

1. "Look ahead!" called Gandalf. "The Bridge is near. It is dangerous and narrow."
2. Suddenly Frodo saw before him a black chasm. At the end of the hall the floor vanished and fell to an unknown depth. The outer door could only be reached by a slender bridge of stone, without kerb or rail, that spanned the chasm with one curving spring of fifty feet. It was an ancient defence of the Dwarves against any enemy that might capture the First Hall and the outer passages. They could only pass across it in single file. At the brink Gandalf halted and the others came up in a pack behind.
3. "Lead the way, Gimli!" he said. "Pippin and Merry next. Straight on, and up the stair beyond the door!"
4. Arrows fell among them. One struck Frodo and sprang back. Another pierced Gandalf's hat and stuck there like a black feather. Frodo looked behind. Beyond the fire he saw swarming black figures; there seemed to be hundreds of orcs. They brandished spears and scimitars which shone red as blood in the firelight. *Doom, doom* rolled the drumbeats, growing louder and louder, *doom, doom*.
5. Legolas turned and set an arrow to the string, though it was a long shot for his small bow. He drew but his hand fell and the arrow slipped to the ground. He gave a cry of dismay and fear. Two great trolls appeared; they bore great slabs of stone, and flung them down to serve as gangways over the fire. But it was not the trolls that had filled the elf with terror. The ranks of the orcs had opened and they crowded away, as if they themselves were afraid. Something was coming up behind them. What it was could not be seen; it was like a great shadow, in the middle of which was a dark form, of man-shape maybe, yet greater; and a power and a terror seemed to be in it and to go before it.
6. It came to the edge of the fire and the light faded as if a cloud had bent over it. Then with a rush it leaped across the fissure. The flames roared up to greet it, and wreathed about it; and a black smoke swirled in the air. Its streaming mane kindled, and blazed behind it. In its right hand was a blade like a stabbing tongue of fire; in its left it held a whip of many thongs.
7. "Ai! ai!" wailed Legolas. "A Balrog! A Balrog is come!"
8. Gimli stared with wide eyes. "Durin's Bane!" he cried, and, letting his axe fall, he covered his face.
9. "A Balrog," muttered Gandalf. "Now I understand." He faltered and leaned heavily on his staff. "What an evil fortune! And I am already weary."
10. The dark figure streaming with fire raced towards them. The orcs yelled and poured over the stone gangways. Then Boromir raised his horn and blew. Loud the challenge rang and bellowed, like the shout of many throats under the cavernous roof. For a moment the orcs quailed and the fiery shadow halted. Then the echoes died as suddenly as a flame blown out by a dark wind, and the enemy advanced again.

11. "Over the bridge!" cried Gandalf, recalling his strength. "Fly! This is a foe beyond any of you. I must hold the narrow way. Fly!" Aragorn and Boromir did not heed the command, but still held their ground, side by side, behind Gandalf at the far end of the bridge. The others halted just within the doorway at the hall's end, and turned, unable to leave their leader to face the enemy alone.
12. The Balrog reached the bridge. Gandalf stood in the middle of the span, leaning on the staff in his left hand, but in his other hand Glamdring gleamed, cold and white. His enemy halted again, facing him, and the shadow about it reached out like two vast wings. It raised the whip, and the thongs whined and cracked. Fire came from its nostrils. But Gandalf stood firm.
13. "You cannot pass," he said. The orcs stood still, and a dead silence fell. "I am a servant of the Secret Fire, wielder of the flame of Anor. You cannot pass. The dark fire will not avail you, flame of Udûn. Go back to the Shadow! You cannot pass."
14. The Balrog made no answer. The fire in it seemed to die, but the darkness grew. It stepped forward slowly on to the bridge, and suddenly it drew itself up to a great height, and its wings were spread from wall to wall; but still Gandalf could be seen, glimmering in the gloom; he seemed small, and altogether alone; grey and bent, like a wizened tree before the onset of a storm.
15. From out of the shadow a red sword leaped flaming.
16. Glamdring glittered white in answer.
17. There was a ringing clash and a stab of white fire. The Balrog fell back and its sword flew up in molten fragments. The wizard swayed on the bridge, stepped back a pace, and then again stood still.
18. "You cannot pass!" he said.
19. With a bound the Balrog leaped full upon the bridge. Its whip whirled and hissed.
20. "He cannot stand alone!" cried Aragorn suddenly and he ran back along the bridge. "*Elendil!*" he shouted. "I am with you, Gandalf!"
21. "Gondor!" cried Boromir and leaped after him.
22. At that moment Gandalf lifted his staff, and, crying aloud, he smote the bridge before him. The staff broke asunder and fell from his hand. A blinding sheet of white flame sprang up. The bridge cracked. Right at the Balrog's feet it broke, and the stone upon which it stood crashed into the gulf, while the rest remained, poised, quivering like a tongue of rock thrust out into emptiness.

