

5E

THE LORD OF THE RINGS™ ROLEPLAYING

5TH EDITION ROLEPLAYING
IN THE WORLD OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

BASED ON THE WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN



Based on *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* by Francesco Nepitello and Marco Maggi

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CHAPTER 1

PROLOGUE

*“The Enemy still lacks one thing to give him strength and knowledge
to beat down all resistance, break the last defences,
and cover all the lands in a second darkness.
He lacks the One Ring.”*

DEAR friend,

I am writing this sitting at our usual table at the prancing pony, puffing at my pipe. According to the latest tidings I received, you are many miles away south, riding with the horse-lords. I trust you brought a good supply of Old Toby! If you didn't, you are going to miss your northern lone-lands much more bitterly, I assure you.

When I took up the pen, my intention was to elaborate on the reasons why I counseled you not to go to Gondor, yet. You know what troubled me... the Steward is a wise man, and won't waste any time in putting your talents to good use, but his firstborn son is about your age. Denethor is valiant and proud. I feared that this might lead him to ignore your counsel, if not to resent it.

Then, I remembered what I have to tell myself from time to time... the task I chose is to inspire the enemies of Sauron, and to push them to action. I am not here to rob them of their freedom of choice. They say that even the wise cannot see all ends! So, who am I, certainly not the wisest, to tell you what you should do? Only you can decide what to do with the time that is given you.

Please accept one word of advice though, something that I have learnt in more than one adventure: do not face your challenges alone, and choose your companions wisely. There are many brave souls among the various free peoples of the world who can join you in your struggle: Elves, Dwarves, and Men. Even the little folk of the Shire may prove useful. They certainly did prove useful to me! A good friend of mine discovered too late that there is more to those amazing creatures than you would credit them for. I hope you will not commit the same mistake.

yours in friendship

Gandalf. .V.



*“Wolves were howling round the fences last winter.
And there’s dark shapes in the woods, dreadful things
that it makes the blood run cold to think of.”*

t is the year 2965 of the Third Age, twenty-some years after one Bilbo Baggins disappeared one Spring morning, only to reappear a year later and interrupt his own estate sale. The extraordinary tale that he told, of travelling with the Wizard Gandalf and Thorin Oakenshield to Wilderland on the other side of the Misty Mountains and somehow defeating a Dragon seemed nothing more than a fairy tale to the other Hobbits.

However, no one can deny that there are more folk on the Great Road these days. Most are Dwarves, coming and going both ways, and sometimes even visiting Hobbiton! Rumours from Bree speak of strangers coming into town, telling stories of the rebuilt Dale and the dragon-slayer King Bard and other unusual names. And Elves too are on the move, and rumoured to be in the Wild and even in the Woody End of the Shire!

It all sounds rather adventurous, but adventures are dangerous, uncomfortable things. They make you late for dinner and might get you killed! Of course, some valiant individuals are seeking to make their mark on the world, to find the long-lost ruins of past kingdoms, to patrol the borders of their lands and keep them safe, to meet others of similar persuasion and unite to strive against the Shadow that lies over Middle-earth. If successful, folk will call them heroes. But if they disappear while in the wild, they will be lost to history and legend.

In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, you become the adventurers exploring Middle-earth. As the game progresses, you will discover new lands and old secrets, take part in the events of the Third Age, and have your own chance to strive against the Enemy.

The Twilight of the Third Age

The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying is set in the time period between the events narrated in *The Hobbit* and those told in *The Lord of the Rings*. Encompassing a span of eight decades,

this period is ushered in when Bilbo the Hobbit finds the Ruling Ring, and culminates with the war fought by the Free Peoples against the Dark Lord Sauron, and the destruction of the Ring.

Players of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* create a Company of heroes — Hobbits, Dwarves, Elves, and Men, seeking adventure in the Lone-lands of Eriador. It is a desolate country, a vast region that once saw the glory of the North Kingdom of the Dúnedain, the Men of the West. Here, many wars were fought, and countless ruins dot its landscape. Shadows move along its paths, and not all of them belong to the living.

It is in Eriador that the One Ring lies dormant, a seed of the past that will one day bring the end of this age of the world.



THE ONE RING FOR 5E

The present volume converts the best-selling *The One Ring* roleplaying game to 5E, bringing the world created by J.R.R. Tolkien to the players of the most popular set of rules for fantasy gaming. This is not a stand-alone game: to play *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* you must be familiar with the rules for 5E.

To preserve consistency with the sources, the game master of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is called the ‘Loremaster’, and the characters ‘Player-heroes’. Likewise, races have been renamed ‘cultures’, and classes are here referred to as ‘callings’.

ADVENTURING IN THE THIRD AGE

Tales and adventures sprouted up all over the place wherever he went, in the most extraordinary fashion.

Adventurers are often simply common individuals born in exceptional times. They have most likely led an ordinary life until the day something happened and changed the way they looked at their world and the people they knew. For some reason, the place they grew up in didn't look as interesting and boundless as before, or they started to realise that they weren't doing enough for the safekeeping of their loved ones by staying at home in idleness, pretending shadows weren't growing nearer and nearer every year.

Adventurers are not soldiers or mercenaries following the commands of a lord, nor are they subtle Wizards trying to weave the threads spun by fate — they are bold souls putting themselves in peril of their own free will, sometimes simply for the love of adventure itself.

THE FOLK OF ERIADOR

West of Wilderland, between the Misty Mountains and the Sea, is the region of Eriador. Right in its middle is found the Shire of the Hobbits, a quiet land whose folk enjoy a secluded life behind guarded borders. Across the river Brandywine, east of the Shire, lies the Bree-land, a small inhabited region, rising like an island in the midst of the Lone-lands about it.

The Bree-land is traversed by the East-West Road, and in its chief village of Bree is The Prancing Pony, a resort for all weary travellers. These are mainly Dwarves of the Folk of Durin, going east to their far Kingdom Under the Mountain, in Wilderland, or west, on their way to the Blue Mountains. Sometimes, they travel in the company of Northmen from distant Dale, subjects of King Bard the Dragonslayer.

According to ancient stories, the region of Eriador was once the realm of Arnor, a great kingdom of the North, brought to ruin long ago by bitter strife and the machinations of the Enemy. Much of its past is now forgotten, for the memory of mortals is short, and the days of the king are celebrated only in songs and proverbs devoid of their original meaning.

But some remember — the mysterious Rangers of the North, lonely hunters of the servants of the Enemy who guard all boundaries against Wights and Trolls, as do the long-lived Elves of Lindon, that at times leave their land along the western coasts to wander across Eriador, to witness with their immortal eyes the fading of the glories of the past.

The land of the Lost Realm of Arnor is described in detail in *Chapter 9: The World*, starting on page 178.



The shadow of the past

The last twenty years or so have seen the resurgence of hope in the lands of the Free Peoples, and then its slow but steady decline, as the world darkens once again.

YEAR 2941: The Wizard Gandalf, Thorin Oakenshield, and twelve Dwarves visit Bilbo the Hobbit in the Shire: they set upon a quest to recover the treasure of Durin's Folk and free the North from the threat of the Dragon of Erebor.

A series of unlikely events leads to the death of Smaug and to the destruction of Lake-town. Dáin of the Iron Hills becomes King of Erebor, while Dwarves, Men, and Elves collaborate in rebuilding new cities in Dale and upon the Long Lake.

YEAR 2942: Bilbo returns to his peaceful life in the Shire. He carries the One Ring with him, not suspecting its true nature. News of the great events that have come to pass spread across the land as he travels home.

YEAR 2949: Gandalf and Balin journey to the Shire to visit Bilbo Baggins. They arrive at Bag End on one autumn evening. They spend some time together, talking of their adventuring times and about how things are going in Wilderland. Balin doesn't hide his disquiet from his good friend, and tries to convince Bilbo to join him in a new adventure. Bilbo is reluctant, and in the end declines the invitation.

YEAR 2951: The Dark Lord Sauron unveils his presence in the black land of Mordor. He is ready to spread his power far and wide, and begins to rebuild his Dark Tower. His will is bent on gathering a vast army in the black land, and his summons are answered by all sorts of wicked creatures. Gollum is among them, and his path slowly turns in the direction of Mordor.

Sauron sends the Nazgûl to reclaim his stronghold in southern Mirkwood, and the forest darkens. Rumours of a new Shadow in the South start to be whispered by many folks in the North. Orcs and Goblins are found bearing the symbol of a lidless Eye.

YEAR 2953: The White Council, a gathering of the Wise, meets to discuss the fate of the Rings of Power. Saruman the White, the head of the Council, declares that the One Ring, the Ruling Ring that Sauron himself made, is lost forever, having been carried by the River Anduin to the Sea.

Saruman claims the impregnable fortress of Isengard as his own abode and begins to restore its defences.

YEAR 2955: Adventurers out of Rivendell signal the presence in Eriador of a new breed of Troll: the Olog-hai. They seem to come from Mordor and directly serve the Dark Lord.

YEAR 2956: Aragorn, son of Arathorn, captain of the Rangers of the North and heir of Isildur, meets Gandalf the Grey, and their friendship begins.

YEARS 2957–65: Rumours of turmoil and strife in Wilderland become more and more common in this decade. Traffic intensifies over the High Pass as more and more travellers from the East cross into the Westlands bringing news of threats to the fragile peace between Men, Elves, and Dwarves.



PLAYER-HEROES

Players use the rules presented in this volume to create adventurers hailing from the Lone-lands of Eriador, a region steeped in old lore and thick with secrets. Players can be courageous Hobbits of the Shire, driven by curiosity to go and see the ruins of Deadmen's Dike; travelling Dwarves, seeking to visit the ancestral halls of Durin's Folk in the Ered Luin; far-reaching Bardings from Wilderland, in search of adventure in the Westlands; Elves from Lindon, tasked with guarding what is kept in the tower of Elostirion; Men of Bree, leaving their quiet village for the first time; or Rangers of the North, sworn to keep dreadful things at bay.

Whatever their choices, players must step into their characters' shoes, to think as a hero would think and react as a hero would react. It is a game of make-believe, a story in the making, created in collaboration with the Loremaster.

THE LOREMMASTER

The player who will take the mantle of the Loremaster should be familiar with the entirety of this volume, but particular attention must be given to the content of *Chapter 7: The Loremaster*. It contains rules and guidelines created to assist the Loremaster in the role of game arbitrator, along with suggestions on how to work with players to create stories that are both engaging and faithful to the world as depicted in the source material.



ENTER MIDDLE-EARTH

The aim of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is to allow its players to feel what it means to go adventuring in a wild and perilous land from a forgotten past. It is a threatening world that has more in common with the world depicted in epic sagas or the Dark Ages of Europe than with our contemporary world.

Players are invited to leave the age of information and fast travel behind, and adopt the point of view of individuals whose horizons often didn't extend farther than a few miles from their birthplace. For every member of the Wise and the Great there are countless more like Samwise Gamgee: simple people who never crossed the boundaries of their own village or town. For every Wizard there are individuals like Gimli son of Glóin, who ignored the existence of Rohan until he visited it. For every Elven Lord there are women like noble Éowyn, who never encountered an Elf or a Hobbit before the War of the Ring.

The landscape revealed by this perspective is a world with uncertain boundaries, and only vague hints of distant realms and the folks who inhabit them; a place that, for these very reasons, offers plenty of opportunities for exploration and adventure.







CHAPTER 2

NEW RULES

*“In the end Bilbo won the game,
more by luck (as it seemed) than by wits...”*



The *Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is a game based on *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, two extraordinary works of fiction by the beloved author and respected academic, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. With his books, Tolkien introduced readers to his own greatest

creation, the world of Middle-earth, a mythic land from a remote past, characterised by a rich history and detailed geography.

This chapter introduces a number of setting-specific rules modifications, necessary to adapt 5E to suit Middle-earth itself.

STRUCTURE OF THE GAME

"Still, I wonder if we shall ever be put into songs or tales. We're in one, of course; but I mean: put into words, you know, told by the fireside, or read out of a great big book with red and black letters, years and years afterwards."

Gameplay in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is structured into two distinct phases — an Adventuring Phase, comprising the main part of the ‘action’ taking place during gameplay, and a closing Fellowship Phase, addressing in detail what is often called ‘downtime’.

Usually, an Adventuring Phase will last two or three sessions of play, followed by a Fellowship Phase wrapping up neatly what happened thus far in the adventure. After a few games, what happens in the two distinct phases of the game will become more and more closely interrelated:

- ◆ The events arising during the Adventuring Phase lead the players to make certain choices during the following Fellowship Phase.
- ◆ In turn, the Loremaster will find it easy to tie the next Adventuring Phase into what happened during the previous Fellowship Phase.

The final result is an epic that grows out of the ongoing lives of the Player-heroes and their deeds.

The Adventuring Phase and the Fellowship Phase are discussed in detail later on, respectively, in *Chapter 5* and *Chapter 6*.

PILLARS OF ADVENTURE

In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, Player-heroes can do anything their players can imagine, but their main activities as adventurers fall within three broad categories: combat, council, and journey.

THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Time passes at different rates in the game: one evening spent playing may detail a single day in the life of an adventurer, or skim over a month or more of their career.

During most Adventuring Phase sessions, gameplay is articulated in shorter, focused scenes that require players to describe in detail what they do. Time passes relatively slowly, with the players often keeping track of what happens every single day — with the exception of prolonged or time-consuming events, like journeys, or sieges.

Time passes more quickly during a Fellowship Phase, when the Loremaster and the players adopt a broader approach to narration. This is best suited when dealing with endeavours that occur ‘off-screen’. Weeks or months may pass before a new Adventuring Phase begins, and a special type of Fellowship Phase (Yule, see page 111) also deals with the advancement of the chronology of the game: the Tale of Years.

COMBAT

Combat is a necessity in a world where the Shadow threatens to cover the land in darkness. *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* relies primarily on the core rules for combat in 5E.

COUNCIL

Council comprises social interaction, in particular those occasions when the Player-heroes meet with the Wise and the Great of Middle-earth, to offer their services in the fight against the Enemy or to seek their aid or counsel. When the Company meets one or more nonplayer characters in a formal gathering, a council occurs.

While much of what transpires in a council can be played out as a dialogue between the Company and the Loremaster, *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* introduces new rules to determine the result of such encounters and their consequences (see Council, on page 95).

JOURNEY

Journey is an activity that is almost synonymous with adventuring in Middle-earth — travelling across a vast, dangerous land, dotted by the relics of a past going back for many ages. Each journey will test the Company, and the Player-heroes will have to rely on their skills in order to make their way to their destination safely.

Special game mechanics designed to make travelling a part of the adventure are introduced starting from page 100.



THE COMPANY

"I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone."

Adventurers know that burdens are easier to bear when shared with others. That's one of the reasons why they gather in a Company, a group united by a common cause — be it to fight the Enemy, lead a hunt for a prized prey, or scour the land seeking lost or stolen treasure.

1. Players use the information presented in *Chapter 3: Adventurers* to create their Player-heroes, first choosing their cultural heritage (their heroic culture) and then determining the nature of their call to adventure and their vocation in life (their calling).
2. Once all players have created their Player-heroes, they should take some time to introduce their adventurers to each other and determine the circumstances that brought them together. This may require them to choose a patron and a safe haven.

In general, it is good to assume that the Company has been together for some time already when the game begins. The Loremaster assists the players, providing suggestions and advice.

FELLOWSHIP

The group of Player-heroes is more than a band of roving mercenaries brought together by mere necessity. At its foundation are communal goals and a mutual respect. This feeling of trust is recreated in the game by the Company's Fellowship score.

Fellowship represents the bond of mutual trust enjoyed by the members of the Company. Expressed by a numerical value, Fellowship is a pool of points shared among all Player-heroes that is mainly spent to gain confidence:

During the Adventuring Phase, Player-heroes can spend 1 point of Fellowship to gain advantage on an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Additionally, Fellowship can be spent to trigger special effects tied to the Company's Patron (see Patrons, below).

The starting Fellowship score of the Company is equal to the number of Player-heroes in the group; this value can be augmented by a number of virtues, and by a bonus associated with the Company's patron.

Once calculated, the Company's Fellowship score is recorded by all players on their character sheets, in the designated space. For every point of Fellowship spent, all Player-heroes must adjust the amount on their character sheet.

When all points have been used, the Company cannot spend any more Fellowship. Fellowship points are fully refreshed at the end of each Fellowship Phase.

Since Fellowship is a common pool of points shared by all Player-heroes, any expenditure must be agreed upon by all Player-heroes in the Company.

PATRON

A Company may be brought together by chance or design. If it's not chance, then the meeting of the Player-heroes might have been directly arranged by one of the Wise and the Great of Middle-earth — their Patron.

A Patron is an influential individual who has taken an interest in the group, and that in the course of the game will offer the Company additional reasons to go adventuring, often providing both support and counsel. All Patrons work with the Player-heroes from time to time, following a personal agenda, but in general hoping to influence the events that are going to shape Middle-earth in the years to come.

The Company starts the game choosing one Patron among those listed below (but additional ones may be added in the course of the game).

To select their Patron, the players should check their characteristics, and pick the one whose potential agenda seems more in agreement with their own goals as a group — for example, the list of callings favoured by a Patron can be used as a good indication of what that individual might ask a Company as a favour or service in the course of play.

As can be seen by consulting the table below, all Patrons may provide a Fellowship Bonus, effectively raising the number of Fellowship points available to the members of the Company, and another peculiar form of advantage, usually connected to the expenditure of Fellowship points.

STARTING PATRONS:

PATRON	FAVoured CALLINGS	FELLOWSHIP POINTS	ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE	AGENDA
Balin, son of Fundin	Captain, Champion	+1	<i>Balin's Counsel.</i> You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after an attack roll (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used.	Reclaim lost strongholds, eliminate enemy leaders, etc.
Bilbo Baggins	Scholar, Treasure Hunter	+2	<i>Bilbo's Hospitality.</i> By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to visit Bilbo you additionally raise the Fellowship rating by +1 until the next Fellowship Phase.	Recover lost lore and lost things.
Círdan the Shipwright	Messenger, Scholar	+1	<i>The Shipwright's Foresight.</i> You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after an ability check (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used. By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to go and see Círdan you additionally receive a rumour from the Loremaster.	Rekindle hope, preserve the lore of the Ages.
Gandalf the Grey	Captain, Messenger	+2	<i>Wisdom of the Grey Pilgrim.</i> You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after a saving throw (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used.	Warn the Free Peoples, inspire them to action.
Gilraen, daughter of Dírhael	Champion, Warden	0	<i>Gilraen's Folk.</i> At the start of a journey, you can spend a Fellowship point. During that journey, as long as you are within the territory that once was the old realm of Arnor, you can roll a d20 after each roll on the Journey Events table (see page 105), and choose whether the Loremaster uses their roll or yours. By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to go and see Gilraen you additionally receive a rumour from the Loremaster.	Fight the Enemy, defend the weak.
Lady Goldberry and Tom Bombadil	Treasure Hunter, Warden	+2	<i>Master of Wood, Water and Hill.</i> Spend all your remaining Fellowship to call Tom or Goldberry's intervention anywhere in Tom's country.	Protect the land, find and preserve what was buried.



Player-heroes gain the opportunity to go and see a Patron when they are in the same place during a Fellowship Phase, choosing the Meet Patron undertaking (see page 113).

The safe haven

The safe haven of the Company is a location that works as the starting base of operations for the group, and as its refuge to repair to for the Fellowship Phase. Usually, it's the place where the Player-heroes gathered for the first time.

In Eriador, the ideal choice for a starting safe haven is certainly the village of Bree, as it stands at the crossroads of the East Road and North Road, and everyone who journeys across the land stops at The Prancing Pony for a pipe to smoke in comfort (see Chapter 9 for more information about Bree and its inn).

In the course of their exploration of Eriador the Company will find new places suitable to be used as safe havens, widening their options — for example, a Company might

eventually add the city of Tharbad or Rivendell as a possible safe haven.

The Inn of Bree ... was a meeting place for the idle, talkative, and inquisitive among the inhabitants, large and small, of the four villages; and a resort of Rangers and other wanderers, and for such travellers (mostly dwarves) as still journeyed on the East Road, to and from the Mountains.

LONG HAVE I WANDERED BY ROADS FORGOTTEN

Telling the story of how a Player-hero reached the location where the Company first meets is a good way of introducing a character. Such a tale tells the other players where heroes come from, why they left, and possibly something about their abilities and aspirations.

NEW SKILLS

The hobbits gazed at Strider. It seemed that he was learned in old lore, as well as in the ways of the wild....

The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying does not use the *Arcana* or *Religion* skills. The *History* skill is renamed *Old Lore*, and a new skill, *Riddle*, is added, given the importance of this custom among many cultures of Middle-earth. The *Survival* skill is replaced by three focused skills to highlight the importance of journeys in this setting: *Explore*, *Hunting*, and *Travel*.

Finally, to preserve balance between abilities, while playing *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* we recommend applying the *Medicine* skill to Intelligence checks rather than Wisdom checks: for this reason, in the following pages the skill is indicated as Intelligence (Medicine).

NEW SKILLS LIST

The following list offers brief descriptions for each additional and variant skill, to help players and the Loremaster identify the type of actions that can be accomplished using each ability.

EXPLORE (WISDOM)

Player-heroes rely on this when they move through an unfamiliar area of the Wild. A Wisdom (Explore) check may be required during a journey to find out where the Company is heading, or to get back on track after a detour; to cope with adverse weather conditions or other natural hazards; to create paths through the wilderness suitable for others to follow; or to choose a suitable place to set up camp.

"We have found a dry cave," they said, "not far round the next corner; and ponies and all could get inside."

HUNTING (WISDOM)

Knowing how to hunt is a fundamental skill, shared by most cultures of Middle-earth. A Wisdom (Hunting) check is required when hunting wild game, or to follow tracks and identify a quarry by its spoor. This skill also covers fishing and preparing traps. In wilder areas, hunters learn to apply their trade to more dangerous creatures — such as Orcs, Spiders, or Wargs — or else risk becoming the prey.

They dwelt most often by the edges of the woods, from which they could escape at times to hunt, or to ride and run over the open lands by moonlight or starlight...

OLD LORE (INTELLIGENCE)

An Intelligence (Old Lore) check measures the ability of a Player-hero to recall obscure information from bygone days, such as knowledge of the ancient tales of the Elder Days, the annals of kings and rulers, family genealogies, and recollections of deeds and places lost to common lore. This knowledge may derive from different sources, from stories heard around the fire to the dusty records of a chronicler.

He knew many histories and legends of long ago, of Elves and Men and the good and evil deeds of the Elder Days.

RIDDLE (INTELLIGENCE)

The riddle game is an accepted custom among many creatures, including quite a few that would be classified as wicked if they did not respect the ancient rules. An Intelligence (Riddle) check is used to solve a spoken or written riddle, but also to draw conclusions from seemingly unconnected scraps of information by deduction, reasoning, and intuition.

"A Hobbit waded out into the water and back; but I cannot say how long ago." "How then do you read this riddle?" asked Gimli.

TRAVEL (WISDOM)

In the Third Age, the cities, villages, and towns of Middle-earth are often separated by many leagues of wild or deserted areas. Roads that used to lead safely to distant realms now end in broken trails that go nowhere. Whichever way the Company chooses to go, it will be a long and weary way before they get there. A successful Wisdom (Travel) check may let a Player-hero estimate the length of a journey, read a map, and even evaluate whether a group of strangers on the road can be approached safely or if they should be left alone instead.

The country was much rougher and more barren than in the green vale of the Great River in Wilderland on the other side of the range, and their going would be slow...

MAGICAL SUCCESS

Enchanted artefacts, like magic rings and cloaks, and ancient spells and uncanny powers, can allow a Player-hero to exceed the possibilities of mere mortals.

Possessing a talent or artefact capable of unlocking a magical success on an ability check grants a Player-hero automatic success, regardless of the DC and ignoring conditions.

During contests, a Player-hero who obtains a magical success automatically wins the contest, unless the other participant also obtains a magical success.

Whenever it is necessary to know the exact result of the roll, a Player-hero who achieves a magical success counts as having rolled a 20 on the d20.

Player-heroes who have the chance to achieve a magical success can attempt actions that would be nearly impossible to achieve by someone without a magical aid (see box for examples).

Narratively, a magical success is an outcome that can hardly be mistaken for an ordinary success — in other words, the Player-hero has achieved something so unusual that it could not be accomplished without supernatural aid.

EXAMPLES OF MAGICAL SUCCESS

Following are some examples of magical successes for each ability check:

STRENGTH CHECKS

- ◆ *Athletics*. Climb a sheer wall of rock without tools, or jump across a chasm 20 feet wide in full gear.

DEXTERITY CHECKS

- ◆ *Acrobatics*. Run lightly on a tightrope as if on a road, or on fresh snow as if it was firm sand, ignoring difficult terrain.
- ◆ *Sleight of Hand*. Make an item seemingly disappear from one's hands (or pockets...), even while everyone is watching.
- ◆ *Stealth*. Hide even in plain sight, or walk without sound or footfall.

INTELLIGENCE CHECKS

- ◆ *Investigation*. Find a very well-hidden object by simply guessing its location.
- ◆ *Medicine*. Stabilise a dying companion, or heal them from a disease or poison, by simply laying on your hands.
- ◆ *Nature*. Predict the weather with perfect accuracy, or learn the direction and distance to the closest beast or plant of a chosen kind.
- ◆ *Old Lore*. Recall all the details of a past event as if witnessed firsthand.
- ◆ *Riddle*. Formulate or solve an impossible riddle.

WISDOM CHECKS

- ◆ *Animal Handling*. Comprehend and verbally communicate with a beast as if speaking its tongue.
- ◆ *Explore*. Gain instantaneous and detailed knowledge of the surrounding territory, such as information regarding its terrain, nearby bodies of water, and climate.
- ◆ *Hunting*. Track a creature by simply guessing its location, or find game even in the most inhospitable places.
- ◆ *Insight*. Read the surface thoughts of a creature, or learn what is most on its mind in that moment.
- ◆ *Perception*. See in darkness and in dim light as if they were bright light, or into the wraith-world; make out details of extremely distant creatures and objects.
- ◆ *Travel*. Mentally visualise a route as if reading a detailed map, guessing the perfect itinerary.

CHARISMA CHECKS

- ◆ *Deception*. Convincingly tell a lie that is almost impossible to believe.
- ◆ *Intimidation*. Seemingly grow in stature, as the light dims and the shadows lengthen.
- ◆ *Performance*. Make the listeners experience visions of what the performance is about.
- ◆ *Persuasion*. Look much fairer and wiser, your voice melodious and delightful to hear.

MAGICAL SUCCESSES USING TOOLS

A magical success using artisan's tools may allow a Player-hero to craft objects that can even seem magical to the eyes of others – for example, a ship wrought and carved with Elven-skill in the likeness of a bird, a marvellous toy like those of Dwarf-make sold in the toy-market of Dale, or even fireworks like those made by Gandalf himself.

A magical success using other tools allows for different effects depending on the tools used – for example, a musical instrument may have effects similar to those of the Performance skill, and thieves' tools could allow a door locked magically to be opened.



ADDITIONAL RULES VARIANTS

...on every wall there was a notice and a list of Rules.

This section highlights some of the more important rules variations upon the rules for 5e that are necessary to play *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*.

ENCUMBRANCE

The following alternative rules for lifting and carrying determine how the Player-heroes are hindered by the weight of their carried gear.

- ◆ If you carry weight in excess of 5 times your Strength score, you are *encumbered*, which means your speed drops by 10 feet and you have disadvantage on fatigue saving throws at the end of journeys (see page 103).
- ◆ If you carry weight in excess of 10 times your Strength score, up to your maximum carrying capacity, you are instead *heavily encumbered*, which means your speed drops by 20 feet and you have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

The maximum carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift is calculated as usual.

