

## **Hobbit 3: Who is Richard Armitage, a/k/a Thorin Oakenshield?**

Osnabrück. Richard Armitage plays Thorin Oakenshield, the king of the dwarves, in the *Hobbit* trilogy, but who's hiding behind the long beard and the gloriously beautiful hair? We take a look at the British actor.

It will not occur at first thought to anyone who meets Richard Crispin Armitage that this 1.89 meter tall man plays a dwarf king from Tolkien's fantasy kingdom of Middle Earth. But one fierce glance, which scarcely anyone else has mastered as well as he, is sufficient to demonstrate convincingly that as Thorin Oakenshield he does more than look the part.

His new film project is the thriller, *Sleepwalker*, in which he plays a doctor, along with Ahna O'Reilly (*The Help*) and Haley Joel Osment (*The Sixth Sense*). [This was reported in deadline.com.](#)

Tolkien's dwarves are actually big drinkers, loud, and rough and ready, but in addition to his fierceness, Armitage gives Thorin a twinge of serious melancholy, which lifts him royally above the other dwarves. But where does this fierceness come from?

## **Heartthrob thanks to *North and South* [sic]**

The search for clues begins with the filming of Elisabeth Gaskell's [sic] *North and South* [sic]. With the four-part BBC-Drama of 2004 Richard Armitage minted his reputation as an expressive actor. His dark, mysterious, melancholy glance and above all his presence on the screen brought him the admiration of numerous women. Yes, Armitage struggles sometimes with his existence and behavior in some fan fiction ([as in this video](#) visibly, [or here](#)), but he is nonetheless thankful for the love of his fans, even if at times it takes on somewhat preposterous features. For example, as it became known that Armitage himself had answered the messages of fans on a BBC-Message board, the BBC server crashed.

## **Action hero in *Strike Back*, *Robin Hood* and *Spooks***

Armitage proved, however, that he had a great deal more in him than a heartthrob in the miniseries *Strike Back*. There he played – how could it be otherwise – broken elite soldier John Porter, who arrives at the British secret service MI-6 and must overcome difficult missions in Iraq and South Africa. His antagonist is played by Andrew Lincoln, who, thanks to this role, got a little advance taste of the action genre; he has been convincing in five seasons as the merciless [Rick Grimes in the zombie series, \*The Walking Dead\*](#).

For his role in *Strike Back*, Armitage undertook weeks of special training, so that he was able to do almost all his stunts himself. He took further heroic roles in other British series, such as the BBC series *Robin Hood* and *Spooks*.

## **Disaster film and Theater**

The next action excursion awaited after the completion of *The Hobbit*; he played a teacher in a rather mediocre disaster film *Into the Storm*. Fully different his outing into the world of the theater in fall of this year: In Arthur Miller's drama *The Crucible* at London's Old Vic theater, he played farmer John Proctor, who wants to protect his wife from the madness of the witch trials, but in the end is himself condemned to death.

## **Serious, serious-er, Richard Armitage**

These tough, broken characters are Armitage's calling. That permits a few conclusions about Richard Armitage himself, although little is known about his private life. [In an interview with the British](#)

[Huffington Post, he admits](#) that he takes himself too seriously. He lacks the optimistic view of the world that his fellow actor Martin Freeman (known as Dr. Watson and Bilbo Baggins) brings to bear. “He sees the world as a funny place, while I see it as a serious place,” he says, as it sounds, regretfully.

## **Richard Armitage discovers (and curses) Twitter**

He’s less serious on his Twitter Account, [@RCArmitage](#). There, the 43-year-old tweets smileys and some back ground information about his projects. Those hoping for private photos or information do so in vain. Until recently, Armitage did not participate at all in social networks, and even told Martin Freeman that he did not get Twitter at all. Here’s a link to a funny interview, in spite of all its seriousness, between Martin Freeman and Richard Armitage on youtube -- [part one](#) and [part two](#).

## **Richard Armitage’s journey continues**

The opaque Brit remains secretive and seriousness remains his great strength. For being funny on demand is the last thing he wants to do. But we believe him in fierce roles without question, even if expressions are impossible to recognize from his bearded face, but only the gloomy comportment of a belligerent king. It’s hardly surprising, then, that his fellows want to follow him to war in the third part of the *Hobbit* trilogy.

“Will you follow me one last time?” The journey of Thorin Oakenshield ends on December 12, but Richard Armitage’s world trip is just beginning. We’re happy to follow.