and Wargs.
- They won! And "the mountains had peace for many a year" (18.24).
- Dain has been crowned King under the Mountain.
- Ten of the twelve dwarf companions of Thorin are still alive: Fili and Kili both died defending Thorin. But the other ten stay with Dain.
- Dain hands over a fourteenth portion of the treasure to Bard, as Thorin promised before the war.
- Bard uses the money to rebuild Dale and enrich Lake-town.
- Bilbo comes away with two small chests of treasure – "That will be quite as much as I can manage" (18.37).
- Bilbo and Gandalf ride along with the Elvenking to Mirkwood.
- Beorn accompanies Bilbo and Gandalf to his house close to the Misty Mountains.
- Bilbo and Gandalf spend the winter with Beorn.
- Then Bilbo and Gandalf continue on to Rivendell.

CHAPTER 19 SUMMARY

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The Last Stage

- When Bilbo and Gandalf ride into Rivendell, the elves are singing a song of welcome.
- Gandalf tells Elrond all about their adventures in the North.
- Bilbo has a grand old time at Elrond's house: "Weariness fell from him soon [...] and he had many a merry jest and dance, early and late, with the elves of the valley" (19.11).
- But before long, Bilbo and Gandalf ride out to Hobbiton.
- On the way, they stop to pick up the bags of troll treasure they left buried at the side of the road over a year before.
- When Bilbo arrives at Bag-End, he finds that his relatives (the Sackville-Bagginses, but of course) have declared him dead and are selling off all of his stuff!
- Bilbo manages to prove that he is still alive.
- But he has lost his reputation for being a totally respectable, ordinary hobbit.
- Everyone in The Hill thinks he's a bit weird now.

- But Bilbo doesn't mind: he's happy to be at home, with his trusty dagger little sword hanging over the mantelpiece.
- Some years later, Gandalf and Balin happen to be passing by.
- Balin tells Bilbo the good news that the area around the Lonely Mountain has grown rich and peaceful.
- The men around the area sing songs that "the rivers run with gold" (19.34).
- Bilbo laughs: "Then the prophecies of the old songs have turned out to be true after a fashion!" (19.35).
- Gandalf points out that Bilbo shouldn't doubt prophecies just because he had a part in making them come true.
- It's not like everything that happened in these adventures were solely for Bilbo's own good!
- After all, Bilbo is "only quite a little fellow in a wide world" (19.36).
- Bilbo replies, "Thank goodness!" (19.37), and passes the tobacco.