

The world is at my Fingertips

Von abgemeldet

Kapitel 1:

The night was cold and so very dark. The flames that devoured the house felt like tiny needles on his skin, pierced through his very soul.

He would never know why the fire had started, nor would he know if his parents would ever be proud of what became of him as he grew up.

Some nights he lay awake, feeling the burning of the flames. It was as if he could taste the ash and hear the cracking of the old wood again. Most nights though, he tried to sleep through his pain and loss. He was alone in a world that was too big for someone as small as him.

How can a child manage in a world that is so cruel without a mother's love or a father's protection?

The day William "Bilbo" Baggins' parents died, was the day that his childhood ended. He was 8 years old and utterly alone on the world. His next of kin wasn't interested in him and he hardly knew them anyway. Without parents, a family or any money, his only chance to live was learning to survive on his own as fast as possible.

The night his parents died he was so scared and confused that he bolted as soon as he heard the sirens of the fire brigade in the distance. His face was caked with grime and most of his clothes were torn, but in his haste he hardly noticed anything.

Some nights, Bilbo wondered what would have happened with him, had he stayed and waited. Foster care or something, probably.

During the years that followed he lived on the streets of London, since it was easier as a stray to survive in a big city, where nobody cares and sees.

After so much time alone and forgotten it had been a bittersweet moment when he met the man he only had ever known as Smaug.

Bilbo had been hungry but hadn't been bold enough to steal from any of the shops. So he had tried to pickpocket someone, without much bravado. That day he had learned what a ludicrous idea it was to steal from a thief.

The tall and dark man took him in and gave him a place where he could belong, not

quite a home, but a start.

Smaug taught him, how important education was, especially for a thief. So Bilbo went to school and attended university after that, because only a solid persona could build a double life. During the day he sat through lectures, met friends and worked in a little café where he learned how to cook and brew a decent cup of tea. But as soon as it grew dark, he was in Smaug's world and learned how to climb walls without climbing gear, faking IDs and how to plan a cue.

While he worked on his degrees in English Literature and Business Studies, Interpol worked on his profile. Neither Smaug nor he ever got caught, but since most of their cues had involved prestigious objects the authorities couldn't ignore their actions.

On one occasion Bilbo had left some muddy boot prints behind and with the following day the media had started to nickname him *The Hobbit*. (Having a solid size 14 had made him feel a tad awkward as a teen, but even big feet had their perks.)

Not all of his thefts could be related to one another, which made it even harder to catch them. But after a while Bilbo started to leave a demonstrative boot print behind as some sort of trademark, as evidence of his capability. Smaug would just call it *mocking* but never stopped him.

With Smaug he was a very successful thief, together they mastered stealing several art works up to jewels or on some rare occasion even valuable information and data. Bilbo never knew what happened with the things they took; he just accepted the payment Smaug wired on his account after each cue.

But in the end Bilbo had to run again. Staying with the man would lead not only to an early death but also to heartache. So he made a decision and told the other man about it after their latest job.

With Smaug he had spent most of his years away from England, they had travelled the world due to their 'trade'. Not only had Bilbo learned how to pickpocket someone successfully but everything that came with being a master thief.

Part of him was proud to be skilled. He loved the thrill that came with his job and enjoyed the power he felt each time he climbed up the face of a building instead of using a door. But his other half wished for a cosy home and regular meals.

He wished for a normal life, for security. And he knew that Smaug would never provide those things. So Bilbo had left. He had bid the other man farewell, no hard feelings involved, and he was convinced that he could leave it all behind, that he owed nothing to anyone.