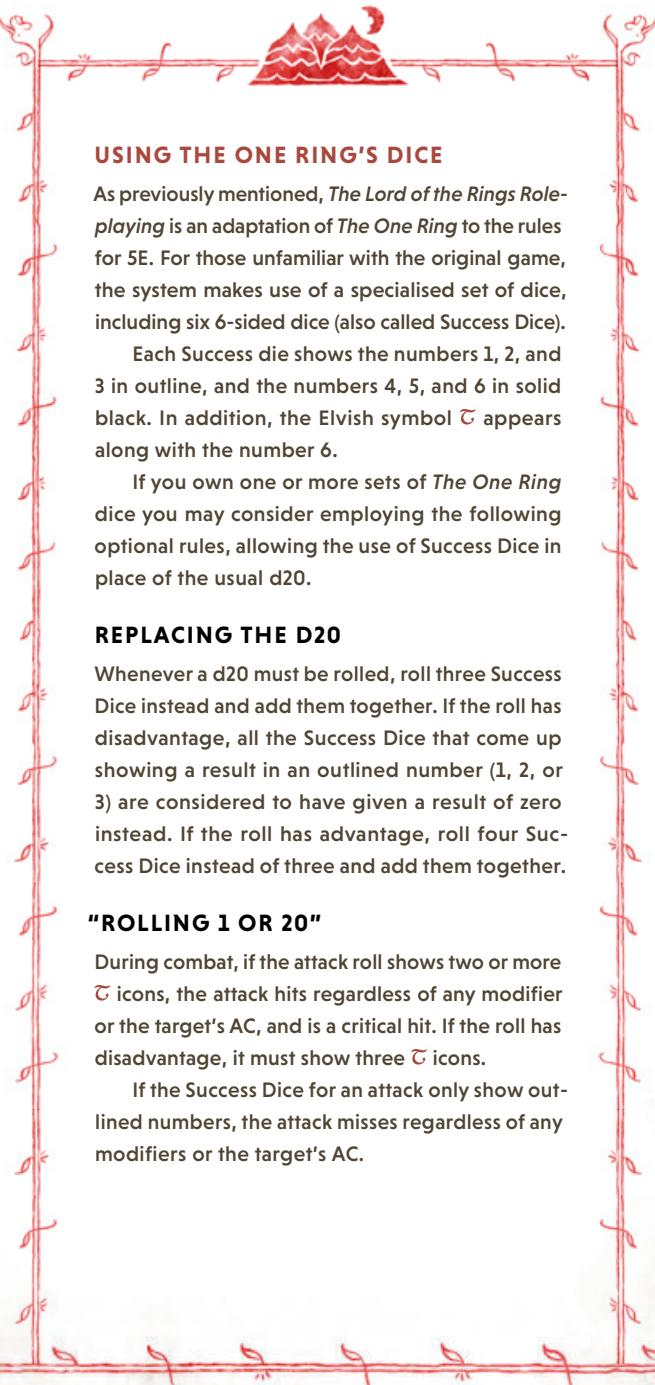
RESTING

The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying employs a variant of the standard 5e rules for short and long rests.

- ◆ Player-heroes can benefit from long rests exclusively in sheltered and safe refuges (i.e. not ‘on the road’). The safe havens of the Company (see page 18) certainly count as sheltered refuges, as well as any city or settlement where the Company is welcomed on friendly terms. At the Loremaster’s discretion, a deserted but well-sheltered place in the wilds could also be suitable for a long rest.
- ◆ Additionally, a short rest during a journey (see page 100) must be at least 8 hours long, during which a character sleeps or performs only light activities. Once the Player-heroes stop travelling for at least 24 hours (because they have reached their destination, or have decided to stop along the way), they can resume taking short rests of 1 hour.

Rewards and Virtues

Virtues are unique abilities and special talents, characteristic of a given culture. Players select a new virtue when their Player-hero reaches certain levels in a calling.



USING THE ONE RING'S DICE

As previously mentioned, *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is an adaptation of *The One Ring* to the rules for 5E. For those unfamiliar with the original game, the system makes use of a specialised set of dice, including six 6-sided dice (also called Success Dice).

Each Success die shows the numbers 1, 2, and 3 in outline, and the numbers 4, 5, and 6 in solid black. In addition, the Elvish symbol C appears along with the number 6.

If you own one or more sets of *The One Ring* dice you may consider employing the following optional rules, allowing the use of Success Dice in place of the usual d20.

REPLACING THE D20

Whenever a d20 must be rolled, roll three Success Dice instead and add them together. If the roll has disadvantage, all the Success Dice that come up showing a result in an outlined number (1, 2, or 3) are considered to have given a result of zero instead. If the roll has advantage, roll four Success Dice instead of three and add them together.

ROLLING 1 OR 20*

During combat, if the attack roll shows two or more C icons, the attack hits regardless of any modifier or the target’s AC, and is a critical hit. If the roll has disadvantage, it must show three C icons.

If the Success Dice for an attack only show outlined numbers, the attack misses regardless of any modifiers or the target’s AC.

Rewards are pieces of war gear of superior craftsmanship, granted to a Player-hero as an award for their deeds when they reach certain levels. Rewards are not tied to a specific culture.

Virtues and rewards are described on page 78).

SHADOW AND CORRUPTION

Challenging an almost all-powerful Enemy and facing its terrible minions is bound to instil a sense of fear and doubt in the Player-heroes, a sentiment that in time comes to weigh heavily on their hearts and minds. In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, this burden is represented by the accumulation of Shadow points, and by the sources that force their gain.

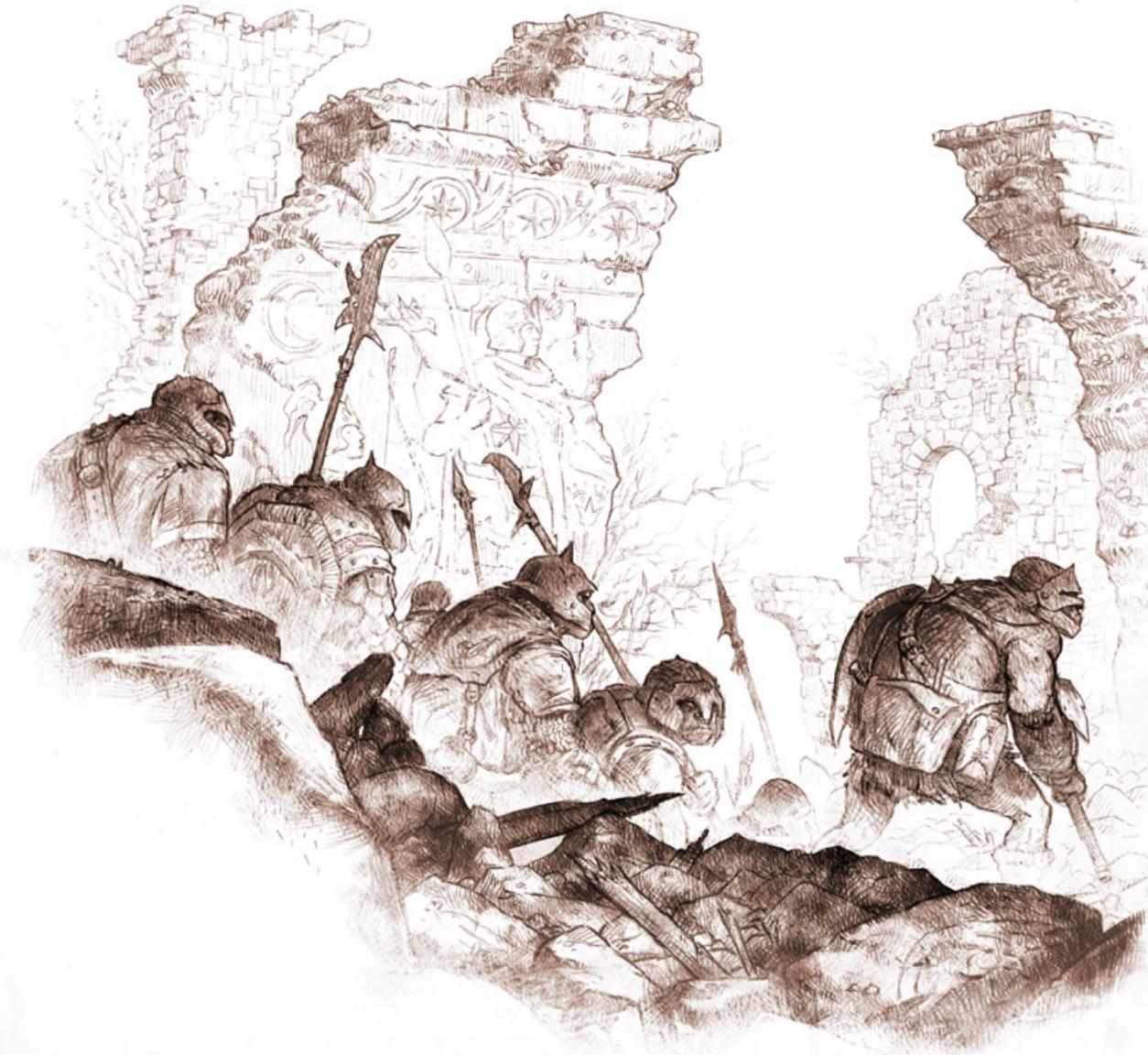
- ◆ Player-heroes can resist some sources of Shadow gain by making a saving throw — either an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw.

- ◆ Attempting or performing misdeeds provokes an automatic Shadow gain instead, as such actions prove that a hero is falling for the evil ways of the Enemy.

Player-heroes mark their descent into the Shadow following a specific Shadow path, based on their chosen calling, and risk leaving the game if they cannot stop their descent into madness. Player-heroes avoid this by getting rid of Shadow points during the Fellowship Phase, resting from actively opposing the Enemy.

- ◆ Shadow can also result in the Player-heroes being subjected to two new conditions, anguished and miserable.

These conditions, along with the rules for the Shadow, are presented starting from page 140).





The background of the entire page is a dark, moody landscape. In the upper left, there's a bright, glowing area that looks like a campfire or a stream reflecting light. A wooden bridge arches across the scene from the left side. The ground is covered in dark, fallen leaves and branches. In the lower right, there are silhouettes of bare trees against a lighter sky.

CHAPTER 3

adVENTURERS

*He had a strange feeling as the slow gurgling stream slipped by:
his old life lay behind in the mists, dark adventure lay in front.*



The following pages show you how to craft a Player-hero drawn from one of six heroic cultures, and answering to one of six different callings.

Using the guidelines presented in this chapter, you will create your own hero, complete with strengths and weaknesses, possessions, and aspirations.

The character creation process consists of a number of steps, and aims to create fictional individuals that are as close as possible to their player's wishes, and that at the same time conform to the source material. The Loremaster should assist players during this process, providing insight into the rules when needed, or simply advising a player to make choices that are both true to the game's setting and make for a satisfying character to play.

YOUR CHARACTERS

To create a character, each player must first choose a heroic culture, selecting the one that is closest to the hero concept that they have in mind. All cultures presented in this volume belong to the Free Peoples, brave nations that refuse the darkness and are often at open war with it.

They represent the main choices for roleplaying in the Westlands of Eriador:

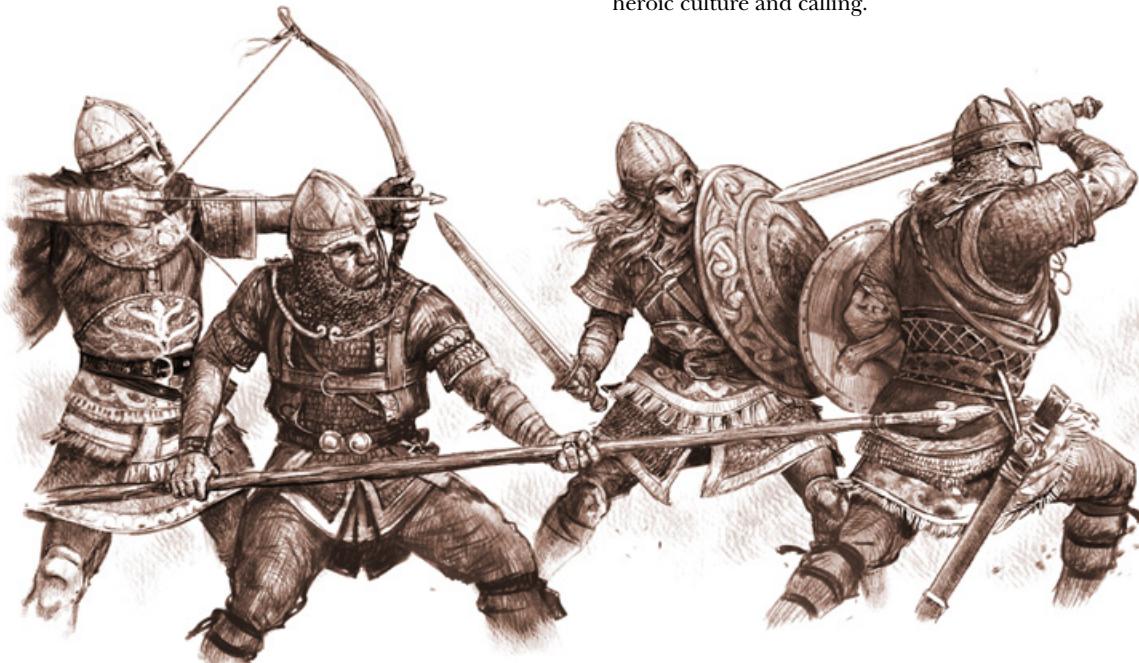
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Bardings
2. Dwarves of Durin's Folk
3. Elves of Lindon
4. Hobbits of the Shire
5. Men of Bree
6. Rangers of the North | page 28
page 31
page 34
page 37
page 40
page 42 |
|---|--|

Players refer to the chosen heroic culture writeup page and compile all the required information onto their character sheets (see Appendix).

Once all steps concerning heroic culture have been completed, players proceed to choose a calling appropriate to Middle-earth, selecting one from among Captain, Champion, Messenger, Scholar, Treasure Hunter, and Warden.

Player-heroes are then completed determining their ability scores, and selecting their starting equipment.

Last, but not least, all players cooperate in adding details about how their newly-created adventurers met each other and formed a Company (see page 16). A Company may be composed of adventurers of any kind, but the sum of its parts is going to be influenced by the Player-heroes' selection of heroic culture and calling.



HEROIC CULTURES

Bilbo began to feel there really was something of a bold adventurer about himself after all...

In Middle-earth, the culture to which an adventurer belongs often defines them more profoundly than simply in terms of customs and traditions. For this reason, the most important choice that players must make is to select the culture of origin of their adventurers.

Each heroic culture's writeup is composed along the same format of presentation, illustrated in the following paragraphs.

DESCRIPTION

This section offers a number of details defining the appearance of a typical hero belonging to that culture and includes information about their martial tradition.

TYPICAL NAMES

Every name in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* has been carefully crafted, building upon solid linguistic foundations, and represents a precise cultural influence. The native language of every character-type presented in this chapter has been identified, and a list of personal names appropriate to each culture is provided.

CULTURAL TRAITS

This section provides a description of each culture's peculiar features — traits that are common to all members of that culture. This includes the languages known by every character type, the age range of the average adventurer, and a rough indication of the starting resources available to a member of that culture, in the form of a standard of living (see *Chapter 4: Equipment*, for more information on a Player-hero's standard of living).

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds reveal something about the origins of the Player-heroes, helping players in visualising their previous experiences and identity. This section includes six different backgrounds to choose from.

Each background provides a Player-hero with two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency, and two distinctive features. All

Player-heroes start the game with the tools their background grants proficiency with, in addition to their equipment.

CUSTOMISING A BACKGROUND

Players may want to tweak some of the features of a background so it better fits their hero. To customise a background, a player can replace one distinctive feature with any other one, and choose any two skills and a tool proficiency.

INSPIRATION IN MIDDLE-EARTH

In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, the Loremaster may grant inspiration to the players for the usual reasons — for example to reward them for playing their characters in a compelling way. In particular, this may happen when they play them according to the distinctive features provided by their chosen background.

MANY TONGUES

Different languages can provide intriguing role-playing opportunities, if the Loremaster and the players are interested. This shouldn't get in the way of the fun, however. While Tolkien used the linguistic differences among the various realms of Middle-earth to good narrative effect, he also found it simpler to avoid steep cultural barriers and gave most ethnic groups (even Orcs and other more fantastical creatures, like Ents) at least a passing knowledge of what constituted a 'lingua franca,' the so-called Common Speech, or Westron. This allows players who don't want to deal with the complex relations between the various peoples and their languages to ignore the entire subject altogether without damaging the setting. But if you are willing to explore this angle, it is certainly worth investigating.

BARDINGS

He was a descendant in long line of Girion, Lord of Dale, whose wife and child had escaped down the Running River from the ruin long ago.

The Bardings are Northmen of noble origins hailing from Wilderland, far off to the east. They rebuilt their city of Dale from its ashes after the slaying of the Dragon Smaug and they earned a new prosperity trading with nearby kingdoms of Elves and Dwarves.

Each year, Barding merchants reach new faraway lands, as they look outside their borders to expand their trade and influence. Sometimes, warriors follow in their wake, hoping to prove their mettle against worthy adversaries, inspired by their King's slaying of the Dragon.

DESCRIPTION

Strong in body and fearless in spirit, the Northmen are the denizens of Middle-earth that many consider to be nearest in kin to the Men of the West. They are strong-limbed, with fair hair, although dark or even black hair is not unknown. Barding men tend to keep beards, and often let their hair grow to reach their shoulders. Women adventurers braid their hair in long, tight tresses.

When abroad they may be recognised by their gear, as they often carry equipment of superior make. Unlike most denizens of Wilderland, Bardings prefer to use swords over axes, and naturally favour the bow, after the example of their King.

TYPICAL NAMES

Like most Northmen, Bardings often name their children after a renowned ancestor or relative, or choose a name beginning with the same sound or sharing one element with that of the father (whose name is often given with their first name when introduced formally — for example, Lifstan, son of Leiknir, or Ingrith, daughter of Ingolf).

Sample Female Names: Aldrif, Asfrid, Asny, Astrith, Bera, Bergdis, Dagny, Dalla, Eilif, Erna, Eydis, Estrild, Frida, Geira, Gerda, Grimhild, Gundrid, Gunnhild, Halla, Halldis, Hild, Holma, Inga, Ingirun, Ingrith, Kelda, Lif, Linhild, Ragna, Runa, Saldis, Sigga, Signy, Solveig, Thora, Thorhild, Thorleif, Ulfhild, Ulfrun, Una, Vigdís, Walda.

Sample Male Names: Aegir, Arn, Brandulf, Domarr, Erland, Farald, Gautarr, Hafgrim, Hjalmar, Ingolf, Ketilmund, Kol, Kolbeinn, Leiknir, Lodin, Lomund, Magni, Mord, Munan, Nari, Nefstan, Nerulf, Oddmarr, Ornolf, Ottarr, Reinald, Runolf, Sandarr, Saxulf, Sigdan, Sigfast, Sigvald, Sigward, Sigmund, Skarf, Skefill, Smidur, Steinarr, Torwald, Ulfarr, Unnarr, Valbrand

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Charisma scores each increase by 1.

Adventuring Age: 18-40. Bardings rarely become adventurers before their 18th year, and retire in their forties, when they return home to serve their family and folk.

Size. Bardings average between 5 and 6 feet tall, tending toward the higher end. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Archers of Dale. You have proficiency with the great bow.

Starting Virtue. You gain one cultural virtue of your choice (see page 80).

Trading People. You have proficiency in the Persuasion skill.

Languages. You can speak, read and write Westron and Dalish, a language that can be described as a very old form of the Common Speech.

Standard of Living: Prosperous. The city of Dale and nearby Esgaroth are successful trading towns. Those among the Bardings who choose a life of adventure are usually members of less affluent families — yet, their wealth is still superior to that of most of the denizens of Eriador.



BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

DRAGON STORIES

Your family told many tales of Smaug the Dragon, from its arrival long ago to its death at the hand of your lord, King Bard. After his victory your family reclaimed their ancestral home in Dale. But now, the only dragons in Dale grace the painted signs of inns, and so you have left your home in search of adventure.

Skill Proficiencies: Explore, Old Lore

Tool Proficiency: A musical instrument of your choice

Distinctive Features: Eager, Proud

BY HAMMER AND ANVIL

Your parents paid richly for a Dwarf-smith to take you as an apprentice in his forge, and you worked hard under his severe discipline, to prove that your craft could reach his people's high standards. In the long hours you spent hammering on the anvil under the close scrutiny of your master, you have learnt that it is possible to create amazing things, but it is only by putting your heart into your work that you can succeed in creating a masterpiece.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Intimidation

Tool Proficiency: Smith's tools

Distinctive Features: Proud, Wilful

HEALING HANDS

You have long served on a trading boat from Esgaroth, first leaving the Long Lake when you were very young. Once, staying for months in a distant town in Dorwinion, waiting for a caravan from the East to arrive, you fell victim to a foreign sickness, and were succoured by a lady speaking a strange tongue. She saved your life, and taught you how to save others in time of need.

Skill Proficiencies: Medicine, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Herbalism kit or water vehicles

Distinctive Features: Bold, Generous

GIFTED SENSES

You are the first to notice when things are out of place, or just don't smell or sound right. Others have learned to pay attention to your intuition, and invite you to help them, since you may see something they missed. Little did you realise how far from home this would carry you.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Perception

Tool Proficiency: Brewer's supplies or cook's utensils

Distinctive Features: Generous, Wilful

A PATIENT HUNTER

Faithful to your ancestors' heritage, your family never embraced the ways of the merchants of Esgaroth, and when you were a child, your father spent long days hunting. For a few years after the death of the Dragon, hunting was a dangerous trade, bearing little fruit, as the land was still recovering from the Desolation of Smaug. But now the land is again blooming with every new spring, and birds and animals alike are returning in ever greater numbers.

Skill Proficiencies: Hunting, Nature

Tool Proficiency: Leatherworker's tools or woodcarver's tools

Distinctive Features: Bold, Fierce

WORDWEAVER

King Bard earned his throne by accomplishing a feat deemed unthinkable by most, setting an example for generations to come. But it is another deed that caught your interest and fired your imagination: that of the witty halfling who crossed words with Smaug the Golden in his lair. While you yourself do not expect to ever see a living Dragon, you look forward to your chance to win renown with your cunning.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: A gaming set of your choice

Distinctive Features: Eager, Fair-spoken



DWARVES OF DURIN'S FOLK

Only on the Road would travellers be found, most often Dwarves, hurrying along on business of their own, and with no help and few words to spare for strangers.

The Dwarves are an ancient and proud folk, whose customs and traditions are mostly unknown to outsiders. A dwindling people, they have recently recovered some of their lost greatness, and a Dwarven King reigns once again under the Lonely Mountain, in Wilderland.

Many Dwarves cross into Eriador from the East, on their way to their mines in the Blue Mountains. They can often be seen marching along the East-West Road that runs through the Shire and ends at the Grey Havens.

DESCRIPTION

The Dwarves are exceedingly strong for their height, and hard to break or corrupt, but often at odds with other folks over old quarrels or new slights. They are short and stocky, with robust limbs and heads crowned with long hair and longer beards that give them their typically elderly appearance. When on a journey or in battle they plait their forked beards and thrust them into their belts.

In battle most Dwarves use axes and swords, but those belonging to their easternmost kin wield heavy two-handed mattocks, a weapon derived from their mining tools.

TYPICAL NAMES

All Dwarves receive a true name at birth that they do not reveal to members of other folks, and adopt another name in the tradition of their neighbours. This custom has been in use for so long that a number of names have become traditionally associated with Dwarves, and are used almost exclusively by them. Dwarves of renown are sometimes given an honorific title, celebrating an exceptional deed or distinctive quality (for example, Thorin Oakenshield or Dáin Ironfoot).

Sample Female Names: Adís, Afrid, Agda, Bersa, Birna, Dagrún, Dís, Drífa, Edda, Elin, Fenja, Frida, Geira, Gísla, Hadda, Hón, Ida, Ilmr, Jóra, Kára, Kóna, Líf, Línhild, Már, Mist, Nál, Oda, Ósk, Rán, Rinda, Sefa, Syn, Tóra, Trana, Úlfrún, Vírún, Yrr.

Sample Male Names: Ai, Anar, Beli, Bláin, Borin, Burin, Bruni, Farin, Flói, Frár, Frerin, Frór, Gínar, Gróin, Grór, Hanar, Hepti, Iari, Lófar, Lóni, Náli, Nár, Niping, Nói, Núr, Nýrád, Ónar, Póri, Regin, Sviðr, Veig, Vidar

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 2.

Adventuring Age: 50–100. Dwarves generally start their life on the road in their fifties, and do not usually consider retiring before their nineties. Around that time, many among them choose to dedicate themselves solely to the perfection of their crafts.

Size. Dwarves stand between 4 and 5 feet tall and average about 150 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

Axes of the Dwarves. You have proficiency with the battle axe, great axe, and mattock.

Endurance of the Dwarves. Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by an additional 1 every time you gain a level.

Make Light of Burdens. Armour doesn't impose disadvantage on your fatigue saving throws, and your carrying capacity (including the weight you can carry before you are encumbered or heavily encumbered, and the weight you can push, drag or lift) is doubled.

Tool Proficiencies. You have proficiency with the artisan's tools of your choice: jeweller's tools, mason's tools, or smith's tools.

Languages. You can speak, read and write Westron and Khuzdul, the secret language of the Dwarves.

Standard of Living: Prosperous. With the fabulous Dragon-hoard of Erebor reclaimed and their kingdom restored, the Dwarves of Durin's Folk are the richest of the seven houses.

Subculture. All Dwarves display the traits described so far, but centuries of war against Dragons and Orcs have divided them, splitting the folk of Durin into three sun-dewed Dwarf-kingdoms — the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains, the Dwarves of Erebor, and the Dwarves of the Iron Hills — while others became a wandering people. Choose one of these subcultures.

DWARF OF EREBOR

For many long years, the Dwarves were denied the Lonely Mountain, as the Dragon made it its lair. But with the death of Smaug, the kingdom lives again and riches flow down the river, as in the songs of old.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Wrights of the Mountain. You gain proficiency with the artisan's tools of your choice: jewellery's tools, mason's tools, or smith's tools. If you are already proficient with the tools of your choice, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with them. Additionally, whenever you make an Intelligence check related to the origin of jewellery, metal-work, or stone-work, you are considered proficient in the Old Lore skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

Extra Language. You can speak, read, and write Dalish.

DWARF OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

The folk who now inhabit these ancient mountains are more likely to be scholars or musicians than miners.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Songs of the Halls. You gain proficiency in the Old Lore skill, and with a musical instrument of your choice.



DWARF OF THE IRON HILLS

Your family has worked in the mines beneath the Iron Hills for generations, earning a living by chasing veins of the ore for which those mountains are named.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Shod with Iron. You have proficiency with all armour and shields.

WANDERING DWARF

Those Dwarves who didn't go east to Erebor and the Iron Hills or west to the Blue Mountains carve out a living as wandering craftsmen and traders. With no forge of their own, they take work where they can find it, but always look north to the lost realm of their ancestors, seeking to restore their place in the world and glory to their lost kingdom.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Wandering People. You gain proficiency in the Travel skill.

BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

BITTER EXILE

Your ancestors fled their home in the far North, and you grew up hearing stories of lost Dwarf-halls fallen to Orc-kind or burnt to cinders by Dragons. It is your ambition to return to those mountains and set things right.

Skill Proficiencies: Explore, Old Lore

Tool Proficiency: A musical instrument of your choice

Distinctive Features: Fierce, Proud

ELOQUENT ORATOR

The hardships endured by your folk during two ages of the world have inspired many songs. But the words that come easier to your lips are those recounting feats of great cunning, not those about deeds of valour. It is by your ingenuity that you seek the fall of your adversaries.

Skill Proficiencies: Persuasion, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: Calligrapher's supplies

Distinctive Features: Cunning, Lordly



FAR TRADER

By the reckoning of the Dwarves, you were only a stripling when you left your home to follow your kin along the trading roads. You have since seen many places and met different folks eager to trade goods for the product of Dwarven handiwork, and your heart burns with a desire to see more.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Land vehicles

Distinctive Features: Cunning, Proud

THE GRIEF OF AZANULBIZAR

A great war was fought between the Dwarves and the Orcs of the Misty Mountains about 170 years ago. The parents and grandparents of most Dwarves, including yours, remember the horrors of that war; you have vowed to mete out justice to all Orc-kind.

