

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER: New Line Cinema Presents

SUPER: A Wingnut Films Production

**BLACK CONTINUES... ELVISH SINGING... A WOMAN'S VOICE IS
whispering, tinged with SADNESS and REGRET:**

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

(Elvish: subtitled)

**"I amar prestar sen: han mathon ne nen,
han mathon ne chae... a han noston ned
wilith."**

(English:)

**The world is changed: I feel it in the
water, I feel it in the earth, I smell it
in the air... Much that once was is lost,
for none now live who remember it.**

SUPER: THE LORD OF THE RINGS

EXT. PROLOGUE -- DAY

**IMAGE: FLICKERING FIRELIGHT. The NOLDORIN FORGE in EREGION.
MLTEN GOLD POURS from the lip of an IRON LADLE.**

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

**It began with the forging of the Great
Rings.**

**IMAGE: THREE RINGS, each set with a single GEM, are received
by the HIGH ELVES-GALADRIEL, GIL-GALAD and CIRDAN.**

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

**Three were given to the Elves, immortal,
wisest... fairest of all beings.**

IMAGE: SEVEN RINGS held aloft in triumph by the DWARF LORDS.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

**Seven to the Dwarf Lords, great miners
and craftsmen of the mountain halls.**

**IMAGE: NINE RINGS clutched tightly by the KINGS OF MEN... as
if holding-close a precious secret.**

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

**And Nine... nine rings were gifted to the
race of Men who, above all else, desire
power.**

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
For within these rings was bound the
strength and will to govern each race.

FADE TO BLACK

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
But they were all of them deceived.

FADE UP: An ancient PARCHMENT MAP of MIDDLE EARTH...moving
slowly across the MAP as if drawn by an unseen force the
CAMERA closes in on a PLACE NAME...MORDOR.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
...for another ring was made.

TEASING SHOTS: SAURON forging the ONE RING in the CHAMBERS of
SAMMATH NAUR.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
In the land of Mordor, in the fires of
Mount Doom, the Dark Lord Sauron forged
in secret a Master Ring to control all
others.

IMAGE: The ONE RING reflecting FIERY LAVA! FIRE WRITING
emerges on the plain BAND OF GOLD.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
...and into this Ring he poured his
cruelty, his malice and his will to
dominate all life.

IMAGE: THE ONE RING falls through SPACE and into flames...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
One Ring to rule them all...

IMAGE: A GREAT SHADOW falls across the MAP...closing in
around the realm of GONDOR...

IMAGE: SCREAMING VILLAGERS, MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN, RUN
from their homes, pursued by ARMIES OF HIDEOUS ORCS.

GALADRIEL
One by one the Free lands of Middle earth
fell to the power of the ring.

FADE TO BLACK

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
But there were some...who resisted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FADE UP: ISILDUR, son of the KING OF GONDOR, leads an ARMY ACROSS the PLAINS OF DAGORLAD...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
A last alliance of Men and Elves marched
against the armies of Mordor.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
On the slopes of Mount Doom they fought
for the freedom of Middle- Earth.

TEASING SHOTS: THE BATTLE OF DAGORLAD... THE ELF LORD, ELROND,
commands rank after rank of ELVEN ARCHERS... ORCS RETREATING
before the ARMY of the LAST ALLIANCE... ELENLIL holds aloft
the great sword... NARSIL!

GALADRIEL
Victory was near!

IMAGES: THE HUGE, DARK FIGURE OF SAURON, bearing the ONE
RING on his finger, looms over the field of battle...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
But the power of the Ring could not be
undone.

IMAGE: SAURON lays waste to the armies of the LAST ALLIANCE.
With desperate courage, ELENLIL leads a charge... THE BLACK
MACE OF SAURON LASHES OUT!! IMAGE: ELENLIL'S body falls like
a crumpled rag doll... IMAGE: ISILDUR cradles the body of his
father in his arms. The SHADOW OF SAURON falls over him..

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
It was in this moment.. when all hope had
faded, that Isildur, son of the king,
took up his father's sword.

ISILDUR snatches up the BROKEN BLADE OF NARSIL. The BLADE
severs SAURON'S FINGERS... AND THE ONE RING FLIES from his
body.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
Sauron, the enemy of the Free Peoples of
Middle Earth, was defeated. SAURON'S
ARMOR clatters to the ground. His body

GONE... VAPORIZED! CLOSE ON: ISILDUR picks up the SEVERED
FINGER and removes the ONE RING... transfixed!

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
The Ring passed to Isildur... who had this
one chance to destroy evil forever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMAGE: GLADDEN FIELD...ISILDUR leads a small column of men through DARKENING WOODS...the ONE RING glinting on a CHAIN around his neck.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
But the hearts of Men are easily corrupted. And the Ring of Power has a will of its own.

SUDDENLY! ARROWS FLY! They are ambushed by ORCS...ISILDUR SCREAMS!

FADE TO BLACK

FADE UP: ISILDUR MATERIALIZES UNDER WATER...as THE RING slips slowly from his finger. Ripples of LIGHT play across ISILDUR'S PALE FACE...he is DEAD.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
It betrayed Isildur to his death.

IMAGE: THE RING falls through the MURKY WATERS of the RIVER ANDUIN.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
And some things that should not have been forgotten...were lost.

FADE TO BLACK

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
History became legend...legend became myth.

FADE UP: The waters of the ANDUIN RIVER lie dark and undisturbed.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
And for two and a half thousand years the Ring passed out of all knowledge.

IMAGE: SILT SWIRLS...A THIN WHITE HAND reaches down...grasping the RING...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
Until, when chance came, it ensnared a new bearer!

IMAGE: THE THIN WHITE HAND opens to reveal one ring.

GOLLUM (V. O.)
My Precious...

IMAGE: MIST SHROUDED MOUNTAINS...

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

The Ring came to the creature Gollum, who took it deep into the tunnels of the Misty Mountains.

IMAGE: THE GLOOM of a MOUNTAIN CAVERN.. a MURKY POOL of WATER.. in the DARKNESS the SHADOWY OUTLINE of an EMACIATED FIGURE.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

And there, it consumed him. A RASPY VOICE mutters in the half light...

GOLLUM

It came to me. My own. My love...
(ecstatic whisper)
My preciousness.

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

The Ring brought to Gollum unnatural long life. For five hundred years it poisoned his mind. And in the gloom of Gollum's cave...

FADE TO BLACK

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

It waited.

FADE UP: Bathed in COLD MOONLIGHT, the WORLD lies DARK and STILL.. the unsettled quiet before the storm..

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

Darkness crept back into the forests of the world. Rumor grew of a Shadow in the East... whispers of a nameless fear. And the Ring of Power perceived... its time had now come. It abandoned Gollum

SLOW MOTION: unseen by its KEEPER.. THE RING falls to the MUDDY FLOOR of a MOUNTAIN TUNNEL...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

But something happened then the Ring did not intend...

FADE TO BLACK

IMAGE: FUMBLING in the dark, a SMALL HAND closes over the

RING.

GALADRIEL
It was picked up by the most unlikely
creature imaginable...

BILBO
(to himself)
What's this?

A YOUNGISH LOOKING BILBO BAGGINS peers down at what lies in
his hand... PERPLEXED by what he has found.

GALADRIEL (V. O.)
A Hobbit... Bilbo Baggins of the Shire.

BILBO
(surprised)
A Ring.

SUDDENLY! A VOICE SCREAMS... ITS ANGUISH RINGING through the
COLD, DANK TUNNELS...

GOLLUM (V. O.)
Lost! Lost! My Precious is lost!!

Frightened Bilbo quickly POCKETS the ONE RING and hurries on.

DISSOLVE TO:

WIDE ON: THE CAMERA SOARS AWAY FROM THE MOUNTAINS. MOVING
FASTER AND FASTER... THEIR DARK GREEN FORESTS AND JAGGED
WHITE PEAKS RECEDING INTO THE SHROUD OF MIST

GALADRIEL (V. O.)
For the time will soon come when Hobbits
will shape the fortunes of all.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. HOBBITON WOODS -- DAY

ANGLE ON: TWO HOBBIT FEET

resting on a small rock... rising out of the LONG, OVERGROWN
GRASSES SUPER: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING SUPER: THE
SHIRE... 60 YEARS LATER CAMERA TRACKS TO: a Figure lies
beneath the dappled sunlight of an old tree.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

White flowers are scattered among the Well seeded grasses. An idyllic setting at the end of a long hot summer... the figure is reading a book. ON THE SOUNDTRACK: In the distance, growing louder..over the Gentle clip clop of an approaching cart and horse can be heard the HUMMING OF A DEEP VOICE to the tune of "The Road Goes Ever On and On..."

SUDDENLY! The figure in the grass sits up...looking straight at camera is a handsome young HOBBIT, with dark curly hair and deep blue eyes. This is FRODO BAGGINS...his EYES alight with EXCITEMENT! Tossing away the long stem of grass in his mouth, Frodo runs off.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIRE LANE -- DAY

The cart rattles along a leafy lane, driven by a stooped figure in Grey.

INTERCUT WITH; SHOTS OF FRODO RUNNING... CAREERING DOWN A HILL. . . JUMPING OVER LOGS... DODGING TREE BRANCHES.

ANGLE ON:

The shambling OLD PONY snorts and rears as... SUDDENLY FRODO appears on a bank above the cart.

FRODO

You're late.

CLOSE ON: GANDALF glowers at the young Hobbit...

GANDALF

A Wizard is never late, Frodo Baggins, nor is he early. He arrives precisely when he means to.

They look at each other a moment..then both start laughing as FRODO'S face breaks into a smile and he leaps on to the front seat of the cart.

FRODO

It's wonderful to see you, Gandalf!

Next to Gandalf, we see how small Hobbits are...Frodo is 3 foot 6 inches tall.

GANDALF

You didn't think I'd miss your Uncle Bilbo's birthday?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBBITON FIELDS -- DAY

Wide on: The cart rattles past a FIELD LUPIN being tended by HOBBITS.

FRODO
What news of the outside world? Tell me everything!

ANGLE ON:

Gandalf looks down at Frodo, a twinkle in his eye.

GANDALF
What, everything? Far too eager and curious for a Hobbit. Most unnatural...

Wide on: The cart rattles over a Stone bridge towards a Busy Hobbit Marketplace.

GANDALF (V. O.) (CONT' D)
Well, what can I tell you? Life in the wide world goes on much as if it has past age. Full of its own comings and goings, scarcely even aware of the existence of Hobbits...

Close on: Gandalf as he surveys the peaceful scene before him

GANDALF (CONT' D)
...for which I am very thankful.

ANGLE ON:

Hobbits look up exclaiming in wonder and excitement as the cart bearing Gandalf and Frodo rolls past the Green Dragon Inn...towards... Wide on: The party field. Where scores of Hobbits are busy preparing for the big night.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
Ah, the long expected party. So, how is the old rascal? I hear it's going to be a Party of Special Magnificence.

FRODO
You know Bilbo...he's got the whole place in an uproar.

GANDALF
Oh, well...that should please him

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO
Half the Shire's been invited...

GANDALF
Good gracious, me.

FRODO
He's up to something.

GANDALF
Oh, really?

Frodo shoots a knowing look, as Gandalf averts his eyes.

FRODO
Alright then..keep your secrets. Before
you came along we Bagginses were very
well thought of.

GANDALF
Indeed?

FRODO
Never had any adventures or did anything
unexpected.

GANDALF
If you're referring to the incident with
the Dragon...I was barely involved...all
I did was give your Uncle a little nudge
out the door.

FRODO
Whatever you did...you've been officially
labelled as a Disturber of the Peace.

GANDALF
Oh, really?

ANGLE ON:

ODO PROUDFOOT looks up as the Cart passes by, deeply
suspicious.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBBITON -- DAY

CRANE UP:

As the cart rattles into the small village of Hobbiton...a
quaint rustic settlement, nestled amongst rolling green hills
and large trees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Hobbits live in Hobbit Holes: neat burrows dug into the grassy hillside, with round doors and cute front gardens.

ANGLE ON:

Excited children, chasing after the cart.

CLOSE ON:

Gandalf ignores the children's cries. The children stand deflated, watching Gandalf disappear up the lane. At that moment: spinning balls of bright color suddenly leap out of the cart, fizzing over the heads of the delighted children.

ANGLE ON:

Gandalf smiling to himself, well pleased with his joke. ODO PROUDFOOT is unable to suppress a chuckle. Frodo stands up in the cart as Gandalf reigns in the horse.

FRODO

Gandalf... I'm glad you're back. Frodo leaps expertly from the cart. Gandalf smiles.

GANDALF

So am I, dear boy... so am I

CUT TO:

EXT. BAG END -- DAY

Wide on: GANDALF'S CART pulls up outside the gate to BAG END... a particularly fine example of a Hobbit hole, with a large round front door set into a grassy hillside. There is a sign on the gate which reads: "NO ADMITTANCE EXCEPT ON PARTY BUSINESS." Gandalf strides up to the garden path of Bag End. He raises his staff and raps on the front door... a voice calls out:

BILBO (O. S.)

No, thank you! We don't want any more visitors, well wishers, or distant relations.

GANDALF

And what about very old friends?

Suddenly the door opens and BILBO BAGGINS stands before him. He is a HOBBIT OF INDERTIMINATE AGE, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. Wearing a dashing brocade waist coat, he looks every inch the eccentric gentleman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILBO
Gandalf?

GANDALF
Bilbo Baggins!

BILBO
My dear Gandalf!

Gandalf drops to his knee to embrace his old friend.

GANDALF
It's good to see you. One hundred and eleven years old, who would believe it!

Gandalf looks at him more keenly.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
You haven't aged a day! Gandalf and Bilbo laugh together and enter Bag End.

BILBO
Come on, come in! Welcome, welcome!!

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Bilbo leads Gandalf into Bag End...cozy and cluttered with souvenirs of Bilbo's travels. Gandalf has to stoop to avoid hitting his head on the low ceiling. Bilbo hangs up Gandalf's hat on a peg and trots off down the hall.

BILBO
(Calling)
Tea? Or maybe something stronger... I've a few bottles of the Old Winyard left, 1296...a very good year, almost as old as I am. It was laid down by my father. What say we open one, eh?

Bilbo disappears into the kitchen as Gandalf looks around..enjoying the familiarity of Bag End...he turns, knocking his head on the light and then walking into the wooden beam. He groans.

BILBO (O. S.) (CONT' D)
I was expecting you some time last week. Not that it matters, you come and go as you please, always have done, always will.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILBO (O. S.) (CONT' D)
 You've caught me a bit unprepared, I'm afraid...we've only got cold chicken, bit of pickle, some cheese here...ooh, no, that might be a little risky...

Gandalf stops in front of a framed map, charred in one corner...it is Thorin's map of the Lonely Mountain, Gandalf smiles to himself.

BILBO (CONT' D)
 Er, we've got raspberry jam and apple tart...got some custard somewhere. Not much for Afters, I'm afraid. Oh no...we're alright...I've just found some sponge cake. Nice little snack. Hope it's enough.

(comes into view)
 I could do you some eggs if you like?

Bilbo jumps, a half eaten pork pie in his hand, as Gandalf mysteriously appears behind him

GANDALF
 Just tea, thank you.

BILBO
 Oh..right. You don't mind if...?

GANDALF
 No, not at all. Go ahead. A sudden loud knock on the front door.

MRS. SACKVILLE BAGGINS (O. S.)

Bilbo Baggins, you open this door..I know you're in there.

BILBO
 I'm not home.

Gandalf watches, amused as Bilbo tries to hide.

BILBO (CONT' D)
 I've got to get away from these confounded relatives, hanging on the bell all day, never giving me a moment's peace. I want to see mountains again...mountains, Gandalf... and then find somewhere quiet where I can finish my book...Oh, Tea!

GANDALF
 So, you mean to go through with your plan, then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILBO

Yes, yes...it's all in hand. All the arrangements are made.

GANDALF

Frodo suspects something.

BILBO

'Course he does, he's a Baggins...not some block headed Bracegirdle from Hardbottle!

GANDALF

You will tell him, won't you?

BILBO

Yes, yes.

GANDALF

He's very fond of you.

BILBO

I know. He'd probably come with me if I asked him. I think, in his heart, Frodo's still in love with the Shire, the woods and the fields... little rivers. Bilbo stands gazing out of the kitchen window.

BILBO (CONT' D)

I am old, Gandalf... Bilbo looks at Gandalf sadly...

BILBO (CONT' D)

I know I don't look it, but I'm beginning to feel it in my heart.

CLOSE ON:

Bilbo's fingers close around his waistcoat pocket...gripping a small, unseen object.

BILBO (CONT' D)

I feel thin...sort of stretched, like butter scraped over too much bread. I need a holiday...a very long holiday and I don't expect I shall return...in fact, I mean not to.

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END -- EVENING

Gandalf and Bilbo are sitting on the Bag End porch. Below them, final preparations are being made on the Party field. Bilbo strikes a match and lights his pipe.

BILBO
Old Toby, the finest weed in
Southfarthing!

Bilbo blows a perfect smoke ring and watches it rise into the air. A tiny sailing ship with masts and sails glides through the Center of Bilbo's smoke ring.

BILBO (CONT' D)
Ohhhh,
(smiles)
Gandalf my old friend... this will be a
night to remember!

CUT TO:

EXT. PARTY FIELD, HOBBITON -- NIGHT

BOOM! A FIREWORK explodes into the night sky high above Hobbiton... in the shape of a great green tree with unfolding branches. TILT DOWN: with glowing flowers as they rain down from the branches... evaporating just above the up turned faces of the delighted party-goers 144 Hobbits, feasting and drinking Carts of beer and wine are scattered about, and the tables are piled high with steaming scones and savories. Gandalf hurries about, lighting fireworks with a blue spark that dances magically from his staff... Bilbo is greeting visitors. Frodo and SAM sit at a table drinking ale... Frodo notices Sam's eyes keep flicking to another pretty Hobbit, Rosie Cotton, sitting some distance away.

FRODO
Go on, Sam, ask Rosie for a dance.

SAM
(horri fied)
I think I'll just have myself another
ale.

FRODO
Oh, no you don't. Go on.

Sam goes to drain his glass... suddenly it is snatched out of his hands as Frodo thrusts him into the middle of a passing throng of dancers.

ANGLE ON: SAM S HORRIFIED FACE

as he is Swept away. Frodo laughs and finishes Sam's beer.

ANGLE ON:

Gandalf as he sets alight a particularly spectacular firework that draws gasps of admiration from the party guests.

Close on: Bilbo is relating stories of his adventure to a group of young hobbit children.