23. With a terrible cry the Balrog fell forward, and its shadow plunged down and vanished. But even as it fell it swung its whip, and the thongs lashed and curled about the wizard's knees, dragging him to the brink. He staggered, and fell, grasped vainly at the stone, and slid into the abyss. "Fly, you fools!" he cried, and was gone.
24. The fires went out, and blank darkness fell. The Company stood rooted with horror staring into the pit. Even as Aragorn and Boromir came flying back, the rest of the bridge cracked and fell. With a cry Aragorn roused them.
25. "Come! I will lead you now!" he called. "We must obey his last command. Follow me!"
26. They stumbled wildly up the great stairs beyond the door. Aragorn leading, Boromir at the rear. At the top was a wide echoing passage. Along this they fled. Frodo heard Sam at his side weeping, and then he found that he himself was weeping as he ran. *Doom, doom, doom* the drum-beats rolled behind, mournful now and slow; *doom!*
27. They ran on. The light grew before them; great shafts pierced the roof. They ran swifter. They passed into a hall, bright with daylight from its high windows in the east. They fled across it. Through its huge broken doors they passed, and suddenly before them the Great Gates opened, an arch of blazing light.
28. There was a guard of orcs crouching in the shadows behind the great door-posts towering on either side, but the gates were shattered and cast down. Aragorn smote to the ground the captain that stood in his path, and the rest fled in terror of his wrath. The Company swept past them and took no heed of them. Out of the Gates they ran and sprang down the huge and age-worn steps, the threshold of Moria.
29. Thus, at last, they came beyond hope under the sky and felt the wind on their faces.
30. They did not halt until they were out of bowshot from the walls. Dimrill Dale lay about them. The shadow of the Misty Mountains lay upon it, but eastwards there was a golden light on the land. It was but one hour after noon. The sun was shining; the clouds were white and high.
31. They looked back. Dark yawned the archway of the Gates under the mountain-shadow. Faint and far beneath the earth rolled the slow drum-beats: *doom*. A thin black smoke trailed out. Nothing else was to be seen; the dale all around was empty. *Doom*. Grief at last wholly overcame them, and they wept long: some standing and silent, some cast upon the ground. *Doom, doom*. The drum-beats faded.
32. "Alas! I fear we cannot stay here longer," said Aragorn. He looked towards the mountains and held up his sword. "Farewell, Gandalf!" he cried. "Did I not say to you: *if you pass the doors of Moria, beware?* Alas that I spoke true! What hope have we without you?"

33. He turned to the Company. “We must do without hope,” he said. “At least we may yet be avenged.” ...

1. One evening Frodo and Sam were walking together in the cool twilight. Both of them felt restless again. On Frodo suddenly the shadow of parting had fallen: he knew somehow that the time was very near when he must leave Lothlorien.
2. “What do you think of Elves now, Sam?” he said. “I asked you the same question once before –it seems a very long while ago; but you have seen more of them since then.”
3. “I have indeed!” said Sam. “And I reckon there’s Elves and Elves. They’re all elvish enough, but they’re not all the same. Now these folks aren’t wanderers or homeless, and seem a bit nearer to the likes of us: they seem to belong here, even more than Hobbits do in the Shire. Whether they’ve made the land, or the land’s made them, it’s hard to say, if you take my meaning. It’s wonderfully quiet here. Nothing seems to be going on, nobody seems to want it to. If there’s any magic about, it’s right down deep, where I can’t lay my hands on it, in a manner of speaking.”
4. “You can see and feel it everywhere,” said Frodo.
5. “Well,” said Sam, “you can’t see nobody working it. No fireworks like poor Gandalf used to show. I wonder we don’t see nothing of the Lord and Lady in all these days. I fancy now that she could do some wonderful things, if she had a mind. I’d dearly love to see some Elf-magic, Mr. Frodo!”
6. “I wouldn’t,” said Frodo. “I am content. And I don’t miss Gandalf’s fireworks, but his bushy eyebrows, and his quick temper, and his voice.”
7. “You’re right,” said Sam. “And don’t think I’m finding fault. I’ve often wanted to see a bit of magic like what it tells of in the old tales, but I’ve never heard of a better land than this. It’s like being at home and on a holiday at the same time, if you understand me. I don’t want to leave. All the same, I’m beginning to feel that if we’ve got to go on, then we’d best get it over.
8. “It’s the job that’s never started as takes longest to finish, as my old gaffer used to say. And I don’t reckon that these folk can do much more to help us, magic or no. It’s when we leave this land that we shall miss Gandalf worse, I’m thinking.”
9. “I am afraid that’s only too true, Sam,” said Frodo. “Yet I hope very much that before we leave we shall see the Lady of the Elves again.”
10. Even as they spoke, they saw, as if she came in answer to their words, the Lady Galadriel approaching. Tall and white and fair she walked beneath the trees. She spoke no word, but beckoned to them.
11. Turning aside, she led them to the southern slopes of the hill of Caras Galadhon, and passing through a high green hedge they came into an enclosed garden. No trees grew there, and it lay open to the sky. The evening star had risen and was shining with white