Skill Proficiencies: Hunting, Intimidation

Tool Proficiency: Smith's tools

Distinctive Features: Fierce, Stern

A LIFE OF TOIL

Your ancestors crafted wondrous things out of shining stones and precious metals, while you have been forced to labour hard in the mines for far less noble ore. Unfortunately, to this day, most ancient Dwarf-holds are no more than Dragon's lairs or Orc-infested pits. You toil patiently, peering into the gloom with eyes hungry for the gleaming of gems and gold.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Perception

Tool Proficiency: Mason's tools

Distinctive Features: Secretive, Wilful

A PENETRATING GAZE

Your elder sibling instructed you to judge others by their deeds, not their words, especially when dealing with the fair-spoken Elves. But in time you have come to trust your instincts above all else, as your heart is not easily swayed. Thieves and liars do not dare to meet your eyes, as you seem able to lay bare their plots.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Investigation

Tool Proficiency: Pipes

Distinctive Features: Wary, Wilful

ELVES OF LINDON

'Yes, it is Elves,' said Frodo. 'One can meet them sometimes in the Woody End.'

The Fair Folk of Eriador have dwelt in the Westlands since before the drowning of Beleriand. They are all members of the Firstborn, displaying a wisdom beyond the reach of Men. They rarely leave their sanctuaries in the Grey Havens, for these are their fading years.

More and more leave Middle-earth sailing West on grey ships, never to return. Those who still remain live mostly along the western coasts, where once were found great kingdoms of their kindred.

DESCRIPTION

All Elves are endowed with tremendous vitality and great vigour. They are not subject to illness or old age, and thus can dwell within the circles of the world until they choose to leave it, or are slain.

In battle, most Elves carry bows and spears. Many wield swords too, but by ancient tradition some still favour axes.

TYPICAL NAMES

For the most part, Elves bear names fashioned in their own, fair tongue – the Sindarin speech.

Sample Female Names: Aranel, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elníth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindís, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Nar-niel, Orothél, Tarandís.

Sample Male Names: Amras, Aredhel, Beleganor, Belegon, Calanhir, Carmagor, Dagorhir, Durandir, Edrahil, Ellahir, Finncalan, Fuindor, Galdagor, Galdor, Hallas, Hirimlad, Ithildir, Lascalan, Linaith, Mablin, Malanor, Nauros, Orgalad, Pelegorn, Sargon.

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 2.

Adventuring Age: 100–500. Elves may leave their homes at any time after they reach adulthood (at about a century of age). Adventurers older than 300 years are rare, as in time all Elves find the sea-longing that lies deep within their hearts to become irresistible.

Size. Elves have slender builds and are taller than most Men, standing well over 6 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Elvish Dreams. Elves don't need to sleep. Instead, they meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit as from 8 hours of sleep.

Elven-skill. By virtue of their birthright, Elves are capable of reaching levels of finesse unattainable by mortals. If you are not miserable and make an ability check that lets you add your proficiency bonus, you can obtain a magical success (see page 20). You can do so a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Immortal Folk. You are immune to ageing and disease.

Keen Eyes of the Elves. You have proficiency in the Perception skill, and dim light doesn't impose disadvantage on your Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Westron and Sindarin, the Grey-elven tongue.

Subculture. All Elves display the traits described so far, but the Fair Folk have experienced many sunderings since the Elder Days. In this book, only the Elves of Lindon subculture is available. Future supplements will introduce new subcultures of Elves.



ELVES OF LINDON

The Elves of Lindon are an ancient and wise folk, ruled by Círdan the Shipwright. Wandering Companies can at times be encountered on the roads leading east beyond the Tower Hills in spring and autumn.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity and Intelligence scores each increase by 1.

Elven-lore. You have proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Medicine, Nature, or Old Lore.

Shipwrights and Singers. You have proficiency with the tools of your choice: carpenter's tools, water vehicles, or a musical instrument of your choice.

Standard of Living: Frugal. The Fair Folk of Eriador live in harmony with Middle-earth and have little or no use for those things that others consider precious. They lack nothing, and craft beautiful things using the richest materials, but they don't profit from their wealth the way other folks do.

BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

THE CALL OF THE SEA

No Elf could live by the Sea and not be moved by it. The crashing of waves is a second heartbeat to you; but you do not want to depart Middle-earth yet, for you feel that you have some purpose to fulfil before you sail away. You are not certain what lies in your future, but you are committed to finding out.

Skill Proficiencies: Performance, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: A musical instrument of your choice

Distinctive Features: Patient, Subtle

MAKER OF SHIPS

You studied your chosen craft under the expert shipbuilders of Círdan; but though the long firth of Lune stirs your heart, you feel the world is wide, and you have lived your life on its edge. Perhaps it is time to go where no ship can take you...

Skill Proficiencies: Acrobatics, Athletics

Tool Proficiency: Carpenter's tools

Distinctive Features: Eager, Lordly

A MERCHANT FAMILY

Elven ships still sometimes sail to Dol Amroth and Pelargir to trade with the Men of Gondor. You have traded with mortal folk for years, but the Corsairs of Umbar grow more numerous and the lords of Gondor more cautious. Now ships seldom sail south, and you have decided to travel elsewhere.

Skill Proficiencies: Persuasion, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Water vehicles

Distinctive Features: Fair-spoken, Lordly

**SKY-WATCHER**

When aboard ship, you study the skies and predict the weather. With much practice, you became adept at this, and can detect a storm brewing hundreds of miles away. Now, when you are at home in the Havens, you notice strange movements in the air coming from the south-east, where lies Mordor, the Land of Shadows.

Skill Proficiencies: Explore, Nature

Tool Proficiency: Navigator's tools

Distinctive Features: Patient, Wary

TOWER GUARD

Your folk guards the Tower Hills, lest the Enemy benefit from great secrets hidden there. Sometimes, you have been tasked with keeping the boldest of the little folk away from the towers, and by Mithrandir's advice, you keep a secret watch on their border. You know not what destiny these Hobbits have, but a fondness for them grows in your heart.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Stealth

Tool Proficiency: Cartographer's tools

Distinctive Features: Subtle, Wary

VISITOR TO THE MOUNTAINS

Not content to stay in your homeland, you were drawn to the Blue Mountains and its folk. Most Dwarves want nothing to do with an overcurious Elf, but a few taught you enough for you to appreciate their skills and love for beautiful objects. You wonder what you could learn in other lands, and now prepare for a longer journey.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Old Lore

Tool Proficiency: Jeweller's tools or smith's tools

Distinctive Features: Fair-spoken, Inquisitive

hobbits of the shire

...he wished to go and see the great mountains, and hear the pine-trees and the waterfalls, and explore the caves, and wear a sword instead of a walking-stick.

Hobbits are a small and merry folk, possessing a love for time-honoured traditions and respectable ways, and a strong dislike for anything out of the ordinary. If Hobbits had their way, the days would go by in an unchanging world, as they have since anyone can remember. At least, in their land, the Shire.

But since the return of Mr Bilbo Baggins from his adventure with a group of Dwarves and a travelling Wizard, something has changed. Stories about remote lands, dark woods, Giants, Elves, and forgotten halls beneath the earth have started to circulate among Hobbits of a more adventurous sort. And with every year, another one or two discreetly disappear to go and have adventures.

DESCRIPTION

Hobbits are much smaller than Men, even smaller than Dwarves, and might be mistaken for children of Men by those who do not know of their existence. They have never been warlike, but for all their gentle appearance they are surprisingly tough, and difficult to intimidate or kill. A merry folk, Hobbits possess a cheerful spirit and a friendliness that makes them good companions.

When pushed to resort to weapons, Hobbits choose short swords and hunting bows, which they can shoot with uncanny precision.

TYPICAL NAMES

Hobbit names are composed of a first name and a family name. First names for men are usually simple and short, with women being often given names of flowers or precious stones, but among the older families a custom survives of giving more heroic and high-sounding names, whose origin can be traced back to a time before the Shire.

Sample Female Names: Adaldrida, Amaranth, Asphodel, Belba, Bell, Berylla, Camellia, Daisy, Eglantine, Estella, Gilly, Hanna, Lily, Malva, Marigold, May, Melilot, Menegilda, Menthia, Mirabella, Myrtle, Pearl, Peony, Pervinca, Pimpernel, Primrose, Primula, Prisca, Rosamunda, Ruby, Salvia.

Sample Male Names: Andwise, Berilac, Bungo, Cottar, Doderic, Dudo, Erling, Fastred, Ferumbras, Folco, Gorhendad, Griffo, Halfred, Hamson, Ilberic, Isembold, Isengar, Longo,

Marmadas, Marroc, Mungo, Odo, Orgulas, Otho, Posco, Regnard, Robin, Rudigar, Sadoc, Saradas, Tobold, Tolman.

Sample Family Names: Baggins, Boffin, Bolger, Bracegirdle, Brandybuck, Brown, Brownlock, Bunce, Burrows, Cotton, Gamgee, Gardner, Goldworthy, Goodbody, Goodchild, Grubb, Headstrong, Hornblower, Maggot, Noakes, North-Tooks, Proudfoot, Puddifoot, Roper, Rumble, Sackville, Smallburrow, Took, Twofoot, Whitfoot.

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Adventuring Age: 25–60. Hobbits do not abandon their comfortable lives easily, but when they do they usually wait for their coming of age at 33. A particularly reckless fellow might feel the call to adventure when in their tweens, as Hobbits call their twenties.

Size. Hobbits average about 3 feet tall and weigh about 50 pounds. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

Hobbit Elusiveness. You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

Hobbit-sense. You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against Shadow.

Pipe-weed Lore. You have proficiency with pipes.

Unobtrusive. You can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than yours.

Languages. You speak, read and write Westron, preserving the use of a few words and names of your own forgotten tongue.

Standard of Living: Common. Hobbits live in peace, their land is well-tilled and their borders protected, but theirs is an isolated island in the middle of a desolate region, and trading is an uncommon occurrence.

Subculture. All Hobbits display the traits described so far, but in their wandering days the Shire-folk were divided into three distinct groups: the Fallohides, the Harfoots, and the Stoors. Although those branches today are blended together in most families, there is a tendency for an individual Hobbit to display some characteristics that can be traced back to one of the three ancestral origins. Choose one of these subcultures.

FALLOHIDE

Originally a northerly branch, Fallohides were bold and adventurous, possessing more skill in language and song than any other craft.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Skill in Language and Song. You have proficiency with the tools of your choice: calligrapher's supplies, cartographer's tools, or a musical instrument.

HARFOOT

Harfoots were friendly with Dwarves in ancient times, sharing their love of living underground and possessing neat and nimble hands.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Skilful with Tools. You have proficiency with the artisan's tools of your choice: herbalism kit, mason's tools, or weaver's tools.

STOOR

Heavier in build than most Hobbits, Stoors favoured riversides and were more familiar with Men than most Hobbits.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Riverside Dweller. You have proficiency with the tools of your choice: carpenter's tools, water vehicles, or woodcarver's tools.



BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

BUCKLANDER

Your parents belong to the folk of Buckland, and you were brought up on the 'wrong side of the Brandywine River', as they say. If half the tales be true, members of your family have always displayed a certain queerness of character, and an unusual fighting spirit, a strangeness you seem to possess yourself.

Skill Proficiencies: Hunting, Perception

Tool Proficiency: Carpenter's tools or water vehicles

Distinctive Features: Rustic, Wary

ON PATROL

Your aunt was a Shirriff, and often brought you along with her when she went 'beating the bounds', that is, when she was appointed to watch the Shire's borders for Outsiders. More often than not, her watch included a visit to The Ivy Bush, a small inn on the Bywater Road. There, you heard the best stories over deep mugs of excellent beer.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Brewer's supplies

Distinctive Features: Inquisitive, Wary

RESTLESS FARMER

You were born into a family of farmers in the Southfarthing, where the best pipe-weed grows. To satisfy your curiosity — and your parents' expectations — you started to work at a very early age, learning a lot from farmhands and traders. From time to time, you feel your closeness to the earth move you, awakening a desire to sleep in the fields, under a canopy of stars.

Skill Proficiencies: Animal Handling, Nature

Tool Proficiency: Cook's utensils or herbalism kit

Distinctive Features: Faithful, Rustic



TOO MANY PATHS TO TREAD

Your father was a mason and you were supposed to take his place in his workshop in Hardbottle at the age of 33. But before that time, a mysterious wanderlust took you and you were away from home for months. When you came back, you renounced your position, to the outrage of your whole neighbourhood. But you know that secretly your father approves; he always dreamed of leaving the Shire to 'go and see Elves'!

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Explore

Tool Proficiency: Mason's tools

Distinctive Features: Eager, Merry

TOOKISH BLOOD

Yours is a honourable family of potters from the Marish, Eastfarthing. One day, something Tookish stirred in your blood and overcame your respectability. It first happened on your way home one night, when you spotted some outlandish folk around a bright campfire. When you described them to your grandmother, she told you they were Dwarves, on their way

to the Blue Mountains. From that night you started to shun well-trodden paths, hoping to meet other wayfarers secretly crossing the Shire.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: Potter's tools

Distinctive Features: Eager, Honourable

WITTY GENTLEHOBBIT

You come from a well-to-do family of landed Westfarthing gentry, living in a Hobbit-hole in Michel Delving. It is rumoured that your great-grandfather once vanished, only to show up three days later at the local inn, talking of a giant Tree-man he had seen on the North Moors. Some believe your family's fortune is based on the giant's hoard your ancestor discovered, but you have been able to dispel such rumours with your humorous remarks.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Tool Proficiency: A gaming set of your choice

Distinctive Features: Fair-spoken, Merry

MEN OF BREE

*“...four miles along the Road you'll come upon a village,
Bree under Bree-hill, with doors looking westward.”*

The inhabitants of the Bree-land and its four villages lying about Bree-hill are the descendants of the ancient people that first dwelt in the region known today as Eriador, the Lone-lands. Few have survived the turmoils that have ravaged the area, but they are still there now.

Today, the Men of Bree live at an old meeting of ways, and even if the traffic was far greater in former days, travellers of various sorts still make their way along those roads. Whoever enters the common room of the Inn of Bree is sure to hear strange tales and news from afar, and maybe be swept away by them.

DESCRIPTION

Most Men of Bree are brown-haired and rather short, and tend to be stocky and broad. This, combined with their cheerful disposition, is the reason why they do not appear as outlandish as most foreigners do to their neighbours, the inhabitants of the Shire. But like Hobbits, their appearance can be deceiving: the Men of Bree can be simple and friendly, but they are independent and wise in their own way.

Not being of a warlike disposition, the Bree-folk favour simple weapons, derived from everyday tools and hunting implements.

TYPICAL NAMES

The Men of Bree use names that to foreign ears sound similar to those used by Hobbits in the Shire (Hobbits beg to differ, of course).

Sample Female Names: Daisy, Emma, Etta, Fay, Fern, Flora, Gert, Holly, Lily, Myrtle, Poppy, Rose, Sage, Tilly, Violet.

Sample Male Names: Alfred, Artie, Bill, Bob, Carl, Ed, Fred, Giles, Herb, Larry, Nob, Oswald, Percy, Perry, Sid, Tom, Harry.

Sample Family Names: Appledore, Asterfire, Bellsap, Briarleave, Butterbur, Cherryborn, Chesterstout, Droverwind, Ferny, Foxglow, Goatleaf, Hardybough, Heathertoes, Hedge-don, Kettlegrass, Lilyhawk, Mossburn, Mugworts, Oakstout, Pickthorn, Pollenroad, Rushlight, Shrubrose, Sweetroot, Thistlewool, Wayward.

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom and Charisma scores each increase by 1.

Adventuring Age: 18–40. Actual adventurers from Bree-land are rare indeed. If they leave their villages at all, they do it when the vigour of youth is in their limbs, and usually return home to settle down before their fortieth year.

Size. Most of the ‘Big’ Bree-folk are not much taller than 5 feet and tend to be broad. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Pipe-weed Lore. You have proficiency with pipes.

See Through a Brick Wall in Time. You have proficiency in the Insight skill.

Starting Virtue. You gain one cultural virtue of your choice (see page 80).

Languages. You speak, read and write Westron, albeit slightly altered in a local dialect.

Standard of Living: Common. Bree-land is not as wealthy as it once was, but these days the inhabitants of the four villages are no more rustic than their neighbours in the Shire, and no less well-off.

BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

CROSSROADS OF THE NORTH

Your family has run a tailoring business in Bree since forever, serving the needs of Bree-landers and wanderers alike. Your grandfather even says he once had Elves on his doorstep — and indeed, their coin was as good as anyone else’s. You worked in the family business when you were younger, until a great desire came upon you to follow the Road and see where all those strangers and their gold come from.

Skill Proficiencies: Explore, Persuasion

Tool Proficiency: Cobbler’s tools, leatherworker’s tools, or weaver’s tools

Distinctive Features: Faithful, Generous

FOREST-DWELLER

Your kin dwell in the Chetwood, east of Bree. Most of the forest is wholesome, but parts of it — especially near the Midgewater Marshes — have their own perils. As a child you learned to find food that was safe to eat near certain old

trees that whispered to one another in the night. It was worth creeping out of Archet and risking the dangers of the wood, though, because on some nights, you could hear Elves singing in the wind.

Skill Proficiencies: Nature, Stealth

Tool Proficiency: Herbalism kit

Distinctive Features: Cunning, Rustic

GATE-WARDEN

Great care is kept in the Bree-land to keep out of its borders anyone, or anything, that would make trouble. In addition to your ordinary job as a woodworker you served as one of the gate-wardens, and spent many cold, lonely nights on watch, with only the stars and hooting owls for company.

Skill Proficiencies: Intimidation, Perception

Tool Proficiency: Carpenter's tools or woodcarver's tools

Distinctive Features: Inquisitive, Patient

NO LONGER FREE FROM CARE AND FEAR

Many years ago you discovered that the Bree-land is far from being safe, but is rather a small island surrounded by unseen foes. You haven't told anyone as they won't believe you. But you know for sure, because you have listened to the stories that the Rangers tell when they trust somebody. Now you know that a Shadow is returning, and the day when you will go out and seek the Rangers is near.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Investigation

Tool Proficiency: A gaming set or a musical instrument of your choice

Distinctive Features: Inquisitive, Rustic

OFF WITH DWARVES

Once, Dwarwen travellers passing through Bree on their way to the Blue Mountains took you with them to care for their ponies. You became friends, if that is a word that can describe the grudging respect you earned from that stern folk. When you returned home to Bree you realised that you developed a wanderlust that will never allow you to sit idle in Bree anymore.

Skill Proficiencies: Animal Handling, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Land vehicles

Distinctive Features: Fair-spoken, Faithful

UP THE GREENWAY

Your grandfather was not born around here. He made a long journey up from the South, across the Gap of Rohan from beyond the Isen. He crossed the river at Tharbad with his wife and children and settled here by Bree-hill. The North is cold and wild compared to the southern lands, but the tales your grandfather used to tell about the fierce kings of the South never made you doubt his choice.

Skill Proficiencies: Old Lore, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: Mason's tools, potter's tools, or smith's tools

Distinctive Features: Fair-spoken, True-hearted



RANGERS OF THE NORTH

...in the wild lands beyond Bree there were mysterious wanderers. The Breefolk called them Rangers, and knew nothing of their origin.

The Rangers of the North are a secret people, severely diminished in number with the passing of a thousand years. They wander in disguise among the ruins of what was once their kingdom of Arnor, tirelessly patrolling its many paths and roads.

While the years have lengthened, the task of the Rangers has always been the same: to keep the folk of Eriador free from care and fear. They labour secretly, keeping to themselves, and rarely giving their names to the travellers they save or to the folk whose farms they guard at night, when evil things come out from dark places.

DESCRIPTION

The Rangers are the last descendants in the North of the Dúnedain, kings among Men that once came to Middle-earth over the Sea out of Westernesse. When they do not disguise their features, they are tall and lordly, towering above most Men. They are often silent and grim of countenance, and look wise and mature beyond their years.

When in the Wild, the Rangers of the North wear comfortable but weather-beaten garments, favouring high leather boots and heavy cloaks of dark grey or green cloth, with ample hoods that can be cast over a worn helm.

Typical Names

The Rangers of the North retain an ancient tradition of naming their children using the Sindarin speech.

Sample Female Names: Anwen, Arbereth, Berúthiel, Baraniel, Calanril, Celenneth, Elníth, Eraniel, Finduilas, Gilraen, Gilraeth, Gloredhel, Idril, Ioreth, Ivorwen, Lôrwend, Lothíriel, Luindís, Meneloth, Moriel, Morwen, Narieth, Nar-niel, Orothêl, Tarandís.

Sample Male Names: Adrahil, Amlaith, Arvegil, Baranor, Belecthor, Bergil, Celepharn, Cirion, Damrod, Dírhael, Duinhir, Egalmoth, Eradan, Findemir, Forlong, Golasdán, Hallas, Hirluin, Ingold, Iorlas, Malvegil, Ohtar, Orodreth, Tarannon, Targon.

CULTURAL TRAITS

Your character gains the following benefits based on their cultural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength, Constitution, and Wisdom scores each increase by 1. Then, increase one ability score of your choice by 1.

Adventuring Age: 20–50. Rangers take to the Wild around the age of twenty, but may begin to go on adventures even at a younger age. They retain their strength of body and will longer than most Men, but usually cease to travel far from Eriador when they reach their fifties.

Size. Most Dúnedain stand well over 6 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Dúnedain have long shanks, and move about at great pace. Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

Wandering Folk. You have proficiency in two of the following skills of your choice: Explore, Hunting, Old Lore, Perception, Stealth, or Travel.

Languages. You can speak, read and write Westron and Sindarin.

Standard of Living: Frugal. Rangers rarely wear or carry anything whose worth cannot be measured in a practical way. Their gear or garments are never considered precious for the gleam of stone or gold, but for their capability to endure long journeys and strenuous fights.

BACKGROUNDS

Players choosing a background receive a brief personal history, two skill proficiencies, a tool proficiency and two distinctive features.

COUNSELLOR

You have been taught that the Enemy thrives upon secrecy and deception. For the plans of his servants to be laid bare, their honey-tongued lies must be exposed and their twisted words unravelled. Fortunately, you can see through their tricks quite well, and you can recognise honesty in all Men, Elves, and Dwarves.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Riddle

Tool Proficiency: Pipes

Distinctive Features: Secretive, Subtle

FAR-REACHING HERALD

You wandered the far corners of the Northern Realm and travelled to places unknown to most before you reached 14 years of age. Many miles and many weeks spent in the Wild have made you strong and fit. Your talents have been noticed, and you have become a carrier of tidings, at the service of the many Rangers spread across one of the most dangerous realms of the world.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Travel

Tool Proficiency: Land vehicles

Distinctive Features: Bold, True-hearted

HUNTER OF ORCS

Orcs raid the lone-lands of Eriador from their lairs in the mountains, causing great destruction. You protect the isolated farmsteads and communities, forcing the Orcs back to their holes. Then the cycle begins anew. Your heart cries for vengeance, but your mind fears there will be no end to this war.

Skill Proficiencies: Hunting, Stealth

Tool Proficiency: Leatherworker's tools or woodcarver's tools

Distinctive Features: Bold, Stern

KEEPER OF LORE

The history of your people is long and often obscure, and recorded only in Rivendell, away from the eyes of most of your kin. You've taken on the responsibility of telling tales of lost Arnor to whoever you meet, to spread the memory of the

bitter struggle of your folk. Fortunately, Elrond has noticed and appreciated your efforts, and allowed you to visit the Last Homely House to learn.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Old Lore

Tool Proficiency: Calligrapher's supplies

Distinctive Features: Honourable, True-hearted

PROTECTOR OF THE LAND

Your people did not always live scattered across the lone-lands. Long ago, they were rulers, nobles and artisans of great kingdoms that existed here. Those realms failed and now you've only the land itself. Keep it safe, and it will do the same for you.

Skill Proficiencies: Nature, Medicine

Tool Proficiency: Herbalism kit

Distinctive Features: Honourable, Subtle

WATCHER ON THE BORDER

Interested in the edges of things, especially maps, you were often sent to the borders of the land of your folk to keep watch on the servants of the Enemy or the simple people who live there. You've learned that the reach of the Shadow has grown, but that some simple people will not falter, though the days may grow dark.

Skill Proficiencies: Explore, Perception

Tool Proficiency: Cartographer's tools

Distinctive Features: Secretive, Stern



CALLINGS

He found himself wondering at times, especially in the autumn, about the wild lands, and strange visions of mountains that he had never seen came into his dreams.

Leaving home and setting off on the road is a courageous choice, often considered reckless by a hero's family and folk. Adventurers leave behind all they know and love, so what is it that motivates and pushes them towards danger and the unknown?

Whatever it is that motivates the Player-heroes, it must be something that for them is worth the risk of crossing swords with the curved blades of Orcs. In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, this motivation is represented by an adventurer's calling.

Each calling provides a variety of special features, such as a Captain's mastery of weapons and armour, and is capped at ten levels, an appropriate limit for adventuring in Middle-earth. At low levels, all callings give only two or three features, but as a Player-hero advances in level they gain more and their existing features often improve. Each entry in this chapter includes a

SHADOW PATHS

All calling writeups include a Shadow path, a description outlining the individual fate a calling typically leads to if a character fails to resist the Shadow's influence. The rules for Shadow Paths and corruption are found in *Chapter 8*, starting on page 140.

table summarising the benefits a calling provides at every level, and a detailed explanation of each one.

CALLING	HIT DIE	PRIMARY ABILITY	SAVING THROW PROFICIENCIES	ARMOUR & WEAPON PROFICIENCIES	DESCRIPTION
Captain	d10	Strength and Charisma	Constitution, Charisma	All armour, shields, simple and martial weapons	A valiant fighter and leader of others
Champion	d10	Strength or Dexterity	Strength, Constitution	All armour, shields, simple and martial weapons	A fierce warrior, skilled with a variety of weapons and armour
Messenger	d8	Dexterity and Charisma	Dexterity, Charisma	Light armour, simple weapons, short swords, swords	An experienced traveller and advisor, carrying tidings to distant lands
Scholar	d8	Intelligence and Wisdom	Intelligence, Wisdom	Light armour, simple weapons	A master of learning, familiar with ancient lore and healing arts alike
Treasure Hunter	d8	Dexterity	Dexterity, Intelligence	Light armour, simple weapons, short swords, swords	A cunning adventurer who seeks to recover what is lost
Warden	d10	Dexterity and Wisdom	Strength, Wisdom	Light armour, medium armour, shields, simple and martial weapons	A protector of the weak who blends martial prowess and knowledge of the land

CAPTAIN

*He stood up, and seemed suddenly to grow taller.
In his eyes gleamed a light, keen and commanding.*

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES
1st	+2	Leadership
2nd	+2	Craft or Virtue, Fighting Style
3rd	+2	Captain Title, Valiant
4th	+2	Virtue
5th	+3	Extra Attack
6th	+3	Aura of Valour, Craft or Virtue
7th	+3	Captain Title feature
8th	+3	Virtue
9th	+4	-
10th	+4	Aura of Courage, Craft or Virtue

When the world is on the brink of ruin, it is the duty of all individuals of worth to rise and take the lead, whatever the risk. You have chosen to put your judgement to the service of others, to guide them in this dark hour. But you don't want others to heed your commands out of fear or obedience — you want them to follow you because they trust you.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Captain you gain the following calling features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d10 per Captain level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 10 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per Captain level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: All armour, shields

WEAPONS: Simple weapons, martial weapons

TOOLS: None

SAVING THROWS: Constitution, Charisma

SKILLS: Choose two from Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, Persuasion, and Travel

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ◆ (a) ring-mail or (b) hide armour
- ◆ (a) a martial melee weapon and a shield or (b) a martial melee weapon and a simple melee weapon
- ◆ (a) a bow and a quiver of 20 arrows or (b) two simple melee weapons

SHADOW PATH

LURE OF POWER: When individuals are given a position of authority, either by rank, lineage, or stature, they may end up mistaking their own aggrandisement for the greater good of the people they should be guiding or keeping safe. Power is the quintessential temptation, and provides the Shadow with an easy way to win the hearts of those who desire it.