BILBO

(melodramatic)

So, there I was...at the mercy of three monstrous trolls...Have you ever heard of a troll? Do you know what a Troll is? Great big nasty twenty foot high smelly things...and they're arguing...arguing about how they were going to cook us!

ANGLE ON: A LITTLE HOBBIT GIRL'S

upturned face...her eyes growing larger and larger.

BILBO

Whether it be turned on a spit or minced in a pie or whether they were going to sit on us one by one and squash us into jelly! But they spent so long arguing the whether-to's and why-for's that the sun's first light crept over the top of the trees...and turned them all to stone!

STUNNED GASPS from his young Audience greet his astonishing feat! Close on: MERRY AND PIPPIN, two mischievous Young Hobbits in their late teens. Pippin scrambles on to the back of Gandalf's wagon, snatching up a small firework

MERRY

(urgent whisper)

No, no...the big one...the big one! Pippin grabs a huge rocket. CLOSE ON: FIREWORK FUSE crackles with flame!

Merry is holding out the big rocket...he looks aghast at the fizzing fuse that Pippin has just lit.

MERRY (CONT'D)

(worried whisper)

You're supposed to stick it in the ground!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIPPIN

It is in the ground.

Merry fearfully tosses the Rocket to Pippin! The fuse sizzles angrily.

MERRY

Outside!

PIPPIN

It was your idea.

Pippin attempts to throw the fizzing rocket back to Merry. WHOOSH! The two hobbits are suddenly blown off their feet in a shower of sparks as the rocket blasts off with frightening power. The ROCKET ZOOMS over the Party..It suddenly bursts apart, forming the shape of a great red golden Dragon! Fire gushes from its nostrils as it turns back and Flies low towards the startled crowd. Close on: Frodo watches the Fireworks Dragon with alarm..but Bilbo is oblivious to the Panicking crowd and impending danger!

FRODO

Bilbo! Watch out for the dragon!!

BILBO

Dragon? Nonsense...hasnt been a dragon in these parts for a thousand years!

ANGLE ON: FRODO

As he hurriedly pulls Bilbo to the ground, just as the dragon roars a few feet above their heads like a flaming express train! Hobbits dive to the ground, tables overturn, tents collapse, food flies everywhere. The fireworks dragon turns a somersault and explodes over the hills with a deafening bang! This gets the biggest Cheer of the night.

ANGLE ON: MERRY AND PIPPIN,

clothes and hair smoking.

MERRY

That was good!

PIPPIN

Let's get another one!

LARGE HANDS suddenly clamp down on Merry and Pippin's ears. Low angle: Gandalf looking DOWN STERNLY!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF
Meridoc Brandybuck and Peregrin Took... I
might have known!

CUT TO:

MERRY AND PIPPIN

Are leaning over a barrel, washing dishes in soapy water... with Gandalf sitting nearby, smoking his pipe and sipping an ale. Cries of "SPEECH! SPEECH" erupt from the party.

ANGLE ON:

Bilbo stepping on a stool... he bows in gratitude at the applause.

FRODO
Speech!

BILBO
(clearing throat)
My dear Bagginses, and Boffins, tooks and Brandybucks... Grubbs, Chubbs, Hornblowers, Bolgers, Bracegirdles and Proudfoots...

ANGLE ON: A HOBBIT WITH PARTICULARLY BIG FEET

ODO PROUDFOOT
Proudfeet!

BILBO
Today is my one hundred and eleventh birthday. Yes, and alas... Eleventy- one years is far too short a time to live among such excellent and admirable Hobbits! Tremendous outburst of approval!

BILBO (CONT' D)
I don't know half of you half as well as I should like; and I like less than half of you as well as well as you deserve.

SCATTERED CLAPPING as the guests try to work out if that was a compliment or not. CLOSE ON: FRODO AND GANDALF smiling to themselves. CLOSE ON: Bilbo... a strange hum seems to fill his head. A bead of sweat rolls down his brow.

Bilbo's hand pulls something out of his waistcoat pocket and holds it behind his back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILBO (CONT' D)

I have.. things to do and I have put this off for far too long... CLOSE ON: BILBO'S knuckles turn white as he tightens his grip on the small object behind his back.

BILBO (CONT' D)

I regret to announce, this is the end. I am going now. I bid you all a very fond farewell!! Bilbo looks across at Frodo, hesitates... then...

BILBO (CONT' D)

(whisper)
Goodbye.

Bilbo instantly vanishes. The party explodes into an uproar... the crowd leaps to its feet.

ANGLE ON: FRODO

staring at the empty stool in disbelief.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAG END -- NIGHT

The party is still in an excited uproar... some 50 yards away as we pan across a moonlit lane to the front door of Bag End. Door opens, pulled by an invisible hand.

INT. BAG END -- NIGHT

The door quietly closes... Bilbo materializes as he pulls a plain gold ring off his finger. Bilbo laughs as he tosses the ring in the air, then places it in his pocket.

ANGLE ON:

Bilbo emerges from the passage, carrying a walking stick. He finds Gandalf looming over him

GANDALF

I suppose you think that was terribly clever?

BILBO

Come on, Gandalf! Did you see their faces?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

There are many magic rings in the world, Bilbo Baggins, and none of them should be used lightly.

BILBO

It was just a bit of fun. Oh, you're probably right as usual.

GANDALF

You will keep an eye on Frodo, won't you?

BILBO

I'm leaving everything to him.

GANDALF

What about this ring of yours? Is that staying too?

Close on: Bilbo...he gives Gandalf a look and nods toward the mantelpiece.

BILBO

Yes, yes, it's in an envelope...over there on the mantelpiece. Gandalf frowns at the empty mantelpiece...Bilbo suddenly feels his waistcoat with a look of guilty surprise.

BILBO (CONT'D)

No, wait. It's here in my pocket. Isn't that...isn't that odd now? Yet, after all, why not? Why shouldn't I keep it?

GANDALF

I think you should leave the Ring behind, Bilbo. Is that so hard?

BILBO

Well, no...and yes. Now it comes to it, I don't feel like parting with it. It's mine. I found it. It came to me!

ANGLE ON: GANDALF LOOKS DOWN AT BILBO WITH RISING CONCERN.

GANDALF

There's no need to get angry.

BILBO

Well, if I'm angry, it's your fault! It's mine. My own, my precious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

Precious? It's been called that before,
but not by you.

BILBO

So? What business is it of yours what I
do with my own things? Bilbo's voice,
shape and manner have suddenly changed.

GANDALF

I think you've had that ring quite long
enough.

BILBO

You want it for yourself!

Gandalf rises to his full height, his eyes flash, his shadow
suddenly seems to fill the room

GANDALF

Bilbo Baggins do not take me for some
conjurer of cheap tricks! Bilbo cowers
from Gandalf, disarmed by his power... a
frightened Hobbit. Gandalf's expression
softens.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

I am not trying to rob you. I am trying
to help you. Sobbing, Bilbo runs to
Gandalf and hugs him

GANDALF (CONT' D)

All you long years we've been
friends... trust me as you once did. Let
it go!

BILBO

You're right, Gandalf... the ring must go
to Frodo.

Bilbo lifts his knapsack and heads for the front door.

BILBO (CONT' D)

It's late, the road is long... yes, it is
time.

GANDALF

Bilbo?

BILBO

Hmm?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GANDALF

The ring is still in your pocket.

Bilbo hesitates...reaches into his pocket.

BILBO

Oh, yes.

CLOSE ON: Bilbo pulls out the ring...he stares at it in his palm. With all his will power, Bilbo allows the ring to slowly slide off his palm and drop to the floor. CLOSE ON: The tiny ring lands with a heavy thud on the wooden floor.

EXT. BAG END -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON:

Bilbo staggering out of Bag end...he braces himself in the night air, Pale and Trembling, as if his loss of the ring has weakened him. Gandalf steps up behind.

BILBO

I've thought up an ending for my book... "And he lived happily ever after to the end of his days."

GANDALF

I'm sure you will, my dear friend.

BILBO

Goodbye, Gandalf.

GANDALF

Goodbye Bilbo.

Bilbo walks away from Bag End, disappearing into the night, softly singing: "The Road goes on and on."

GANDALF (CONT'D)

(softly)

Until our next meeting.

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THE RING...Glinting on the floor...Gandalf circles around it, a Puzzled look on his face. Gandalf slowly reaches for the ring. His fingers barely touch the ring...the creepy Hum rises on the soundtrack. Gandalf is sitting in front of the fire, with his pipe...staring into the flickering flames.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILBO (V. O.)
It's mine, my own, my precious.

GANDALF
(to himself)
Riddles in the dark.

FRODO (O. S.)
Bilbo! Bilbo!

Frodo rushes into Bag End...he stops and picks up the ring at his feet. Gandalf continues staring into the fire, as if locked in thought.

GANDALF
(to himself)
My precious... precious..

FRODO
(quietly)
He's gone, hasn't he? Frodo steps into the living room

FRODO (CONT' D)
He talked for so long about leaving...I didn't think he'd really do it.

GANDALF
(mutters to himself)
...my own.

FRODO
Gandalf?

Gandalf turns...his eyes locking onto the ring in Frodo's fingers.

GANDALF
Bilbo's ring.

Gandalf sorts hurriedly through Bilbo's papers...

GANDALF (CONT' D)
He's gone to stay with the Elves. He's left you Bag End...

Gandalf holds out the envelope...Frodo drops the ring into it.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
...along with all his possessions.

Gandolf seals the envelope with wax. He hands it to Frodo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GANDALF (CONT' D)

The ring is yours now. But it somewhere out of sight. Gandalf rises hurriedly and starts to gather his things.

FRODO

Where are you going?

GANDALF

I have some things I must see to.

FRODO

What things?

GANDALF

Questions. Questions that need answering.

FRODO

You've only just arrived! I don't understand...

Gandalf is already at the door, he turns to Frodo.

GANDALF

Neither do I. Keep it secret, keep it safe.

Gandalf hurries out the door...leaving FRODO standing alone in the Bag End.

ANGLE ON: THE ENVELOPE

The camera pushes in...the hum of the ring comes up on the soundtrack. The camera pushes through the white paper to the ring...beneath the hum the whispered murmur of BLACK SPEECH can be heard.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARAD-DUR -- NIGHT

The jagged ruins of" BARAD-DUR. THE DARK TOWER! TEASING IMAGES: THE HUGE DARK TOWER OF BARAD-DUR is being rebuilt! Thousands of ORCS crawl over the surface, hauling stone and iron up the towering heights.

WIDE ON: MOUNT DOOM..A HUGE, BILLOWING CLOUD OF BLACK FILTH

grows and spreads across the red streaked sky...casting a shadowy pall over the nightmarish landscape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOLLUM (O. S.)
Baggi ns! Shi re!!

CUT TO:

EXT. MINAS MORGUL -- NIGHT

NINE BLACK RIDERS burst out of Minas Morgul and charge toward Camera.

EXT. THE WEST ROAD, GONDOR -- DAY

WIDE ON: A LONE HORSEMAN gallops to the crest of a hill on the west road. The main highway south to Minas Tirith...he looks toward the saw toothed mountains of Mordor...
...seeing out across the blood red sky, his face grave. He spurs his horse on.

CUT TO:

INT. CITADEL, MINAS TIRITH -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON: GANDALF

making is way down into the lower depths of the Citidel.

CUT TO:

INT. CITADEL CHAMBER, MINAS TIRITH -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Pages flipping as Gandalf searches ancient scrolls and books placed high on a wooden table. His eyes settle on one old parchment. He murmurs hurriedly to himself, reading.

GANDALF
(reading)
The year 3434 of the Second Age...here follows the account of Isildur, High King of Gondor, and the finding of the ring of power.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON: ISILDUR, TRIUMPHANT, REACHES FOR THE ONE RING, HIS EYES FIXATED ON IT.

GANDALF
(reading)
It has come to me...the ring of power!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF (CONT' D)
It shall be an heirloom of my
Kingdom..all those who follow in my
bloodline shall be bound to its fate, for
I will risk no hurt to the

GANDALF (CONT' D)
ring..it is precious to me, though I buy
it with great pain..

CLOSE ON: ELVISH LETTERING MARKS ON THE FADED OLD DOCUMENT
IN GANDALF' S HAND.

GANDALF
(reading)
The marking upon the band begin to
fade...the writing which at first was as
clear as red flame, has all but
disappeared...a secret now that only fire
can tell...

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBBIT FARMHOUSE -- EVENING

FARMER MAGGOT is chopping wood in his garden CLOSE ON:
SNORTING HORSE NOSTRILS...as the shadow of a black rider
looms over a Hobbit House. Terrified, FARMER MAGGOT cowers in
his doorway...FANG, his dog, Whimpers and backs away.

BLACK RIDER
(hissing)
Shire? Baggins?

FARMER MAGGOT
(terrified)
There's no Bagginses around here! They
are all up in Hobbiton...that way.

The BLACK RIDER GALLOPS AWAY AT SPEED

CUT TO:

INT. GREEN DRAGON INN -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ROSIE COTTON

bids the last of the Patron's "Goodnight"...Sam meets her
eyes for a moment as he and Frodo leave the inn.

EXT. BAG END -- NIGHT

WIDE ON: FRODO FAREWELLS SAM outside Bag End, and heads towards the front door. Creepy POV from inside Bag end: Frodo coming up the path.

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END HALLWAY -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON:

FRODO enters Bag End...he immediately Pauses, sensing that something is amiss. All is quiet...Frodo peers uneasily into the darkened living room. SUDDENLY! A large figure looms out of the shadows, reaching for Frodo. Frodo lets out a startled cry, pulls himself free and spins around to face his Assailant. Gandalf steps into a shaft of moonlight. Paranoia blazes in his eyes. His clothes are dirty and ragged from much traveling. Hair and beard much longer an unkempt.

GANDALF
(urgent whisper)
Is it secret? Is it safe?

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Frodo pulls the envelope out of an old chest. Gandalf, suspicious, Alert. Without a word, Gandalf takes the envelope and tosses it into the fireplace!

FRODO
(bewildered)
What are you doing?

Flames instantly consume the envelope...revealing the ring, as it sinks into the red hot embers. Gandalf reaches into the fire with a pair of tongs...he lifts the ring out.

GANDALF
Hold out your hand, Frodo...it is quite cool.

Gandalf drops the ring into Frodo's hand...he reacts to its weight.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
What can you see? Can you see anything?

FRODO
Nothing... there's nothing. Wait...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON: The Gold Band of the ring as fiery letters begin to appear... a tiny inscription glows red... as if burning from within.

GANDALF
... these are markings.

CLOSE ON: GANDALF... STILL... TENSE

FRODO
It's some form of Elvish... I can't read it.

GANDALF
(ominous)
There are few who can... the language is that of Mordor, which I will not utter here.

Mordor?

FRODO
GANDALF

In the common tongue it says, "One ring to rule them all, One ring to find them, One ring to bring them all, and in the darkness bind them."

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END KITCHEN -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The ring lies on Frodo's simple kitchen table.

GANDALF
This is the one ring forged by the dark lord, Sauron, in the fires of Mt Doom... taken by Isildur from the hand of Sauron himself.

CLOSE ON: FRODO... STUNNED

FRODO
(quiet realization)
Bilbo found it... in Gollom's cave.

GANDALF
For sixty years the ring lay quiet in Bilbo's keeping, prolonging his life, delaying old age... but no longer, Frodo. Evil is stirring in Mordor. The ring has awoken. It has heard its master's call.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF (CONT' D)
 AT THAT MOMENT: A FLEETING, LOW WHISPER
 of BLACK SPEECH

emanates from the Ring. Frodo looks at Gandalf, each knowing the other has heard it.

FRODO
 But he was destroyed... Sauron was
 destroyed.

ANGLE ON: THE RING

lies between them on the table.

GANDALF
 No, Frodo. The spirit of Sauron has
 endured. His life force is bound to the
 ring and the ring survived. Sauron has
 returned. His Orcs have multiplied... his
 fortress of Barad- dur is rebuilt in the
 land of Mordor. Sauron needs only this
 ring to cover all the lands in the second
 darkness. He is seeking it, seeking it,
 all his thought is bent on it. For the
 ring yearns, above all else, to return to
 the hand of its master: they are one, the
 ring and the dark lord. Frodo, he must
 never find out. SUDDENLY Frodo scoops up
 the Ring.

FRODO
 Alright!

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON: FRODO

hurriedly entering the living room

FRODO
 (thinking fast)
 We put it away, we keep it hidden! We
 never speak of it again. No one know
 it's here, do they? Gandalf shifts
 uncomfortably.

FRODO (CONT' D)
 Do they, Gandalf?

Gandalf looks at Frodo, sadly...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

There is one other who knew that Bilbo had the Ring. I looked everywhere for the creature Gollum, but the enemy found him first.

CUT TO:

INT. BARAD-DUR -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A teasing Glimpse of Gollum being tortured by the Orcs. The wretched creature screams in pain.

GANDALF (V. O.)

I don't know how long they tortured him..but amidst the endless screams and inane babble, they discerned two words.

GOLLUM

(screaming)
S...Shire! Baggins!

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: FRODO'S HORRIFIED FACE!

FRODO

Shire! Baggins! That will lead them here!

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIRE LANE, SOUTH FARTHING -- NIGHT

IMAGE: On a dark country lane, a Hobbit boulder lifts his watch lantern in alarm.

HOBBIT BOUNDER

Halt! Who goes there?

Out of the darkness thunder two BLACK RIDERS...A LETHAL SWORD swings down at the small Hobbit boulder.

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

FRODO thrusts the ring at Gandalf.

FRODO

Take it! Take it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

No, Frodo...

FRODO

You must take it.

GANDALF

You cannot offer me this ring.

FRODO

I'm giving it to you!

GANDALF

Don't tempt me, Frodo. I dare not take it, not even to keep it safe.

CLOSE ON: THE RING IN FRODO'S HAND...

GANDALF

Understand, Frodo...I would use this Ring from a desire to do good...but through me, it would wield a power too great and terrible to imagine.

FRODO

But it cannot stay in the Shire!

GANDALF

No, no it can't.

CLOSE ON: THE RING IN FRODO'S CLENCHED HAND.

FRODO

What must I do?

CUT TO:

INT. FRODO'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON: FRODO

throwing clothes into a knapsack...Gandalf watches him making plans...

GANDALF

You must leave, and leave quickly. Get out of the Shire.

FRODO

Where? Where shall I go?

GANDALF

Make for the village of Bree.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO

Bree? What about you?

GANDALF

I will, be waiting for you at the Inn of the Prancing Pony. Frodo packs his food into his knapsack.

FRODO

And the ring will be safe there?