fire above the western woods. Down a long flight of steps the Lady went into the deep hollow, through which ran murmuring the silver stream that issued from the fountain on the hill. At the bottom, upon a low pedestal carved like a branching tree, stood a basin of silver, wide and shallow, and beside it stood a silver ewer.

12. With water from the stream Galadriel filled the basin to the brim, and breathed on it, and when the water was still again she spoke. "Here is the Mirror of Galadriel," she said. "I have brought you here so you may look in it, if you will."
13. The air was very still, and the dell was dark, and the Elf-lady beside him was tall and pale. "What shall we look for, and what shall we see?" asked Frodo, filled with awe.
14. "Many things I can command the Mirror to reveal," she answered. "But the Mirror will also show things unbidden, and those are often stranger and more profitable than things which we wish to behold. What you will see, if you leave the Mirror free to work, I cannot tell. For it shows things that were, and things that are, and things that yet may be. But which it is that he sees, even the wisest cannot always tell. Do you wish to look?"
15. Frodo did not answer.
16. "And you?" she said, turning to Sam. "For this is what your folk would call magic, I believe; though I do not understand clearly what they mean; and they seem to use the same word of the deceits of the Enemy. But this, if you will, is the magic of Galadriel. Did you not say that you wished to see Elf-magic?"
17. "I did," said Sam, trembling a little between fear and curiosity. "I'll have a peep, Lady, if you're willing."
18. "And I'd not mind a glimpse of what's going on at home," he said in an aside to Frodo. "It seems a terrible long time that I've been away. But there, like as not I'll only see the stars, or something that I won't understand."
19. "Like as not," said the Lady with a gentle laugh. "But come, you shall look and see what you may. Do not touch the water!"
20. Sam climbed up on the foot of the pedestal and leaned over the basin. The water looked hard and dark. Stars were reflected in it.
21. "There's only stars, as I thought," he said. Then he gave a low gasp, for the stars went out. As if a dark veil had been withdrawn, the Mirror grew grey, and then clear. There was sun shining, and the branches of trees were waving and tossing in the wind. But before Sam could make up his mind what it was that he saw, the light faded; and now he thought he saw Frodo with a pale face lying fast asleep under a great dark cliff. Then he seemed to see himself going along a dim passage, and climbing an endless winding stair. It came to him suddenly that he was looking urgently for something, but what it was he did not know. Like a dream the vision shifted and went back, and he saw the trees again.

But this time they were not so close, and he could see what was going on: they were not waving in the wind, they were falling, crashing to the ground.