LEADERSHIP

You possess the ability to direct others to action — when under pressure, other people naturally turn to you for guidance. As an action in combat, choose a number of friendly creatures (which can include yourself) within 30 feet of you who can see or hear you and who can understand you, up to twice your proficiency bonus. Each creature can gain temporary hit points equal to your Captain level + your Charisma modifier. These temporary hit points last until they are depleted or the creature finishes a short or long rest. You must then finish a short or long rest to use this feature again.

FIGHTING STYLE

At 2nd level, you adopt a particular style of fighting as your speciality. Choose one of the following options. You cannot take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

DEFENCE: While you are wearing armour, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

DUELLING: When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

GREAT WEAPON FIGHTING: When you roll damage for an attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding with two hands, you can treat any roll of 4 or less on a damage die as a 5. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.

PROTECTION: When a creature you can see hits you or a target other than you that is within 5 feet of you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to add your proficiency bonus to the target's AC for that attack, potentially causing the attack to miss. You must be wielding a shield or a finesse weapon.

VIRTUE

At 2nd level, and again at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice (see *Chapter 4*). You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

At 2nd, 6th, and 10th level, instead of taking a virtue you can gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

CAPTAIN TITLE

At 3rd level, you receive a title as a reward for your accomplishments. Choose Chieftain or Thane, both detailed at the end of the calling description. The title you choose grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th level.

VALIANT

Starting at 3rd level, you can add half your proficiency bonus, rounded down, to any saving throw you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

AURA OF VALOUR

Starting at 6th level, whenever you or a friendly creature within 10 feet of you hit a target with a melee weapon attack, the creature can add your Charisma modifier to the damage roll. You cannot grant this bonus if you are frightened or unconscious.

AURA OF COURAGE

At 10th level, you and friendly creatures within 10 feet of you cannot be frightened while you are conscious (but can still accumulate Shadow points from Dread).

CAPTAIN TITLES

There are many titles that Captains can acquire during their career, the most common of which are the Chieftain and the Thane.

CHIEFTAIN

As a chieftain you are both a leader and a weaponmaster, accustomed to leading your comrades by jumping first into battle.

CHALLENGE

Starting at 3rd level, you can issue a challenge to a creature you can see within 10 feet of you as a bonus action. You gain advantage on melee attack rolls against the creature for 1 minute or until it drops to 0 hit points or falls unconscious. In addition, the creature must make a Wisdom (Insight) check (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier). On a failed check, the creature has disadvantage on attack rolls against targets other than you for the duration, until you attack another creature, if a creature friendly to you attacks the target, or if you end your turn more than 30 feet away from the target.

You must then finish a short or long rest to use this feature again.

PURSUER OF FOES

Starting at 7th level, creatures provoke opportunity attacks from you even if they take the Disengage action. In addition, when you hit a creature with an opportunity attack, the creature's speed becomes 0 for the rest of the turn.

"Here is Aragorn son of Arathorn, chieftain of the Dunedain of Arnor; Captain of the Host of the West..."

thane

You have sworn service to a King and serve as one of their chosen fighters. As long as war must be, you stand ready to protect the innocent and destroy your lord's enemies.

BRIGHT BLADE

Starting at 3rd level, as a bonus action, you can imbue a melee weapon that you are holding with your bravery. For 1 minute, you add your Charisma modifier to attack rolls made with that weapon (with a minimum bonus of +1). For the duration of the effect, when you hit a creature, the next attack roll against the target made by an attacker other than you has advantage if the attack is made before the start of your next turn. If you are no longer holding or carrying this weapon, or if you fall unconscious, this effect ends.

You must then finish a short or long rest to use this feature again.

TIRELESS LEADER

Starting at 7th level, you and friendly creatures within 10 feet of you suffer the effects of exhaustion as if it was one level lower (no effects at level 1, disadvantage on ability checks at level 2, and so on).

From dark Dunharro in the dim morning/with thane and captain rode Thengel's son:/to Edoras he came, the ancient halls/of the Mark-wardens mist-enshrouded...



champion

“War must be, while we defend our lives against a destroyer who would devour all...”

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES
1st	+2	Fighting Style, Surge of Vigour
2nd	+2	Craft or Virtue
3rd	+2	Champion Way
4th	+2	Virtue
5th	+3	Extra Attack
6th	+3	Craft or Virtue
7th	+3	Champion Way feature
8th	+3	Virtue
9th	+4	Indomitable
10th	+4	Extra Attack (2)

You deem that there is but one way to oppose the return of the Shadow, and that it is to conquer it by strength of arms. You are recognised as a warrior among your folk, a valiant fighter, onward into battle. For you, the road to adventure leads straight to wherever your foes prowl or hide.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Champion you gain the following calling features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d10 per Champion level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 10 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per Champion level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: All armour, shields

WEAPONS: Simple weapons, martial weapons

TOOLS: None

SAVING THROWS: Strength, Constitution

SKILLS: Choose two from Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, Intimidation, Perception, and Hunting

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ♦ (a) ring-mail or (b) hide armour or (c) leather shirt, great bow, and a quiver of 20 arrows
- ♦ (a) a martial melee weapon and a shield or (b) a martial melee weapon and a simple melee weapon
- ♦ (a) a bow and a quiver of 20 arrows or (b) two simple melee weapons

SHADOW PATH

CURSE OF VENGEANCE: Individuals who live by the sword are ever tempted to draw it, either literally or figuratively, when their will is thwarted or when they deem their honour to have been impugned by an insult. As corruption spreads in their spirit, their behaviour worsens, leading to more extreme violent reactions.

FIGHTING STYLE

You adopt a particular style of fighting as your speciality. Choose one of the following options. You cannot take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

ARCHERY: You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

DEFENCE: While you are wearing armour, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

DUELLING: When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

GREAT WEAPON FIGHTING: When you roll damage for an attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding with two hands, you can treat any roll of 4 or less on a damage die as a 5. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.

PROTECTION: When a creature you can see hits you or a target other than you that is within 5 feet of you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to add your proficiency bonus to the target's AC for that attack, potentially causing the attack to miss. You must be wielding a shield or a finesse weapon.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING: When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

SURGE OF VIGOUR

You have a limited well of stamina that you can draw on to protect yourself from harm, or to push yourself beyond your normal limits for a moment. You can use a bonus action to either take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, or Dodge action, or to regain hit points equal to $1d8 + \text{your Champion level} + \text{your Constitution modifier}$. Once you use this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

VIRTUE

At 2nd level, and again at 4th, 6th, and 8th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice. You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

At 2nd and 6th level, instead of taking a virtue you can gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

CHAMPION WAY

At 3rd level, you choose a way that you strive to follow in your combat styles and techniques. Choose Sharp-shooter or Slayer, both detailed at the end of the calling description. The way you choose grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th level.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn. The number of attacks increases to three when you reach 10th level in this calling.

INDOMITABLE

At 9th level, you become immune to being charmed or frightened (but can still accumulate Shadow points from Dread and Sorcery).

Champion ways

There are different ways for a Champion to follow, but all lead to confronting the enemy with fighting prowess.

sharp-shooter

As King Bard proved, well-placed arrow shots can slay dragons and restore lost kingdoms. You decided to follow his path by mastering ranged weapons.

BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you choose this way at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Perception skill. If you are already proficient, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

MIGHTY SHOT

Starting at 3rd level, you have learned to put all your might into your shots. Before you make an attack with a ranged weapon, you can choose to roll the weapon's damage die and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll. If the attack hits, you roll two additional weapon damage dice on the damage roll. You can deal this extra damage only once per turn.

TRUE SHOT

By 7th level, when you take the Attack action and attack with a ranged weapon on your turn, you can forgo one of your attacks. If you do so, the next hit you score with a ranged weapon before the end of your turn is a critical hit.

"That was a mighty shot in the dark, my friend!"

SLAYER

You have chosen a brutal path, maybe because you are looking to avenge a wrong you suffered. For you, the sound of battle is a joyful call.

STERNER THAN STEEL

When you choose this way at 3rd level, your hit point maximum increases by 3 and increases by 1 again whenever you gain a level in the Champion calling.

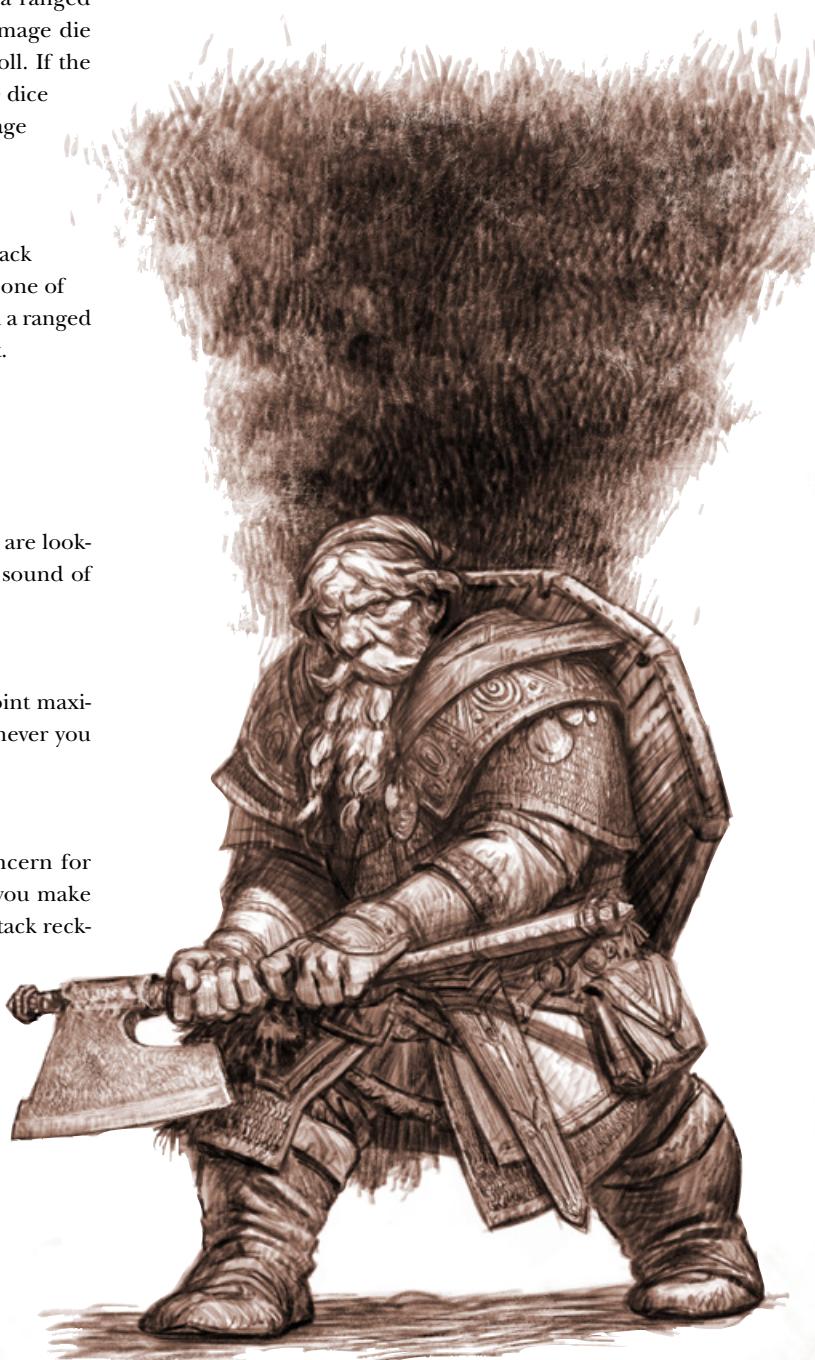
BATTLE-FURY

Starting at 3rd level, you can throw aside all concern for defence to attack with fierce desperation. When you make your first attack on your turn, you can decide to attack recklessly. Doing so gives you advantage on melee weapon attack rolls using Strength, a bonus to damage rolls equal to half your proficiency bonus (rounded down), and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage until the start of your next turn, but attack rolls against you have advantage until your next turn.

WAR-HARDENED

By 7th level, your instincts are so honed that you have advantage on initiative rolls, Strength checks, and Strength saving throws, and you cannot be surprised. To gain this benefit, you cannot be blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

"The day will come when they will perish and I shall go back!"



MESSENGER

"Elrond is sending Elves, and they will get in touch with the Rangers, and maybe with Thranduil's folk in Mirkwood."

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES	SNEAK ATTACK
1st	+2	Folk-lore, Tireless and Swift, Unarmoured Defence	-
2nd	+2	Craft or Virtue, Sneak Attack	1d6
3rd	+2	Errand Runner, Messenger Path	1d6
4th	+2	Virtue	1d6
5th	+3	Uncanny Dodge	2d6
6th	+3	Craft or Virtue, Tireless and Swift improvement	2d6
7th	+3	Messenger Path feature	2d6
8th	+3	Virtue	2d6
9th	+4	-	3d6
10th	+4	Craft or Virtue, Tireless and Swift improvement	3d6

The Wise hold that evil days lie ahead, and that to keep hope, all who fight the Enemy must be as one. Yet, many miles and centuries of isolation separate the Free Peoples, and estrangement breeds mistrust. You have decided that it is your duty to travel to distant lands, carrying tidings and warning people of the coming danger.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Messenger you gain the following features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d8 per Messenger level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 8 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Messenger level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: Light armour

WEAPONS: Simple weapons, short sword, swords

TOOLS: A tool of your choice

SAVING THROWS: Dexterity, Charisma

SKILLS: Choose four from Animal Handling, Explore, Hunting, Insight, Intimidation, Old Lore, Perception, Performance, Persuasion, Riddle, Stealth, and Travel

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ◆ Any one tool and any simple melee weapon
- ◆ (a) a short sword or (b) a sword
- ◆ (a) Leather shirt or (b) a bow and a quiver of 20 arrows

SHADOW PATH

WANDERING-MADNESS: Travelling afar might be the duty chosen by a Messenger, but it carries the risk of never finding a place to fight for. The Road goes ever on and on, it's true, but whither then?

FOLK-LORE

You possess some knowledge of the many traditional customs, beliefs, and stories of the various communities that compose the Free Peoples. Whenever you make an Intelligence check related to one of these topics, you are considered proficient in the Old Lore skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus. Likely the result of your wanderings, this information may help you when dealing with strangers, allowing you to come up with some useful facts regarding their folk or a smattering of the appropriate language.

TIRELESS AND SWIFT

Beginning at 1st level, your speed increases by 5 feet while you are not wearing heavy armour. In addition, whenever you must make a fatigue saving throw at the end of a journey (see page 103), you gain a bonus to the saving throw equal to your Messenger level.

The speed bonus increases to 10 feet when you reach 6th level in this calling. At 10th level, the speed bonus increases to 15 feet, and whenever you finish a short rest, your exhaustion level (if any) is decreased by 1.

UNARMOURED DEFENCE

Where such laws hold, it is custom for ambassadors not to be assailed. While you are wearing no armour and not wielding a shield, your AC equals $10 + \text{your Dexterity modifier} + \text{your Charisma modifier}$.

VIRTUE

At 2nd level, and again at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice. You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

At 2nd, 6th, and 10th level, instead of taking a virtue you can gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

SNEAK ATTACK

Starting at 2nd level, you know how to strike subtly and exploit a foe's distraction. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 1d6 damage to one creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage on the attack roll. The attack must use a finesse or a ranged weapon.

You don't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of it, that enemy isn't incapacitated, and you don't have disadvantage on the attack roll. The amount of the extra damage increases as you gain levels in this calling, as shown in the Sneak Attack column of the Messenger table.

ERRAND RUNNER

By 3rd level, the many errands you've borne during your travels have made you proficient in a little bit of everything. You can add half your proficiency bonus, rounded down, to any ability check you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.

MESSENGER PATH

At 3rd level, you choose a path that shapes your calling as a Messenger. Choose the path of the Counsellor or the path of the Herald, both detailed at the end of the calling description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th level.

UNCANNY DODGE

Beginning at 5th level, when an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can use your reaction to halve the attack's damage against you.

MESSENGER paths

Messengers can serve their purpose in two different ways, choosing the path of the Counsellor or that of the Herald.

COUNSELLOR

Wise counsel is rare to come by in the Twilight of the Third Age, as words can be distorted and put to crooked uses by the servants of the Enemy. This notwithstanding, you have chosen to oppose the Shadow by bringing your advice to all who need it.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

At 3rd level, you become proficient in two of the following skills of your choice: Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Performance, Persuasion, and Riddle. If you are already proficient in any one of them, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

WORDS OF GUARD AND GUIDING

Starting at 3rd level, you can use a bonus action to make a Charisma check or take the Help action. In addition, whenever you use the Help action to aid an ally in attacking a

creature, the target of the attack can be within 30 feet of you rather than within 5 feet of you, if the ally can hear and understand you.

A DANGEROUS GIFT

Starting at 7th level, you have advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks if you are not miserable, and on Intelligence (Riddle) and Charisma (Deception) checks if you are.

“...advice is a dangerous gift, even from the wise to the wise, and all courses may run ill.”

HERALD

You believe that advice alone cannot stop the Enemy. To withstand such reckless hate you need both wise words and strength to back them.

FORTH TO BATTLE

When you choose this path at 3rd level, you can give yourself a bonus to your initiative rolls equal to your Charisma modifier. In addition, you gain proficiency with medium armour, shields, and martial weapons.

FIGHTING STYLE

Also at 3rd level, you adopt a style of fighting as your speciality. Choose one of the following options. You cannot take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

ARCHERY: You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

DEFENCE: While you are wearing armour, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

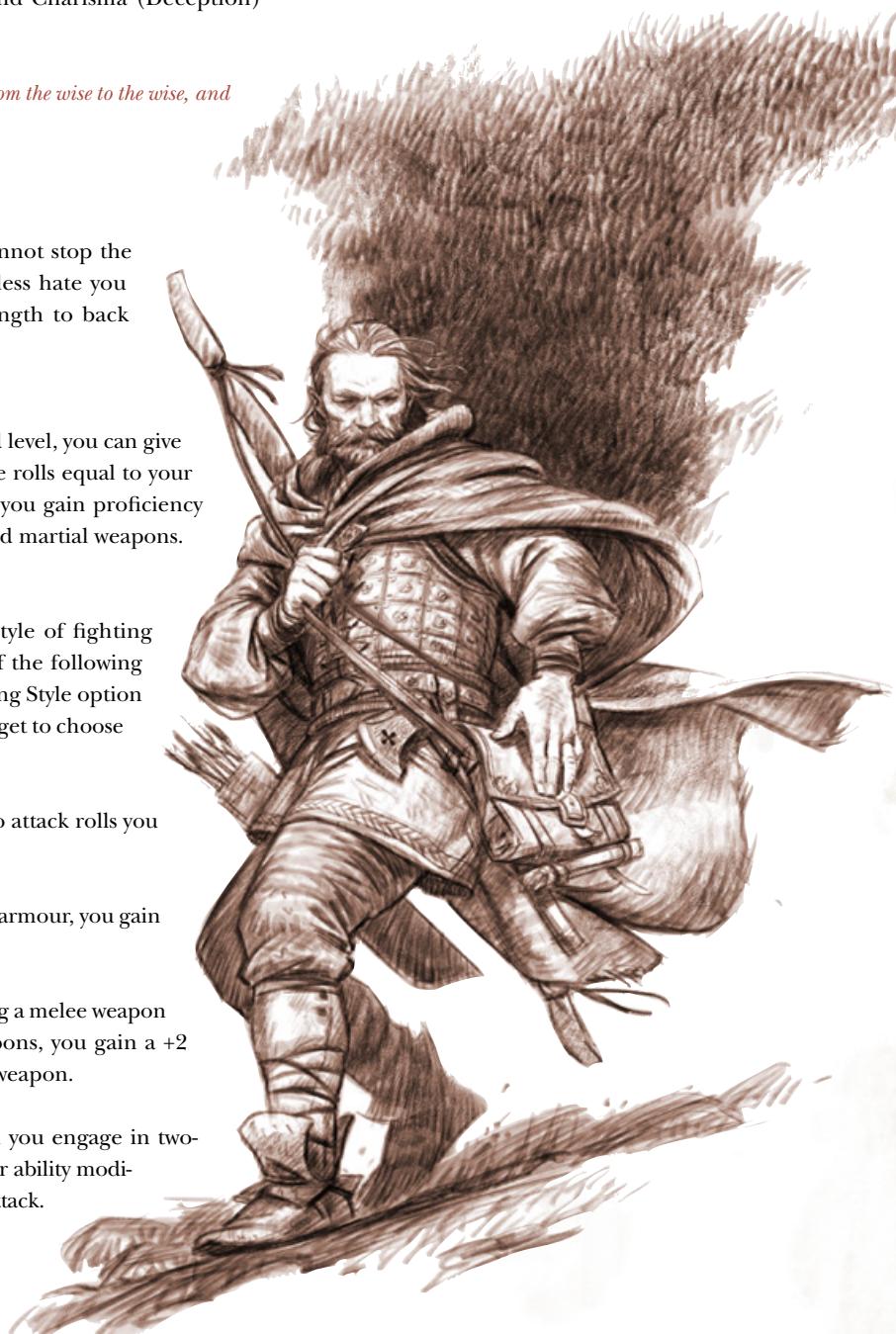
DUELLING: When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING: When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

EXTRA ATTACK

Starting at 7th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

“I was the herald of Gil-galad and marched with his host. I was at the Battle of Dagorlad before the Black Gate of Mordor, where we had the mastery...”



SCHOLAR

“Speak no secrets! Here is a scholar in the Ancient Tongue.”

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES	CRAFT SLOTS
1st	+2	Crafts, Rhymes of Lore (d6), Unarmoured Defence	1
2nd	+2	Cunning Mind, Hands of a Healer (d6)	1
3rd	+2	Expertise, Scholar Tradition	2
4th	+2	Virtue	2
5th	+3	Rhymes of Lore (d8), Endless Rhymes	3
6th	+3	Virtue	3
7th	+3	Scholar Tradition feature	4
8th	+3	Virtue	4
9th	+4	Hands of a Healer (d8)	5
10th	+4	Expertise, Rhymes of Lore (d10), Unfailing Rhymes	5

For you, knowledge makes the wild world a less threatening place. Yellowed maps in lost books replace a fear of the unknown with curiosity and wonder, songs composed in ages past strengthen the weariest of hearts. A love of learning guides your every step, and illuminates the way for you and those who listen to your advice.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Scholar you gain the following features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d8 per Scholar level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 8 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Scholar level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: Light armour

WEAPONS: Simple weapons

TOOLS: Two tools of your choice among calligrapher's supplies, cartographer's tools, herbalism kit, a musical instrument, navigator's tools, or pipes

SAVING THROWS: Intelligence, Wisdom

SKILLS: Choose three from Animal Handling, Insight, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Old Lore, Performance, Riddle, and Travel

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ◆ A healer's kit, any simple melee weapon, and any two tools
- ◆ (a) Leather shirt or (b) a bow and a quiver of 20 arrows

SHADOW PATH

LURE OF SECRETS: Inquisitiveness and curiosity are desirable virtues in an individual, but knowledge can be put to malicious use, and learned individuals can look down on others as ignorant fools. Secrets are dangerous, as the very desire to uncover them may corrupt the heart.

CRAFTS

You have learned techniques that have been passed down along the generations. These crafts do not translate into mere skill but represent obscure branches of knowledge, forgotten by most and seeming almost magical to uneducated eyes.

CRAFT SLOTS: The Scholar table shows how many slots you have to use your crafts. To use one of your crafts, you must expend a craft slot. You regain all expended craft slots when you finish a short or long rest.

KNOWN CRAFTS: You know a craft of your choice from the "Crafts" list, at the end of this chapter. Each time you gain a new craft slot, you also learn another craft of your choice.

RHYMES OF LORE

Rhymes of Lore are short verses created by many cultures to help them remember significant facts from ancient history which might otherwise be lost. You can use a bonus action on your turn to choose one creature (including yourself) within 30 feet of you who can hear and understand you. That creature gains one Lore die, a d6.

Once within the next minute, the creature can roll the die and add the number rolled to one ability check, attack roll, or saving throw it makes. The creature can wait until after seeing the roll before deciding to use the Lore die, but must decide before the Loremaster says whether the roll succeeds or fails. Once the Lore die is rolled, it is lost. A creature can have only one Lore die at a time.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Your Rhymes of Lore die changes when you reach certain levels in this calling. The die becomes a d8 at 5th level, and a d10 at 10th level.

UNARMOURED DEFENCE

Beginning at 1st level, while you are wearing no armour and not wielding a shield, your AC equals $10 + \text{your Dexterity modifier} + \text{your Wisdom modifier}$.

CUNNING MIND

Starting at 2nd level, you can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only to make an Intelligence or Wisdom check, or to take the Help action.

HANDS OF A HEALER

Beginning at 2nd level, you can use healing techniques to treat the wounds of your allies during a short rest. Choose a number of friendly creatures (including yourself) who spent one or more Hit Dice at the end of the short rest, up to twice your proficiency bonus. Each of those creatures regains an extra $1d6$ hit points for each Hit Die spent.

The extra hit points increase to $1d8$ when you reach 9th level in this calling.

EXPERTISE

At 3rd level, choose any combination of two of your skill and tool proficiencies. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of the chosen proficiencies.

At 10th level, you can choose another two proficiencies (in skills or with tools) to gain this benefit.

SCHOLAR TRADITIONS

Also at 3rd level, you choose a tradition that determines the focus of your study. Choose Healing or Lore (both are detailed at the end of the calling description). The tradition you choose grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th level.

VIRTUE

At 4th level, and again at 6th and 8th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice. You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

ENDLESS RHYMES

Beginning when you reach 5th level, you regain all of your expended uses of Rhymes of Lore when you finish a short or long rest.

UNFAILING RHYMES

At 10th level, your Rhymes of Lore mastery is such that those who listen to them are bound to succeed. When a creature adds one of your Lore dice to its ability check, attack roll, or saving throw and the roll fails, the creature can keep the Lore die.

SCHOLAR TRADITIONS

There are more secrets in Middle-earth than golden leaves on a Mallorn-tree — each Scholar must specialise in a traditional field of study.

HEALING

Few can hope to learn as much as you will about the healing arts. Your skill can mend the body, as well as the mind and the spirit.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

When you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Medicine skill and with the herbalism kit. If you are already proficient in any one of them, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

WISE LEECHCRAFT

Also starting at 3rd level, you add your Wisdom modifier (minimum of +1) to your Intelligence (Medicine) checks, to the hit points regained for each Hit Die spent by any creature you choose as the target of your Hands of a Healer, and to the number of uses of your Rhymes of Lore. The Lore dice granted by these additional uses can only be added to Intelligence (Medicine) checks.

In addition, when a creature would roll a Lore die it gained from you on an Intelligence (Medicine) check, it instead uses the highest number possible for the die.

A CURE FOR WEARINESS

Beginning at 7th level, the healing you impart on others also shakes off their weariness. During a short rest, you can reduce a creature's exhaustion level by one. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier

(minimum of once). You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

“... the leechcraft of Gondor was still wise, and skilled in the healing of wound and hurt, and all such sickness as east of the Sea mortal men were subject to.”



LORE

Some say that lore-masters risk accumulating knowledge at the expense of wisdom. You are determined to prove them wrong.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

When you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Old Lore skill and with calligrapher's supplies. If you are already proficient in any one of them, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

LORE-MASTER

Also at 3rd level, when a creature rolls a Lore die it gained from you, the creature can reroll the Lore die and use either total.

WORDS OF COMMAND

At 7th level, when you roll a Lore die and add the number rolled to an ability check using a skill other than Medicine, you can obtain a magical success. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once). You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

“This only would he say, that Imladris was of old the name among the Elves of a far northern dale, where Elrond the Halfelven dwelt, greatest of lore-masters.”