GANDALF

I don't know, Frodo. I don't have any answers. I must see the Head of my Order. He is both wise and powerful. Trust me, Frodo. He'll know what to go.

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Frodo is preparing to leave.

GANDALF

You'll have to leave the name of Baggins behind you...for that name is not safe outside the Shire. GANDALF helps FRODO into his coat.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

Travel only by day and stay off the road.

FRODO

(thinking)

I can cut across country easily enough.

Gandalf looks at the young Hobbit, moved by his courage.

GANDALF

My dear Frodo, Hobbits really are amazing creatures. You can learn all that there is to know about their ways in a month, and yet, after a hundred years, they can still surprise you.

SUDDENLY! A SOUND from outside.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

Get down!

GANDALF FREEZES... he moves quietly towards the window, eyes wide with tension. He raises his staff above the window, and slams it down on the intruder. THERE IS A YELP OF PAIN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gandalf hauls a small figure into the room..SAM GAMGEE sprawls across the floor! He looks up in terror as Gandalf looms over him

GANDALF (CONT' D)

(angry)

Confound it all! Samwise Gamgee, have you been eavesdropping?

SAM

I ain't been dropping no eaves, sir! Honest. I was just cutting the grass under the window there, if you follow me...

GANDALF

It's a little late for trimming the hedges, don't you think?

SAM

I heard raised voices...

GANDALF

What did you hear? Speak!

SAM

(panicked)

Nothing important...that is, I heard a good deal about a ring...and a Dark Lord. And something about the end of the world, but...Please, Mr. Gandalf, sir, don't hurt me! Don't turn me into anything unnatural!

GANDALF

No?

FRODO SMILES

GANDALF

Perhaps not. I've thought of a better use for you.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBBITON FIELDS -- PRE DAWN

Wide on: HOBBITON...shrouded in a white veil of MIST. WIDER: To reveal Gandalf, Frodo and Sam hurrying across a ploughed field, away from Hobbiton! Gandalf leads his Horse...Frodo and Sam are carrying knapsacks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF (V. O.)
Come along, Samwise...keep up...

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBBITON WOODS -- DAY

Gandalf leads Frodo and Sam under the cover of Woods.

GANDALF (V. O.)
Be careful, both of you. The Enemy has
many spies in his service, many ways of
hearing...birds, beasts...

Gandalf takes Frodo to one side...

GANDALF (CONT' D)
(low voice)
Is it safe?

FRODO NODS...he pats his pocket.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
Never put it on, for then the agents of
the Dark Lord will be drawn to its
power...Always remember, Frodo, the ring
is trying to get back to its master...it
wants to be found. Gandalf wheels his
horse and gallops away.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREEN HILL COUNTRY -- DAY

MONTAGE: FRODO AND SAM hiking over the gentle Shire
Countryside...wading through a shallow stream...heating a
kettle over a small fire...clambering over stone walls.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREEN HILL COUNTRY -- AFTERNOON

Sam stops short...taking stock of his surroundings. Sam
looks back from where they came.

SAM
This is it.

FRODO
This is what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

If I take one more step it'll be the
farthest away from home I've ever been.

FRODO gives Sam a pat on the shoulder.

FRODO

Come on, Sam

Sam takes a deep breath and steps forward. CLOSE ON: SAM S
brown, furry foot hits the ground.

FRODO IS SMILING.

FRODO

Remember what Bilbo used to say...it's a
dangerous business...

Frodo and Sam continue their journey.

BILBO (V. O.)

... it's a dangerous business, Frodo,
going out your door...you step onto the
road, and if you don't keep your feet,
there's not knowing where you might be
swept off to.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISENGARD VALLEY -- DAY

Gandalf is galloping along the outskirts of the ancient
forest of Fangorn. Nestled in a basin at the foot of the
distant Misty Mountains, the tall black tower of Orthanc is
clearly visible

EXT. ISENGARD VALLEY -- DAY

Gandalf gallops through the gate, into the fortress of
ISENGARD... a great ring-wall of stone, a mile from rim to
rim, encloses beautiful trees and gardens, watered by streams
that flow down from the mountains.

SARUMAN (V. O.)

Smoke rises once more from the mountain
of doom... the shadow takes shape in the
darkness of Mordor; the hour grows
late... and Gandalf the Grey rides to
Isengard seeking my counsel...

The strange tower of Orthanc... hewn from a solid pillar of
black obsidian... rises up in the center of the Isengard
Circle. Gandalf arrives at the foot of the Orthanc Stairs.

ANGLE ON: SARUMAN, THE WHITE WIZARD

he sweeps down the Orthanc stairs.

SARUMAN

For that is why you have come, is it not,
my old friend?

Gandalf moves quickly towards him, grimy and weary from his long ride.

GANDALF

Saruman!

CUT TO:

EXT. ISENGARD GARDENS -- DAY

Gandalf and Saruman walk slowly between the beautiful trees of Isengard, Saruman's clean, white robe contrasts with Gandalf's dusty grey robes.

SARUMAN

Are you sure of this?

GANDALF

Beyond any doubt.

SARUMAN

So the ring of power has been found?

GANDALF

All these long years it was in the Shire,
under my very nose.

SARUMAN

And yet you did not have the wit to see
it! Your love of the Halfling's leaf has
clearly slowed your mind.

GANDALF

We still have time...time enough to
counter Sauron...if we act quickly.

SARUMAN

Time? What time do you think we have?

CUT TO:

INT. ORTHANC ANTE-CHAMBER -- DAY

Saruman and Gandalf are seated in a small, cluttered room to the side of the cavernous central chamber.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARUMAN

Sauron has regained much of his former strength. He cannot yet take physical form...but his spirit has lost none of its potency. Concealed within his fortress, the lord of Mordor sees all. His gaze pierces cloud, shadow, earth, and flesh. You know of what I speak, Gandalf...a great Eye, lidless, wreathed in flame.

GANDALF

(softly)
The eye of Sauron.

SARUMAN

He is gathering all evil to him

SARUMAN (CONT' D)

Very soon he will have summoned an army great enough to launch an assault upon Middle earth.

GANDALF

You know this? How?

SARUMAN

I have seen it.

Gandalf and Saruman stride through Orthanc toward a stone plinth on which a sphere like shape is draped with a cloth...

GANDALF

A palantir is a dangerous tool, Saruman.

Saruman lifts the cloth to reveal the Palantir.

SARUMAN

Why? Why should we fear to use it?

GANDALF

They are not all accounted for, the lost seeing-stones...we do not know who else may be watching. Gandalf throws the cloth back over the Palantir.

FLASH IMAGE: A FIERY EYE!

Saruman sits upon his throne.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARUMAN

The hour is later than you think.
Sauron's forces are already moving... the
Nine have left Minas Morgul.

GANDALF

(shocked)
The nine!

SARUMAN

They crossed the river Isen in
Midsummer's eve, disguised as riders in
black.

GANDALF

(alarmed)
They have reached the Shire? Saruman
shrugs...

SARUMAN

They will find the ring...and kill the
one who carries it.

Gandalf backs away and turns to run to the door...horrificed
as the doors suddenly slam shut.

SARUMAN (CONT' D)

You did not seriously think a Hobbit
could contend with the will of Sauron?
There are none who can.

Gandalf slowly turns to Saruman...a look of dawning horror.

SARUMAN (CONT' D)

Against the power of Mordor, there can be
no victory. We must join with him,
Gandalf. We must join with Sauron. It
would be wise, my friend.

GANDALF

(deadly)
Tell me, friend, when did Saruman the
wise abandon reason for madness?

At that moment: Gandalf is suddenly blasted across the room!
He slams against the wall...pinned there by some unseen
force. With sudden effort, Gandalf wrenches himself off the
wall and swings his staff on Saruman...blasting him off his
feet! Gandalf and Saruman battle, powerful blasts throwing
them across the room SARUMAN SCREAMS, EYES BLAZING!
Gandalf's staff is suddenly wrenched from his grasp...it
flies across the chamber into Saruman's hand! Gandalf is
flung to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SARUMAN

I gave you the chance of aiding me willingly, but you have elected the way of pain.

Gandalf is breathing hard on the floor, his eyes look into the madness of Saruman... Commanding two staffs, Saruman sends Gandalf into a sickening spin. Gandalf tumbles towards the top of the chamber... as if falling in reverse. Rushing POV: the roof of Orthanc rockets toward camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMER'S FIELDS -- DAY

Wide on: Frodo and Sam walking along a country lane which borders Farmer Maggot's Fields. Sam is looking up... Frodo has disappeared around a corner in the lane.

SAM

(panicked)

Mr. Frodo. Mr. Frodo! Frodo turns, surprised as Sam comes running towards him

SAM (CONT'D)

(worried)

I thought I lost you. Frodo looks at Sam suspiciously. Sam glances down, embarrassed.

FRODO

(teasing)

What are you talking about?

SAM

(mumbling)

It's just something Gandalf said...

FRODO

What did he say?

SAM

He said... "Don't you leave him, Samwise Gamage."

(looks at Frodo intently)

And I don't mean to.

FRODO

(laughing)

Sam... we're still in the Shire... what could possibly happen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUDDENLY! A figure comes crashing out of a hedgerow sending Frodo flying. Frodo picks himself up, only to be knocked back down again by Pippin.

PIPPIN

Frodo! Merry, it's Frodo Baggins.

MERRY

Hello Frodo

Merry, Pippin, and Frodo picking themselves up... a variety of vegetables have scattered everywhere.

SAM

What's the meaning of this!

MERRY

Sam, hold this...

Merry gives Sam a large cabbage.

SAM

(accusing)

You've been into Farmer Maggot's crop!

A large pitchfork can be seen racing towards them along the Hedgerow...angry shouts from Farmer Maggot.

FARMER MAGGOT (O. S.)

Who's that in my field! Get out of it!
Get out of my field, you young varmits!
I'll show you...get out of my corn.

Merry and Pippin hurriedly gather their booty and race away...with Frodo and Sam on their heels.

MERRY

(looking behind him)

I don't know why he's so upset, it's only a couple of carrots.

PIPPIN

And some cabbages...and those three bags of potatoes that we lifted last week. And then the mushrooms the week before.

MERRY

Yes, Pippin, my point is, he's clearly over reacting.

The BAYING OF LARGE DOGS sounds!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIPPIN

Run!

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODED ROAD -- DAY

Frodo, Sam, and Merry and Pippin tumble head over heels down a bank, onto a dark, wooded road. CLOSE ON: A winded Pippin, his face inches away from a large pile of Horse droppings...

PIPPIN

That was close.

Frodo picks himself up and looks around quickly.

MERRY

(groaning)

Ow... I think I've broken something.

Pulls a LARGE CARROT, almost broken through in the middle, out from his back pocket.

MERRY (CONT' D)

Oh.

SAM

(turning on Merry and Pippin)

Trust a Brandybuck and a Took.

MERRY

What? That was just a detour... a shortcut.

SAM

A shortcut to what?

Pippin has spied something under the trees on the far side of the road.

PIPPIN

(excited)

Mushrooms!

CLOSE ON: SMALL, brown mushrooms growing amongst the Loamy undergrowth. Sam, Merry, and Pippin race toward the mushrooms! Frodo is tense and watchful. He realizes they are on a wooded road. Scattered leaves rise into the air Whirling down the road as if blown by an invisible wind...

SUDDENLY... THE SOUND OF HORSES HOOVES...

FRODO

I think we should get off the road.

A long drawn WAIL comes down the wind, like the cry of some evil and lonely creature.

FRODO (CONT' D)

(more urgency)

Get off the road!

Sam grabs Merry and Pippin as the Hobbits quickly scramble down the bank, hiding under a mossy log. THE SOUND OF HOOVES is close... A sinister MOUNTED RINGWRATH steps into view... hooded and faceless, mounted on a huge snarling black horse with insane eyes ! Frodo freezes in terror. The RINGWRAITH pauses right beside their hiding place...he sits very still with his head bowed, listening. From inside the hood comes a sniffing noise as if he is trying to catch an elusive scent; his head turning from side to side.

CLOSE ON: FRODO

Beads of sweat gather on his brow. The ringwraith suddenly slides off his horse, leaning over the mossy log, peering suspiciously into the woods.

CLOSE ON: FRODO

He is drawing the ring out of his pocket, with trembling hands...his face fevered and sweating as if in the grip of some terrible INTERNAL STRUGGLE. The SOUND OF SNIFFING intensifies as the ringwraith darts his head from side to side like a bird of prey.

CLOSE ON: FRODO SQUEEZING HIS EYES SHUT...

QUICK PSYCHIC BLASTS! AND EVIL DARK TOWER... A GREAT EYE... A BURST OF FLAME.

ANGLE ON: SAM LOOKING AT FRODO WITH CONCERN

SAM

Frodo?

Merry desperately hurls the mushrooms across the road...the ringwraith spins around at the sound, and darts to the far side of the road with frightening speed. Frodo instantly slumps...as if a PSYCHIC LINK had been broken

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERRY
What was that?

Frodo is staring, a look of shock on his face at the ring lying in the palm of his hand.

EXT. FERRY LANE -- NIGHT

Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin hurry through the trees... slipping and sliding on the muddy ground.

SAM
Anything?

FRODO
Nothing.

PIPPIN
What is going on?

Merry moves past Pippin, toward Frodo, watching intently... Sam keeps looking around nervously.

MERRY
The Black rider was looking for something... or someone... Frodo?

SAM
Get down!

The SILHOUETTE OF A BLACK RIDER looms against the skyline. The Four Hobbits... sprawled on the ground, holding their breath. The BLACK RIDER turns and departs.

FRODO
I have to leave the Shire... Sam and I must get to Bree.

Merry looks at his friend... realizing Frodo is in deep trouble.

MERRY
Right... Buckleberry Ferry... follow me !

The Hobbits break cover. SUDDENLY, A RINGWRAITH bursts out of the forest TOWARD THEM!

MERRY (CONT' D)
There's another one!! Frodo, this way! !

The Hobbits run THE RINGWRAITH SHRIEKS!

QUICK CUTS:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Black horse hooves... snarling horse mouths... a fleeting black cowl.

MERRY (CONT' D)
Frodo, follow me!

CUT TO:

EXT. BUCKLEBERRY FERRY -- NIGHT

FRODO, SAM, MERRY AND PIPPIN, are running towards the wide, placid Brandywine river... and the FERRY.

MERRY
Get the ropes, Sam

QUICK ANGLES: STOMPING HOOVES... SNARLING HORSES...

Four RINGWRAITHS are speeding through the Fog... converging on the FERRY CROSSING. The HOBBITS stampede across the Wharf and Tumble onto the Ferry.

SAM
(screaming)
Frodo!

Frodo races across the Wooden Wharf, followed by the ringwraiths. He leaps into the Ferry.

CLOSE ON: HOOVES THUNDER DOWN THE WOODEN WHARF!

Sam and Merry shove off with the poles... the ferry slides out into the river, just as the ringwraiths arrive. They pull up on the end of the wharf... shrieking with rage! The Hobbits cover their ears. The Ringwraiths wheel their horses towards the north and Gallop away along the river bank, quickly disappearing into the fog.

FRODO
How far to the nearest crossing?

MERRY
The brandwine bridge... twenty miles.

CUT TO:

EXT. BREE GATE -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON:

Lights of Bree... a small village of stone and half timbered houses nestled against a low wooded hill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A thick hedge surrounds the village... a great gate bars the western entrance.

CLOSE ON:

FRODO, SAM, MERRY AND PIPPIN approaching the gatehouse... wild eyes, ragged, and out of breath.

FRODO

Come on.

A SURLY GATEKEEPER glances down at them

GATEKEEPER

What do you want?

FRODO

We're headed for the prancing pony.

The gatekeeper swings his lantern onto the hobbits, bathing them in an uncomfortable yellow spotlight.

GATEKEEPER

Hobbits! Four Hobbits, and what's more, out of the Shire by your talk. What business brings you to Bree?

FRODO

We wish to stay at the inn... our business is our own. To Frodo's relief, the Gatekeeper unlocks the gate.

GATEKEEPER

All right, young sir, I meant no offense.

The Hobbits gratefully enter Bree... the gatekeeper eyeing them curiously in the lantern light.

GATEKEEPER (CONT' D)

It's my job to ask questions after nightfall. There's talk of strange folk abroad... can't be too careful.

CUT TO:

EXT. BREE STREETS -- NIGHT

The tall BREE FOLK loom over the nervous little hobbits as Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin make their way through the Narrow Streets. Tall buildings tower above them... lights glow dimly from behind thick curtains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Close on: The sign of the "PRANCING PONY INN"...Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin hurry toward it.

CUT TO:

INT. "PRANCING PONY" RECEPTION -- NIGHT

Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin come rushing in. Frodo attracts the INN KEEPERS' S attention.

FRODO

Excuse me.

BUTTERBUR

Good evening, little masters. If you're seeking accommodation, we've got some nice, cozy Hobbit sized rooms available, Mr... ah...

FRODO

Underhill...my name's Underbill.

BUTTERBUR

Underhill? Hmmm.

FRODO

We're friends of Gandalf the Grey... can you tell him we've arrived? BUTTERBUR frowns...

BUTTERBUR

(Puzzled)

Gandalf... Gandalf... Oh...

(recognition)

Oh yes! I remember...elderly chap...big grey beard...pointy hat? Frodo nods with relief...Butterbur shakes his head.

BUTTERBUR (CONT'D)

Not seen him for six months. Frodo is shocked.

SAM

(worried whisper)

What do we do now?

INT. PRANCING PONY INN -- NIGHT

Wide on: the noise, smokey Inn. It is dimly lit, chiefly from a blazing log fire...and crowded with a mixture of BIG FOLK, LOCAL HOBBITS, and a couple of dwarfs. Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin are sitting at a table against the wall... clearly trying to remain Quiet and inconspicuous... Sam can't help himself...he keeps casting nervous glances around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO

Sam, he'll be here. He'll come.

Merry ploinks himself down at a table, carrying a very large mug of beer.

PIPPIN

What's that?

MERRY

This, my friend, is a pint.

PIPPIN

It comes in pints? I'm getting one!

Sam watches Pippin rise unsteadily to his feet and head to the bar.

SAM

You've had a whole half already. Merry watches Pippin go.

A COUPLE OF SWARTHY MEN leaning against the bar glance at Frodo, then quickly look away.

SAM (CONT'D)

(tense)

That fellow's done nothing but stare at you since we've arrived.

Sam indicates a BROODING STRANGER who sits alone at a table in the far corner, smoking a curiously carved long stemmed pipe, peering from beneath a travel stained cowl with gleaming eyes. Frodo gestures to Butterbur...