22. "Hi!" cried Sam in an outraged voice. "There's that Ted Sandyman a-cutting down trees as he shouldn't. They didn't ought to be felled: it's that avenue beyond the Mill that shades the road to Bywater. I wish that I could get at Ted, and I'd fell *him!*"
23. But now Sam noticed that the Old Mill had vanished, and a large red-brick building was being put up where it had stood. Lots of folks were busily at work. There was a tall red chimney nearby. Black smoke seemed to cloud the surface of the Mirror.
24. "There's some devilry at work in the Shire," he said. "Elrond knew what he was about when he wanted to send Mr. Merry back." Then suddenly Sam gave a cry and sprang away. "I can't stay here," he said wildly. "I must go home. They've dug up Bagshot Row, and there's the poor old gaffer going down the Hill with his bits of things on a barrow. I must go home!"
25. "You cannot go home alone," said the Lady. "You did not wish to go home without your master before you looked in the Mirror, and yet you knew that evil things might well be happening in the Shire. Remember that the Mirror shows many things, and not all have yet come to pass. Some never come to be, unless those that behold the visions turn aside from their path to prevent them. The Mirror is dangerous as a guide of deeds."
26. Sam sat on the ground and put his head in his hands. "I wish I had never come here, and I don't want to see no more magic," he said and fell silent. After a moment he spoke again thickly, as if struggling with tears. "No, I'll go home by the long road with Mr. Frodo, or not at all," he said. But I hope I do get back some day. If what I've seen turns out true, somebody's going to catch it hot!"
27. "Do you now wish to look, Frodo?" said the Lady Galadriel. "You did not wish to see Elf-magic and were content."
28. "Do you advise me to look?" asked Frodo.
29. "No," she said. "I do not counsel you one way or the other. I am not a counselor. You may learn something, and whether what you see be fair or evil, it may be profitable, and yet it may not. Seeing is both good and perilous. Yet I think, Frodo, that you have courage and wisdom enough for the venture, or I would not have brought you here. Do as you will!"
30. "I will look," said Frodo, and he climbed on the pedestal and bent over the dark water. At once the Mirror cleared and he saw a twilight land. Mountains loomed dark in the distance against a pale sky. A long grey road wound back out of sight. Far away a figure came slowly down the road, faint and small at first, but growing larger and clearer as it approached. Suddenly Frodo realized that it reminded him of Gandalf. He almost called aloud the wizard's name, and then he saw that the figure was clothed not in grey but in

white, a white that shown faintly in the dusk; and in its hand there was a white staff. The head was so bowed that he could see no face, and presently the figure turned aside round a bend in the road and went out of the Mirror's view. Doubt came into Frodo's mind: was this a vision of Gandalf on one of his many lonely journeys long ago, or was it Saruman?

31. The vision now changed. Brief and small but very vivid he caught a glimpse of Bilbo walking restlessly about his room. The table was littered with disordered papers; rain was beating on the windows.
32. Then there was a pause, and many swift scenes followed that Frodo in some way knew to be parts of a great history in which he had become involved. The mist cleared and he saw a sight which he had never seen before but knew at once: the sea. Darkness fell. The sea rose and raged in a great storm. Then he saw against the Sun, sinking blood-red into a wrack of clouds, the black outline of a tall ship with torn sails riding up out of the West. Then a wide river flowing through a populous city. Then a white fortress with seven towers. And then again a ship with black sails, but now it was morning again, and water rippled with the light, and a banner bearing the emblem of a white tree shown in the sun. A smoke as of a fire and a battle arose, and again the sun went down in a burning red that faded into a grey mist; and into the mist a grey ship passed away, twinkling with lights. It vanished, and Frodo sighed and prepared to draw away.
33. But suddenly the Mirror went altogether dark, as dark as if a hole had opened in the world of sight, and Frodo looked into emptiness. In the black abyss there appeared a single Eye that slowly grew, until it filled nearly all the Mirror. So terrible was it that Frodo stood rooted, unable to cry out or to withdraw his gaze. The Eye was rimmed with fire, but was itself glazed, like a cat's, watchful and intent, and the black slit of its pupil opened on a pit, a window into nothing.
34. Then the Eye began to rove, searching this way and that; and Frodo knew with certainty and horror that among the many things that it sought he himself was one. But he also knew it could not see him –not yet, not unless he willed it. The Ring that hung upon its chain around his neck grew heavy, heavier than a great stone, and his head was dragged downwards. The Mirror seemed to be growing hot and curls of steam were rising from the water. He was slipping forward.
35. “Do not touch the water!” said the Lady Galadriel softly. The vision faded, and Frodo found that he was looking at the cool stars twinkling in the silver basin. He stepped back shaking all over and looked at the Lady.
36. “I know what it was that you last saw,” she said; “for that is also in my mind. Do not be afraid! But do not think that only by singing amid the trees, nor even by the slender arrows of elven-bows, is this land of Lothlorien maintained and defended against its Enemy. I say to you, Frodo, that even as I speak to you, I perceive the Dark Lord and know his mind, or all of his mind that concerns the Elves. And he gropes ever to see me and my thought. But still the door is closed!”