TREASURE HUNTER

*Far over the Misty Mountains cold, To dungeons deep and caverns old.
We must away ere break of day, To seek the pale enchanted gold.*

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES	SNEAK ATTACK
1st	+2	Expertise, Sneak Attack	1d6
2nd	+2	Cunning Action	1d6
3rd	+2	Treasure Hunter Speciality	2d6
4th	+2	Virtue	2d6
5th	+3	Uncanny Dodge	3d6
6th	+3	Craft or Virtue	3d6
7th	+3	Treasure Hunter Speciality feature	4d6
8th	+3	Virtue	4d6
9th	+4	Expertise	5d6
10th	+4	Reliable Talent	5d6

The world has seen the passing of the glory of many Dwarven kings and Elven lords, and their heritage is now buried in Orc-infested dungeons. Hoards of stolen gold and jewels, guarded by fell beasts, beckon all who dare to find them. You seek to recover what is lost, even when it means braving unspeakable dangers.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Treasure Hunter you gain the following features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d8 per Treasure Hunter level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 8 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Treasure Hunter level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: Light armour

WEAPONS: Simple weapons, short swords, swords

TOOLS: A tool of your choice among cartographer's tools, a gaming set, or thieves' tools

SAVING THROWS: Dexterity, Intelligence

SKILLS: Choose four from Acrobatics, Athletics, Deception, Insight, Investigation, Old Lore, Perception, Persuasion, Riddle, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, and Travel

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ◆ Leather shirt, any simple melee weapon, and thieves' tools
- ◆ (a) a short sword or (b) a sword
- ◆ (a) a bow and a quiver of 20 arrows or (b) any simple melee weapon

SHADOW PATH

DRAGON-SICKNESS: Adventurers who find themselves on the Road to seek lost riches run the risk of catching the age-old disease capable of turning a pile of enchanted gold into bitter ashes. As the Shadow tightens its grip on their hearts, the world shrinks around them and their closely guarded possessions.



EXPERTISE

At 1st level, choose any combination of two of your skill and tool proficiencies. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of the chosen proficiencies.

At 9th level, you can choose another two proficiencies (in skills or with tools) to gain this benefit.

SNEAK ATTACK

Beginning at 1st level, you know how to strike subtly and exploit a foe's distraction. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 1d6 damage to one creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage on the attack roll. The attack must use a finesse or a ranged weapon.

You don't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of it, that enemy isn't incapacitated, and you don't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

The amount of the extra damage increases as you gain levels in this calling, as shown in the Sneak Attack column of the Treasure Hunter table.

CUNNING ACTION

Starting at 2nd level, you can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

TREASURE HUNTER SPECIALITY

When you reach 3rd level, you choose a speciality to pattern your career as a Treasure Hunter after. You can choose to be a Burglar or a Spy. Specialities grant you features at 3rd and 7th level. Both specialties are detailed at the end of the calling description.

VIRTUE

At 4th level, and again at 6th and 8th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice. You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

At 6th level, instead of taking a virtue you can gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

UNCANNY DODGE

Beginning at 5th level, when an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can use your reaction to halve the attack's damage against you.

RELIABLE TALENT

By 10th level, you have refined your chosen skills until they approach perfection. Whenever you make an ability check that lets you add your proficiency bonus, you can treat a d20 roll of 9 or lower as a 10.

TREASURE HUNTER SPECIALITIES

Treasure can take different forms — from wondrous objects in a Dragon-hoard, to precious information stolen from the Enemy.

BURGLAR

Yours are the venerable arts of pickpocketing, lock picking, or otherwise getting hold of the possessions of others and accessing protected areas.

CLEVER-HANDED

Starting at 3d level, you can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or take the Use an Object action.

TREE-CLIMBER

Also at 3rd level, you gain the ability to climb faster than normal; climbing no longer costs you extra movement.

In addition, you can add your Dexterity modifier to Strength (Athletics) checks you make to climb or jump, and to the distance you cover (in feet) when you make a running jump.

QUIET-FOOTED

Starting at 7th level, you have advantage on Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) and Dexterity (Stealth) checks if you move no more than half your speed on the same turn.

Burglar wants a good job, plenty of Excitement and reasonable Reward, that's how it is usually read.

SPY

The Enemy sends many agents among the Free Peoples, and you intend to spy upon them, lest they undermine your efforts to resist the Shadow.

CUNNING EYE

Starting at 3rd level, you can add your Intelligence modifier to your Wisdom (Insight) and Wisdom (Perception) checks. In addition, you can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to take the Search action.

WEAK SPOT

Also at 3rd level, you can use a bonus action to make an Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check against a creature within 30 feet of you that you can see, contested by the target's Dexterity (Stealth) check. If you win the contest, you can use your Sneak Attack against that target even if you don't have advantage on the attack roll, but not if you have disadvantage on it.

This benefit lasts for 1 minute or until you successfully use this feature against a different target.

SHARP-EYED

Starting at 7th level, you have advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) and Wisdom (Perception) checks if you move no more than half your speed on the same turn.

But it appeared that he was nobody's friend, and nobody could recollect when he had joined their party.

warden

"Travellers scowl at us, and countrymen give us scornful names."

LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	FEATURES
1st	+2	Shadow-lore, Warded Lands
2nd	+2	Craft or Virtue, Fighting Style
3rd	+2	Warden Oath, Rumour of the Earth
4th	+2	Virtue
5th	+3	Extra Attack
6th	+3	Craft or Virtue, Shadow-lore and Warded Lands improvements
7th	+3	Warden Oath feature
8th	+3	Virtue
9th	+4	Long Stride
10th	+4	Craft or Virtue, Shadow-lore and Warded Lands improvements

In this age of the world, when shadows grow deeper with every passing year, you have sworn to defend all who cannot defend themselves. Often, your choice forces you to forsake civilised areas, to better guard their inhabitants from what lurks right outside their fences. This has made you a stranger in the eyes of the common folk, a threatening figure like those you are protecting them from.

CALLING FEATURES

As a Warden you gain the following calling features:

HIT POINTS

HIT DICE: 1d10 per Warden level

HIT POINTS AT 1ST LEVEL: 10 + your Constitution modifier

HIT POINTS AT HIGHER LEVELS: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per Warden level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

ARMOUR: Light armour, medium armour, shields

WEAPONS: Simple weapons, martial weapons

TOOLS: None

SAVING THROWS: Strength, Wisdom

SKILLS: Choose three from Animal Handling, Athletics, Explore, Hunting, Insight, Investigation, Nature, Perception, and Travel

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your standard of living:

- ◆ (a) hide armour or (b) leather shirt
- ◆ (a) a martial weapon and a shield or (b) a martial melee weapon and a simple melee weapon
- ◆ (a) a great bow and a quiver of 20 arrows or (b) two simple melee weapons

SHADOW PATH

PATH OF DESPAIR: Self-doubt is often the way that the Shadow chooses to reach the heart of those who oppose it. For they know that the Enemy is strong and terrible and that those they protect are too naive or weak to fend for themselves. Every day they ask themselves: will my strength be enough to prevail, or will I drag down the innocent in defeat?

SHADOW-LORE

Beginning at 1st level, you have significant experience studying, tracking, and hunting the servants of the Shadow. Choose a kind of favoured foe: Beasts, Evil Men, Giants, Monstrosities, Orcs, or Undead.

You can add your Wisdom modifier to the damage roll whenever you hit one of your favoured foes, as well as to saving throws you make against their special abilities. Additionally, you have advantage on Wisdom (Hunting) checks to track your favoured foes, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them. You also learn one language of your choice that is spoken by your favoured foes, if they speak one at all.

You choose one additional favoured foe at 6th level, and again at 10th level. As you gain levels, your choices should reflect the types of enemies you have encountered on your adventures.

WARDED LANDS

You are particularly familiar with the lands you have sworn to protect and are adept at travelling and surviving in such regions. Choose two warded lands from among the following: Arthedain, Cardolan, Enedwaith, Eregion, Lindon, and Rhudaur (the Loremaster may wish to expand or alter this list depending on the chosen setting). When you make an Intelligence or Wisdom check related to your warded lands, your proficiency bonus is doubled if you are using a skill that you're proficient in.

During journeys in your warded lands, you gain the following benefits:

- ◆ You are allowed to cover more than one role without penalties. Remember that the same role cannot be assigned to more than one Player-hero, unless there are more than four Company members (see page 101).
- ◆ You have advantage on fatigue saving throws at the end of journeys that start and end in your warded lands.
- ◆ Double your speed for the purpose of calculating your travel pace within your warded lands.
- ◆ While tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.

Finally, a Company including a Warden that spends a Fellowship Phase in a warded land can choose the Gather Rumours undertaking as a free undertaking (see page 112).

You choose two additional warded lands at 6th level, and again at 10th level. As you gain levels, your choices should reflect the regions you have visited on your adventures.

FIGHTING STYLE

At 2nd level, you adopt a particular style of fighting as your speciality. Choose one of the following options. You cannot take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

ARCHERY: You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

DUELLING: When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

PROTECTION: When a creature you can see hits you or a target other than you that is within 5 feet of you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to add your proficiency bonus to the target's AC for that attack, potentially causing the attack to miss. You must be wielding a shield or a finesse weapon.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING: When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

VIRTUE

Also at 2nd level, and again at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, you can take a common or cultural virtue of your choice. You can take each virtue only once. As normal, you cannot increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

At 2nd, 6th, and 10th level, instead of taking a virtue you can gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

WARDEN OATH

At 3rd level, you swear your oath as a Warden. You might choose to be a Forayer or a Hunter, both detailed at the end of the calling description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th level.

RUMOUR OF THE EARTH

Beginning at 3rd level, you can use your action to focus your awareness on the region around you. You can sense whether and which of your favoured foes are present within a number of miles of you equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1; double this value if you are in your warded lands). This feature doesn't reveal the creatures' location or number. Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

EXTRA ATTACK

When you reach 5th level you make two attacks when you take the Attack action on your turn, instead of one.

LONG STRIDE

Starting at 9th level, you can use the Dash action as a bonus action on your turn. Also, if you are in one of your warded lands, moving through difficult terrain costs you no extra movement.

WARDEN OATHS

Wardens are not soldiers sworn into service to a lord, but obey personal oaths they would never think of breaking, whether they choose to be Forayers or Hunters.

FORAYER

You patrol the land ceaselessly seeking to ambush the servants of the Enemy, for they are found in many places, not in Mordor only.

BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you choose this oath at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Stealth skill. If you are already proficient, or if you are in one of your warded lands, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

AMBUSHER

Starting at 3rd level, you excel at ambushing your enemies. You can add your Wisdom modifier to your initiative rolls, and you have advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. In addition, you gain the Sneak Attack feature (see page 58). The extra damage is 1d6, and it increases to 2d6 when you reach 9th level in this calling.

HARRIER

Starting at 7th level, you can use the Hide action as a bonus action on your turn.

From such men the Lord Denethor chose his forayers, who crossed the Anduin secretly (how or where, they would not say) to harry the Orcs and other enemies that roamed between the Ephel Dúath and the River.

HUNTER

You have chosen to prey upon the enemies of the Free Peoples, as a hunter relentlessly seeks a dangerous quarry.

BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you choose this oath at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in the Hunting skill. If you are already proficient, or when tracking your favoured foes, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.

HUNTER'S PREY

At 3rd level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

FOE-HAMMER: Your tenacity can wear down the most potent foes. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can roll one additional weapon damage die on the damage roll if it's below its hit points maximum. You can deal this extra damage only once per turn.

GOBLIN-CLEAVER: Once on each of your turns when you make a weapon attack, you can make another attack with the same weapon against a different creature that is within 5 feet of the original target and within range of your weapon.

TROLL-KILLER: Once on each of your turns when you make a weapon attack against a Large or larger creature, you can make another attack with the same weapon against the same creature.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

At 7th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

MULTIATTACK DEFENCE: When a creature hits or misses you with an attack, you add your proficiency bonus to your AC against all subsequent attacks made by that creature for the rest of the turn.

STOUT RESISTANCE: You gain proficiency in a saving throw of your choice.

SWIFT TO FLY: You can use the Disengage action as a bonus action on your turn.

"I am called Strider," answered Aragorn. "I came out of the North. I am hunting Orcs."



CRAFTS

“... for it was enriched by many people and much lore and craft...”

BEAST-CRAFT

You gain the ability to comprehend and verbally communicate with beasts. The knowledge and awareness of many beasts is limited by their intelligence, but at minimum, beasts can give you information about nearby locations and creatures, including whatever they can perceive or have perceived within the past day. You might be able to persuade a beast to perform a small favour for you, at the Loremaster's discretion, such as delivering a letter, or a verbal message to someone who can also speak with beasts.

In addition, as an action you can spend a craft slot and choose a beast that you can see within 30 feet of you. It must be able to see and hear you. Make a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, contested by the target's Wisdom (Insight) check. If you win the contest, the beast is charmed by you for 24 hours or until you or your companions do anything harmful to it. If you obtain a magical success and the target is a beast with a challenge rating of 1/8 or lower, you can make the beast permanently charmed by you, until you dismiss it, harm it, or make another beast permanently charmed by you. A beast automatically wins the contest if its Intelligence score is 4 or higher. When you reach 5th level, you can affect one additional beast, or two additional beasts at 9th level.

“... and he has much lore of herbs and beasts, and birds are especially his friends.”

HAND-CRAFT

This craft is not meant to cover the whole range of abilities of smiths, wrights, and other artisans, but reflects a talent for making things with superior skill and cunning. During a Fellowship Phase, you can spend a craft slot and choose a non-magical item in your possession. You must be proficient with the tools related to the item you choose, and you might also need access to special materials or locations, such as a forge. If a feature lets you add double your proficiency bonus with a tool, you can select two items related to that tool instead of one. Then, choose one of the following options for each item:

- ◆ If it's a suit of armour or a shield, it is upgraded with a reward (see page 78). When you reach 5th level, a creature also gains a +1 bonus to Armour Class while wearing or holding it.
- ◆ If it's a weapon, it is upgraded with a reward. If you can obtain a magical success with the tools used, the weapon can also become magical. When you reach 5th level, a creature also gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.
- ◆ If it's any other item, choose a skill somehow related to the item, for example Stealth if the item is a cloak, or Athletics if the item is a pair of boots. A creature holding or wearing the item gains a Blessing die (see page 129) on ability checks using that skill. If you can obtain a magical success with the tools used, the item can instead become a Marvellous Artefact with a blessing affecting the chosen skill (see page 129).

Each of the above options can only be chosen once for each item, and you cannot regain a craft slot expended in this way until the next Fellowship Phase, when you can withdraw the bonuses granted by that slot and regain the slot, if you wish.

“The lesser rings were only essays in the craft before it was full-grown, and to the Elven-smiths they were but trifles – yet still to my mind dangerous for mortals...”

LEECH-CRAFT

You are skilled, according to ancient traditions, in the healing of wounds and sickness. As an action, you can spend a craft slot to tend to a creature within 5 feet of you and make a DC 10 Intelligence (Medicine) check. You can spend one use of a healer's kit to replace the d20 roll with a 10. If you succeed, the creature regains a number of hit points equal to your check result minus 10 (minimum 1 hit point).

When you reach 5th level, on a successful check you can alternatively cure the target of one disease or neutralise one poison affecting it.

“Alas!” he cried. “It was this accursed knife that gave the wound. Few now have the skill in healing to match such evil weapons. But I will do what I can.”

RUNE-CRAFT

You can now read and write runic inscriptions. You can use the runes to convey secret messages to other creatures who know them, or whom you previously instructed in their meaning.

At the end of a short or long rest, you can spend a craft slot and choose a magical item in the Company's possession. Make an Intelligence (Old Lore) check. The DC is 10 for a Marvellous Artefact, 15 for a Wondrous Item, or 20 for a Famous Weapon or Armour. If you succeed, you learn all there is to be discovered about the item's qualities, and whether it is cursed or not.

If it is a Famous Weapon or Armour, once you have learned about its qualities you can also choose the order in which the item's qualities are activated, ignoring how they have been listed on the Treasure Index.

In addition, whenever you finish a long rest, you can spend a craft slot to inscribe runes of protection on a non-magical item of your choice. You must be proficient with the tools related to the substance of which the item you choose is made (smith's tools for metal, woodcarver's tools for wood, etc.). While a creature holds or wears the item, it gains a +1 bonus to all saving throws. When you reach 5th level, the item also grants a +1 bonus to AC. The runes can only be inscribed once on each item, and you cannot regain a craft slot expended in this way until you finish a long rest, when you can cancel the runes inscribed with that slot and regain the slot, if you wish.

"These look like good blades... They were not made by any troll, nor by any smith among men in these parts and day; but when we can read the runes on them, we shall know more about them."

SONG-CRAFT

You have been trained in the art of singing, according to the tradition of the wandering minstrels. Your musical lore runs deeper than most, as you partake of the knowledge of the mighty singers of old. As an action, you can spend a craft slot and make a Charisma (Performance) check, contested by the Wisdom (Insight) check of each creature of your choice within 30 feet of you that can hear you. A creature can choose to fail its ability check if it wishes. For each target against which you win the contest, choose one of the following options:

- ◆ You can suppress any effect causing the target to be charmed or frightened until the end of your next turn. This effect ends if the target can no longer hear you.
- ◆ You can make the target indifferent about creatures of your choice that it is hostile towards until the end of your next turn. The target also has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to perceive any creature other than you for the same duration. This effect ends

if the target can no longer hear you, it is harmed, or if it witnesses any of its friends being harmed.

- ◆ Until the end of your next turn, whenever the target makes an attack roll or a saving throw, the target must roll a d4 and either add the number rolled to the attack roll or saving throw (if the target is friendly to you), or subtract it (if the target is hostile). This effect ends if the target can no longer hear you.

When you reach 5th level, you can use a bonus action on each of your turns to extend the duration of each of these effects on all targets until the end of your next turn, up to 1 minute.

"... for in these days men are slow to believe that a captain can be wise and learned in the scrolls of lore and song..."

SPEECH-CRAFT

You are a student of Sindarin and Quenya, the Ancient Tongue, and have advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with Elves and Dúnedain.

In addition, as an action you can spend a craft slot and choose a creature other than an Elf, a Dúnedan, or a Wizard (or a similarly powerful creature), within 30 feet of you who can hear you. Then, choose one of the following options:

- ◆ Make a Charisma (Intimidation) check contested by the target's Charisma (Intimidation) check. A target has advantage on this check if it is Large or larger or if it cannot understand you. If you win the contest, the target is frightened of you for 1 minute. The frightened target can make a Charisma (Intimidation) check against your passive Charisma (Intimidation) score at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. When you reach 5th level, you can target one additional creature, or two additional creatures at 9th level.
- ◆ Make a Charisma (Intimidation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check contested by the target's Intelligence (Ride) check. A target has advantage on this check if it is immune to being charmed or if it cannot understand you. If you win the contest, you can speak a one-word command that the target must follow on its next turn, if it can and if the command is not directly harmful to it. Once the target has executed the command, it ends its turn. Some typical commands include "*Fall!*" (the target falls prone), "*Flee!*" (the target moves away from you), and "*Halt!*" (the target doesn't move and takes no actions), and the effect may be considered a Misdeed depending on the circumstances. When you reach 5th level, you can target one additional creature, or two additional creatures at 9th level.

“...for their forefathers had learned the Sindarin tongue, and this they handed on to their children as a matter of lore, changing little with the passing of the years.”

WEAPON-CRAFT

Choose a type of weapon. You gain proficiency with this weapon if you don't already have it. When you attack with that type of weapon and the weapon is finesse or ranged, you can use your choice of your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier instead of your Strength or Dexterity modifier for the attack and damage rolls. You must use the same modifier for both rolls.

In addition, when you hit a creature with the chosen weapon, you can spend a craft slot to roll two additional weapon damage dice on the damage roll. When you reach 5th level, you roll three additional weapon damage dice instead of two.

“...and though we still hold that a warrior should have more skills and knowledge than only the craft of weapons and slaying, we esteem a warrior, nonetheless, above men of other crafts.”

WOOD-CRAFT

You are familiar with the difficulties encountered when crossing wild lands, and with the ways of overcoming them. When you make a Wisdom (Explore) or Wisdom (Hunting) check, you can spend a craft slot to replace the number you roll with your passive Intelligence (Nature) score.

In addition, you can spend 1 hour and a craft slot to make an Intelligence (Nature), Wisdom (Explore), or Wisdom

(Hunting) check (your choice). The DC is determined by the terrain type the Company is currently traversing (as if a journey event was taking place there; see page 105). The check has disadvantage if it is autumn or winter. If you succeed, choose one of the following options:

- ◆ Choose a number of creatures equal to your check result minus the terrain DC (minimum 1), which can include yourself. For 1 hour, each of those creatures has a +5 bonus to its Dexterity (Stealth) checks. When you reach 5th level, the bonus increases to +10. If you obtain a magical success, the creatures also leave behind no tracks or other traces of their passage for the duration.
- ◆ Choose a number of creatures equal to your check result minus the terrain DC (minimum 1), which can include yourself. For 8 hours, each of those creatures has a +5 bonus to its passive Wisdom (Perception) score. When you reach 5th level, the bonus increases to +10. If you obtain a magical success, the creatures also gain tremorsense out to a range of 60 feet for the duration.
- ◆ You forage a number of pounds of food and gallons of water equal to your check result minus the terrain DC (minimum 1). The food lasts for 24 hours, or 48 hours when you reach 5th level. If you obtain a magical success, each pound of food foraged in this way also restores 1 hit point to the creature eating it during a short or long rest.

“Let us be thankful that they are not hunting us: for they use poisoned arrows, it is said, and they are woodcrafty beyond compare.”



MORE THAN ONE CALLING

"Your pardon lord!" said the man.

"I see you are a lore-master, not merely a captain of war."

The callings presented in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* already offer a wide variety of customisation options. However, should players think that their character concepts require even greater flexibility, the following optional rule can be used.

This rule allows Player-heroes to gain a level in a new calling whenever they advance in level, instead of gaining a level in their current calling. When this happens, all levels in all callings are added together to determine that character's

level. To qualify for a new calling, Player-heroes must meet the ability score prerequisites for both their current calling and the new one, as shown in the Multiple Callings table. When Player-heroes gain a level in a calling other than their first, they gain only some of that calling's starting proficiencies, as shown in the Multiple Callings table. The Player-hero's Shadow Path does not change when gaining a level in a new calling.

MULTIPLE CALLINGS

CALLING	ABILITY SCORE MINIMUM	PROFICIENCIES GAINED
Captain	Strength 13 and Charisma 13	Light armour, medium armour, heavy armour, shields, simple weapons, martial weapons
Champion	Strength 13 or Dexterity 13	Light armour, medium armour, heavy armour, shields, simple weapons, martial weapons
Messenger	Dexterity 13 and Charisma 13	Light armour, simple weapons, one skill from the class's skill list, one tool of your choice
Scholar	Intelligence 13	Light armour, simple weapons, one skill from the class' skill list, one of the tools from the class' tools list
Treasure Hunter	Dexterity 13	Light armour, simple weapons, one skill from the class' skill list, thieves' tools
Warden	Wisdom 13	Light armour, medium armour, shields, simple weapons, martial weapons

The experience point cost to gain a level is always based on the total character level. Player-heroes gain the hit points from their new calling as described for levels after 1st, and they add together the Hit Dice granted by all their callings to form their pool of Hit Dice. Their proficiency bonus is always based on their total character level, not their level in a particular calling.

When Player-heroes gain a new level in a calling they get its features for that level. If they gain the Extra Attack feature from more than one calling, the features don't add together.

For example, Sophia is playing a 4th-level Scholar. When her Player-hero earns enough experience points to reach 5th level, Sophia decides that her Player-hero will gain a level in a new calling instead of continuing

to progress as a Scholar. Sophia's Player-hero has been travelling a lot with the Company, running some errands and delivering messages across the land. Sophia decides that her Player-hero will gain a new level in the Messenger calling, and thus becomes a 4th-level Scholar and a 1st-level Messenger. She gains proficiency in one skill from the Messenger's skill list and with a tool of her choice, a Hit Die (1d8) and additional hit points equal to 1d8 (or 5) + her Constitution modifier, and the Folk-lore and Tireless and Swift calling features.

When Sophia's Player-hero earns enough experience to reach 6th level, she can decide whether to add another Scholar level, another Messenger level, or a level in a third calling, perhaps training for battle and thus adding a level in the Captain calling.



BEYOND 10TH LEVEL

*“...there will be need of valour without renown, for none shall remember the deeds
that are done in the last defence of your homes.”*

Yet the deeds will not be less valiant because they are unpraised.”

The rules for *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* are designed to represent the gritty heroism of the Twilight of the Third Age. Gone is the glory of the Elder Days, and the deeds of the Elves of Beleriand or the first Edain are just dim memories.

For this reason, to preserve both the spirit of the books and provide an adequate challenge, the total character level of the Player-heroes cannot exceed the 10th.

However, that doesn't mean a Player-hero cannot continue playing once they reach that point. Some players may want to retire their characters and assume the role of their heir instead (see page 113), while others may wish to continue playing the game with their current hero — maybe simply because they feel there is still something to tell about their story.

In the latter case, the Loremaster may allow characters who have reached the 10th level to continue accumulating experience points, choosing one of the following features for every 10,000 experience points beyond 64,000. Each feature can be taken only once, unless the feature's description says otherwise.

CRAFT

You gain a craft slot and a craft of your choice from the Scholar's Crafts list (see page 64).

FIGHTING STYLE

You can choose a fighting style option from the Champion's Fighting Style feature (see page 49). As normal, you cannot take a Fighting Style option more than once.

HIT DIE

You gain a Hit Die, a d12, and your hit points maximum increases by 1d12 (or 7) + your Constitution modifier.

Special. You may take this feature multiple times. Each time you take it after the first, the Hit Die you gain is a d6, and your hit points maximum increases by 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier.

REWARD

You choose a reward (see page 78).

Special. You may take this feature multiple times.

SNEAK ATTACK

You gain the Sneak Attack feature (see page 58). The extra damage is 1d6.

VIRTUE

You gain a common or cultural virtue of your choice (see page 80).

EQUIPMENT

*...he got to Bywater just on the stroke of eleven,
and found he had come without a pocket-handkerchief!*

As seen in the callings section, all heroes start their adventuring career equipped with the personal items, weapons and armour that is considered most appropriate to their vocation. In addition to that, all players receive a set of starting equipment based on their standard of living, and may acquire more gear by spending their starting wealth.

COINAGE IN MIDDLE-EARTH

In north-western Middle-earth, most cultures engage in bartering to acquire the goods they need for their daily necessities. But since the death of the Dragon, trade has started to flourish once again, and coins have returned to be seen more often, especially in those settlements that lie along the Dwarven trading routes from the Lonely Mountain to the Ered Luin.

Still, the coins that change hands are mainly silver pennies and copper coins. Gold pieces are very valuable and rare — the few ones that circulate come from the fabled treasure of Smaug the Dragon, and most people show an uncanny propensity to hoard them and put them away.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the present section: g for 1 gold piece; s for 1 silver penny; and c for 1 copper coin.

STARTING GEAR AND WEALTH

The characters in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* are adventurers: individuals used to relying on their abilities to find sustenance in the wild, rather than by putting their hands into their money bags. But when they set upon the road, the equipment they carry is based on their culture — a community that is better off can prepare a potential adventurer for a life abroad more easily than a less well-off one.

The standard of living of Player-heroes as indicated under their cultural traits determines the composition of their starting gear and the amount of their starting wealth, as shown in the Starting Gear table.

In addition, all characters start with the equipment granted by their background and calling, as shown earlier in this chapter.

OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES

If the Loremaster and the players agree, a character's standard of living can be used whenever it must be determined whether an adventurer can afford to pay for some of the out-of-pocket expenses listed on the table on page 71, like buying a meal or paying for a night at the inn.

Player-heroes coming from a culture with a Standard of Living equal to or superior to the one indicated by an entry in the Out-of-pocket Expenses table can afford it without detracting its cost from the character's wealth.