FRODO

Excuse me, that man in the corner, who is he?

BUTTERBUR

He's one of them Rangers; they're dangerous folk they are, wandering the wilds. What his right name is, I never heard, but round here he's known as Strider.

FRODO

(to himself)

Strider.

BENEATH TABLE: FRODO'S fingers are nervously TOYING WITH THE RING.

CLOSE ON: FRODO

Sweat runs down his brow. The Strange hum of the Ring spills into the Soundtrack.

"Baggins...Baggins..." a creepy whisper seems to fill Frodo's head...sound that dissolves into Pippin's loud voice:

PIPPIN
Baggins? Sure, I know a Baggins...he's over there...

ANGLE ON: PIPPIN

sitting at the bar, chatting with Locals. Frodo leaps to his feet and pushes his way towards the bar.

PIPPIN
(loudly)
Frodo Baggins. He's my second cousin once removed, on his mother's side and my third cousin twice removed on his father's side...if you follow me.

Frodo grabs Pippin's sleeve, spilling his beer.

FRODO
Pippin!

PIPPIN
Steady on, Frodo!

Pippin pushes Frodo away...he stumbles backwards, and falls to the floor. At that instant, the Inn goes silent and all the attention turns to Frodo...

CLOSE ON:

The ring...in agonizing Slow motion we watch as it seems to hang in the air for a split second...then crashes down onto his out stretched finger. **FRODO VANISHES!** There is a sharp intake of breath...followed by total silence.

CUT TO:

EXT. BREE COUNTRYSIDE -- NIGHT

The **RINGWRAITHS** turn sharply in their saddles...Instantly aware that the ring is being worn. They spur their horses towards the distant lights of Bree.

INT. "PRANCING PONY" INN -- NIGHT

Sam looks sick; Pippin instantly sobers, realizing his folly; the brooding stranger frowns...and the inn erupts into excited babble.

IN THE TWILIGHT WORLD:

ANGLE ON:

FRODO: as he finds himself in the TWILIGHT WORLD of the ring: THE EXCITED CROWD ARE suddenly moving in slow motion...distorted voices...a weird photographic negative quality. FRODO is moving in real time; against the slow motion background. He suddenly clutches his head as he is hit with quick images...of a GREAT EYE! AN EVIL CAT-LIKE EYE, wreathed in flames.

VOICE OF SAURON

There is no life here in the void...only cold...only death... FRODO is terrified! He rolls under a table, desperately pulling the ring from his finger. FRODO MATERIALIZES into the real world. AT THAT MOMENT: A LARGE HAND reaches under the table and Grabs Frodo by the collar, and DRAGS HIM AWAY!

CUT TO:

INT. PRANCING PONY--CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Frodo is roughly pushed against the wall. The Brooding stranger looms over him

STRIDER

You draw far too much attention to yourself...Mr. Underhill

CUT TO:

INT. HOBBIT'S ROOM, PRANCING PONY -- NIGHT

Frodo is pushed into the Hobbit's room by Strider.

FRODO

What do you want?

STRIDER

A little more caution from you...that is no trinket you carry.

FRODO

I carry nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRIDER

Indeed? I can usually avoid being seen if I wish, but to disappear entirely... that is a rare gift.

FRODO

Who are you?

STRIDER

Are you frightened?

FRODO

Yes.

STRIDER

Not nearly frightened enough. I know what hunts you. Frodo jumps at the sound of a noise in the corridor. Strider deftly draws his sword.

The door bursts open and Sam, Merry and Pippin appear on the doorway. Sam is Squaring off with is fists, Merry brandishes a candlestick, and Pippin a chair.

SAM

(angry)

Let him go or I'll have you, Longshanks!

STRIDER SHEATHS his sword, a slight smile playing on his lips.

STRIDER

You have a stout heart, little Hobbit, but that alone won't save you... You can no longer wait for the Wizard, Frodo. They're coming.

CUT TO:

EXT. GATEHOUSE, BREE -- NIGHT

The gate keeper comes out of his Lodgings with a lantern... a look of fear on his face. He approaches the closed gate with great apprehension. CLOSE ON: The Gatekeeper peers out of his Peephole.

CRASH!!

The gate crashed down on the gatekeeper... as four RINGWRAITHS ride into Bree!

EXT. BREE STREETS -- NIGHT

The four RINGWRAITHS fly done the empty streets, like horsemen of the apocalypse.

INT. PRANCING PONY INN -- NIGHT

LOW ANGLE: the front door FLIES OPEN. The FOUR RINGWRAITHS rush into the PRANCING PONY with WICKED SWORDS DRAWN. CLOSE ON: BUTTERBUR hiding behind his bar... trembling and sweating in TERROR.

INT. HOBBIT'S ROOM, PRANCING PONY -- NIGHT

INSERT: MERRY SNORING SOFTLY ON HIS PILLOW.

INSERT: PIPPIN stirs slightly, then settles back to sleep. WIDE ON: the door creaks open...THE FOUR RINGWRAITHS silently slide into the Hobbit's room. The LOOM above each bed, raising their SHINING SWORDS ABOVE THE SLEEPING HOBBITS. QUICK INSERT: Sam's eyes open wide. In unison, the RINGWRAITHS STAB THE HOBBITS, in a Slashing, hacking frenzy.

INT. STRIDER'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Strider is grimly listening to the sounds from his room

INT. HOBBIT'S ROOM, PRANCING PONY -- NIGHT

Wide on: the RINGWRAITHS step back from the slashed beds in triumph. CLOSE ON: a hacked blanket is pulled back to reveal nothing but a shredded pillow. The RINGWRAITHS SHRIEK WITH RAGE!! INSERTS: Sam sits up with a start! Close on: Another shredded pillow is revealed! More Shrieks of rage. INSERT: PIPPIN AND MERRY wake with a start.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIDER'S ROOM -- NIGHT

WIDE ON: Sam, Merry, and Pippin have been sleeping on Strider's bed. Frodo stands next to Strider by the window, peering out nervously as furious Ringwraith screeches echo across the courtyard from the Hobbits room

FRODO
Where are they?

STRIDER
They were once men. Strider glances quickly at Frodo, then looks away...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRIDER (V. O.) (CONT' D)

(quietly)

Great Kings of men. Then Sauron the deceiver gave to them Nine Rings of Power. Blinded by their greed they took them without question, one by one falling into darkness and now they are slaves to his will.

Strider looks from the window as the Ringwraiths gallop down the Bree Streets. CLOSE ON: Strider turns back to the Hobbits, his face lit faintly by the Glowing Embers of the Fire.

STRIDER (CONT' D)

They are the Nazgul, Ringwraiths, neither living or dead. At all times they feel the presence of the ring...drawn to the power of the one...they will never stop hunting you.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHETWOOD FOREST -- DAY

ANGLE ON:

STRIDER, MERRY, PIPPIN, AND FRODO march through a gloomy, overgrown forest. Sam follows at the head leading "Bill", a scrawny pony, who is laden with supplies.

FRODO

Where are you taking us?

STRIDER

Into the wild.

Frodo watches uneasily as Strider moves off into the cover of the trees...

MERRY

(whispered aside)

How do we know this Strider is a friend of Gandalf?

FRODO

We have no choice but to trust him.

STRIDER

But where is he leading us?

ANGLE ON:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Strider stops, casts a glance back at Sam

STRIDER (CONT' D)
To Rivendell, Master Gamgee...to the
house of Elrond.

SAM looks excited.

SAM
Did you hear that, Bill? Rivendell!
We're going to see the Elves!

Strider leads the Hobbits through the gloom of the forest.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDGEWATER MOORS -- DAY

Aerial on: Strider leading Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin
across the windswept moors. The hobbits suddenly stop and
unstrap their knapsacks.

STRIDER
Gentlemen, we do not stop until
nightfall.

PIPPIN
What about breakfast?

STRIDER
You've already had it.

PIPPIN
We've had one, yes...but what about
Second Breakfast?

Strider stares at Pippin blankly, then turns away, shaking
his head.

MERRY
I don't think he knows about second
breakfast, Pip.

PIPPIN
What about Elvenses, Luncheon, Afternoon
Tea, dinner...he knows about them,
doesn't he?

MERRY
I wouldn't count on it.

An apple is thrown to Merry, who deftly catches it. Another,
aimed at Pippin, catches him on the forehead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERRY (CONT' D)
 (exasperated)
 Pippin!

The hobbits trudge through rain, looking tired, hungry, and miserable.

CUT TO:

INT. ORTHANC ANTE-CHAMBER -- NIGHT

Saruman stands over the Palantir, his hands cupping the massive eye.

SARUMAN
 (whisper)
 The power of Isengard is at your command,
 Sauron, Lord of the Earth.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: BLACK SPEECH FILLS THE ROOM .. ADMIST THE HARSH, GUTTURAL WORDS THE VOICE OF SARUMAN EMERGES.

SARUMAN
 Build me an army worth of Mordor.

INT. ORTHANC ANTE-CHAMBER -- NIGHT

Saruman is seated as his ORC OVERSEER approaches.

ORC OVERSEER
 What orders from Mordor, my Lord. What does the eye command?

SARUMAN
 We have work to do.

CUT TO:

INT. ISENGARD -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: GANDALF...lying unconscious on a cold obsidian floor. He wakes to the sound of ripping and tearing...rising onto his knees...lifting his head... Gandalf stands as the camera pulls back to reveal him stranded on the summit of Orthanc. He is marooned on the tiny, flat peak, surrounded on all sides by a sheer 500 FOOT DROP. Another whispering wail rends the air. Gandalf crosses quickly to the edge and peers down: POV: One of the beautiful Isengard trees is being ripped from the ground by the ORCS. Gandalf looks on in Horror as ORCS hack into the trunk with axes.

ANGLE ON:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARUMAN stands in Rain looking out into the dark night...the ORC overseer sidles up to him, axe in hand, sweating with exertion.

ORC OVERSEER

The trees are strong, my Lord. Their roots go deep.

SARUMAN

Rip them all down.

CAMERA CIRCLES SUMMIT: MORE AND MORE TREES are hauled down and killed...as Gandalf looks on in helpless despair.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WEATHERHILLS -- DAY

Wide on: The rugged countryside as the hobbits journey on, lead by Strider. Strider stops before a distant hill, topped by an Ancient Ruin.

SARUMAN

This was once the great Watchtower of Amon Sul. We shall rest here tonight.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEATHERTOP HOLLOW -- DUSK

ANGLE ON:

FRODO, MERRY, AND PIPPIN collapse into a small hollow, halfway up Weathertop...they are muddy and exhausted. Strider drops 4 small swords at the Hobbits feet.

SARUMAN

There are for you. Keep them close. I'm going to have a look around. Stay here.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEATHERTOP HOLLOW -- NIGHT

Close on: Frodo...eyes flickering open. He suddenly sits up, sniffing the air. Sam, Merry, and Pippin huddled over a small fire... Sausages and bacon sizzle in a hot frying pan.

FRODO

What are you doing?

MERRY

Tomatoes, sausages, and crispy bacon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

We saved some for you, Mr. Frodo.

FRODO

Put it out, you fools! Put it out! Frodo desperately kicks dirt on the fire!

PIPPIN

Oh, that's nice...ash on my tomatoes!

A SUDDEN SHREIK!

ANGLE ON:

FIVE RINGWRAITHS ON FOOT, running up the steep slope unnaturally fast.

FRODO

Go! !

Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin clamber desperately towards the summit, clutching their swords.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEATHERTOP SUMMIT -- NIGHT

Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin race into a RING OF BROKEN STONES on the summit or Weathertop...the ruined base of an ancient tower. The hobbits stand back-to-back in the centre of the Ring, waiting for the first assault... One by one, the 5 Ringwraiths appear...brandishing Glistening swords, they move slowly towards the hobbits. In the center is their leader...the WITCH KING!

SAM

Back, you devils!

Sam rushes forward with a cry. He swings his sword at the Witch King, who blocks the blow with his own sword. Sam's blade shatters...the WITCH KING lashes out with his fist, sending Sam flying. Merry and Pippin, overcome with terror, throw themselves flat on the ground. THE RINGWRAITHS close in on Frodo...a Venomous whisper dances in his head...

Frodo shuts his eyes and staggers back, desperately resisting the WRAITH'S WHISPERINGS... slow motion as his hand goes into his pocket and pulls out the ring. The 5 Ringwraiths utter a chilling SCREECH OF EXCITEMENT. Frodo is unable to resist any longer, falls to his knees and slips on the ring. He disappears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT' D)

No!

IN THE TWILIGHT WORLD:

ANGLE ON:

Frodo finds himself in the weird twilight world...he looks upon the Ringwraiths, now visible in their TRUE APPEARANCE: Five Ghouls dressed in long Grey robes, with white hair, and Pallid, ruthless faces. THE WITCH KING extends a haggard hand towards Frodo, reaching for the ring on his finger. Frodo's trembling hand extends forward as if by the pull of the ring...he slides to the ground, unable to pull his hand away. The witch king snarls and springs forward. He stabs at Frodo with a wicked dagger! Frodo winces as the tip of the dagger sinks into his shoulder. Suddenly, Strider charges at the RINGWRAITHS, wielding his sword in one hand, a flaming torch in the other. He moves in slow motion, visible through a sea of mist. Frodo sinks to the ground. Behind him is a faint image of a Ringwraith fleeing, his head engulfed in flames. With draining strength, Frodo manages to pull the ring off his finger...

IN THE REAL WORLD:

...Appearing back in the real world, Sam rushes over to him

SAM (CONT' D)

(horri fied)

Frodo!

Another Ringwraith is burning and screaming...others screech fearfully at the flames, turn and flee form the Weathertop summi t.

SAM (CONT' D)

(pani cked)

Mr. Frodo!!

Strider kneels before Frodo. He snatches up the Witch King's Dagger from the ground, staring gravely at the long, thin, blade.

SAM (CONT' D)

Help hi m, Strider!

STRIDER

(gri m)

He's been stabbed by a Morgul blade. The Morgul Blade suddenly melts...vani shing into the air like smoke. Strider throws the hilt down in disgust...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM
Do something.

STRIDER
This is beyond my skill to heal.
(urgently)
He needs Elvish medicine. Strider lifts
Frodo onto his shoulders.

EXT. WEATHERHILLS -- NIGHT

Strider is jogging grimly, carrying an ailing Frodo on his back. Sam, Merry, and Pippin are running to keep up. The hobbits are carrying flaming torches for protection.

STRIDER
Hurry!

SAM
We are six days from Rivendell. Frodo
groans.

STRIDER
Hold on, Frodo.

SAM
He'll never make it! Close on:
Frodo...head lolling about, barely
conscious.

FRODO
(fevered calling)
Gandalf... Gandalf?

EXT. ISENGARD -- NIGHT

Low angle...looking up at ORTHANC...the tower of Isengard, gleaming in the moonlight. The camera rises to reveal the once beautiful gardens are not a pitted wasteland...with smoke and fire billowing out

of numerous tunnels and vent holes that litter the forecourt of ORTHANC. Strange guttural chants echo up from deep underground. The camera is rising...a small moth flutters into shot...and leads the camera towards the summit or Orthanc. Gandalf lies slumped against the wall at the very top of Orthanc, surrounded by a sheer 500 foot drop. He looks Weak and Frail...and is seemingly asleep. The MOTH flutters close to Gandalf. His hand suddenly moves at lighting speed and SNATCHES THE MOTH. Gandalf brings his hand close to his face and opens it. The moth sits on the palm of his hand as Gandalf mutter strange words in a foreign tongue. Close on: THE MOTH'S face... seemingly listening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It suddenly flutters away. CAMERA FOLLOWS the moth off the Orthanc summit, but drops past the moth...falling down, down, towards the pitted wasteland, straight into a fiery red tunnel!

INT. CAVERNS BELOW ISENGARD -- NIGHT

The dead trees of Isengard are fed into roaring furnaces...molten metal pours into casts...red hot metal, beaten by sweating orc blacksmiths...armor and weapons are forged from the great furnaces. Saruman strides among the ORCS and stands looking on a new born uruk-hai as it escapes its birthing membrane...this is LURTZ, who rises up to stand before his master.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLSHAW FOREST CLEARING -- NIGHT

Close on: Frodo...his eyes flicker open...clouded, red-rimmed...his brow, beaded with sweat.

PIPPIN

Is he going to die? Frodo's breathing is getting shallow. Strider looks out into the darkness.

STRIDER

No. He is passing into the shadow world, he will soon become a wraith like them

A DISTANT CRY of a RINGWRAITH carries through the air.

MERRY

(nervous)
They're close.

Frodo gasps in sudden pain.

STRIDER

(thinking hard)
Sam, do you know the Athelas plant? Sam looks blank.

SAM

Athelas?

STRIDER

Kingsfoil.

SAM

Kingsfoil. Aye. It's a weed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRIDER

It may help to slow the poison. Hurry!

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLSHAW FOREST -- NIGHT

Sam and Strider desperately search the dark forest floor for the Athelas plant. Close on: A small, white flowered plant! Strider drops to one knee, carefully pulling it from the ground.

SUDDENLY! STRIDER FREEZES AS A SWORD BLADE TOUCHES HIS NECK.

ARWEN (O. S.)

What is this? A Ranger caught off his guard?

Strider slowly looks up.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLSHAW FOREST CLEARING -- NIGHT

Frodo is breathing hard, desperately ill. Frodo's half-conscious POV: Surreal impression... a SHIMMERING FIGURE IN WHITE leaps off a horse.

FLASH INSERT: An ethereal vision of ARWEN, as she appears on the other side...

ARWEN

(ELVISH: with sub titles)

Frodo, Im Arwen...telin let thaed. I am Arwen, I have come here to help you.

(urgent)

Lasto Beth nin, tolo Dan na ngalad. Hear my voice, come back to the light. Frodo's eyes close.

PIPPIN

Who is she?

ARWEN

(worried)

Frodo?

SAM

She's an elf.

ANGLE ON: ARWEN

Who now appears in her earth bound form, a young Elven woman with tousled hair, dressed in mud-splattered riding clothes.

ARWEN

He's fading... he's not going to last. We must get him to my father. Strider quickly lifts Frodo... placing him on the horse.

ARWEN (CONT'D)

I have been looking for you for two days.

PIPPIN

Where are you taking him?

ARWEN

There are five Wraiths behind you, where the other four are, I do not know.

STRIDER

(ELVISH: with subtitles)

Dartho guin Berian... rych le ad tolthathon. Stay with the hobbits... I'll send horses for you. Close on: Arwen grabbing the Reins of the horse.

