

The heroism of bilbo baggins

Literature



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The Heroism of Bilbo Baggins Bilbo Baggins is seen as a nice little hobbit from the Shire who leads a simple country life. It seems contradictory that he had a taste for adventure. Gandalf, the wizard and a close friend of Bilbo, tricks Bilbo and the Baggins into taking a quest to the Lonely Mountain in order to reclaim a vast treasure currently under the guard of a fierce dragon referred to as Smaug. Bilbo Baggins can be seen as a developmental hero due to his encounters with trolls, goblins, spiders and then finally Smaug. The first example of Bilbo being a hero in the novel is shortly after him and his dwarf companions depart the Shire and run into a group of trolls. They are captured and held until the trolls can finish making their soup, using them as the primary ingredient. The trolls then instigate a fight among themselves leaving Bilbo and his companions to ponder what was going to happen next. Keeping his cool, Bilbo is able to distract the trolls long enough for Gandalf to save them, knowing the troll's weakness. They are sensitive to light and Gandalf is able to turn them into stone and help the companions continue on their journey. Even though small, it is a small step in the novel with the development of Bilbo as a hero. The second example of the heroism that Bilbo shows is when after leaving Rivendell, the city of the Elves who are an immortal race; they are forced underground near the Misty Mountains by fierce goblins. By himself, Bilbo had to not only avoid capture by goblins, but fight his way back to his companions. It is here where he finds the mysterious ring of power which turns him invisible. He had to use his skill and cunning in order to acquire the ring from a cave dwelling creature named Gollum who is obsessed with the ring. Bilbo is able to find his friends and then they are able to continue on their journey. In addition, Bilbo has a rescue mission that he had to embark on in the novel. As he and his

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companions were travelling in the forest, they ran afoul of spiders. Bilbo, separated from the rest of the group, manages to kill one of them which he triumphantly names his sword in honor of that encounter, Sting. He then goes and searches and finds all of the dwarves he was travelling with being suspended in the spider's web. With the help of his invisibility ring, he leads the spiders away from their meal so that he can cut the dwarves free. The spiders then retreat realizing that they are in the domain of the elves and Bilbo succeeds in rescuing all but one of the dwarves, Thorin. The climatic ending scene is the best example of Bilbo as a hero, showing the reader all of the qualities he was able to acquire and develop on the journey. Bilbo snuck into the lair using his newly acquired invisibility ring in order to steal a cup and he finds out Smaug's one true weakness while he is there. Smaug, thinking that Bilbo had received help from the nearby town, sets out to destroy it. After arguing, Bilbo and his friends decide to slay the dragon. Even though Bilbo could have had as much of the treasure as he wanted, he only takes a small percentage; however, it was still a large percentage for a hobbit. He then returned to the Shire. The Hobbit can clearly be seen as a hero development novel. It starts off with what one could consider a humdrum character from the countryside developing into a fully fledged hero. It is also important to note that many times Bilbo was without Gandalf's help, therefore he had to rely on himself and his newfound companions often. Bilbo had to use his courage, cunning, and other talents in order to help his friends succeed in the mission. In the end, he is rewarded, but still tries to be humble in his acceptance. References Tolkien, J. R. R. 1972 *The Hobbit ; There and back again* / by J. R. R. Tolkien George Allen & Unwin, London