STARTING GEAR

STANDARD OF LIVING	CULTURES	STARTING GEAR
Frugal	Elves, Rangers	A backpack, a bedroll, a mess kit, a tinderbox, 10 torches, 5 days of rations, a waterskin, and a belt pouch containing 10 s (total 40 lbs)
Common	Hobbits, Men of Bree	A backpack, a bedroll, a mess kit, a tinderbox, 10 torches, 10 days of rations, a waterskin, 50 feet of hempen rope, and a belt pouch containing 15 s (total 60 lbs)
Prosperous	Bardings, Dwarves	A backpack, a bedroll, a mess kit, a tinderbox, a hooded lantern with 3 flasks of oil, 10 days of cram rations, a waterskin, 50 feet of silk rope, a tent, and a belt pouch containing 20 s (total 60 lbs)

ADVENTURING GEAR

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Arrows (20)	1 s	1 lb.
Backpack	2 s	5 lbs
Barrel	2 s	70 lbs
Basket	4 c	2 lbs
Bedroll	1 s	7 lbs
Bell	1 s	—
Blanket	5 c	3 lbs
Block and tackle	1 s	5 lbs
Book	25 s	5 lbs
Bottle, glass	2 s	2 lbs
Bucket	1 c	2 lbs
Candle (set of 10)	1 c	—
Case, map or scroll	1 s	1 lb.
Chain (10 feet)	5 s	10 lbs
Chalk (10 pieces)	1 c	—
Chest	5 s	25 lbs
Climber's kit	25 s	12 lbs
Clothes, common	5 c	3 lbs

Clothes, fine	15 s	6 lbs
Clothes, traveller's	2 s	4 lbs
Fishing tackle	1 s	4 lbs
Flask or tankard	1 c	1 lb.
Healer's kit	5 s	3 lbs
Hourglass	25 s	1 lb
Ink (1 ounce bottle)	10 s	—
Ink pen	1 c	—
Jug or pitcher	1 c	4 lbs
Ladder (10 feet)	1 c	25 lbs
Lamp	5 c	1 lb.
Lantern, bullseye	10 s	2 lbs
Lantern, hooded	5 s	2 lbs
Lock	10 s	1 lb.
Magnifying Glass	10 g	—
Manacles	2 s	6 lbs
Mess kit	2 c	1 lb.
Mirror, steel	5 s	½ lb.

OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES

Oil (flask)	1 c	1 lb.
Parchment (one sheet)	1 c	—
Pick, miner's	2 s	10 lbs
Pole (10-foot)	1 c	7 lbs
Pocket-handkerchief	1 c	—
Pot or pan, iron	2 s	10 lbs.
Pouch	5 c	1 lb.
Quiver	1 s	1 lb.
Rations (1 day)	5 c	2 lbs
Rations, cram (1 day)	1 s	1 lb.
Robes	1 s	4 lbs
Rope, hempen (50 feet)	1 s	10 lbs
Rope, silk (50 feet)	10 s	5 lbs
Sack	1 c	½ lbs
Saddlebags	4 s	8 lbs
Saddle	5 s	15 lbs
Scale, merchant's	5 s	3 lbs
Sealing wax	5 c	—
Shovel	2 s	5 lbs
Signal whistle	1 c	—
Signet ring	5 s	—
Soap	1 c	—
Tent, two-person	2 s	20 lbs
Tinderbox	5 c	1 lb.
Torches (bundle of 10)	1 c	10 lbs
Vial	1 s	—
Waterskin	2 c	5 lbs (full)
Whetstone	1 c	1 lb.

ITEM OR SERVICE	COST
Ale or Mead, cup	1 c
Ale or Mead, jug	6 c
Bread, loaf	1 c
Cheese, hunk	5 c
Feast (per person)	10 s
Inn Stay, Frugal (per person, per day)	1 c
Inn Stay, Common (per room, per day)	5 c
Inn Stay, Prosperous (per room, per day)	8 c
Inn Stay, Rich (per room, per day)	2 s
Inn Stay, Very Rich (per room, per day)	4 s
Meals, Frugal (per day)	1 c
Meals, Common (per day)	3 c
Meals, Prosperous (per day)	5 c
Meals, Rich (per day)	8 c
Meals, Very Rich (per day)	2 s
Meat, chunk	3 c
Pipe-weed, Longbottom Leaf (10 uses)	3 s
Pipe-weed, Old Toby (10 uses)	2 s
Pipe-weed, Southern Star (10 uses)	2 s
Pipe-weed, Southlinch (10 uses)	1 s
Stabling, Common (per mount, per day, includes feed)	5 c
Wine, bottle (Elven or Dorwinion)	10 s
Wine, cup	2 c
Wine, cup (Elven or Dorwinion)	2 s

ARMOURS

ARMOUR	COST	ARMOUR CLASS	FATIGUE AND STEALTH*	WEIGHT
<i>Light Armour</i>				
Leather shirt	10 s	11 + Dex modifier	—	10 lbs
Leather corslet	45 s	12 + Dex modifier	—	13 lbs
<i>Medium Armour</i>				
Hide	10 s	12 + Dex mod. (max 2)	—	12 lbs
Mail-shirt	50 s	13 + Dex mod. (max 2)	—	20 lbs
Scale Armour	50 s	14 + Dex mod. (max 2)	Disadvantage	45 lbs
<i>Heavy Armour</i>				
Ring-mail	50 s	15	Disadvantage	50 lbs
Coat of Mail	75 s	16	Disadvantage	55 lbs
Mail Hauberk	20 g	17	Disadvantage	60 lbs
<i>Shield</i>				
Shield	10 s	+2	—	6 lbs

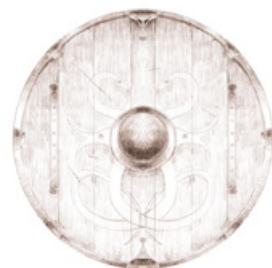
*If an armour type indicates disadvantage, the wearer has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, and on fatigue saving throws at the end of journeys (see page 103) if the armour is worn for at least half of the journey's length in days of travel (rounded up). The days do not need to be consecutive.



Mail-shirt



Coat of Mail



Shield



Dagger



Axe



Sword



Long-hafted Axe



Long Sword



Great Axe

WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DAMAGE	PROPERTIES	WEIGHT
<i>Simple Melee Weapons</i>				
Axe	5 s	1d6 slashing	Versatile (1d8)	3 lbs
Club	1 c	1d4 bludgeoning	Light	2 lbs
Club, Great	2 c	1d8 bludgeoning	Two-handed	10 lbs
Dagger	2 s	1d4 piercing	Finesse, light, thrown (range 20/60)	1 lb.
Hammer	2 s	1d6 bludgeoning	-	3 lbs
Hatchet	5 s	1d6 slashing	Light, thrown (range 20/60)	2 lbs
Spear	1 s	1d6 piercing	Thrown (range 20/60), versatile (1d8)	3 lbs
Spear, Short	5 c	1d6 piercing	Thrown (range 30/120)	2 lbs
Staff	2 c	1d4 bludgeoning	Versatile (1d6)	1 lb
<i>Simple Ranged Weapons</i>				
Bow	25 s	1d6 piercing	Ammunition (range 80/320), two-handed	2 lbs
<i>Martial Melee Weapons</i>				
Axe, Battle	10 s	1d8 slashing	Heavy, versatile (1d10)	4 lbs
Axe, Great	30 s	1d12 slashing	Heavy, two-handed	7 lbs
Hammer, Heavy	10 s	1d8 bludgeoning	Heavy, versatile (1d10)	4 lbs
Mattock	10 s	1d12 piercing	Heavy, two-handed	10 lbs
Spear, Great	20 s	1d10 piercing	Heavy, reach, two-handed	6 lbs
Sword	15 s	1d6 slashing	Finesse, versatile (1d8)	2 lbs
Sword, Long	20 s	1d8 slashing	Heavy, versatile (1d10)	3 lbs
Sword, Short	10 s	1d6 piercing	Finesse, light	2 lbs
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons</i>				
Great Bow	50 s	1d8 piercing	Ammunition (range 150/600), heavy, two-handed	3 lbs



Short Spear



Great spear



Mattock



Bow



Great Bow

TOOLS

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
<i>Artisan's tools</i>		
Brewer's supplies	20 s	9 lbs
Calligrapher's supplies	10 s	5 lbs
Carpenter's tools	8 s	6 lbs
Cartographer's tools	15 s	6 lbs
Cobbler's tools	5 s	5 lbs
Cook's utensils	1 s	8 lbs
Glassblower's tools	30 s	5 lbs
Jeweller's tools	25 s	2 lbs
Leatherworker's tools	5 s	5 lbs
Mason's tools	10 s	8 lbs
Painter's supplies	10 s	5 lbs
Potter's tools	10 s	3 lbs
Smith's tools	20 s	8 lbs
Weaver's tools	1 s	5 lbs
Woodcarver's tools	1 s	5 lbs
<i>Gaming sets</i>		
Chess	1 s	1/2 lb.
Bowls	1 c	8 lbs
Darts	3 c	1 1/2 lbs
Quoits	2 c	4 lbs
<i>Musical instruments</i>		
Clarinet	12 s	2 lbs
Drum	6 s	3 lbs
Fiddle	25 s	1 lbs
Flute	2 s	1 lb.
Harp	30 s	2 lbs
Horn	3 s	2 lbs
Trumpet	35 s	2 lbs
Viol	30 s	1 lbs

Other Tools

Herbalism kit	5 s	3 lbs
Navigator's tools	25 s	2 lbs
Pipe*	1 s	1/2 lb.
Thieves' tools	25 s	1 lb.

* see description for special rules

NEW GEAR

Pipe. Pipes are made of clay or wood and used for inhaling the smoke of burning leaves of pipe-weed. A character that has proficiency with a pipe practises the art of smoking and likely has some skill at blowing smoke-rings. Smoking a pipe can aid you in efforts at introspection, and in friendly chatting with fellow practitioners of the art.

If you are proficient with pipes, you can spend one use of pipe-weed and at least one hour smoking your pipe to gain inspiration. You cannot use a pipe again in this way until you finish a long rest.

Rations, cram. Cram is a biscuitish cake that keeps good indefinitely, made by the Bardings for long journeys. Albeit certainly not entertaining (and in fact, mostly a chewing exercise), it is doubtlessly sustaining and very nutritious: one pound of cram counts as two pounds of food.

If you are a Barding (or you have been taught the recipe by a Barding) and you are proficient with cook's utensils, during each Fellowship Phase you can prepare a number of cram rations equal to 5 times your proficiency bonus (or 10 times your proficiency bonus during a Yule Fellowship Phase).

HOBBIT-PONIES AND FULL-SIZED HORSES

The best asset of an efficient travelling Company is an appropriate number of ponies or horses to ride or to employ as baggage-carriers. Ponies are sturdy little beasts; they cannot go much faster than a normal walking pace, especially when

loaded with stores and tackle, but they are cheap, and good to help the Player-heroes cope with the toil of spending long hours on the road. Horses can go faster, but few such animals are seen in the North, and most are used as pack animals or draught beasts.

PONIES AND HORSES

MOUNT	COST	SPEED	CARRYING CAPACITY	CONSTITUTION
Horse, draught	50 s	40 ft.	540 lbs	13 (+1)
Horse, riding	75 s	60 ft.	480 lbs	12 (+1)
Pony	12 s	40 ft.	225 lbs	13 (+1)







CHAPTER 4

Rewards and Virtues

"There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure."



The heroic stature of an adventurer can be measured in different ways. Players of *The Lord of the Rings Role-playing* can display the growth of their Player-heroes choosing rewards and virtues for them.

- ♦ **Rewards** are pieces of war gear of superior craftsmanship, granted to a Player-hero as an award for their deeds.
- ♦ **Virtues** are unique abilities and special talents, a number of which are characteristic of a given culture.

Rewards

Háma knelt and presented to Théoden a long sword in a scabbard clasped with gold and set with green gems. "Here, lord, is Herugrim, your ancient blade..."

In a world of growing darkness, trade is mostly limited to small areas and is often practised only among trusted individuals. Finely crafted weapons or suits of armour cannot be purchased, but are instead awarded for service or heroic deeds.

Rewards represent the characteristics of high-quality weapons and defensive gear, priceless instruments of war given to heroes by their own folk or family, or by generous lords honouring them by letting them choose a weapon or a suit of armour from their personal armoury.

In game terms, rewards are upgrades that players can select to raise the effectiveness of their war gear. Each reward affects an item in a unique way, described in the following paragraph.

Characters choose a first reward when they reach 3rd level, and again at 5th, 7th, and 9th level.

It is up to the players to decide whether a reward represents the discovery of a previously unknown property of an item, or an entirely new weapon or suit of armour. Whatever their choice, they are encouraged to integrate the decisions into a narrative, telling the tale of how they received a gift or had their equipment improved.

Rewards List

There are six different rewards. Each one indicates in brackets the type of gear that can receive that upgrade.

All upgrades can be applied only once to the same item.
The item cannot be a Famous Weapon or Armour.

ITEMS OF SUPERIOR WORTH

Items upgraded with one or more rewards enjoy a degree of 'plot immunity', and as such they should never be lost, broken, or be otherwise taken (if not temporarily) from a Player-hero. For the same reason, they cannot be sold or handed over to other Player-heroes to use, even in the case of character death (prized items are usually buried with their owners, or passed on to their heirs).

However, if the Company agrees, a Player-hero can spend one point of Fellowship to borrow an item belonging to a companion, be it an armour or weapon upgraded with one or more rewards, or a magical item (see page 128). The Fellowship expenditure allows the Player-hero to use the item until the end of the current Adventuring Phase, or until the owner wants it back (whichever occurs first).

NAMED WEAPONS

Warriors and adventurers often name items of war gear that prove themselves worthy. This is most common with blades and spears, rarer with helms and shields – and almost unknown with armour.

Elves and Men follow similar naming traditions, bestowing titles upon their weapons – such as 'Orc-cleaver', 'Foe-hammer', or 'Battle-friend' – that glorify their effectiveness in battle. However, weapons with loftier or more poetic names – such as 'Snow Point' or 'Cold Star' – are almost always items of nobler lineage or greater antiquity, and are rarely given as rewards.

Weapons of worth are so highly esteemed among the Bardings that they often name their sons and daughters

after pieces of war gear – 'Bard' can be translated as 'Battle-axe'. The Dúnedain treasure their ancient blades, and pass them down through generations of warriors.

Hobbits and Bree-landers rarely give titles to their weapons. If they do, it is probably because such an item has saved their lives. In any case, they tend to choose simple or otherwise unpretentious names taken from ordinary life.

Dwarves do not use names for their weapons at all, even renowned artefacts, which are most likely to be known by their legendary owners (such as the Axe of Durin). Of course, it is entirely possible that they do give names to their weapons but keep them secret.



CLOSE-FITTING (ARMOUR)

A skilful smith has made this armour more difficult to overcome with critical hits. While you're wearing it, any critical hit against you becomes a normal hit.

CUNNING-MAKE (ARMOUR OR SHIELD)

A skilled craftsman has made this piece of equipment lighter or less cumbersome than its lesser counterparts. The item is half the normal weight, and if it normally imposes disadvantage on fatigue saving throws, this version doesn't.

FELL (WEAPON)

Hard and straight, a critical hit from this weapon is more dangerous. When you score a critical hit with this weapon, you can roll two additional weapon damage dice and add them to the extra damage.

GRIEVOUS (WEAPON)

The weapon is strong and heavy, inflicting more harm on its targets. You gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls with this weapon.

KEEN (WEAPON)

Sharp or better-balanced, this weapon is now more likely to produce a critical hit when hitting its target. Attacks using this weapon score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20.

REINFORCED (SHIELD)

The shield's structure is reinforced, possibly with a metal rim or a larger iron boss, letting its wearer parry blows with greater ease. While holding this shield, you have a +1 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.



KEEN WEAPONS USING THE ONE RING DICE

If you are using a set of *The One Ring Success Dice*, a Keen weapon scores a critical hit also when the dice show two or more 5 results, or three 5 results if you have disadvantage on the roll. A Superior Keen weapon (see page 133) additionally scores a critical hit against bane creatures when the dice show two or more 4 results, or three 4 results if you have disadvantage.

VIRTUES

They ... were believed to have strange powers of sight and hearing, and to understand the languages of beasts and birds.

Virtues are special abilities that complement an adventurer's arsenal. Much more than simple talents, virtues define the heroic stature of the Player-heroes.

A Player-hero's choice of culture may grant them a starting virtue, to be selected from the common virtues list below, or from the appropriate list of cultural virtues.

- ◆ *Common* virtues describe aptitudes that come naturally to an adventurer, or that arise through time and practice;
- ◆ *Cultural* virtues represent the secret talents of the dwellers of Middle-earth, and let adventurers accomplish things that are seen as extraordinary, if not magical, by ordinary folk.
- ◆ Each virtue can be acquired only once.

COMMON VIRTUES

There are six common virtues for players to choose from.

CONFIDENCE

Overcoming difficulties has reinforced your spirit and renewed your faith in a brighter future.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain proficiency in saving throws using Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma (your choice).

DOUR-HANDED

Your blows have become more forceful and your aim steadier, allowing you to do greater harm.

- ◆ Increase your Strength score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain a +1 bonus to weapon damage rolls using Strength.

HARDINESS

Your determination and stamina have improved through hardship and toil.

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Your hit point maximum increases by an amount equal to your level when you gain this virtue. Whenever you gain a level thereafter, your hit point maximum increases by an additional hit point.

MASTERY

You have practised certain skills until they have become as natural as breathing.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain one skill, tool, or weapon proficiency of your choice.
- ◆ Choose one of your skill or tool proficiencies. You gain Expertise with that skill or tool, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with it.

NIMBLENESS

Your skill (or fortune?) in battle has increased with your growth in experience.

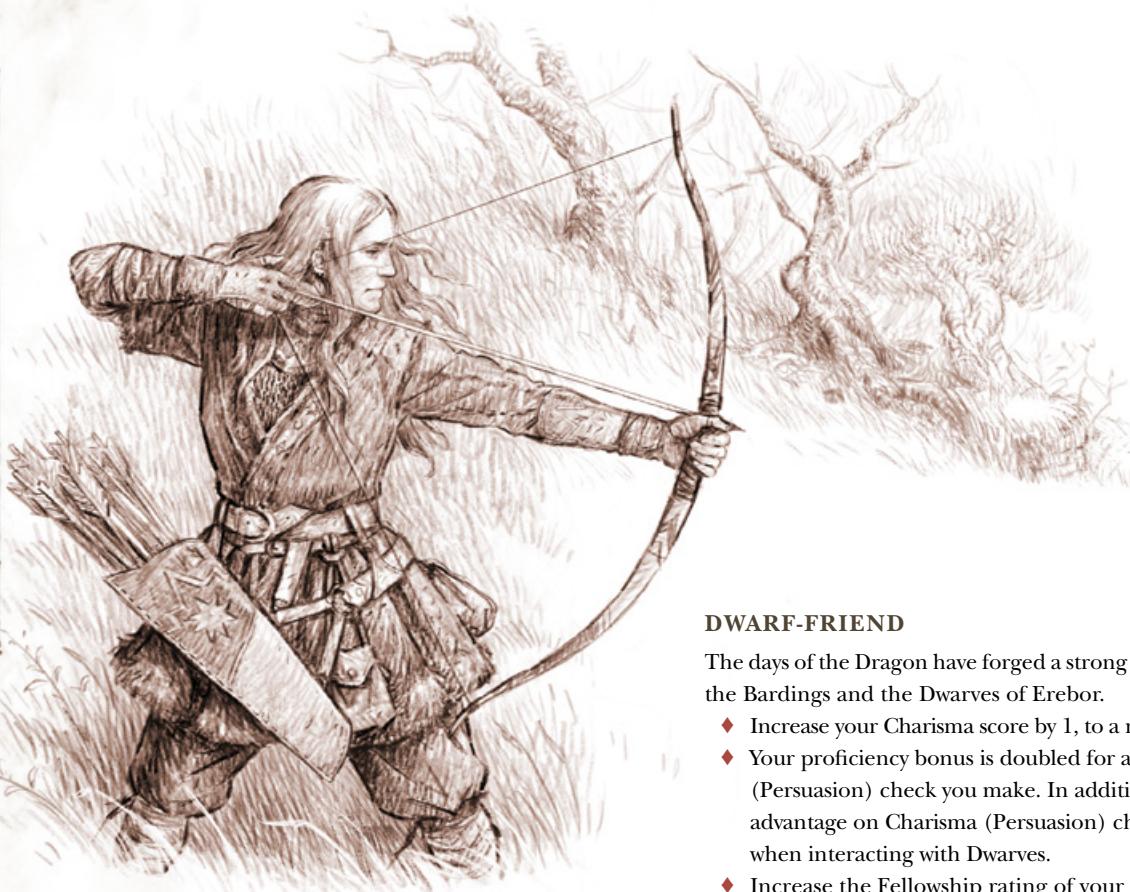
- ◆ Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain a +1 bonus to AC. You lose this bonus if you are incapacitated.

PROWESSION

Adventuring has honed your inborn talents.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or two ability scores of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.





VIRTUES OF THE BARDINGS

The Bardings are Northmen of the noblest blood — a valiant people with a tradition of powerful kings. Considered lost for many long years, their ancient heritage has been tempered anew in dragon-fire and is today once again in capable hands.

DRAGON-SLAYER

The legend of Bard the Bowman has inspired many young men and women from Dale, so much that they long to prove their worth with the killing of a great monster. As many more before you, you have long pondered on the ways to deal with creatures of size, hoping one day to gain renown defeating them.

- ◆ Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on attack rolls against Large or larger creatures.

"I am Bard, and by my hand was the dragon slain and your treasure delivered."

DWARF-FRIEND

The days of the Dragon have forged a strong alliance between the Bardings and the Dwarves of Erebor.

- ◆ Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any Charisma (Persuasion) check you make. In addition, you have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made when interacting with Dwarves.
- ◆ Increase the Fellowship rating of your Company by 1.
- ◆ When you are within 5 feet of a friendly Dwarf and at least one of you isn't incapacitated, and a creature you or the Dwarf can see attacks you or the Dwarf, you can spend a Fellowship point to impose disadvantage on the attack roll.

"Nowhere are there any men so friendly to us as the Men of Dale."

FIERCE SHOT

The Black Arrow that brought down Smaug the Dragon may have been fated to do so, but the hand that sent it flying so fiercely was exceedingly strong. When you throw a spear or bend your bow, you make sure that your grip is steady and your aim true.

- ◆ Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ When making an attack with a ranged weapon, you use your choice of your Strength or Dexterity modifier for the attack and damage rolls. You must use the same modifier for both rolls.
- ◆ If you move no more than half your speed on the same turn and you hit a creature with a ranged weapon attack, you can use a bonus action to cause the attack to deal 1d4 extra damage of the weapon's type.

The great bow twanged... the arrow... smote and vanished, barb, shaft and feather...

HIGH DESTINY

Stories tell that those who belong to the race of Dale are destined for greatness, a fact proven true by your King and his story. Do you share the same destiny of those of the line of Girion?

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on death saving throws.
- ◆ Whenever you become stable, you also regain 1 hit point.

"Bard is not lost!" he cried. "He dived from Esgaroth, when the enemy was slain. I am Bard, of the line of Girion..."

STOUT-HEARTED

Living for many a year under the ever-present menace of Smaug the Dreadful has made the Bardings a courageous race. After all, there are not many creatures more fearsome than a great Dragon...

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on Charisma saving throws, and you cannot be frightened by non-Undead creatures.

To the lineage of Gondor he added the fearless spirit of the Northmen...

THE LANGUAGE OF BIRDS

Stories told in the North say how Dalemen can become so wise as to comprehend the speech of birds, and so by understanding their song be forewarned of impending threats, or be able to spot a weakness in their enemies' defences.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You can comprehend and verbally communicate with birds, and you can obtain a magical success on any Intelligence (Nature) and Wisdom (Animal Handling) check related to birds.
- ◆ When you are outside and you make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can do so with advantage. You can use this virtue a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

...he found he could understand its tongue, for he was of the race of Dale.

VIRTUES OF THE DWARVES

The reserved and surly character of Dwarves has often been misinterpreted by others as hostility or untrustworthiness. Their secretiveness has even led other folks to believe that they possess strange and uncanny powers.

BARUK KHAZÂD!

The secret tongue of the Dwarves is guarded as a treasure of the past, yet their battle-cry is well-known and feared by their foes.

- ◆ Increase your Strength or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You can use a bonus action on your turn to force each hostile creature that can hear and see you within 30 feet of you to make a Charisma (Intimidation) check (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your choice of your Strength or Charisma modifier). On a failed check, the creature becomes frightened of you until the end of your next turn. Attack rolls against creatures frightened in this way have advantage. Once you use this virtue, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

"Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!" An axe swung and swept back. Two Orcs fell headless. The rest fled.

BROKEN SPELLS

In ancient times, the Dwarves made mighty spells. You have been taught fragments of old enchantments that retain some power to this day.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Choose any combination of three skills or tools you are proficient with. Whenever you make an ability check that uses one of the chosen proficiencies, you can obtain a magical success. You can do so a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

...they spoke fragments of broken spells of opening...

DARK FOR DARK BUSINESS

Your kind is not troubled by mere darkness in itself, as most members of other cultures are. On the contrary, you have grown to like the dark better than the light, finding yourself at ease in its cold embrace.

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Dim light doesn't impose disadvantage on your Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight.

- ◆ When you are in dim light, in darkness, or underground, and you make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can do so with advantage. You can use this virtue a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

"We like the dark," said the Dwarves. "Dark for dark business! There are many hours before dawn."

DURIN'S WAY

The Dwarves have fought many wars in deep places beneath the earth. You have been taught how to best defend yourself while fighting underground. As a result, you know how to exploit corners, darkness and other natural obstacles to your advantage.

- ◆ Increase your Dexterity or Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ When you have half or three-quarters cover, you gain an additional +1 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws.
- ◆ Other creatures do not gain advantage on attack rolls against you as a result of being unseen by you.

That was the beginning of the War of the Dwarves and the Orcs, which was long and deadly, and fought for the most part in deep places beneath the earth.

STONE-HARD

The Dwarves were made to be strong to endure, for they came unto the world when a great evil ruled Middle-earth. As long as your spirit supports your strength you can resist any hurt of body more hardily than most.

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You cannot use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest.

They are a tough, thrawn race for the most part, secretive, laborious, retentive of the memory of injuries...

UNTAMEABLE SPIRIT

Dwarves were made from their beginning to resist any form of domination. You have strengthened your resolve against all but the most subtle of the weapons of the Enemy.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.



- ◆ You are immune to being charmed.
- ◆ You have advantage on Intelligence saving throws.

Though they could be slain or broken, they could not be reduced to shadows enslaved to another will...

VIRTUES OF THE ELVES

Elves are synonymous with magic for most inhabitants of Middle-earth. The word ‘magic’ itself invokes images of their grace, the products of their craft, and their unearthly beauty.

AGAINST THE UNSEEN

Elves can perceive creatures that dwell in the wraith-world, be they spirits or ghosts, even when they are normally invisible to the eyes of the living and appear only as a chilling whisper of voices. You have learnt to strengthen your heart against such terrors.

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on Charisma saving throws, and you cannot be frightened by Undead creatures.

“I also will come,” said Legolas, “for I do not fear the Dead.”

DEADLY ARCHERY

Elves possess a natural talent for hitting the mark when using their bows. You have honed this talent almost to perfection, and your arrows find their target with uncanny precision.

- ◆ Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ As a bonus action, you can give yourself advantage on your next ranged weapon attack roll on the current turn. You can use this bonus action only if you haven’t moved during this turn, and after you use the bonus action, your speed is 0 until the end of the current turn.

...their small knives... would have been of no use against the arrows of the Elves that could hit a bird’s eye in the dark.

ELBERETH GILTHONIEL!

The name of Elbereth, the Queen of the Stars, is revered by all the Eldar still dwelling in Middle-earth. You have resorted to calling on her name in moments of great need, asking the Kindler to bestow her grace upon you.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.



- ◆ When you are not miserable and make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can do so with advantage. You can use this virtue a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

"Elbereth Gilthoniel!" sighed Legolas as he looked up.

ELVISH SPIRIT

The spirit of Elves is so strong that their bodies recover swiftly from many ills and injuries. You can recover from your exertions while awake, finding repose in the secret way of your folk.

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, up to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ If you meditate for at least 4 hours, you can reduce your exhaustion level by 1 and regain all lost hit points. You cannot use this virtue if you've had a long rest within the last 24 hours, or if you have 0 hit points. Once you use this virtue, you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.

...he could sleep, if sleep it could be called by Men, resting his mind in the strange paths of elvish dreams, even as he walked open-eyed in the light of this world.

GLEAM OF WRATH

Your folk have seen many defeats, and many fruitless victories in their wars against the Shadow. The deadly rage that your kindred harbour for the Enemy infuses your weapons with a gleam of chill flame.