ARWEN

(ELVISH: w/subtitles)

Hon mabathon. Rochoh ellint im I'll take him I'm the faster rider. Strider clamps his hand over Arwen's.

STRIDER

(elvish: subtitles)

Andelu I ven. The road is too dangerous.

ARWEN

(Elvish: subtitles)

Frodo Fir. Ae anthradon I hir, tur gwaith nin beriatha hon. If I can cross the river, the power of my people can protect him

PIPPIN

What are they saying?

CLOSE ON: Arwen reaches for Strider's hand... looking deep into his eyes.

ARWEN

I do not fear them

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON: Strider...we see that it is hard for him to let her go.

ANGLE ON:

Arwen mounts her horse, ALSFORTH...

STRIDER
Arwen...ride hard, don't look back.

ANGLE ON:

Arwen looks down at Strider as she supports Frodo with one hand.

ARWEN
(elvish)
Noro Lim, Asfaloth, Noro Lim!

SAM
What are you doing! Those Wraiths are still out there!

ANGLE ON:

Asfaloth springs away, bearing Arwen and Frodo into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLSHAW FOREST -- NIGHT

SPEEDING POV: through the forest from the back of the White Horse.

ANGLE ON: FRODO, BOUNCING IN THE SADDLE,

he lifts his head weakly. SURREAL SLOW MOTION POV: THE HORSES HEAD BOBBING...trees sliding by...moonlight flickers through the trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. AERIAL OF ETENMORS ~ MORNING

AERIAL: of Arwen's white horse emerging from the trees...and galloping across the open land as the sun rises.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE FOREST -- DAY

The white horse charges through a Pine Forest. Suddenly 2 Galloping Ringwraiths emerge from the trees behind! 2 more Ringwraiths slide in from different directions to join the chase. Arwen grits her teeth...urges the white horse to greater speed.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE EAST ROAD -- DAY

The white horse speeds out of the pine trees...the 4 ringwraiths close behind PAN ONTO: 2 more ringwraiths galloping down the hillside! AERIAL SHOT: 3 MORE RINGWRAITHS enter frame from different directions...a total of 9 RINGWRAITHS now pursuing Frodo and Arwen! CLOSE ON: Panting head of the WHITE ELVEN HORSE.

ARWEN

Noro lim, Asfaloth!

CUT TO:

EXT. FORD OF BRUINEN -- DAY

CRANE DOWN: As the White Horse races towards Camera, to Reveal the wide river Bruinen in the foreground.

Without hesitation, the white horse leaps into the shallow water and thunders across the Ford. The 9 Ringwraiths pull up short of the Ford, clearly nervous of the water. The white horse reaches the other side...Arwen pulls up and turns to defiantly face the Ringwraiths from across the Ford.

WITCH KING

Give up the Halfling, she-elf! She draws her sword and yells at the Witch King.

ARWEN

(yelling)

If you want him, come and claim him

THE WITCH KING SCREECHES ANGRILY, draws his sword, and leads the Ringwraiths across the Ford. The water starts flowing faster...a distant rumble can be heard. Arwen waits until they are halfway across: she suddenly stands in the saddle arms raised!

ARWEN (CONT' D)

(Elvish)

Non o Chithaeglir, lasto Beth daer: Rimmo
nin Briunen Dan in Ulaer!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARWEN (CONT'D)
 Nin o Chitaeglor, lasto Beth daer: Rimmo
 nin Bruinen Dan in Ulaer!

THE GROUND SUDDENLY TREMBLES... A MIGHTY ROAR FILLS THE AIR!

Frodo looks up weakly... to see a vast torrent of Water flooding down the river towards the ford... as if a dam had burst! The Foaming water seems to form the shape of Dancing white horses with frothing manes! The Ringwraiths scream in terror as they are swallowed up in the deluge. Their Piercing cries are drowned in the roaring of the river as it carries them away! CLOSE ON: FRODO as he loses consciousness...

ARWEN
 (upset)
 No, no... Frodo, no! Frodo, don't give
 in... not now!

Arwen gathers the small Hobbit in her arms, feeling his life slip away.

INT. FRODO'S DELIRIUM -- DAY

DELIRIOUS IMAGES AND SOUNDS....

ARWEN (V. O.)
 What grace is given me, let it pass to
 him. Let him be spared. Save him.

IMAGE: A BRIGHT LIGHT suddenly flares... Frodo squeezes his eyes shut, gasping.

FRODO
 (frightened)
 Where am I?

A FAMILIAR VOICE cuts through the swirl of sound.

GANDALF (O. S.)
 You are in the House of Elrond, and it is
 ten o'clock in the morning on October the
 twenty-fourth, if you want to know.

INT. FRODO'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Frodo's eyes flicker Open He is lying in bed next to an Open Window... Dappled sunlight plays on richly carved timbers... the sound of a nearby waterfall drifts through the Vista of Fir Trees.

FRODO
 (weak relief)
 Gandalf!

ANGLE ON: GANDALF IS SITTING NEXT TO FRODO'S BED...

softly puffing on his pipe. He smiles at Frodo.

GANDALF

Yes, I'm here and you're lucky to be here, too. A few more hours and you would have been beyond our aid. You have some strength in you, my dear Hobbit.

Frodo sits up, looking at Gandalf questioningly...

FRODO

What happened, Gandalf? Why didn't you meet us?

GANDALF

I'm sorry Frodo.

Close on: Gandalf... troubled. His eyes drift away.

GANDALF (CONT'D)

I was delayed.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORTHANC SUMMIT -- NIGHT

SARUMAN stands over Gandalf, gloating...

SARUMAN

Get up! So much for the power of the Ring or embrace your own destruction!

With the power of his staff, Saruman raises Gandalf from the ground, then sends him crashing to the floor.

GANDALF

There is only one Lord of the Ring. Only one who can bend it to his will...and he does not share power.

SUDDENLY! GANDALF lurches to his feet and Throws himself off the Tower! Saruman watches Gandalf fly away from Isengard...on the Back of a GIANT EAGLE.

SARUMAN

(chilling)
So you have chosen death!

CUT TO:

EXT. SKIES OVER MOUNTAINS-- DAWN

Gwaihir the Eagle soars majestically over the mountains, carrying Gandalf towards the dawn.

CUT TO:

INT. FRODO'S BEDROOM - RIVENDELL

Frodo raises himself up and looks at Gandalf.

FRODO
Gandalf! What is it? Gandalf returns his attention to Frodo.

GANDALF
Nothing, Frodo...

Sam runs to Frodo's bedside. He is overjoyed to find Frodo awake.

SAM
Frodo! Frodo! Bless you, you're awake!!

GANDALF
Sam has hardly left your side.

SAM
We were worried about you-- weren't we, Mr. Gandalf?

GANDALF
By the skills of Lord Elrond, you're beginning to mend. ELROND, LORD OF THE HIGH ELVES, steps up to Frodo's

bedside...his face is neither old nor young, though in it is written the memory of many things both glad and sorrowful.

ELROND
Welcome to Rivendell, Frodo Baggins. Frodo sits up, looking at Elrond with awe.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL VALLEY -- DAY

WIDE ON: RIVENDELL... a small cluster of elegant Elven Buildings sitting in a Shangri-la like Valley below towering cliffs and snow capped mountains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELROND (V. O.)

You have found your way to the last homely house east of the sea. The elves of Imladris have dwelt within this valley for three thousand years through few of my kin now remain. Frodo looks out from his balcony.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL GARDENS -- DAY

Frodo and Sam walk together. Suddenly, the voices of Merry and Pippin can be heard as they bound up to Frodo and throw their arms around him

MERRY

Frodo! Frodo!

Sam looks past Frodo smiling... a bent figure sits alone on a bench, in the Sun. Close on: Frodo turning, following Sam's gaze...

FRODO

Bilbo!

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL TERRACE -- DAY

Close on: BILBO BAGGINS! He breaks in to a broad grin as Frodo rushes forward to embrace him. Bilbo has aged significantly since we last saw him

BILBO

Hello, Frodo, my lad!

FRODO

Bilbo!

LATER... Frodo is turning the neatly inscribed title page of a red leather bound journal:

FRODO (CONT' D)

(reading)

"There and back again: A Hobbit's tale"
by Bilbo Baggins.

Bilbo smiles Proudly. He is sitting with Frodo on a terrace overlooking a Waterfall. Frodo looks at Page after page of beautiful Handwriting, with intricate Maps and Drawings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO (CONT' D)
This is wonderful.

BILBO
I meant to go back...wander the paths of Mirkwood, visit Laketown, see the Lonely Mountain again...but age, it seems, has finally caught up with me.

Frodo turns a page...there before him, is a map of the Shire.

FRODO
(quietly)
I miss the Shire...I spent all my childhood pretending I was off somewhere else...off with you, on one of your adventures...
(Looks at Bilbo)
But my own adventure, turned out to be quite different...I'm not like you, Bilbo.

BILBO
My dear boy...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL TERRACE -- EVENING

Sam busily tries to stuff more and more things into his already full pack...pots and pans, blankets, cooking utensils, provisions, clothes.

SAM
No, what have I forgotten? Pull back to reveal Frodo, hands in his pocket, watching Sam

FRODO
Packed already?

Sam looks up, startled.

SAM
(slightly embarrassed)
No harm in being prepared. Frodo strolls to the edge of the Balcony.

FRODO
I thought you wanted to see the Elves, Sam?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I do...

FRODO

More than anything.

SAM

I did. It's just...we did what Gandalf wanted, didn't we? We got the Ring this far, to Rivendell...and I thought...seeing as how you're on the mend, we'd be off soon. Off home.

FRODO

You're right, Sam. Frodo looks at Sam..

FRODO (CONT' D)

...we did what we set out to do. Frodo opens his hand, the Ring sits in his Palm

FRODO (CONT' D)

The ring will be safe in Rivendell. I am ready to go home.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELROND'S CHAMBER, RIVENDELL -- DAY

Gandalf and Elrond watch Frodo and Sam from Elrond's balcony,

ELROND

His strength returns.

GANDALF

That wound will never fully heal. He will carry it the rest of his life.

ELROND

And yet to have come so far still bearing the Ring...the hobbit has shown extraordinary resilience to its evil.

GANDALF

It is a burden he should never have to had to bear. We can ask no more of Frodo.

ELROND

Gandalf, the enemy is moving. Sauron's forces are massing in the east. His eye is fixed on Rivendell. And Saruman, you tell me, has betrayed us. Our list of allies grows thin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

His treachery runs deeper than you know. By foul craft, Saruman has crossed Orc with Goblin Men...he is breeding an army in the caverns of Isengard. An army that can move in Sunlight and cover great distance at speed. Saruman is coming for the Ring.

Elrond turns and walks away...

ELROND

This evil cannot be concealed by the power of the Elves...We do not have the strength to fight both Mordor and Isengard...Gandalf...the ring cannot stay here.

Gandalf turns and looks out the window.

Sounds of arrivals...Gandalf watches as Boromir rides through Rivendell gate, followed by Legolas and Gimli.

ELROND (V. O.) (CONT' D)

This peril belongs to all Middle earth. They must decide how to end it. Not just for themselves but for those who come after. Elrond approaches Gandalf.

ELROND (CONT' D)

The time of the Elves is over. My people are leaving these shores. Who will you look to when we have gone? The dwarves? They hide in their mountains seeking riches. They care nothing for the troubles of others.

GANDALF

It is in Men that we must place our hope.

ELROND

Men? Men are weak. The race of Men is failing. The blood of Numenor is all but spent, its pride and dignity forgotten. It is because of men the Ring survives.

FLASH INSERT: With the broken sword, Isildur slices off Sauron's finger. Elrond reacts.

ELROND (V. O.) (CONT' D)

I was there, Gandalf...I was there three thousand years ago when Isildur took the ring.

FLASH INSERT: ISILDUR PICKS UP THE RING AND STARES AT IT,
ENTRANCED.

ELROND
I was there the day the strength of Men
failed.

CUT TO:

INT. CRACK OF DOOM -- DAY

ELROND
Isildur...hurry...follow me! IMAGES:
ELROND leads Isildur into the steaming
volcano.

ELROND (V. O.) (CONT' D)
I let Isildur into the heart of Mount
Doom, where the ring was forged: the one
place it could be destroyed.

FLASH INSERT: ELROND AND ISILDUR STAND BEFORE THE FIRES OF
MT. DOOM

ELROND
Cast it into the fire...destroy it!

CLOSE ON: ISILDUR...CAPTIVATED BY THE RING.

ISILDUR
No.

Isildur turns and walks away

ELROND
Isildur!!

INT. ENROND'S CHAMBER, RIVERDELL -- DAY

Elrond turns to Gandalf.

ELROND
It should have ended that day, but evil
was allowed to endure. Isildur kept the
Ring...and the line of Kings was broken.
There's no strength left in the world of
Men. They're scattered, divided,
leaderless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

There is one who could unite them, one
who could reclaim the throne of Gondor.

ELROND

He turned from that path a long time ago.
He has chosen exile.

CUT TO:

INT. ELROND'S CHAMBER, RIVENDELL -- NIGHT

Strider watches from the shadows... as Boromir strolls through the darkened gallery. Boromir's eyes are drawn to an old fresco on the wall... depicting Isildur defeating Sauron. Boromir looks with wonderment at Narsil, the Broken Blade of Elendil, which lies on a cloth-covered plinth.

BOROMIR

(quiet awe)

The shards of Narsil... the blade that cut the Ring from Sauron's hand. Boromir picks up the sword and gently touches the blade. Close on: a small bloom of blood appears on Boromir's finger...

BOROMIR (CONT'D)

Still sharp.

Boromir senses Strider's presence... he looks from the blade to Strider, as if sensing a connection.

BOROMIR (CONT'D)

But no more than a broken heirloom.

BOROMIR (CONT'D)

replaces the Broken blade, but it clatters to the floor. Boromir walks away, leaving Strider sitting alone.

Close on: Strider picks up the broken hilt, as Arwen appears behind him.

ARWEN

Why do you fear the past? You are Isildur's heir... not Isildur himself. You are not bound to his fate.

STRIDER

The same blood flows in my veins... the same weakness...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARWEN

Your time will come. You will face the same evil...and you will defeat it.

(Elvish: w/subtitles)

A si i-duath u-orthor, Aragorn...u or le a u or nin. The shadow does not hold sway yet...not over you and not over me.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL VALLEY -- NIGHT

Night falls upon the beautiful valley of Rivendell... still and quiet.

EXT. RIVENDELL WATERFALL -- NIGHT

Strider and Arwen stand upon a stone bridge...the Evenstar at Arwen's breast shines in the moonlight.

ARWEN

(Elvish: with subtitles)

Renech I lu I erui govannem? Do you remember when we first met?

STRIDER

(Elvish: with subtitles)

Nauthannim I ned ol reniannen. I thought I had strayed into a dream

Arwen reaches up and gently touches the Grey at Strider's temples.

ARWEN

(Elvish: with subtitles)

Gwenin in enniath...u-arnech in naeth I se celich. Long years have passed...you did not have the care you carry now.

Arwen looks into Strider's eyes.

ARWEN (CONT' D)

(Elvish: with subtitles)

Renech I Beth I pennen? Do you remember what I told you? Arwen reaches for Strider's hand...

STRIDER

(quietly)

You said you'd bind yourself to me, forsaking the immortal life of your people.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARWEN

(whisper)

And to that I hold. I would rather share one lifetime with you than face all the ages of this world alone. Strider looks down. In his hand lies the Evenstar.

ARWEN (CONT' D)

I choose a mortal live.

STRIDER

You cannot give me this.

ARWEN

It is mine to give to whom I will, like my heart.

Arwen closes Strider's fingers around the jewel.

Arwen leans towards Strider, gently kissing him

CUT TO:

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER, RIVENDELL -- DAY

Elrond addresses the council...

ELROND

Strangers from distant lands ... friends of old. You have been summoned here to answer the threat of Mordor. Middle-earth stands upon the brink of destruction. None can escape it. You will unite... or you will fall. Each race is bound to this fate... this one doom..

Frodo sits amongst a council of free-peoples of Middle earth, Elrond stands before them, addressing Gandalf, Strider, Legolas, and 20 other elves, Dwarves, and men.

ELROND (CONT' D)

Bring forth the ring, Frodo.

Frodo steps forward and moves towards a stone Plinth. He places the ring on the plinth and returns to his seat.

BOROMIR

(shocked)

So it is true!

LEGOLAS

(disbelief)

Sauron's Ring! The ring of power!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIMLI

(grim)
The doom of man!

BOROMIR

It is a gift...a gift to the foes of Mordor! Why not use this Ring? Long has my father, the Steward of Gondor, held the forces of Mordor at bay...by the blood of our people are your lands kept safe. Give Gondor the weapon of the enemy...let us use it against him!

STRIDER

You cannot wield it. None of us can. The one ring answers to Sauron alone...it has no other master. Boromir turns and looks at Strider, coolly.

BOROMIR

And what would a ranger know of this matter?

Strider says nothing and Boromir turns away dismissively. LEGOLAS stands...

LEGOLAS

This is no mere Ranger. He is Aragorn, son of Arathorn. You owe him your allegiance.

Frodo looks at Strider questioningly...Boromir turns sharply.

BOROMIR

(quiet disbelief)
Aragorn? This is Isildur's heir?

LEGOLAS

And heir to the throne of Gondor.

ARAGORN

(Elvish: with subtitles)
Havo dad, Legolas...Sit down, Legolas..

BOROMIR

Gondor needs no king.

GANDALF

Aragorn is right...we cannot use it.

ELROND

You have only one choice..the ring must be destroyed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The HUM OF THE RING seems to grow louder in Frodo's ears. Gimli suddenly stands, excited.

GIMLI

Then...what are we waiting for?

Gimli suddenly rushes forward! He swings his axe down on the ring. The axe shatters with a deafening crack! Gimli falls backwards, staring in disbelief at the ring...unharméd! Frodo winces as an angry image of the fiery eye hits him! He slumps in this chair, clutching his forehead. Gandalf looks at him with concern.

ELROND

The ring cannot be destroyed, Gimli, son of Gloin, by any craft that we

ELROND (CONT' D)

here possess. The ring was made in the fires of Mount Doom...only there can it be unmade. It must be taken deep into Mordor, and cast back into the fiery chasm from whence it came. One of you must do this.

Stunned silence...the council sits with downcast eyes, as if a great dread has descended on them. Boromir addresses the council in a quiet voice

BOROMIR

One does not simply walk into Mordor. Its black gates are guarded by more than just Orcs. There is evil there that does not sleep and the Great Eye is ever watchful. It is a barren wasteland, riddled with fire and ash and dust...the very air you breathe is a poisonous fume. Not with ten thousand men could you do this. It is folly.