37. She lifted up her white arms, and spread out her hands toward the East in a gesture of rejection and denial. Earendil, the Evening Star, most beloved of the Elves, shone clear above. So bright was it that the figure of the Elven-lady cast a dim shadow on the ground, Its rays glanced upon a ring about her finger; it glittered like polished gold overlaid with silver light, and a white stone in it twinkled, as if the Even-Star had come down to rest upon her hand. Frodo gazed at the ring with awe; for suddenly it seemed to him that he understood.
38. “Yes,” she said, divining his thought, “it is not permitted to speak of it, and Elrond could not do so. But it cannot be hidden from the Ring-bearer, and one who has seen the Eye. Verily it is in the land of Lorien upon the finger of Galadriel that one of the three remains. This is Nenya, the Ring of Adamant, and I am its keeper.
39. “He suspects, but he does not know –not yet. Do you not see now wherefore your coming is to us as the footstep of Doom? For if you fail, then we are laid bare to the Enemy. Yet if you succeed, then our power is diminished, and Lothlorien will fade, and the tides of Time will sweep it away. We must depart into the West, or dwindle to a rustic folk of dell and cave, slowly to forget and to be forgotten.”
40. Frodo bent his head. “And what do you wish?” he said at last.
41. “That what should be shall be,” she answered. “The love of the Elves for their land and their works is deeper than the deeps of the Sea, and their regret is undying and cannot ever wholly be assuaged. Yet they will cast all away rather than submit to Sauron; for they know him now. For the fate of Lothlorien you are not answerable, but only for the doing of your own task. Yet I could wish, were it of any avail, that the One Ring had never been wrought, or had remained for ever lost.”
42. “You are wise and fearless and fair, Lady Galadriel,” said Frodo. “I will give you the One Ring, if you ask for it. It is too great a matter for me.”
43. Galadriel laughed with a sudden clear laugh. “Wise the Lady Galadriel may be,” she said, “yet here she has met her match in courtesy. Gently are you revenged for my testing of your heart at our first meeting. You begin to see with a keen eye. I do not deny that my heart has greatly desired to ask what you offer. For many long years I had pondered what I might do, should the Great Ring come into my hands, and behold! It was brought within my grasp. The evil that was devised long ago works on in many ways, whether Sauron himself stands or falls. Would that not have been a noble deed to set to the credit of his Ring, if I had taken it by force or fear from my guest?
44. “And now at last it comes. You will give me the Ring freely! In place of the Dark Lord you will set up a Queen. And I shall not be dark, but beautiful and terrible as the Morning and the Night! Fair as the Sea and the Sun and the Snow upon the Mountain! Dreadful as the Storm and the Lightning! Stronger than the foundations of the earth. All shall love me and despair!”

45. She lifted up her hand and from the ring that she wore there issued a great light that illumined her alone and left all else dark. She stood before Frodo seeming now tall beyond measurement, and beautiful beyond enduring, terrible and worshipful. Then she let her hand fall, and the light faded, and suddenly she laughed again, and lo! She was shrunken: a slender elf-woman, clad in simple white, whose gentle voice was soft and sad.
46. "I pass the test," she said. "I will diminish, and go into the West, and remain Galadriel."
47. They stood for a long while in silence. At length the Lady spoke again. "Let us return!" she said. "In the morning you must depart, for now we have chosen, and the tides of fate are flowing."
48. "I would ask one thing before we go," said Frodo, "a thing which I often meant to ask Gandalf in Rivendell. I am permitted to wear the One Ring: why cannot I see all the others and know the thoughts of those that wear them?"
49. "You have not tried," she said. Only thrice have you set the Ring upon your finger since you knew what you possessed. Do not try! It would destroy you. Did not Gandalf tell you that the rings give power according to the measure of each possessor? Before you could use that power you would need to become far stronger, and to train your will to the domination of others. Yet even so, as Ring-bearer and as one that has borne it on finger and seen that which is hidden, your sight has grown keener. You have perceived my thought more clearly than many that are accounted wise. You saw the Eye of him that holds the Seven and the Nine. And did you not see and recognize the ring upon my finger? Did you see my ring?" she asked turning again to Sam.
50. "No, Lady," he answered. "To tell you the truth, I wondered what you were talking about. I saw a star through your fingers. But if you'll pardon me speaking out, I think my master was right. I wish you'd take his Ring. You'd put things to rights. You'd stop them digging up the gaffer and turning him adrift. You'd make some folk pay for their dirty work."
51. "I would," she said. "That is how it would begin. But it would not stop with that, alas! We will not speak more of it. Let us go!"