- ◆ Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ As a bonus action, you can make a melee weapon that you are wielding emit dim light in a radius equal to its reach until the start of your next turn. The light is sunlight. While the weapon gleams, it also deals radiant damage instead of its normal type.
- ◆ When you score a critical hit with a weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it as extra radiant damage.

The Elves were the first to charge... Their spears and swords shone in the gloom with a gleam of chill flame, so deadly was the wrath of the hands that held them.

MEMORY OF ANCIENT DAYS

Long centuries and uncounted generations of Men seem but a little while to the Elves. Your memories go back to a time before Eriador became desolate, and your knowledge of the

land is returning to you now that you are travelling again outside the boundaries of your realm.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You can give yourself a bonus to pathfinding checks (see page 102) and Wisdom (Explore) checks equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of +1).
- ◆ As long as you are in Eriador, when you are targeted by a journey event, the roll on the Journey Events table is done as if you were in a Border Land if you are in a Wild Land, and as if you were in a Wild Land if you are in a Dark Land (see page 105).

"But it is not your own Shire," said Gildor. "Others dwelt here before hobbits were; and others will dwell here again when hobbits are no more."

VIRTUES OF THE HOBBITS

Hobbits rarely display virtues considered to be heroic by other cultures, which partly explains their absence from history as written by Elves and Men. But to the discerning eye, these merry fellows reveal subtle qualities, often excelling in fields where stronger individuals might fail.

ART OF DISAPPEARING

Hobbits are said to have little or no magic about them, but the way they can choose to disappear quickly and quietly can be described by others only as supernatural. You have learnt to choose exactly the right moment to turn away from the attention of others, sometimes unconsciously anticipating the need to disappear.

- ◆ Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any Dexterity (Stealth) check you make.
- ◆ You can try to hide even when you are only lightly obscured from the creature from which you are hiding.

They possessed from the first the art of disappearing swiftly and silently, when large folk whom they do not wish to meet came blundering by...

BRAVE AT A PINCH

One of the Wise once said that you have to put a Hobbit in a tight place before you find out what is in them. You prefer to avoid finding yourself in one, but you are also sure you would be able to take good care of yourself in the circumstances.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.



- ◆ Whenever a hostile creature or harmful effect imposes a condition on you, you suffer one or more levels of exhaustion, or you drop to less than half your maximum hit points, you gain inspiration.

“...he is one of the best, one of the best — as fierce as a dragon in a pinch.”

SMALL FOLK

Hobbits are a little people, but their resourcefulness far exceeds their stature. You have learnt how to exploit your small size to your advantage in a fight.

- ◆ Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Medium or larger creatures cannot gain advantage on attack rolls against you while you are not incapacitated.
- ◆ You don't provoke opportunity attacks from Medium or larger creatures.

For they are a little people, smaller than Dwarves...

SURE AT THE MARK

Hobbits are nimble and keen-eyed, qualities that make them good archers. You have honed this natural talent to perfection, so much so that you just need to stoop for a stone to find yourself armed with a deadly weapon.

- ◆ Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

- ◆ You are proficient with improvised weapons.
- ◆ When making a ranged attack with an improvised weapon, you can use your choice of your Strength or your Dexterity modifier for the attack and damage rolls.
- ◆ As a bonus action, you can give yourself advantage on your next ranged attack roll on the current turn. You can use this bonus action only if you haven't taken reactions during this turn, and after you use the bonus action, you can't take reactions until the start of your next turn.

They shot well with the bow, for they were keen-eyed and sure at the mark. Not only with bows and arrows.

THREE IS COMPANY

The Wise say that it is sometimes best to trust to friendship than to great wisdom. This is particularly true for Hobbits, as everyone knows that it is hardly possible to separate them from their friends. You have given your trust to your fellow Company members, and a true friendship has grown from the bond unifying you.

- ◆ Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Increase the Fellowship rating of your Company by 1.
- ◆ Whenever you spend Fellowship points, choose a number of companions (which can include yourself) who can see or hear you, up to twice your proficiency bonus. Each of those companions gains inspiration.

"We hobbits ought to stick together, and we will. I shall go, unless they chain me up."

TOUGH AS OLD TREE-ROOTS

They say that Hobbits are difficult to dismay or kill, and that they recover their health at a prodigious pace if allowed to enjoy some peace and quiet. You have discovered that you recover wonderfully from falls and bruises (at the cost of some considerable pain).

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ When you would roll one or more Hit Dice to regain hit points, you instead use the highest number possible for each die.

*"They are a remarkable race," said the Warden, nodding his head.
"Very tough in the fibre, I deem."*

VIRTUES OF THE MEN OF BREE

The Bree-folk live a sheltered life, it is true; but there is an upside in being fond of a warm hearth and the company of friends – you know there is something worth fighting for.

BREE-PONY

Bree-ponies are very similar to their owners, the Bree-folk – they don't seem to have anything special compared to their peers in other parts of Middle-earth, and yet some of them display uncommon courage and exceptional memory. You have acquired an unusually brave and intelligent beast that follows you everywhere.



- ◆ Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Your pony uses your proficiency bonus rather than its own, and adds your proficiency bonus to each of its ability scores, AC, and to any ability check or saving throw that it makes.
- ◆ Your pony has a number of Hit Dice equal to your character level instead of its normal Hit Dice (minimum 2).
- ◆ Your pony obeys your commands. In combat, it takes its turn on your initiative and acts and moves as you direct it (no action required by you), or on its own if you are absent or incapacitated. It cannot make opportunity attacks, and its only action options are Dash, Disengage, and Dodge, unless you spend an action on your turn to command it to take another action. If your pony dies, you can acquire a new one during the next Yule Fellowship Phase.

Bill the pony was with them, and as before he had a good deal of baggage, but he trotted along beside Sam and seemed well content.

DEFIANCE

Many realms have risen and fallen in the Lone-lands of Eriador since the Elder Days. Only ruins remain to mark their boundaries. Yet, the Bree-men have endured, revealing an unexpected reserve of strength and vigour in the face of adversity.

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ As a bonus action, you can spend one Hit Die to heal yourself.

Few had survived the turmoils of the Elder Days; but when the Kings returned again over the Great Sea they had found the Bree-men still there...

DESPERATE COURAGE

You have lived all your life on the edge of the Wild, but the worst news that has come to Bree in your time concerned only brigands or packs of hungry wolves. You don't know yet what the likes of you can do against the Shadow in the East, but you are sure you will stand against it, no matter the cost.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Whenever you gain Shadow points, you also gain inspiration.

*"Are you still willing to help me?" "I am," said Mr. Butterbur.
"More than ever."*

FRIENDLY AND FAMILIAR

Since you started your adventures, you have realised that your folk's custom of trading with foreigners may help you in your endeavours. Your nice manners and friendly demeanour easily gain the sympathies of those you meet, and your ability to inquire about the doings of strangers without letting curiosity get the better of you provides you with many opportunities to learn from those you meet along the way.

- ◆ Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ Increase the Fellowship rating of your Company by 1.
- ◆ Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any Wisdom (Insight) check you make. In addition, you have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks when interacting with Dwarves, Elves, Hobbits, and Men (other than the Dúnedain).

...they were more friendly and familiar with Hobbits, Dwarves, Elves, and other inhabitants of the world about them than was (or is) usual with Big People.

STRANGE AS NEWS FROM BREE

It is indeed true that the affairs of the four villages are the chief concern of the Bree-folk, but the most inquisitive among the inhabitants are always ready to gather what tidings come from distant lands. You have learnt that listening to the strange tales that travellers often talk about can prove to be very precious.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain proficiency in the Investigation skill. If you are already proficient, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with it.
- ◆ During each Fellowship Phase, you can receive a rumour from the Loremaster (see page 112).

Strange as News from Bree was still a saying in the Eastfarthing, descending from those days, when news from North, South, and East could be heard in the inn...

THE ART OF SMOKING

You have mastered the art of smoking pipe-weed, and you always carry your pipe with you, as well as a bag of tobacco, for using it grants you patience and clarity of mind.

- ◆ Increase your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You gain expertise with pipes, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with them.

- ◆ You can use your pipe to gain inspiration a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, instead of once, before you need to finish a long rest.

And certainly it was from Bree that the art of smoking the genuine weed spread in the recent centuries...

VIRTUES OF THE RANGERS OF THE NORTH

The Rangers are what remains in the North of the great people that came to Middle-earth out of Westernesse, the Númenóreans. Their nobility of blood is exemplified by their many talents, even if their number has dwindled and their struggle has destined them to a life of secrecy.

ENDURANCE OF THE RANGER

They say that a Ranger with a clear trail to follow can never be weary. You hope the saying will prove true, as it will be your fate to often travel in haste, to seek distant lands on urgent errands or to relentlessly hunt your enemies.

- ◆ Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on Constitution saving throws.

"Hardy is the race of Elendil!"

FORESIGHT OF THEIR KINDRED

The Rangers of the North still possess a measure of the foresight that their ancestors possessed in full. In the Twilight of the Third Age, this gift manifests as a sense of watchfulness, and of fear, arising to warn a Ranger of a danger that has not yet come to pass.

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have a number of foresight points equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1). Whenever you or a creature that you can see make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can spend one foresight point to reroll the d20 and must use the new roll. You can choose to spend one of your foresight points after the roll, but before the outcome is determined. You can also spend one foresight point after a roll on the Journey Events table. Roll a d20, and then choose whether the Loremaster uses their roll or yours. You regain your expended foresight points when you finish a long rest.

"And I say to you: if you pass the doors of Moria, beware!"

HEIR OF ARNOR

The days of your folk have darkened, and not many of you remain; but ever the memory of the Kings is passed from generation to generation. An artefact going back to the days of Lost Arnor has been in your family's possession for unbroken generations. Now you have been deemed worthy to become its keeper.

- ◆ Increase one ability score of your choice by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ With the help of the Loremaster, use the rules on page 129 to create either a Wondrous Item, or a Famous Weapon possessing a single enchanted reward. The item is generally of Númenórean craftsmanship, but might even be of Elven or Dwarven make. If it is a Famous Weapon, it can be upgraded with up to two non-enchanted rewards, as if it was a normal item.

"Here is the ring of Barahir," he said, "the token of our kinship from afar; and here also are the shards of Narsil."

ROYALTY REVEALED

Your kin belong to a bloodline of kings, but they have learnt to hide from their enemies in the twilight years of their kingdom. Should you choose to reveal your heritage, your noble bearing will cause your allies to cast away their doubts. You reveal yourself by shouting an ancestral battle-cry, or unsheathing a weapon of high lineage, or by showing a device or coat of arms.

- ◆ Increase your Strength or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ As a bonus action, you can choose to reveal your lineage. When you do so, choose a number of friendly creatures (which can include yourself) within 30 feet of you who can see or hear you, up to twice your proficiency bonus. Until the end of your next turn, each creature gains advantage on attack rolls and Charisma (Intimidation) checks, and is immune to being frightened. It also gains temporary hit points equal to your choice of your Strength or Charisma modifier (minimum 1). These temporary hit points last until they are depleted or the creature finishes a short or long rest. Once you use this virtue, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Aragorn threw back his cloak. The elven-sheath glittered as he grasped it, and the bright blade of Andúril shone like a sudden flame as he swept it out. "Elendil!" he cried.

STRENGTH OF WILL

You have been raised in a land dotted with desolate ruins and burial mounds. You have heard the dead whisper with cold voices out of lonely barrows, while ghostly lights dance on haunted hills. When your will strengthens your heart, there is hardly anything in this world that can dismay you.

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ You have advantage on Charisma saving throws.
- ◆ Whenever you must make a Charisma saving throw, you gain a bonus to the saving throw equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum +1).

"Does he feel no fear?" muttered the Dwarf.

WAYS OF THE WILD

The Rangers of the North roam ceaselessly, hunting for wicked things and guarding all frontiers. For you the Wild has become as familiar as the road that leads home is familiar to Hobbits, and the land itself may reveal useful tidings.

- ◆ Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ◆ During a journey, you can take on multiple roles without penalties.
- ◆ You gain proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Explore, Hunting, or Travel. If you are already proficient in each of them, you add double your proficiency bonus to checks you make with one of them of your choice.
- ◆ When you make a Wisdom check using a skill in which you are proficient, you can obtain a magical success. You can do so a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

*"Where sight fails the earth may bring us rumour," said Aragorn.
"The land must groan under their hated feet."*







CHAPTER 5

adVENTURING phases

*Even the good plans of wise wizards like Gandalf
and of good friends like Elrond go astray sometimes
when you are off on dangerous adventures
over the Edge of the Wild ...*



Right-minded, respectable folk know that adventures are disturbing, uncomfortable things. Not only do they make people late for dinner, but they often imperil the lives of those who embark upon them. Those few who dare cross the desolate regions of Eriador are another breed entirely. Some are enthusiastic explorers seeking the last remaining artefacts of a forgotten age. Others are valiant defenders of their people, venturing forth to push back the dark forces that threaten to engulf the land.

Perhaps the most heroic of all are the common folk who put aside their reluctance to leave their homes to do what needs to be done for the greater good. They are destined to confront the unknown, to brave dangers deemed insurmountable, and face foes believed to be invincible. Such is the life of adventurers.

ADVENTURING PHASE SESSIONS

The largest part of the gameplay of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is made up of a series of Adventuring Phases. As the name suggests, it is during an Adventuring Phase that most of the action takes place, as opposed to the Fellowship Phases, where the events happening between adventures are described.

During an Adventuring Phase it is the job of the Loremaster to challenge the players, putting them in difficult circumstances, setting fiendish riddles for them to solve, and confronting them with formidable opponents. The gameplay is a dynamic narrative, as the players take action to explore the situations they encounter. The Loremaster then describes what happens as a result of their actions, and the players again react to the new circumstances, and so on.

The Loremaster keeps the story flowing through a mixture of preparation and improvisation.

HEROIC VENTURES

A truly seasoned adventurer is familiar with the trials and challenges that accompany the dangerous lifestyle of a wandering hero — fighting dangerous enemies (combat), meeting new people or important personalities (council), and travelling to distant or unknown places (journey).

As previously anticipated, the rules for combat in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* rely primarily on the normal rules for 5e, and thus are not repeated here.

The following sections instead offer detailed rules for those activities that require a special treatment to better reflect adventuring in Middle-earth: councils and journeys.



COUNCIL

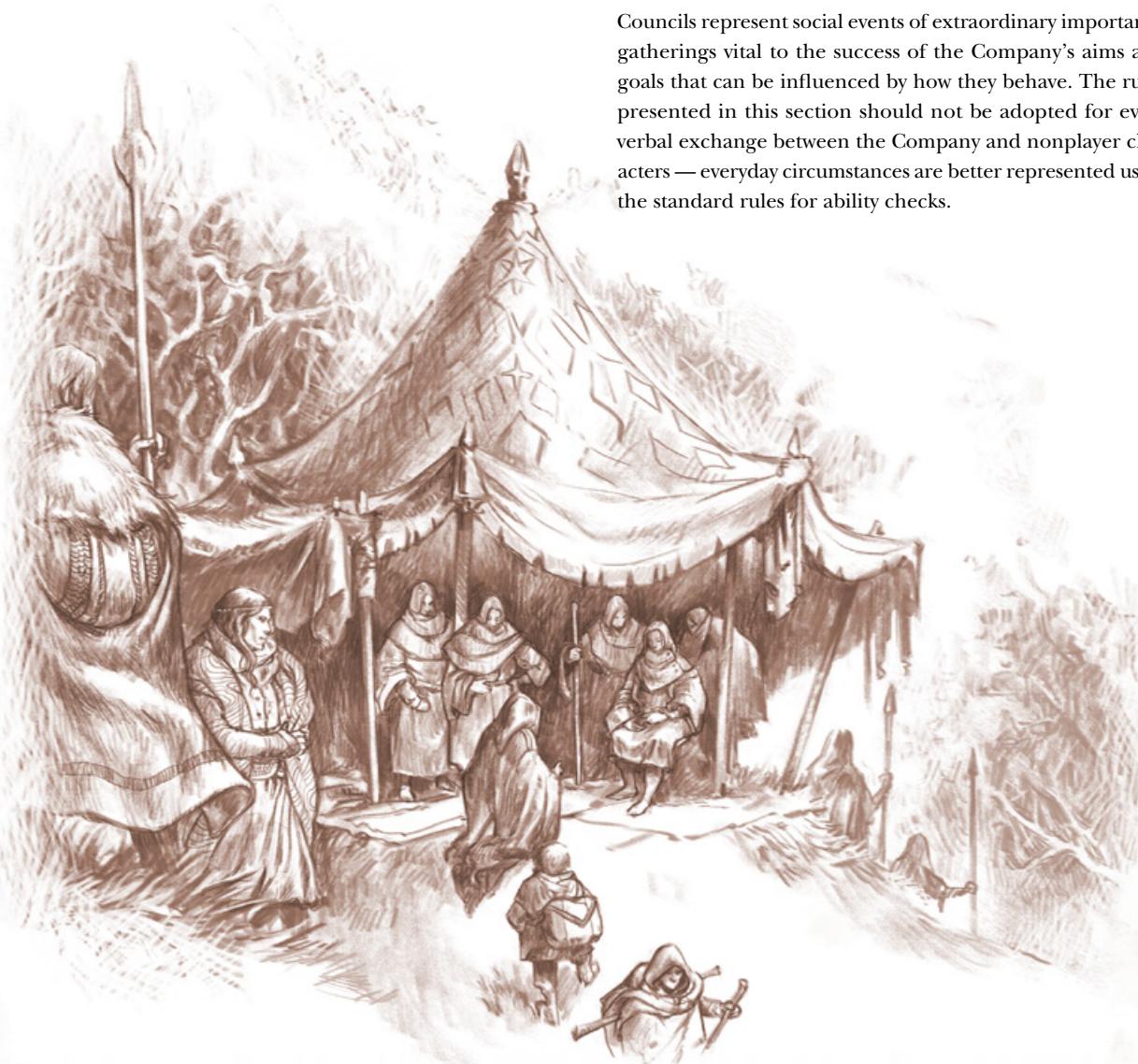
*"You will soon hear all you wish to know," said Gandalf.
"We shall have a Council, as soon as you are well enough."*

Adventurers meet many travellers and wanderers along the road. Whenever they deal with strangers, they should exercise some caution, as theirs is a trade considered peculiar and sometimes dangerous by the common folk. Even when meeting foes of the common Enemy, Player-heroes should watch their tongues and be mindful of their manners, as even trusty friends can be quick to anger in days of doubt.

When the Company meets one or more nonplayer characters in a formal gathering, a council occurs. While much of what transpires in a council can be played out as a dialogue between the Company and the Loremaster, the rules presented in this chapter are particularly appropriate to determine the progress of a meeting and its consequences.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Councils represent social events of extraordinary importance, gatherings vital to the success of the Company's aims and goals that can be influenced by how they behave. The rules presented in this section should not be adopted for every verbal exchange between the Company and nonplayer characters — everyday circumstances are better represented using the standard rules for ability checks.



COUNCIL STRUCTURE

At the beginning of a council, the players should focus on a goal and choose their course of action accordingly.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	USEFUL ABILITY CHECKS
Introduction	The spokesperson presents the Company. The Charisma check determines any rerolls or disadvantage.	Charisma (Intimidation) to impress strangers quickly, revealing much about yourself; Charisma (Persuasion) to ask for support, especially from friends; Charisma (Deception) to extract information without revealing too much.
Interaction	The main part of a council. Successful ability checks accumulate to reach the required successes.	Charisma (Deception) to win over the audience through deceit; Charisma (Intimidation) to address crowds and rouse spirits; Charisma (Performance) to garner approval; Charisma (Persuasion) to make a point; Intelligence (Riddle) to gather information; Wisdom (Insight) to observe and evaluate.



To qualify as a council, a meeting must be a formal gathering during which the stakes are high and, depending on the outcome, the Company stands to win or lose something valuable.

To achieve their goal in a council, the Company must achieve a number of successful ability checks, based on the import of the request and ranging from 1 to 3.

COUNCIL SEQUENCE

A council is set up and resolved by going through the following three steps:

1. Introduction
2. Set Required Successes
3. Interaction

When the council is concluded, a final step is used to assess its consequences (see End of the Council, page 99).

INTRODUCTION

1 At the beginning of a council, a spokesperson chosen among the Player-heroes presents the Company. Generally, the spokesperson is the best speaker in the group.

To introduce the Company, the spokesperson must make a DC 15 Charisma check:

- ◆ On a success, the Company can reroll a single ability check that they fail during the Interaction stage. If the Charisma check succeeds by 5 or more, the Company can reroll up to two failed ability checks.
- ◆ If the Charisma check fails by 5 or more, all Player-heroes have disadvantage on their ability checks during the Interaction stage.

The skills that are particularly useful in setting up a good Introduction are listed below, with details on their uses and consequences.

- ◆ A **CHARISMA (INTIMIDATION)** check conveys a powerful message using few words. Player-heroes can use it to impress someone and overturn a negative early reaction, or to quickly set the terms for the coming discussion. This approach has a downside though, as the spokesperson voluntarily mentions the lineage, deeds and other personal information of the various members of the Company for full effect.

- ◆ A **CHARISMA (PERSUASION)** check is the best way to smooth a relationship before asking for support or other form of assistance. It is particularly useful if the Company (or at least the spokesperson) is already on friendly terms with the opposing party; on the contrary, to unfriendly ears, a courteous speaker might sound duplicitous. Finally, it is possible to politely refuse to reveal too much about the identity of the group.
- ◆ If the Company has doubts about the opposite party's intentions, the spokesperson can make a **CHARISMA (DECEPTION)** check to extract a lot of information from others in exchange for very little. However, a poor performance is sure to provoke mistrust in the opposing party.

SET REQUIRED SUCCESSES

2

When the Company travels to Rivendell to petition Master Elrond, or asks to see the Mayor of the Shire in Michel Delving, they do it with a purpose in mind.

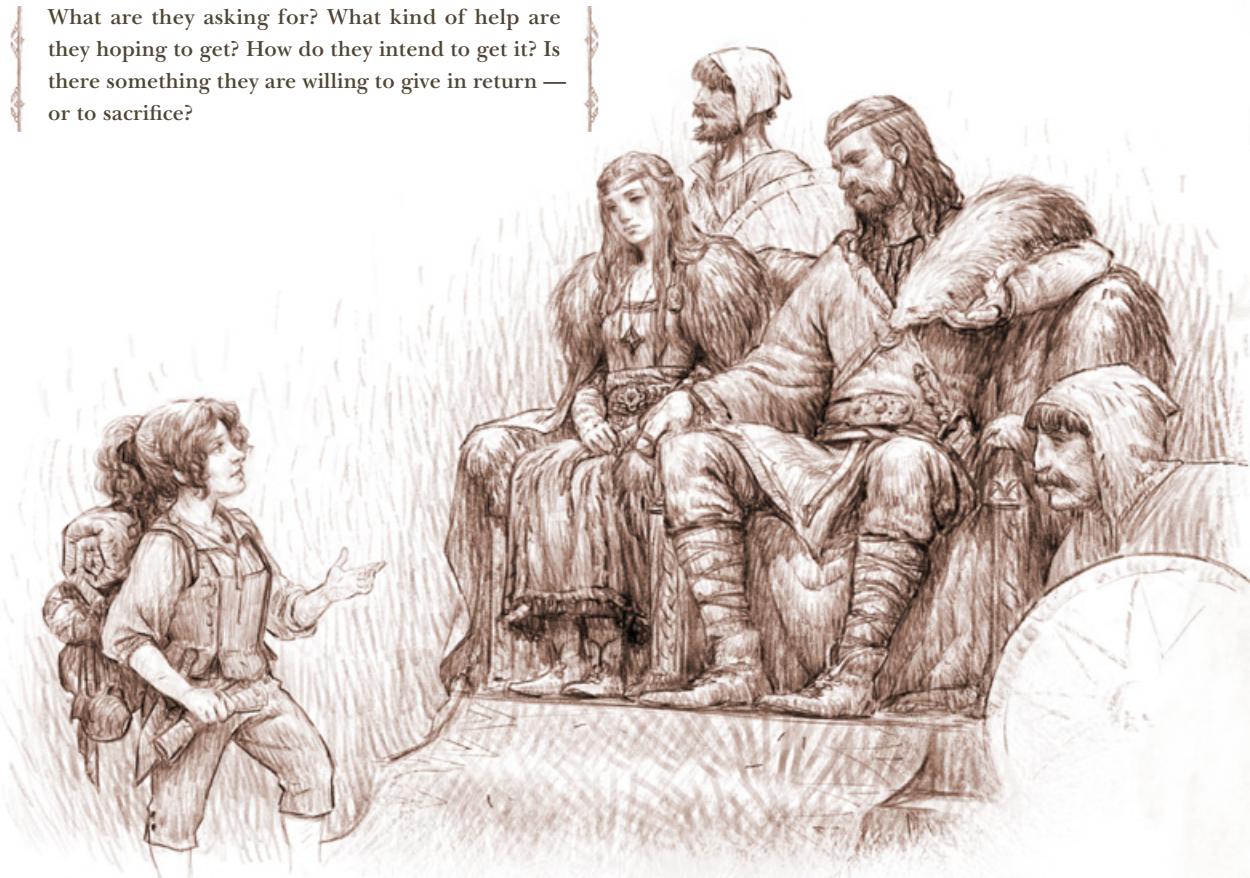
Before the council even begins, the players should all agree on what the Company hopes to achieve from the meeting, and possibly on how to go about getting it.

What are they asking for? What kind of help are they hoping to get? How do they intend to get it? Is there something they are willing to give in return — or to sacrifice?

The difficulty for the Company to achieve their stated goal determines the number of successes required during the Interaction stage, and it is set by the Loremaster at a value equal to 1 (a reasonable request), 2 (a bold request), or 3 (an outrageous request).

To make the evaluation, the Loremaster considers the import of the objective chosen by the Company, in relation to the motivations and expectations of the folk they are encountering.

- ◆ In general terms, a *reasonable* request (1 success required) is one where the encountered folk do not lose anything by helping the Player-heroes, or if the Company is offering something in return of approximately equal import.
- ◆ A *bold* request (2 successes required) corresponds to a goal that is profiting the Company more than it does the people encountered.
- ◆ An *outrageous* request (3 successes required) happens when the Player-heroes are asking the encountered folk to do something that is dangerous, or has scarce or no possibilities for reward.



INTERACTION

3 This is the main, and most challenging, part of most social gatherings — from a birthday party to an official audience with a Lord or Lady.

It is during this stage that the players engage with the Loremaster in playing out the scene, and make ability checks. The players choose their own course of action as they see fit, but the DC of their ability checks depends on the attitude of the people they encounter. To this end, the Loremaster chooses whether the audience of the Player-heroes is reluctant, open, or friendly:

- ◆ **RELUCTANT — DC 20.** The encountered group has reasons to be unwilling to help the Company, possibly due to a level of prejudice or other source of concern.
- ◆ **OPEN — DC 15.** This is the default attitude for an audience, representing a general inclination to listen to what the Company has to say.
- ◆ **FRIENDLY — DC 10.** The audience is very interested in hearing what the Player-heroes have to say, and is willing to hear their plea. Maybe the Company was introduced by someone of note, or the spokesperson belongs to the same culture as the opposing party.

During this stage, the Loremaster keeps track of the number of successful ability checks scored by the Company.

The skills listed below can be used to various effects during Interaction.

- ◆ **CHARISMA (DECEPTION)** — This ability check can be used to obtain favours or information from an individual, resorting to half-truths if not outright lies. Player-heroes must be aware that deceiving the audience may often be considered a Misdeed, depending on the circumstances (see page 142).
- ◆ **CHARISMA (INTIMIDATION)** — This ability check can be used to impress a crowd of listeners or a single individual; Player-heroes may attempt the check to push a frightened community to action, or to rouse a downcast leader. The objective of the ability check must be obvious; otherwise, even if the roll is a success, its effect will be weak.
- ◆ **CHARISMA (PERFORMANCE)** — A good song or tune is almost never out of place at a relaxed social gathering, but they can also be powerful diplomatic devices if the singer finds the proper song or intones well-chosen words.