LEGOLAS

Have you heard nothing Lord Elrond has said? The ring must be destroyed.

GIMLI

And I suppose you think you're the one to do it?

BOROMIR

And if we fail, what then? What happens when Sauron takes back what is his?

Gimli leaps to his feet!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GIMLI

I will be dead before I see the Ring in the hands of an Elf! A STORM OF ARGUMENT erupts around the room. CLOSE ON: FRODO...sound disappears as he watches in slow

motion...the angry faces, the shaking fists, the accusatory fingers, his eyes move across to the ring...the hum grows louder in his head.

GIMLI (CONT' D)

(shouting)

Never trust an Elf!

CLOSE ON: THE RING fills the screen...streams of blood flow across the surface... flames flicker within the Gold Band.

GANDALF

Do you not understand? While we bicker among ourselves, Sauron's power grows! No one will escape it. You will all be destroyed, your homes burnt and your families put to the sword!

CLOSE ON: FRODO...breathing rapidly, Caught in the grip of his hideous vision. With a huge effort or will, Frodo tears his gaze upon the ring. Frodo suddenly stands...he speaks in a strong, clear voice.

FRODO

I will take it...I will take it...I will take the Ring to Mordor.

Sudden silence...Frodo looks around the room at the astounded faces.

FRODO (CONT' D)

(quietly)

Though...I do not know the way. Gandalf rises to his feet.

GANDALF

I will help you bear this burden, Frodo Baggins, as long as it is yours to bear.

ARAGORN

If, by my life or death, I can protect you, I will.

(kneels before Frodo)

...you have my sword. Aragorn steps forward...followed by Legolas and Gimli.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LEGOLAS
And you have my bow.

GIMLI
And my axe.

Boromir looks at them all then walks towards Frodo.

BOROMIR
You carry the fate of us all, little one.

Boromir looks towards Elrond and Gandalf.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)
If this is indeed the will of the
Council, then Gondor will see it done.

Frodo stares in wonder as the Greatest Fighters in all Middle
earth stand at his side.

SAM
(unseen)
Here!

A Sudden Noise... Sam pops up from behind a Bush!

SAM (CONT' D)
Mr. Frodo's not going anywhere without me.

ELROND
No, Indeed...it is hardly possible to
separate you...even when he is summoned
to a secret council and you are not.

Merry and Pippin jump up from behind another bush!

MERRY
Oi! We're coming too! You'll have to
send us home tied up in a sack to stop
us.

PIPPIN
Anyway...you need people of intelligence
on this sort of
mission...quest...thing...

MERRY
Well, that rules you out, Pip.

ELROND SURVEYS THE GROUP

ELROND
 (thoughtfully)
 Nine companions ... so be it.
 (announcing)
 You shall be the "Fellowship of the ring"

PIPPIN
 Great. Where are we going?

CUT TO:

INT. FRODO'S BEDROOM, RIVERDELL---DAWN

Close on: An old sword sliding out of a shabby leather Scabbard...its polished, well tendered Blade glitters cold and bright.

BILBO
 My old sword "Sting"...here, take it!

Bilbo offers Sting to Frodo.

FRODO
 It's so light!

BILBO
 Yes, yes, made by the Elves, you know.
 The blade glows blue when Orcs are close...and it's times like that, my lad, when you have to be extra careful.

Bilbo unwraps a small shirt of close woven Mail.

BILBO (CONT' D)
 Here's a pretty thing. Mithril, as light as a feather, and as hard as dragon scales. Let me see you put it on. Come on.

CLOSE ON: Frodo peels off his shirt... revealing The Ring on the Chain around his neck.

BILBO (CONT' D)
 (entranced)
 Oh! My old Ring... Frodo frowns as Bilbo moves toward him

BILBO (CONT' D)
 I should very much like to hold it again, one last time. Bilbo reaches forward, eyes locked on the ring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly! A shadow passes across Bilbo...for a split second he becomes a wrinkled creature with a hungry face and Bony, groping hands. Frodo pulls away, shocked...the shadow passes. Bilbo slumps into a chair, his head in his hands. Bilbo falters...his eyes filling with tears.

BILBO (CONT' D)

Oh!

BILBO (CONT' D)

(sad)

I'm sorry, that I brought this upon you, my boy...I'm sorry that you must carry this burden. I'm sorry for everything.

Bilbo sobs and Frodo moves to comfort him

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVENDELL VALLEY -- MORNING

ANGLE ON:

The Fellowship climb the long steep path out of the cloven vale of Rivendell.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROUGH COUNTRY, SOUTH OF RIVENDELL -- DAY

ANGLE ON:

The fellowship trekking through a land of Deep Valleys and turbulent waters...the misty mountains rise sharply to their left.

GANDALF (V. O.)

We must hold to his course west of the misty Mountains for forty days. If our luck holds, the Gap of Rohan will still be open to us. From there, our road turns east, to Mordor.

CUT TO:

EXT. EREGION HILLS--DAWN

CLOSE ON: Sam at the campfire. The sound of clashing swords! Wider: Aragorn and Boromir are giving Pippin Sword tuition...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOROMIR

Get away from the blade, Pippin... on your toes... good, very good... I want you to react, not think.

SAM

Should not be too hard...

BOROMIR

Move your feet.

MERRY

Quite good, Pippin.

PIPPIN

Thanks.

CLOSE ON: GIMLI has managed to corner Gandalf....

GIMLI

If anyone were to ask for my opinion, which I note they have not, I would say we are taking the long way round. Gandalf, we can pass through the Mines of Moria. My cousin, Balin, would give us a royal welcome. Gandalf clearly thinks that is a bad idea.

GANDALF

No, Gimli. I would not take the road through Moria unless I had no other choice.

Boromir thrusts, catching Pippin on the hand. Pippin throws down his sword, kicks and lunges at Boromir, tackling him to the ground. Much laughter. Legolas' eyes are fixed on a distant Dark Patch which darts about the sky, like flying smoke in the wind.

SAM

What is that?

GIMLI

Nothing... it's just a wisp of a cloud.

BOROMIR

(worried)

It's moving fast... against the wind.

LEGOLAS

Crebain from Dunland!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ARAGORN

(urgently)

Hi de!

BOROMIR

Merry.. Pippin... Sam.. take cover! WIDE
ON: THE FELLOWSHIP scramble under what
little cover

there is...as a regiment of Large crows fly low overhead at Great speed, wheeling and circling above. As their dark shadow passes over the fellowship, a single harsh croak is heard...and the crows suddenly wheel away, back towards the south. Gandalf staggers to his feet.

GANDALF

(worried)

Spies of Saruman. The passage South is
being watched.

Gandalf looks at Aragorn, turns to the others...gesturing towards a high mountain pass.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

We must take the pass of Caradhras!

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY MOUNTAINSIDE -- DAY

ANGLE ON:

The Fellowship clamber through Rock and Snow. CLOSE ON: Frodo slips on some shale...as he scrambles to his feet, the Ring falls on the ground... CLOSE ON: the ring gleaming in the snow! Boromir's Hand picks it up by the chain...he stands, the ring dangling before his eyes. He seems to grow in stature, as if absorbing its power. Aragorn warily approaches Boromir...Boromir is motionless...he stares at the ring, as if transfixed.

ARAGORN

Boromir?

BOROMIR

It is a strange fate that we should
suffer so much fear and doubt over so
small a thing...such a little thing.

ARAGORN

(quietly)

Boromir...give the ring to Frodo.
ARAGORN'S HAND moves to his sword hilt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ring's POV...looking up at Boromir's face. The strange hum vibrates on the soundtrack. CLOSE ON: a Weird beatific smile lights up Boromir's face...The HUM grows to a Deafening roar! Boromir suddenly snaps out of his trance and hands the ring back to Frodo.

BOROMIR
(lightly)
As you wish. I care not.

Boromir smiles at Frodo, ruffling his hair. CLOSE ON: ARAGON unhands his sword.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISENGARD -- DAY

Following the crows as they race deeper and deeper, passing a vista of Industry, Hundreds of Orcs and writhing Birthsacks...flying past Saruman, who stands upon a wooden Gantry. CLOSE ON: Saruman, listening to the Cries of the crows.

SARUMAN
So, Gandalf...you try to lead them over Caradhras. And if that fails...where then will you go? THE FELLOWSHIP struggles through the snow.

SARUMAN (V. O.) (CONT'D)
If the mountain defeats you, will you risk a more dangerous road?

CUT TO:

EXT. PASS OF CARADHRAS -- DAY

THE FELLOWSHIP are struggling through a blinding blizzard, up towards the PASS OF CARADHRAS. Legolas the Elf moves lightly across the top of the snow...he suddenly pauses. Saruman's voice sweeps by in the wind.

LEGOLAS
(urgent)
There is a fell voice in the air.

GANDALF
It's Saruman.

THUNDER RUMBLES...ROCK and Shale fall from above.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAGORN

(urgently)

He's trying to bring down the mountain.
Gandalf! We must turn back!

GANDALF

No!

GANDALF RAISES HIS STAFF... HE CHANTS INTO THE WIND.

GANDALF

(YELLING)

Losto Caradhras, sedho, hodo, nuitho I
ruith. Sleep Caradhras, be still, lie
still, hold your wrath.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISENGARD -- DAY

CAMERA SWEEPS PAST SARUMAN... he stands on the summit of Orthanc, Chanting. CLOUDS ARE FLOWING FROM ALL DIRECTIONS... converging on the distant mountains in a stormy Malestrom

EXT. PASS OF CARADHRAS -- DAY

Saruman's voice strengthens... rolling past the fellowship like thunder. A LIGHTNING CRACK explodes on the mountainside above them. Frodo looks up in horror as a huge snow avalanche thunders down towards them! The Fellowship throw themselves against the cliff face as snow crashes onto the narrow ledge. LEGOLAS pulls Gandalf to safety. Aragorn shields Frodo and Sam as snow piles around them. Within moments, the pass is blocked and the fellowship are enveloped in snow. Boromir and Aragorn frantically dig for the hobbits... who are pulled out Shivering and Fearful.

BOROMIR

(urgent)

We must get off the mountain! Make for the gap of Rohan and take the West road to my city.

ARAGORN

The Gap of Rohan takes us too close to Isengard.

GIMLI

We cannot pass over the mountain. Let us go under it. Let us go through the mines of Moria. Gandalf has a concerned look on his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARUMAN (V. O.)

Moria. You fear to go into those mines, don't you? The dwarves delved too greedily and too deep.

SARUMAN (V. O.) (CONT' D)

You know what they awoke in, the darkness of Khazad-dum. Shadow and flame.

GANDALF

Let the ringbearer decide.

CLOSE ON: FRODO, the weight of the decision weighing heavily upon him. CLOSE ON: MERRY and PIPPIN shivering in Boromir's arms.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

Frodo?

Frodo meets Gandalf's eye.

FRODO

We will go through the mines. Gandalf slowly nods.

GANDALF

So be it.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORIA GATE -- NIGHT

The Fellowship are walking along the far shore of dark lake... directly below great looming cliffs.

GIMLI

(in awe)
The walls of Moria!

Footing is treacherous on the narrow strip of green and greasy stones. Gandalf touches the smooth rock wall between the trees... slowly, faint lines appear like slender veins of luminous silver running through the stone.

GANDALF

Itidin... it mirrors only starlight and moonlight.

A large moon rises over the mountains... The lines grow Broader and Clearer, forming a glowing arch of interlacing ancient letters and symbols.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF (CONT' D)

It reads, "The door of Durin, Lord of Moria. Speak, friend, and enter."

MERRY

What do you suppose that means?

GANDALF

(confident)

It's quite simple. If you are a friend, speak the password and the doors will open.

Gandalf raises his arms...

GANDALF (CONT' D)

(incanting)

Annon edhellen, edro hi ammen!

The cliff towers into the night, the wind blows cold, Frodo shivers... and the door stands fast!

LATER:

GANDALF CONTINUES...

Mumbling spells in his efforts to open the door. Sam packs pots and pans at his feet... watching sadly as Aragorn unsaddles Bill the pony. CLOSE ON: ARAGORN whispering to Bill the Pony.

ARAGORN

(whispering)

Mines are no place for a Pony, even one so brave as Bill.

SAM

Bye, Bill.

ARAGORN

Go on, Bill, go on... don't worry, Sam... he knows his way home. Aragorn slaps Bill on the rump... Bill goes trotting off. CLOSE ON: Sam watching Bill disappear into the darkness.

SAM

Goodbye, Bill.

SPLASH! Merry and Pippin are tossing stones into the lake. Black Rippling rings slowly fan out. Pippin is about to throw another stone, but Aragorn grabs his arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAGORN

(ominous)

Do not disturb the water.

Aragorn watches anxiously as the Ripples appear to grow...he exchanges a look with Boromir.

Aragorn's hand creeps towards his sword. Gandalf gives up in despair...he sits down beside Frodo. Close on: Frodo peers at the Elvish inscription...his face breaks into a smile of comprehension.

FRODO

(quietly)

It's a riddle...

Gandalf raises his eyebrows...

FRODO (CONT'D)

(explaining)

Speak, friend, and enter. What's the Elvish for friend?

GANDALF

Oh...mellon.

With that, the rock face silently divides in the middle and two great Doors swing outwards... revealing a blackness deeper than the night. As the Fellowship enter the Blackness, something in the water stirs....

INT. MORIA GATE -- NIGHT

The Fellowship step warily into the darkness of Moria... a Dank cavern, with winding steps leading deeper into the mountain.

GIMLI

So, master elf, you will enjoy the fabled hospitality of the dwarves; roaring fires, malt beer, red meat off the bone. This, my friend, is the home of my cousin, Balin...and they call this a Mine...

(snorting)

A mine!

A Glow from Gandalf's Staff suddenly lights the chamber... The Fellowship recoil in Horror! Many dwarf Skeletons are strewn about, clearly the dead of some old battle...the rusting armor and shields are peppered with arrows and axes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOROMIR

(grimly)

This is no mine...it's a tomb!

GIMLI

(in horror)

Oh...no...no...no... ! Legolas pulls a crude arrow out of a skeleton.

LEGOLAS

Goblins!

The Fellowship draw swords and back away, towards the Entrance.

BOROMIR

We make for the Gap of Rohan. We should never have come here.

EXT. MORIA GATE -- NIGHT

Frodo is suddenly PULLED TO THE GROUND. A long sinuous Tentacle is wrapped around Frodo's ankle and is dragging him towards the lake. FRODO CRIES OUT as Aragorn and Boromir rush forward! Aragorn severs the Tentacle holding Frodo, and pulls him to safety...Boromir hacks at the other Writhing Limbs. 20 more tentacles ripple out of the Lake! The dark water Boils as the hideous beast lashes out at the FELLOWSHIP! Again the creature grabs Frodo and pulls him to the lake, Frodo is flung in the air as the Fellowship battle the creature. Aragorn hacks at a tentacle...Frodo is released, falling into Boromir's arms.

GANDALF

Into the mines!

BOROMIR

Legolas!

Legolas shoots an Arrow into the creature's head, gaining a few vital seconds for Aragorn and Boromir as they race out of the water with Frodo. The FELLOWSHIP hurriedly back away from the Creature... retreating into the Moria Chamber as many Coiling arms seize the large doors.

INT. MORIA GATE -- NIGHT

With a shattering echo, the creature rips the doors away, creating a rock slide that crashes down the Cliff Face. Within seconds, tons of rock seal the doorway... throwing the Fellowship into Pitch Blackness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A faint light rises from Gandalf's staff, throwing a Creepy Glow across the old wizard's face.

GANDALF

(ominous)

We now have but one choice...we must face the long dark of Moria. Be on your guard...there are older and fouler things than the Orcs in the deep places of the world.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW CHAMBER, MORIA -- NIGHT

WIDE ON: the Fellowship crossing a precarious bridge above deep mine workings.

GANDALF

Quietly, now. It's a four day journey to the other side. Let us hope that our presence will go unnoticed.

INT. MORIA CEMETERY CAVERN -- NIGHT

They continue up a steep stair, passing through a dwarf cemetery. The graves are despoiled...dwarf skeletons are strewn about and Goblin Graffiti is scrawled on monuments in dried Dwarf blood. The Atmosphere is very sinister.

CUT TO:

INT. MORIA TUNNEL FORK -- NIGHT

The path splits into three passages...each disappearing into dark tunnels. Gandalf pauses, frowning.

GANDALF

I have no memory of this place.

LATER... The Fellowship are nervously waiting...while Gandalf sits, staring intently at the 3 tunnel mouths in front of him. He appears to be in some kind of trance.

CLOSE ON: FRODO

He turns at the sound of a faint noise down the tunnel behind them.

PIPPIN

Are we lost?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERRY
No. I don't think we are. Shhhh,
Gandalf's thinking.

PIPPIN
Merry!

MERRY
What?

PIPPIN
I'm hungry.

Frodo's POV: a sudden glimpse of a creature darting in the darkness. Frodo is nervous...he approaches Gandalf.

FRODO
(whispers)
There's something down there.

GANDALF
(quietly)
It's Gollum.

FRODO
Gollum!

GANDALF
He's been following us for three days.

TEASING SHOT: and emaciated, leering creature.

FRODO
(disbelieving)
He escaped the dungeons of Barad-dur?

GANDALF
Escaped...or was set loose. And now the Ring has drawn him here...he will never be rid of his need for it. He hates and loves the ring, as he hates and loves himself. Smeagol's life is a sad story. Gandalf catches Frodo's look of surprise.

GANDALF (CONT'D)
Yes...Smeagol he was once called...Before the ring came to him, before it drove him mad.

Gollum's withered fingers are gripping the cave wall...he is large, Luminous eyes blinking with malice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRODO

(grim)

It's a pity Bilbo didn't kill him when he had the chance.

GANDALF

Pity? It was pity that stayed Bilbo's hand. Many that live deserve death, and some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them, Frodo? Frodo frowns.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

Do not be too eager to deal out death in judgment...even the very wise cannot see all ends. My heart tells me that Gollum has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before this is over. The pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many.

FRODO

I wish the ring had never come to me...I wish none of this had happened.

GANDALF

So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. There is a note of finality in Gandalf's voice.

GANDALF (CONT' D)

There are other forces at work in this world, Frodo, besides the will of evil. Bilbo was meant to find the ring. In which case, you also were meant to have it...and that is an encouraging thought,
(sudden brightness)
Ah! That it's that way! Gandalf points at the right hand tunnel...the Fellowship scramble to their feet.

MERRY

(relieved)

He's remembered!

GANDALF

No, but the air doesn't smell so foul down there. If in doubt, Meriadoc, always follow your nose!

(laughs)

Ye s...

INT. DWAROWELF CHAMBER, MORIA -- DAY

The Fellowship pass under an arched doorway into a black and empty space. Gandalf pauses...

GALADRIEL

Let me risk a little more light. Gandalf taps his staff... for a brief moment a light

blazes... like a silent Flash of Lightning. Great shadows spring up and flee...

GANDALF

Behold! The great realm and Dwarf city of Dwarrowdelf! Frodo gasps at the brief sight of a vast roof, far above

their heads, upheld by many mighty pillars hewn of stone. Before them stretches a huge empty hall, with black walls, polished and smooth as glass.

SAM

Well, there's an eye opener and no mistake!

Ahead of them, a wooden door has been smashed. Black arrows are embedded in the timbers. Two goblin skeletons lie in the doorway. Gimli rushes ahead...

GANDALF

Gimli!!

CUT TO:

INT. BALIN'S TOMB, MORIA -- DAY

Gimli rushes into another vast empty chamber... lit with a narrow shaft of sunlight, beaming in from a small hole near the roof. Dwarf and Goblin skeletons are piled high. In the far corner sits a stone walled Well. A shaft of light falls directly onto a stone table in the middle of the room: a single oblong block, about 4 feet high, topped with a great slab of white stone. Gimli falls to his knees...

GIMLI

No... no... oh, no!

Gimli sobs.

Gandalf quietly reads an inscription of runes, carved onto the white stone slab.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANDALF

"Here lies Balin, son of Fudin, Lord of Moria." He is dead, then. It's as I had feared.

Gandalf carefully lifts the rotting remains of a book from the white stone slab. It has been slashed and stabbed... and appears to be covered in Dried Blood. The pages crack and break as he opens it...

LEGOLAS

(urgent whisper to Argorn)
We must move on, we cannot linger.

GANDALF

(reading)
"They have taken the Bridge and the second hall: we have barred the gates...but cannot hold them for long...the ground shakes...drums in the deep...we cannot get out. A shadow moves in the dark. Will no- one save us? They are coming."

Unnerved, Pippin backs away nervously...He stumbles against the well, sending a precariously balanced Armored skeleton tumbling in! Merry reaches out, Grabbing hold of Pippin before he falls. The Fellowship freeze in stunned silence as the armored skeleton clatters down the deep well...echoing loudly!

INT. MORIA CAVERNS -- DAY

Gandalf turns angrily on Pippin.

GANDALF

(angry)
Fool of a Took! Throw yourself in next time and rid us of your stupidity!

ANGLE ON: PIPPIN, CHASTENED.

They fall silent. A low rolling boom rises from the depths below...growing louder...BOOM...BOOM...as if the caverns of Moria were turned into a vast drum. A great horn blasts nearby...Answering horns... running feet...harsh cries... Sam's eyes glance at Frodo's belt...

SAM

(worried)
Mr. Frodo!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Frodo looks down. A cold blue glow is emanating from Sting's Scabbard! Frodo draws the Sword...and stares at its glowing blade!

LEGOLAS

Orcs !

ARAGORN

(to the hobbits)

Get back! Stay close to Gandalf.

Aragorn and Boromir slam and wedge the doors. Boromir catches sight of something; he turns to Aragorn with shock in his eyes.

BOROMIR

They have a cave troll!

Gimli snatches up two rusty dwarf axes and leaps onto the tomb.

GIMLI

(yelling)

Let them come! There is one Dwarf yet in Moria who still draws breath!

BOOM! The Door bursts open in a shower of wood fragments, and 20 Goblins charge into the tomb, followed by a huge cave troll! Gimli ducks a blow and immediately buries his Axes in 2 Goblin helmets. Aragorn and Boromir wade into the mass of Goblins with their swords. Legolas fires deadly arrows into Goblin throats, desperately trying to Shield the Hobbits! Gandalf is clutching his sword and joins in the battle! The cave troll is sweeping his club at Aragorn...who stumbles backwards...the huge club descends for the killing blow...suddenly, in a flash of steel, Boromir's long sword slices into the Scaly arm of the troll; it rears back, spewing green blood! Sam is backing up against a wall...a sword in one hand, a saucepan in the other. In desperation he swings wildly at a Goblin with a saucepan! It keels over...Sam looks surprised. He wallops another Goblin and it too, drops.

SAM

I think I'm getting the hang of this.

The Cave Troll lunges forward, thrusting at Frodo's chest with his spear.

FRODO

Aragorn! Aragorn!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam screams as Frodo is lifted off his feet by the spear tip and slammed against the wall.

ARAGORN
(shocked yell)
Frodo!!

The hobbits go crazy. Sam slashes at the cave troll's knee, bringing him down... Merry and Pippin jump on him... Legolas fires an arrow... and the cave troll topples, dead. Aragorn rushes to Frodo's side as he slumps to the floor... Frodo appears to be dead. Close on: Gandalf, Aragorn, Hobbits looking horrified... Suddenly Frodo coughs... takes a huge breath.

SAM
He's alive!

FRODO
I'm alright. I'm not hurt.

ARAGORN
You should be dead. That spear would've skewered a wild boar!

GANDALF
I think there's more to this hobbit than meets the eye.

Frodo open his shirt to reveal the Mithril Vest. The Troll Spear did not pierce the mithril."

GIMLI
Mithril! You are full of surprises,
Master Baggins.

BOOM BOOM BOOM the sound of the drums rings out again!
Gandalf turns to the others.

GANDALF
To the bridge of Khazad-dum!

CUT TO:

INT. DWAROWELF CHAMBER, MORIA -- DAY

Gandalf leads the fellowship into the huge Dwarrowdelf Chamber.

GANDALF
This way!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hurry towards a distant door...as Goblins start scuttling down the Pillars behind them, like cockroaches! Frodo looks with horror at the overwhelming Goblin army that's rushing toward them! SUDDENLY! A deafening roar fills the air! A fiery light dances down the hallway... the pillars casting eerie shadows. The Goblins freeze. They back fearfully away from the approaching beast...melting into the darkness.

BOROMIR

What is this new devilry?

A HUGE SHADOW, surrounded by flame, falls across the hall...the ground shakes...an unearthly sound rumbles...

GANDALF

(quietly)

A Balrog...a demon of the ancient world!
This foe is beyond any of you!

(urgent yell)

Run! Quickly!

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY OF KHASAD-DUM, MORIA -- DAY

The BALROG, a massive creature rises from a chasm, a great 40 foot man-beast, with a mane of flames! In one hand is a blade...like a stabbing tongue of fire; in the other, a WHIP of many thongs. Aragorn leads the fellowship to the top of a dizzying stairway...Gandalf follows, leaning heavily on his staff. Close on: Aragorn looks at Gandalf, concerned.

GANDALF

Lead them on, Aragorn. The bridge is near.

Aragorn hesitates...Gandalf looks at him

GANDALF (CONT'D)

Do as I say; swords are no more use here.

THE FELLOWSHIP race down the stairway, Aragorn picks up Frodo...leaping across a gaping chasm. A NARROW BRIDGE, spanning a bottomless pit...Gandalf yells to the others: Aragorn makes to throw Gimli across the Chasm

GIMLI

Nobody tosses a dwarf! The BALROG smashes through the wall and spreads its vast wings.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIMLI (CONT' D)
It swoops down past the Fellowship,
disappearing into a flaming pit!

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE OF KHAZAD-DUM, MORIA -- DAY

The Fellowship run into a hall...the floor is split with
fissures that spit flame.

GANDALF
(yelling)
Over the bridge! Fly!

They race towards the slender bridge of stone...without kerb
or rail...at the far end of the hall. The Fellowship
recklessly hurry over the dizzying bridge..but Gandalf... the
last..pauses in the middle of the span...he faces the
Balrog...staff in one hand...Sword in the other! Frodo looks
back in horror:

GANDALF (CONT' D)
You cannot pass!

FRODO
(alarmed yell)
Gandalf!

GANDALF
(yelling)
I am a servant of the Secret Fire,
wielder of the flame of Anor. The dark
fire will not avail you, flame of Udun.

Frodo watches as the Balrog puts one foot on the bridge and
draws up to Full Height, wings spreading from wall-to-wall.
Gandalf is a tiny figure, balanced precariously on the narrow
bridge.

GANDALF (CONT' D)
Go back to the shadow! The BALROG slashes
at Gandalf with its Sword of

flame...Gandalf blocks with his sword...a ringing clash and
the Balrog's sword shatters into molten fragments!

GANDALF (CONT' D)
(booming)
You shall not pass!! The Balrog places
one foot onto the bridge. Aragorn and
Boromir race forward, swords drawn.

GANDALF CRIES ALOUD as he summons up his LAST RESERVES OF
STRENGTH!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He thumps the bridge with his staff... a blinding sheet of white flame springs up... the staff shatters... the bridge breaks... right at Balrog's feet. The stone bridge drops away into the gulf... from under the Balrog. For a moment, the great Beast remains poised in the air... then it plunges down: in slow motion Relief floods Frodo's face.. Gandalf remains trembling on the lip of the broken bridge. Slow motion: As the Balrog falls, he lashes out with his whip of fire... Slow motion: The thongs of the whip lash and curl around Gandalf's knees, dragging him over the brink! Gandalf just manages to hand on by his fingertips

FRODO
(screaming)
Gandalf!

GANDALF
(fierce)
Fly, you fools!

CLOSE ON: Gandalf lets go his grip and falls away... following the Balrog into the bottomless Abyss! Frodo cries out! Boromir scoops him up and carries him away.

FRODO
No!

ARAGORN
Gandalf!

They rush towards an archway.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIMROLL DALE DOOR -- DAY

The Fellowship tumble out of the Great Eastern Gate on to a grassy sunlit hillside. Sam, Merry, and Pippin fall slowly to the ground, sobbing... Aragorn turns to Legolas and Gimli.

ARAGORN
(urgent)
Legolas, get them up!

BOROMIR
Give them a moment... for pity's sake!

ARAGORN
By nightfall these hills will be swarming with Orcs! We must reach the woods of Lothlorien. Come, Boromir, Legolas, Gimli, get them up. On your feet, Sam
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAGORN (CONT' D)

Boromir glances towards Frodo, then back at Aragorn. Frodo is walking away, as if in a daze.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)

Frodo? Frodo!

CLOSE ON: FRODO SLOWLY TURNS... a look of numb shock on his devastated face. The Fellowship marches on.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIMRILL DALE HILLSIDE--DUSK

Aragorn scours ahead of the company, as they stumble on in the fading light...in the distance the shimmer of a large forest can be seen...Lothlorien!

EXT. EDGE OF LOTHLORIEN--DUSK

WIDE ON: The fellowship run across a forest floor strewn with yellow flowers..above is a roof of golden leaves, held up by silver pillars...the trunks of huge, grey trees. Gimli looks nervously around...

GIMLI

Stay close, young hobbits..they say a Sorceress lives in these woods. An elf- witch of terrible power. All who look upon her fall under her spell...

Frodo hesitates... a STRANGE VOICE whispers in his head...

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

Frodo...

GIMLI

And are never seen again!

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

...your coming to us is as the footsteps of doom. You bring great evil here, Ringbearer.

SAM

Mr. Frodo?

GIMLI

Well, here's one dwarf she won't ensnare so easily. I have the eyes of a hawk and the ears of a fox!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The FELLOWSHIP are suddenly surrounded by ARMED ELVES. Deadly arrows aimed at their heads. HALDIR, the Elvish captain steps forward... he looks at Gimli with disdain.

HALDIR

The dwarf breathes so loud we could have shot him in the dark.

ARAGORN

(Elvish: with subtitles)

Haldir of Lorien, we come here for your help. We need your protection.

GIMLI

Aragorn! These woods are perilous. We should go back.

HALDIR

You have entered the realm of the Lady of the Wood. You cannot go back.

Haldir's eyes lock onto Frodo.

HALDIR (CONT' D)

Come, she is waiting.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOTHLORIEN HILLTOP -- DAY

Haldir leads the Fellowship onto a Hill Top. They look with wonderment at the vista spread before them.

Several miles towards the South, a Large Hill rises out of the woods. Upon the hill rise many mighty Mallorn Trees, taller than any others... Nestled high in the crown of the mallorns is a Beautiful City. It Gleams in the low rays of the late afternoon sun... green, gold, and silver. To the east of Caras Galadhon, the Woods of Lorien run down the pale gleam of Anduin, the great river. Beyond the River, the land appears flat and empty, formless and vague, until far away, it rises again like a dark and dreary wall. The Sun that lies on Lothlorien has not power to enlighten the shadows that lie beyond.

CUT TO:

INT. CELEBORN'S CHAMBER, CARAS GALADHON -- NIGHT

ANGLE ON: THE FELLOWSHIP

step onto a wide fleet filled with a soft light. The walls are green and silver, the roof gold and in its midst is the trunk of the might Mallorn tree, now tapering toward its crown. Celeborn steps forward to greet the guests. His hair is long and silver, his face grave and beautiful, with no sign of age upon it. Next to him stands Galadriel, the Lady of the Elves. She has hair of deep gold and timeless, unsurpassed beauty. Celeborn looks hard at Aragorn...

CELEBORN

Eight there are, yet nine there were set out from Rivendell. Tell me, where is Gandalf, for I much desire to speak with him

Frodo looks at Galadriel, standing silently beside Celeborn.

GALADRIEL (V. O.)

(softly aloud)
...he has fallen into shadow. Galadriel looks to Aragorn.

GALADRIEL (CONT' D)

The Quest stands upon the edge of a knife. Stray but a little and it will fail, to the ruin of all...Yet hope remains while the company is true.

Galadriel's eyes settle on Sam

GALADRIEL (CONT' D)

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Go now and rest for you are weary with sorrow and much toil. Galadriel's eyes turn to Frodo...her voice fades.

GALADRIEL (CONT' D)

Tonight you will sleep in peace.
(whispered v/o)
Welcome, Frodo of the Shire... CLOSE ON:
FRODO looks at GALADRIEL. SUDDEN INSERT:
GALADRIEL as she is on the other

side... Powerful, divine...no longer of this world..a Piercing white light surrounds her.

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)

...one who has seen the eye.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARAS GALADHON LAWN -- NIGHT

Gimli, Legolas, Merry, Pippin, Frodo and Sam are in a pavilion set among the trees near the fountain. They lie on soft couches as Elves leave food and wine for them. MOURNFUL SINGING drifts down from the trees above.

LEGOLAS

(sadly)

A lament for Gandalf...

MERRY

What do they say about him?

LEGOLAS

I have not the heart to tell you. For me, the grief is still too near. Boromir is sitting alone... Aragorn approaches him

ARAGORN

Take some rest.. these borders are well protected.

Moonlight catches the trace of tears on Boromir's face. Aragorn kneels down beside him

BOROMIR

I will find no rest here. I heard her voice inside my head... she spoke of my father and the fall of Gondor, and she said to me: "Even now, there

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

is hope left. But I cannot see it... it is long since we had any hope.

CLOSE ON: BOROMIR looks at ARAGORN in despair.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

My father is a noble man, but his rule is failing and our... our people lose faith. He looks to me to make things right... and I would do it, I would see the glory of Gondor restored. Have you ever seen it, Aragorn? The White Tower of Ecthelion, glimmering like a spike of pearl and silver, its banners caught high in the morning breeze... have you ever been called home by the clear ringing of silver trumpets?

ARAGORN

I have seen the white city.. long ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Boromir feels Aragorn's love for Minas Tirith and takes heart,

BOROMIR

One day our paths will lead us there, and
the tower guards shall take up the call
"the Lords of Gondor have returned."

Aragorn returns Boromir's smile...betraying his disquiet
sadness only when Boromir looks away.

CUT TO:

LATER...

The Fellowship are asleep on their beds. Gimli is snoring
loudly. CLOSE ON: BARE FEET tread soundlessly across the
lawn. CLOSE ON: Frodo's eyes flicker open...as if by
instinct. GALADRIEL, her White dress glowing in the
moonlight, glances at him. Frodo follows her...as if drawn by
an invisible force.

CUT TO:

EXT. GALADRIEL'S GLADE, LORHLORIEN -- NIGHT

Upon a low stone pedestal, carved like a branching tree, sits
a shallow Silver Basin. Galadriel leads Frodo into the small
Glade.

GALADRIEL

Will you look into the mirror? Frodo
looks with apprehension at the silver
basin.

FRODO

(warily)
What will I see?

Galadriel pours water into the basin from a silver jug...a
glow rises from the water.

GALADRIEL

Even the wisest cannot tell for the
mirror shows many things...things that
were ..things that are...and some things
that have not yet come to pass.

Frodo slowly steps up to the pedestal...he peers into the
glossy surface. The night sky is reflected into the water...
suddenly a figure takes form...the bowed figure of an old
man, clad in white robes. He walks down a long road. Frodo
leans closer to the mirror's surface...

CLOSE ON: GANDALF LIFTS HIS HEAD AND LOOKS DIRECTLY AT FRODO!

FRODO gasps, his face lighting up with hope.

FRODO
(joyous)
Gandalf!

Gandalf looks at Frodo with a fierce intensity. Frodo reaches out his hand toward the surface of the mirror. Suddenly the image flares, burning out to white. The vision shifts...Frodo gasps in horror! The Shire is in ruins! The image suddenly widens to fill the screen...buildings burning...bodies strewn about...Dark Shapes of ORCS looting and destroying...Bag End, billowing in flames! The Party tree is hacked down. Frodo reels back as the mirror seems to grow...the nightmarish image sweeps past his head, engulfing him entirely.

IMAGE: Hobbiton...now an Industrial wasteland! The fields and trees destroyed...replaced with Brick factories belching smoke! IMAGE: ORCS brutally herd manacled Hobbits into the Factories! We see Sam..Merry... and Rosie Cotton. Soot-stained and sobbing, they disappear into the factory hell-hole! Suddenly, the mirror goes dark...and out of the black abyss a single eye grows. CLOSE ON: FRODO IS FROZEN. Unable to move or cry out. The ring dangles from his neck, inches above the water...not shimmering with curls of steam. Fire erupts around the eye... With a Yell, Frodo pushes himself away from the pedestal and collapses on the ground. Light instantly fades from the mirror. Frodo comes to his senses...he is shocked. Galadriel stands still as a statue, unmoved, untouched by the horror.

GALADRIEL
I know what it is you saw...for it is also in my mind. It is the future, Frodo. It is what will come to pass if you should fail.

Galadriel looks at Frodo intensely...Frodo looks down...in his hand he is clutching the ring. Frodo looks up at Galadriel.

GALADRIEL (CONT'D)
The fellowship is breaking. It has already begun. He will try to take the ring. You know of whom I speak. One by one, it will destroy them all.

FRODO (V. O.)
If you ask it of me, I will give you the One Ring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GALADRIEL

You offer it to me freely...I do not deny that my heart has greatly desired this.

Galadriel suddenly seems to rise in stature before Frodo's eyes. Frodo is suddenly afraid of her.

GALADRIEL (CONT' D)

In place of the Dark Lord, you would have a Queen, not dark, but beautiful and terrible as the Dawn. Treacherous as the Sea! Stronger than the foundations of the earth...all shall love me and despair! Frodo takes a step away from Galadriel...

Galadriel suddenly laughs...a slender Elf-woman once more, clad in simple white, her voice soft and sad.

GALADRIEL (CONT' D)

(gently)

I pass the test.

(laughs)

I will diminish and go into the west and remain Galadriel. Frodo's confidence drains away.

FRODO

I cannot do this alone...

GALADRIEL

You are the ring-bearer, Frodo...to bear a ring of power is to be alone. This task was appointed to you, and if you do not find a way, no one will.

Frodo realizes what her message is.

FRODO

Then I know what I must do. It's just...I'm afraid to do it. Galadriel kneels down to Frodo's height, staring at him intently.

GALADRIEL

Even the smallest person can change the course of the future.

The Ring lies in the palm of Frodo's hand...his fingers close over it.

CUT TO:

INT. ORTHANC CHAMBER -- DAY

Naked, Lurtz's eyes follow Saruman, alight with a mean intelligence.

SARUMAN (V. O.)

(smiles)

They were Elves once. Taken by the Dark Powers ... tortured and mutilated... a ruined and terrible form of life. And now...perfected. My fighting Uruk-Hai. Whom do you serve?

LURTZ

(guttural rasp)

Saruman.

INT. CAVERNS BELOW ISENGARD -- DAY

QUICK CUTS: LURTZ is quickly armored... Breastplate... Leg guards, Helmet... a sword is thrust in Lurtz's hand. The URUK-HAI are smearing themselves in white paint... a creepy ritualistic ceremony... the white hand of Isengard is smeared on bodies, faces, and armor. SARUMAN address a crowd of 200 fully armed URUK-HAI.

SARUMAN

Hunt them down. Do not stop until they are found. You do not know pain. You do not know fear. You will taste man-flesh. Saruman turns to Lurtz.

SARUMAN (CONT' D)

(coldly)

One of the Halflings carries something of great value... bring him to me... alive and unspoiled... kill the others.

EXT. ISENGARD -- DAY

Lurtz is leading 200 URUK-HAI out of Isengard.. they run fast, their powerful legs carrying them at speed.

EXT. SILVERLODE RIVER BANK-- DAWN

The Fellowship are in small elven boats. They row away from the Lothlorien Shore into the Silverlode river. Elves quietly watch them depart. Galadriel gives Frodo a small Crystal Phial.

GALADRIEL

Farewell, Frodo Baggins. I give you the light of Earendil, our most beloved star.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the Fellowship's boats drift past, Galadriel stands alone, watching from the banks of the river. In his head, Frodo still hears her voice...

GALADRIEL (V. O.) (CONT' D)
May it be a light for you in dark places,
when all other lights go out.

EXT. RIVER ANDUIN -- DAY

The boats pass into the great river Anduin. The Three Elven boats carry the Fellowship steadily southward. Green trees slowly give way to a brown and withered land.

EXT. FOREST -- DAY

The Uruk forces are running through the trees with deadly purpose.

EXT. RIVER ANDUIN -- DAY

A flock of birds circle high above, Black against the pale sky. Aragorn watches them with concern.

EXT. PILLARS OF THE KINGS, RIVER ANDUIN--DAWN

The Three Elven boats drift slowly through the steep rocky gorge in the Pre-dawn light. CLOSE ON: ARAGORN, slowly paddling in the stern.

ARAGORN
(quietly)
Frodo.

Frodo slowly looks up, his eyes widening with amazement. Wide on: Two enormous rock statues, towering like 300 foot pinnacles on either side of the river...carved images of Gondorian kings of old. They loom over the boats with power and majesty.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)
The Argonath...

Close on: Aragorn...strangely moved by the beauty of the silent sentinels. He speaks, almost as if to himself.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)
(deeply moved)
Long have I desired to look upon the
kings of old...my kin.

The fellowship stare in stunned silence as the current takes them through the narrow gap between the Statues' feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wide on: Craning up past the statues vast crumbling heads, to reveal a large lake only a mile down river...

EXT. SHORE OF NEN HITHOEL -- DAY

ANGLE ON: THE FELLOWSHIP

As they leap out of the boats and clamber onto the wooded shore.

ARAGORN

We cross the lake at nightfall, hide the boats and continue on foot..we approach Mordor from the North.

GIMLI

(gloomy)

Oh, yes, just a simple matter of finding our way through Eryn Muil, an impassable labyrinth of razor sharp rocks. And after that gets even better...a festering, stinking marshland, far as the eye can see.

ARAGORN

That is our Road...I suggest you take some rest and recover your strength, Master Dwarf.

GIMLI

(indignant)

Recover my...

Legolas turns to Aragorn with urgency.

LEGOLAS

We should leave now.

ARAGORN

No. Orcs patrol the Eastern shore. We must wait for cover of darkness.

LEGOLAS

It is not the Eastern shore that worries me.

Legolas casts a glance around into the Parth Galen forest...

LEGOLAS (CONT' D)

A shadow and a threat has been growing in my mind. Something draws near, I can feel it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Aragorn looks at Legolas, knowing full well what he means. Sam has slumped asleep... Merry dumps a small pile of kindling at Gimli's feet...

MERRY

Where's Frodo?

Sam sits up with a start... Aragorn's head snaps round.. his eyes fly to Boromir's shield which lies abandoned by his camp bed. CLOSE ON: ARAGORN... as he realizes Boromir has gone!

EXT. SLOPES OF AMON HEN -- DAY

Frodo is walking beneath the trees...lost in thought. His feet hit the rough edge of an ancient stone slab...his eyes follow an overgrown path towards stone stairs leading to the summit of Amon Hen...the seeing seat. A CRACKLING SOUND! Frodo freezes....

BOROMIR

(quietly)

None of us should wander alone; you least of all. So much depends on you...Frodo?

Frodo turns slowly...he stares at Boromir, tense, cautious.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

I know why you seek solitude. You suffer, I see it day by day. Are you sure you do not suffer needlessly?

Frodo stands silent for a moment..the murmur of the Wind in the trees and the distant roar of the falls of Rauros can be heard

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

Let me help you. There are other ways, Frodo..other paths that we might take.

FRODO

I know what you would say, and it would seem like wisdom but for the warning of my heart.

BOROMIR

Warning? Against what?

Boromir has started forward towards Frodo, he pulls himself up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

We are all afraid, Frodo. But to let that fear drive us to destroy what hope we have... don't you see that is madness?

FRODO

There is no other way.

BOROMIR

I ask only for the strength to defend my people.

(angrily drops the wood he has collected)

If you would but lend me the ring...

FRODO

No. . .

Frodo steps hurriedly away from Boromir.

BOROMIR

Why do you recoil? I am no thief.

FRODO

(wary)

You are not yourself.

BOROMIR

What chance do you think you have? They will find you, they will take the ring and you will beg for death before the end.

Frodo turns to leave.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

You fool! It is not yours save by unhappy chance... it might have been mine. It should be mine. Give it to me! Give me the ring.

Boromir leaps on top of Frodo, grasping for the ring! Frodo has only moments to act. Frodo rips the ring from around his neck..and rams it on his finger.

FRODO DISAPPEARS

Boromir spins wildly around, yelling into thin air!

BOROMIR

I see your mind... you will take the ring to Sauron. You will betray us! You go to your death and the death of us all.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

Curse you! Curse you and your Halflings!
Boromir stumbles and falls. His body
shakes as if in the throes of a
fit...slowly he comes to.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

(Disoriented)

Frodo! Frodo! What have I done. Please,
Frodo...

EXT. SEEING SEAT -- DAY

IN THE TWILIGHT WORLD:

FRODO races through the misty twilight world, past the foggy
shapes of twisted trees. Somewhere behind him, Boromir's
distraught voice carries from another dimension:

BOROMIR (O. S.)

I'm sorry, Frodo...Frodo...

Frodo suddenly finds himself on the stone steps...he clammers
up the stairs, onto a high seat, perched on four stone
pillars. Frodo cowers on the seat, like a lost child upon the
throne of mountain kings. The world of mist swirls around
him. Frodo peers out from the seat...the world seems to
shrink. In all directions, views of far off lands telescope
towards him through the mist. IMAGES: ORCS spilling out of
holes in the misty mountains... flames rising from
Mirkwood...grim faced easterlings march to war...black ships
sailing into the south. All the power of the Dark Lord is in
motion. Frodo moves his gaze towards the east...fire explodes
against the smoke, as a huge mass of black battlements fills
Frodo's vision. A mountain of iron, immeasurably strong,
tower of adamant: Barad-dur, FORTRESS OF SAURON!

SUDDENLY! SAURON'S EYE LEAPS TOWARD FRODO LIKE A FINGER OF
LIGHT.

SAURON (V. O.)

(IN BLACK SPEECH)

They will fall! Frodo leaps off the seat, and tumbles down
the stairs! The eye sweeps Amon Hen like a searchlight,
seeking its ring! With a huge effort, Frodo wrenches the ring
off his finger...

EXT. SUMMIT OF AMON HEN -- DAY

Frodo lies gasping on the summit of Amon Hen...below the
ancient ruins of the seeing seat.

AT THAT MOMENT: A BLACK BOOT STEPS INTO SHOT!

Frodo looks up as Aragorn towers over him

ARAGORN

Frodo?

FRODO

(numb)

It has taken Boromir. ARAGORN moves towards Frodo...

ARAGORN

(urgent)

Where is the ring?

Frodo backs away from Aragorn...Aragorn is shocked by the movement.

FRODO

Stay away!

ARAGORN

Frodo...I swore to protect you.

FRODO

Can you protect me from yourself?

Frodo uncurls his fist...in his palm lies the ring! It glints, gold and beautiful in the afternoon sun...Aragorn's eyes are drawn to it.

FRODO (CONT' D)

Would you destroy it?

ARAGORN

(kneeling to Frodo)

I would have gone with you to the end... into the very fires of Mordor.

FRODO

I know...Look after the others, especially Sam...he will not understand.

Aragorn freezes! He draws his sword.

ARAGORN

(urgent)

Go, Frodo!

Frodo hesitates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAGORN (CONT' D)

(yells)
Run! Run!!

Frodo backs away into the trees... as 200 URUK-HAI SWARM onto Amon Hen behind Aragorn!

Aragorn attacks the leading URUK-HAI like a madman... he brings two down with his sword... leaping into the ruins as others close in on him. Frodo scrambles down the hillside, away from the fight. Aragorn battles the URUK-HAI, amongst the pillars and blocks of Amon Hen. Despite his bravery, he is quickly surrounded... SUDDENLY: ELVEN ARROWS smash into the URUK-HAI. Legolas races out of the woods, firing his bow. Gimli leaps into the battle, wielding his might axe.

EXT. PARTH GALEN HILLSIDE -- DAY

Frodo is darting down the steep hillside as heave feet thunder down behind him

SAM

Mr. Frodo!

Sam looks around for Frodo. CLOSE ON: LURTZ ordering his URUKS.

LURTZ

Find the Halflings ... find the halflings!

Frodo stumbles and falls... quickly he crawls behind a tree... above him the sound of Uruk-Hai crashing through the forest rings out.

MERRY (O. S.)

(urgent whisper)
Frodo!

Frodo turns to see Merry and Pippin hidden in a hollow, a few feet away.

MERRY (CONT' D)

Hide here, quick!

PIPPIN

Come on...

Frodo looks at his friends... slowly shakes his head, a great sadness in his eyes...

PIPPIN (CONT' D)

What's he doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Merry's eyes meet Frodo's. Understanding.

MERRY
(softly)
He's leaving.

PIPPIN
No!

Pippin stands and makes a move toward Frodo... Merry grabs at his arm

MERRY
Pippin!

THE ECHO OF BOROMIR'S HORN reaches Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli... they are battling their way down the Slopes towards the lake.

LEGOLAS
The horn of Gondor!

ARAGORN
Boromir!

Aragorn desperately slashes his way towards Boromir, felling URUK-HAI in his path... while Legolas and Gimli fight a rear guard action. MANY URUK-HAI fall to Boromir's sword as he tries to protect Merry and Pippin...

BOROMIR
Run! Run!

Lurtz takes aim. A black arrow suddenly thuds into Boromir's chest. Amazingly, Boromir continues fighting, but another arrow... and another, brings him to his knees. Merry and Pippin are scooped off their feet by URUK-HAI.

MERRY & PIPPIN
Aaaaagh! Boromir! Boromir!

Lurtz aims his bow at Boromir's heart... suddenly Aragorn charges at him, smashing the Bow with his sword. They lock into a deadly battle. Aragorn cuts Lurtz down and races towards Boromir, who lies slumped against a tree... URUK-HAI arrows sticking out of his chest. At least 20 dead URUK-HAI lie heaped around Boromir. His horn lies at his feet... Cloven in two.

BOROMIR
(painful gasp)
They took the little ones...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

Aragorn quickly tries to staunch the flow of Blood from Boromir's shoulder.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

(panicked)

Frodo... where is Frodo?

ARAGORN

I let Frodo go.

Boromir holds Aragorn's gaze.

BOROMIR

Then you did what I could not. I tried to take the ring from him

ARAGORN

The ring is beyond our reach now.

BOROMIR

Forgive me, I did not see..I have failed you all.

ARAGORN

No, Boromir. You fought bravely. You have kept your honor. Aragorn tries to bind Boromir's wound.

BOROMIR

Leave it! It is over...the world of Men will fall and all will come to darkness and my city to ruin..Aragorn..

ARAGORN

I do not know what strength is in my blood, but I swear to you... I will not let the White City fall, nor your people fail...

BOROMIR

Our people...our people...

Aragorn places Boromir's sword in his hand. Boromir's fingers tighten around the hilt.

BOROMIR (CONT' D)

I would have followed you, my brother...my captain, my King. Aragorn lays Boromir down. He is dead.

ARAGORN

Be at peace, son of Gondor. Aragorn bends and Kisses Boromir's forehead.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ARAGORN (CONT' D)
Legolas and Gimli appear behind
him..Aragorn stands.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)
They will look for his coming from the
white tower...but he will not return.

EXT. SHORE OF NEN HITHOEL -- DAY

On the lakeshore Frodo stands in front of one of the Elvish
Boats, the ring in his palm. A distraught Sam..running as
hard as he can through the forest...

SAM
Mr. Frodo!

Close on: Frodo looks to the far side of the river...the
camera moves in on the ring.

FRODO (V. O.)
I wish the ring had never come to me..I
wish none of this had happened...

Tears fall down Frodo's face...

GANDALF (V. O.)
So do all who lie to see such times...but
that is not for them to decide. All we
have to decide is what to do with the
time that is given us.

With renewed determination, Frodo tucks the ring inside his
vest pocket. The small figure of Frodo pushing the Elvish
boat into the water... Sam bursts through the trees and runs
toward the lake...Frodo is already paddling away.

SAM
(anguished)
Not alone, Frodo. Mr. Frodo! Frodo, in
the boat, paddling steadfastly away from
the

shore..tears in his eyes..the voice of Sam carried on the
wind. Frodo whispers to himself

FRODO
No, Sam

Sam looks at the water...then at the boat.

SPLASH! FRODO turns to see Sam launching himself into the
water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO (CONT' D)

Go back, Sam. I'm going to Mordor alone.

Sam splashes hopelessly toward the boat.

SAM

Of course you are... and I'm coming with you!

FRODO

You can't swim

Sam starts to go under, spluttering and coughing... Frodo drops his paddle and scrambles backwards in the boat...

FRODO (CONT' D)

(frightened)

Sam!

Sam is underwater... hands flailing helplessly as he sinks. Close on: Frodo's hand grasping Sam's... Frodo pulls a bedraggled and half drowned Sam into the boat. Frodo and Sam look at each other, out of breath, tears and water streaming down both their faces.

SAM

I made a promise, Mr. Frodo... a promise.

(fierce passion)

"Don't you leave him, Samwise Gamage."

(sobs)

And I don't mean to... I don't mean to.

FRODO

(crying)

Oh, Sam!

Frodo starts to laugh through his tears... the two friends hug.

FRODO (CONT' D)

Come on then..

The two Hobbits row through the water...

EXT. FALLS OF RAUROS AERIAL -- DAY

Slow motion: Looking down on swiftly flowing water... Boromir's body slides under camera.

He is lying in one of the boats, his arms across his chest... his broken horn at his side. Suddenly... the boat drops away from camera... as it plunges over the massive falls of Rauros, disappearing into the vapor below.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEGOLAS

If we are quick, we will catch Frodo and Sam before nightfall.

Aragorn looks towards the far shore; Frodo and Sam's small Boat can be seen lying on the distant Riverbank as Frodo and Sam make off into the forest beyond. He doesn't react. Legolas turns and looks at Aragorn.

LEGOLAS (CONT' D)

You mean not to follow them..

ARAGORN

Frodo's fate is no longer in our hands.

GIMLI

Then it has all been in vain... the fellowship has failed.

ARAGORN

Not if we hold true to each other. We will not abandon Merry and Pippin to torment and death, not while we have strength left.

Aragorn pulls a HUNTING KNIFE out of his pack and straps it on.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)

Leave all that can be spared behind...
CLOSE ON: ARAGORN.. a steely light in his eye.

ARAGORN (CONT' D)

(grimly)
We travel light. Let's hunt some Orc.

GIMLI

Yes! Ha!

Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli disappear into the Woods, following the URUK-HAI trail.

EXT. EMYN MUII HILLTOP -- DAY

Frodo and Sam scramble onto a high ridge.

A distant line of Saw toothed mountains below a dark, oppressive sky. Black volcanic smoke rises behind the mountains... MORDOR!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRODO
Mordor! I hope the others find a safer
road.

SAM
(simply)
Strider' I'll look after them

FRODO
I don't suppose we'll ever see them
again.

SAM
We may yet, Mr. Frodo. We may.

FRODO
Sam?

Frodo looks at Sam with great affection.. despite the grim
outlook, Sam is undeterred...

FRODO (CONT' D)
I'm glad you're with me.

WIDE ON: THE TWO HOBBITS SETTING OFF TOWARD MORDOR.

THE END