AWARDING EFFECTIVE ROLEPLAYING

The players and the Loremaster may ask themselves about how much impact the interaction between them should have on the final outcome of a council. Should a good die roll be considered more important than a clever decision by a player? The right answer is to give both equal weight.

As happens with any action that has the possibility of failure, players during a council describe their conduct, and then an appropriate ability check is made to evaluate the result.

If the delivered speech touches topics that are relevant to the Company's goal and that are deemed important by their audience, then the Player-hero gains advantage on the ability check.

- ◆ **CHARISMA (PERSUASION)** — Player-heroes can use their persuasiveness to win the minds of their listeners, or to strengthen their hold on an already-captivated audience. Unlike a Charisma (Intimidation) check, a Charisma (Persuasion) check may be used discreetly during any kind of social interaction.
- ◆ **INTELLIGENCE (RIDDLE)** — This ability check can be used in a social environment, either to formally play the ancient riddle-game — practised and respected even by the unlikeliest of wicked creatures — or to gather information and news. In the latter case, a successful Intelligence (Riddle) check allows a Player-hero to put together all sorts of tidbits that incautious speakers might accidentally give away in their conversation, or simply to gather interesting facts, all the while seeming to appear uninterested or unconcerned.
- ◆ **WISDOM (INSIGHT)** — This ability check is useful to evaluate the emotions of the person or people the Company is interacting with, possibly revealing unspoken purposes or hidden feelings.

END OF THE COUNCIL

A council can end in three different ways:

- ◆ **SUCCESS.** The Company reaches the number of successful ability checks required — the Player-heroes achieve what was chosen as their objective at the start of the council.
- ◆ **FAILURE, OR SUCCESS WITH WOE.** A Player-hero fails an ability check attempted during the Interaction stage (after any rerolls gained with a successful Introduction) — the Player-heroes can now choose to simply fail and be refused what they asked for, OR, with the approval of the Loremaster, they can opt to achieve their stated goal, but at a steeper price. For example, they gain from the council much less than what they asked for, or they end up acquiring one or more enemies from among their audience. The price doesn't need to be immediately apparent, and may lead to an unexpected challenge to be faced another day.

- ◆ **DISASTER.** A Player-hero fails an ability check attempted during the Interaction stage by 10 or more (after any rerolls), or by 5 or more if the request was outrageous — The Player-heroes cannot opt to turn the failure into a success with woe, and the Company is now seen as a threat by the folk encountered. The Player-heroes may end up being imprisoned, or even attacked.

EXPERIENCE AWARDS FOR COUNCILS

Combat encounters in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* are not as important as in other 5e products — for this reason, the Loremaster is encouraged to award players with XP also when they successfully complete a Council.

The following table provides a series of suggested awards, to be divided among all Player-heroes taking part in a gathering (not only those who made one or more ability checks during the council), and to be awarded exclusively if the council involved a meaningful risk for the Company.

COUNCIL XP AWARDS:

The values provided in brackets are the XP awards suggested in the case of a success with woe.

THE AUDIENCE IS...	REASONABLE REQUEST	BOLD REQUEST	OUTRAGEOUS REQUEST
... friendly	25 (0) XP	50 (0) XP	100 (25) XP
... open	100 (10) XP	200 (25) XP	450 (100) XP
... reluctant	200 (50) XP	700 (100) XP	1,800 (450) XP

JOURNEY

He then gave a full account of their journey from the time when they left Hobbiton.

A Company will often end up travelling across long leagues of inhospitable and unfamiliar terrain in the course of their errands and quests. But a journey is much more than simply a means of getting to a destination. Travelling Player-heroes see the world outside the borders of their own lands, witness wondrous events, and face challenges that put their capabilities to the test. In short, a journey is synonymous with adventuring.

Gameplay during a journey is less focused on details — whenever possible, everyone involved should try to avoid explicitly referencing the rules, and rather blend the structure into an ongoing narrative.

Applying the rules for journeys requires the use of a map of the traversed region, and collaboration between the Loremaster and the players to determine what happens along the way.

The Map

The rules for travelling in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* assume that the Company is trying to reach a specific destination. If the Company must visit a number of different locations, reaching each of them must be considered as a separate journey.

As obvious as it may seem, the members of a travelling Company must know at least approximately where their destination is located to be able to reach it. At the end of the Third Age, Middle-earth is a dangerous place, and the folks inhabiting it have been long sundered from each other, to the point that most people do not know the precise whereabouts of places just a few days away — if they are aware of their existence at all.

The front end papers contain the Players' Map, representing the geographical lore of experienced adventurers — that is, a deeper knowledge than that possessed by the average denizen of Eriador.

All the locations indicated as villages or towns are places that the Company may choose as their destination. Not every settlement that exists in the Third Age is shown on the map — even a sparsely populated region like Eriador counts dozens of unmarked villages and isolated homesteads, what remains of what was once a large kingdom of Men.

Players can update their geographical lore during play, by making a copy of the map and writing directly on it, adding the places they visit.



THERE AND BACK AGAIN

The rules for journey resolution have been devised to make travelling across the land a vital component of gameplay, but they are not meant to be used every time the Company is on the road. In particular, they should rarely be used when the heroes are on their way back home. This is because the main effects of adventuring on the Player-heroes are not very relevant if the members of the Company are headed for a safe haven where they can rest without problems, or if they are travelling without any concern for the amount of time it will take them to make the trip. On the contrary, the journey back should be played out in detail in those cases where an Adventuring Phase may profit from a 'closing act', or when reaching their destination was just part of the Player-heroes' mission — for example, if they are escorting someone back with them.

ASSIGN JOURNEY ROLES

A travelling Company must cover all four available roles. If there are more than four Company members, more than one Player-hero may be assigned the same role — with the exception of the Company's Guide (there can be only one Guide, but more than one Player-hero can stand as a Lookout or Hunter, etc.). Conversely, if the Company counts less than four Player-heroes, then one or more adventurers will have to take on the duty of multiple roles (still, only one Player-hero can be the Guide).

JOURNEY SEQUENCE

If a Company is undertaking a very long journey (more than 20 hexes), the Loremaster should split the itinerary into a number of legs, to be considered as separate journeys.

Journeys are resolved by applying the following sequence:

1. Set Journey Path
2. Make Pathfinding checks
3. Ending the Journey

SET JOURNEY PATH

1 Using the Player's map, the Company shows the Loremaster the route that they intend to follow.

The itinerary must connect the location where the Company is at the start of the journey, and the location chosen as their destination.

When tracing their journey path, the players must consider that their itinerary can rarely be drawn 'as the crow flies' — that is, connecting the starting point to the destination in a straight line. Instead, due consideration must be given to the lie of the land.

For example, high mountain ranges and swift-running rivers can be traversed only across passes or over bridges or fords.

Then, the Loremaster checks the map on the back end papers and draws the Company's itinerary on a copy of the journey log, using its hex grid, as a path traversing a number of hexes equal to those required to reach the destination (not counting the starting hex).

The path drawn on the journey log must not necessarily conform to the shape of the path as traced by the players on the map — the only requirement is that it must be composed of the same number of hexes.

This notwithstanding, the players are encouraged to annotate any prominent landmarks they are traversing or passing

THE TRAVELLING COMPANY

The members of the Company assume different roles during a journey. A journey role summarises roughly what a Player-hero is doing for the length of the trip and comes into play when the Company experiences an event (see Journey Sequence).

There are four journey roles to cover: Guide, Hunter, Lookout, and Scout.

JOURNEY ROLES:

ROLE	FUNCTION
Guide	In charge of all decisions concerning route, rest, and supplies.
Hunter	In charge of finding food in the wild.
Look-out	In charge of keeping watch.
Scout	In charge of setting up camp, opening new trails.

JOURNEY LOG		THE COMPANY			PONIES AND HORSES		JOURNAL	
Year 2965	Name Haldamir	Journey Role Guide	Ability Check Wis (Travel) +6	Name Burin	Journey Role Look-out	Ability Check Wis (Perception) +2	Name Joki	Constitution 15 (+2)
Season Summer	Name Primula	Journey Role Look-out	Ability Check Wis (Perception) +1	Name Folco	Journey Role Hunter	Ability Check Wis (Hunting) +4	Name Willy	Constitution 13 (+1)
Journey from Weathertop	Name Holly	Journey Role Scout	Ability Check Wis (Explore) +3	Name Old Tom			Name Gus	Constitution 13 (+1)
Destination Fornost								
Days of travel 9								

JOURNEY PATH

EVENTS

- EVENT 1**
Target Scout
Event Short-cut
Result Success! (DC +1)
- EVENT 2**
Target Hunter
Event Mishap
Result Failure! (DC +2)
- EVENT 3**
Target
Event
Result
- EVENT 4**
Target
Event
Result
- EVENT 5**
Target
Event
Result
- EVENT 6**
Target
Event
Result

by, like ruins, or river fords and bridges. Players may also mark those hexes that contain different types of terrain, as seen on the region map, to eventually facilitate the Loremaster in assessing the duration of the journey.

MAKE PATHFINDING CHECKS

2 Journeys can be dangerous (and exciting!), as a travelling Company experiences along the way a number of events representing threats and unexpected occurrences.

Events take place in specific spots along the journey path of the Company. To determine exactly where, the Guide of the Company must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Travel) check. If the Company carries a map of the itinerary, the Guide can use their proficiency with cartographer's tools, instead of Travel. If the journey is by sea, the Guide can alternatively use their proficiency with navigator's tools. A Guide who takes on multiple roles takes a -5 penalty to this check.

As soon as the Company leaves, the Guide makes a first pathfinding check, and counts a number of hexes along the journey path based on the outcome of the roll:

- ♦ If the pathfinding check fails, the event occurs 2 hexes away along the journey path. If the check fails by 5 or more, the event occurs only 1 hex away.
- ♦ If the pathfinding check succeeds, the event takes place at a distance of 3 hexes. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the event occurs 4 hexes away.

The Loremaster finds the precise spot by counting the appropriate number of hexes, starting from the current position of the Company and proceeding towards its destination — the last hex reached by counting is the spot where an event takes place. If the Company is using a journey log, the event is marked on the appropriate hex.

To determine the precise nature of an event, the procedure described under Event Resolution must be applied (see page 104).

Once the event has been resolved, the Guide must make a new pathfinding check to see if another event happens further along the Company's journey path.

ENDING THE JOURNEY

3 A journey continues until the Guide's pathfinding check lets the Company match or exceed the number of hexes left between their current position and the final destination — when this happens, the Company has reached its destination and the journey is over.

More specifically, a journey ends when the Company reaches its intended destination, and the Player-heroes take part in a new scene, or when an unexpected occurrence engages the Company in a different activity for a significant amount of time — in that case, the Loremaster adjudicates whether this ends the journey or not.

FATIGUE SAVING THROW: Fatigue represents the level of exhaustion that a Player-hero accumulates while travelling and that manifests itself fully when the journey is finally over.

In game terms, at the end of the Journey each Player-hero must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. The DC is increased by an amount determined by the number and the type of events faced by the Company (see table on page 105). If the fatigue saving throw succeeds, the Player-hero does not suffer any level of exhaustion.

If the fatigue saving throw fails, the Player-hero suffers one level of exhaustion. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the Player-hero suffers two levels of exhaustion instead. If it fails by 10 or more, the Player-hero suffers three levels of exhaustion instead.

If you ride a mount for at least half of the journey's length in days of travel (rounded up), you gain a bonus to your fatigue saving throw equal to your mount's Constitution modifier.

JOURNEY LENGTH

The following rules replace those for travel pace of 5e. During a journey, traversing each hex on the region map takes 1 day, or 2 days for each hex suggesting a hard terrain (hills, marshes, woods, etc.). If the Company must move at a speed of 15 feet or lower, add 1 day for each hex traversed at this pace.

If the entire Company can move at a speed of 50 feet or higher (either because the Player-heroes are travelling on horseback, or because they have an increased speed), count 1 day for each two hexes (1 day for each three hexes if the Company moves at a speed of 70 feet or higher), or 1 day for each hex of hard terrain. Hard terrain does not allow proceeding on horseback.

FORCED MARCH: The members of a Company can press themselves while on a journey, and march for more hours each day than they would otherwise dare.

If the Company undertakes a forced march, double their speed for the purpose of calculating travel pace, but each Player-hero must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the end of each day of forced march. On a failed saving throw, a character suffers one level of exhaustion.

PERILOUS AREAS

A number of hexagons on the Journey Map are outlined with a thicker border — these are areas that are considered particularly hard or dangerous to cross. These are patches of thick woodland, steep mountain passes, treacherous marshes, and other hazardous terrain types.

In game terms, all Perilous Areas are rated for their dangerousness with a numerical value — their Peril rating. When a pathfinding check would lead the Company into or through a Perilous Area, apply the following:

1. The travelling Company stops in the Perilous Area as soon as it enters it.

2. Before the Player-heroes can leave the area, they must face a number of events equal to its Peril rating (all normal rules apply).
3. Once all events have been resolved, the Company continues the journey normally, resuming their pathfinding checks from the first hex along the journey path outside the boundaries of the Perilous Area.

Supplements for the game may provide special Journey Events Tables based on specific Perilous Areas.

NOTICING THREATS: Use the passive Wisdom (Perception) scores of the Player-heroes to determine if they notice hidden threats during a journey, as normal. Player-heroes who take on multiple roles take a -5 penalty to their passive Wisdom (Perception) scores.

STEALTH: During a journey, Player-heroes can move stealthily if they travel at no more than half their base walking speed. While doing so, as long as they are not in the open, they can try to surprise or sneak past other creatures they encounter.

EXPERIENCE AWARDS FOR JOURNEYS

Characters in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* also gain experience points by completing a journey.

As it happens with Councils, the XP award should be gained exclusively if the Company took significant risks along the path, had to cover the route within a time limit, or had to make the journey under particularly disadvantageous conditions. The total XP award of a journey is calculated by adding up the suggested XP value of each hex crossed by the Player-heroes, and then dividing the total among all Player-heroes.

For example, the journey from Bree to Sarn Ford along the Greenway involves travelling 4 hexes of road between the South Downs and the Barrow Downs (a Dark Land), worth 100 XP (25 x 4), and another 3 hexes of road in a Wild Land, worth 30 XP (10 x 3). The journey is therefore worth a total of 130 XP (100 + 30).

EVENT RESOLUTION

Journeys can be long but uneventful, or made exciting by many unexpected occurrences. Using the Journey Sequence described in the previous pages, each journey may end up featuring one or more events, based on the length of the journey.

Once the Loremaster has identified the location where an event is going to take place, apply the following sequence:

1. Select Targets
2. Determine Event
3. Resolve the Event

SELECT TARGETS

1 The Loremaster selects who will face the journey event by rolling a d3 and using the Event Target table below.

The table identifies the possible targets, among those Player-heroes covering the roles of Scouts, Look-outs, and Hunters. The table also shows the ability check that will be required by the journey event.

EVENT TARGET:

D3	TARGET	ABILITY CHECK
1	Scouts	Wisdom (Explore)
2	Look-outs	Wisdom (Perception)
3	Hunters	Wisdom (Hunting)

JOURNEY XP AWARDS:

When crossing a Perilous Area, count a number of hexes equal to the Peril rating of the area.

THE HEX IS...	... IN A BORDER LAND	... IN A WILD LAND	... IN A DARK LAND
... along a road	0 XP	10 XP	25 XP
... in open terrain	10 XP	25 XP	50 XP
... in hard terrain	25 XP	50 XP	100 XP

DETERMINE EVENT

2 To determine the nature of the event, the Loremaster must check the map to see in which region type the event is taking place, and then makes a d20 roll:

- ◆ If it is within a Border Land, the roll is made with advantage.
- ◆ If it is within a Dark Land, the roll is made with disadvantage.

The roll result is then checked on the Journey Events table below. All entries detail a type of occurrence that the Loremaster uses to describe what happens to the travelling Company, specifying precisely what happens in game terms.

More specifically:

- ◆ Each journey event features a unique effect that must be resolved with an ability check made by a Player-hero among those covering the role that was singled out as the target.
- ◆ Most events may additionally cause an increase in the DC of the fatigue saving throw made by each Player-hero at the end of the journey. Multiple increases are cumulative.

JOURNEY EVENTS TABLE:

D20	EVENT	CONSEQUENCES
1-2	Terrible Misfortune	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +3. In addition, if the check fails, the target must make a Dexterity saving throw*. On a failed save, the target is reduced to 0 hit points. On a successful save, the target loses half of their maximum hit points (rounded down).
3-4	Despair	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +2. In addition, if the check fails, everyone in the Company gains 1d3 Shadow points (Charisma saving throw* to resist, see page 140).
5-6	III Choices	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +2. In addition, if the check fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Wisdom saving throw* to resist, see page 140).
7-14	Mishap	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +1. If the check fails, the DC increases by +2 instead, and the length of the journey increases by 1 day.
15-17	Short Cut	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +1. If the check succeeds, reduce the length of the journey by 1 day, to a minimum of 1 day.
18-19	Chance-meeting	The fatigue saving throw DC increases by +1. If the check succeeds, the DC does not increase, and the Loremaster improvises an encounter that favours the Company.
20	Joyful Sight	If the check succeeds, everyone in the Company gains inspiration.

* The DC for this saving throw equals the DC of the ability check (see Resolve the Event, below). The saving throw has disadvantage if it is autumn or winter.

RESOLVE THE EVENT

3 To resolve the event, one Player-hero among those selected as the targets must now make the ability check specified in step 1; a Player-hero covering the same role can choose to help the companion, granting advantage to the check.

The DC of the ability check is determined by the terrain type where the event is taking place. Player-heroes who take on multiple roles take a -5 penalty to their check. The check has disadvantage if it is autumn or winter.

- ◆ **HARD TERRAIN - DC 20.** The event takes place in a hex suggesting a hard terrain.
- ◆ **ROADS - DC 10.** The events happens along a road.
- ◆ **OPEN TERRAIN - DC 15.** The events takes place in a hex suggesting neither hard terrain nor roads.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ABILITY CHECK: Each entry in the Journey Events table specifies what happens in game terms, based on whether the ability check fails or succeeds. A consequence indicating ‘the target’ concerns the Player-hero who made the roll (and also includes anyone who helped).

DESCRIBING JOURNEY EVENTS

When resolving events, the Loremaster should be ready to improvise a short scene describing what is happening to the Company, based on the information that the event resolution system has provided (who in the Company is facing the challenge, which ability check is required, etc.) and the current gameplay circumstances.

The aim is not only to provide the players with a narration giving context to the journey rules, but also to weave what happens to the Company on the road into the wider landscape of the ongoing gameplay.

EVENT TYPES

The following paragraphs provide a number of suggestions on how to improvise scenes based on all event types.

TERRIBLE MISFORTUNE: Something went so badly that the Company is trudging wearily and the target of the event risked being seriously harmed. The Hunters were injured when a prey proved to be too dangerous, the Scouts suffered harm from the extreme cold, a Look-out fell from a tree while standing watch, etc.

Slowly they moved off, and were soon toiling heavily. In places the snow was breast-high, and often Boromir seemed to be swimming or burrowing with his great arms rather than walking.

DESPAIR: The Company has been so unlucky as to have been subjected to a terrible ordeal, an occurrence that is most likely connected to the slow rising of the Shadow. Examples of such an experience include: the Company stumbled into a blighted area, discovered the grisly remains of other travellers murdered by Orcs, felt the chilling presence of an evil spirit, witnessed the passage of some powerful servant of the Enemy, and so on.

The sun, a pale and watery yellow, was gleaming through the mist just above the west wall of the hollow in which they lay; north, south, and east, beyond the wall the fog was thick, cold and white. The air was silent, heavy and chill.

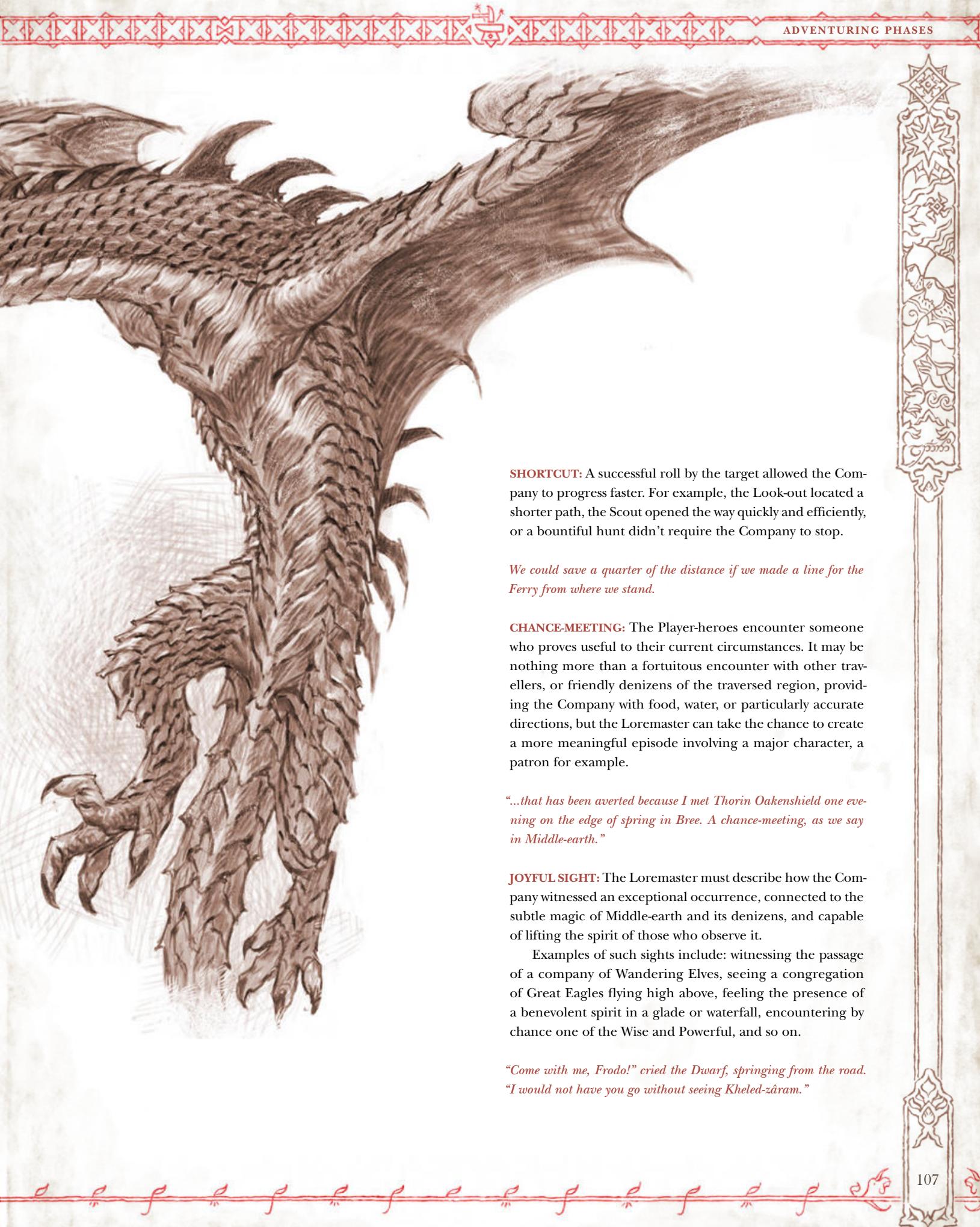
ILL CHOICES: Failing the event caused the target much grief or frustration. Maybe the Scout couldn't decide on the right way and lost precious sleep finding a good path, the Hunter worried about scanty provisions, the Look-out feared constantly about putting the Company in danger, etc.

"You give the choice to an ill chooser," said Aragorn. "Since we passed through the Argonath my choices have gone amiss."



MISHAP: Some adversity has caused the Company to slow its pace, or to stop altogether. Anything from not having brought the correct travelling gear or enough provisions and having to hunt or fish, to having to choose a longer and more difficult itinerary.

"Rope!" he muttered. "No rope! And only last night you said to yourself: 'Sam, what about a bit of rope? You'll want it, if you haven't got it.' Well, I'll want it. I cannot get it now."



SHORTCUT: A successful roll by the target allowed the Company to progress faster. For example, the Look-out located a shorter path, the Scout opened the way quickly and efficiently, or a bountiful hunt didn't require the Company to stop.

We could save a quarter of the distance if we made a line for the Ferry from where we stand.

CHANCE-MEETING: The Player-heroes encounter someone who proves useful to their current circumstances. It may be nothing more than a fortuitous encounter with other travellers, or friendly denizens of the traversed region, providing the Company with food, water, or particularly accurate directions, but the Loremaster can take the chance to create a more meaningful episode involving a major character, a patron for example.

...that has been averted because I met Thorin Oakenshield one evening on the edge of spring in Bree. A chance-meeting, as we say in Middle-earth.

JOYFUL SIGHT: The Loremaster must describe how the Company witnessed an exceptional occurrence, connected to the subtle magic of Middle-earth and its denizens, and capable of lifting the spirit of those who observe it.

Examples of such sights include: witnessing the passage of a company of Wandering Elves, seeing a congregation of Great Eagles flying high above, feeling the presence of a benevolent spirit in a glade or waterfall, encountering by chance one of the Wise and Powerful, and so on.

*Come with me, Frodo!" cried the Dwarf, springing from the road.
"I would not have you go without seeing Kheled-zâram."*





CHAPTER 6

FELLOWSHIP phases

*'But tonight I shall sleep without fear
for the first time since I left Rivendell.
And may I sleep deep, and forget for a while
my grief! I am weary in body and in heart.'*



Fheroes are not always busy navigating deep caverns, fighting back the Shadow, or fleeing from dangers beyond their ability to face. Even the most eager of adventurers needs some time to rest, to gather their wits, and allow time for

their hurts to mend. Whether the Player-heroes spend it in pursuit of a personal goal, or simply resting comfortably to recover their energies before setting out on the road once again, the time between adventures is called the Fellowship Phase.

how a FELLOWSHIP phase WORKS

They stayed long in that good house, fourteen days at least, and they found it hard to leave.

A Fellowship Phase is a gameplay instance driven by the players' choices — while during the Adventuring Phase players react to the Loremaster's storytelling prompts, during a Fellowship Phase they get to elaborate upon their Player-heroes' stories and ambitions, and to mark their adventurers' progression. The Loremaster is invited to sit back and follow what the players have to say about their characters.

Players are encouraged to narrate in detail what they do during a Fellowship Phase, not necessarily limiting themselves to those activities with a direct gaming effect. For example, the adventurers might inquire about leads, problems, and opportunities that have arisen during the preceding Adventuring Phase.

When they do so, the players must always keep in mind the length of a Fellowship Phase and its geographical limits. Moreover, they must not introduce new background information — such as exploring a location their Player-hero has never visited before, making the acquaintance of personalities they haven't encountered yet, and so on (in short, they should not do what is better suited to an Adventuring Phase).

A Fellowship Phase marks the conclusion of each Adventuring Phase, and, as such, ideally takes place at the end of a gaming session. Otherwise, it can open a new session, and precede the next Adventuring Phase.

FELLOWSHIP PHASE STRUCTURE

All Fellowship Phases are structured as follows:

1. Set duration
2. Choose destination
3. Perform Updates
4. Choose Undertakings

SET DURATION

1 A Fellowship Phase usually covers a longer period of time than the average Adventuring Phase. Events are described in broader strokes — days and weeks pass while the Player-heroes relax, or busy themselves with their own personal work or studies.

To give the Player-heroes a real break from active adventuring, a Fellowship Phase should last a minimum of one week, up to an entire season.

Normally, the longest Fellowship Phase is taken during the mid-winter festivities (see Yule, on the next page).

CHOOSE DESTINATION

2 Once the length of the Fellowship Phase has been determined, the players must decide where they will spend it. Generally, the Player-heroes stop at a safe haven

to spend the phase as a group, unless the year's end festivities are near.

To keep the gameplay authentic, the players should choose a place within a reasonable distance from the area where the Company was adventuring during the recent sessions of play, also taking into consideration how long the Fellowship Phase will last.

The players are free to select any location the Company has visited so far. The journey required to reach the chosen destination is considered to take place 'behind the scenes', unless the players have a mind to play out the details.

Places like the town of Bree or Rivendell are the ultimate safe havens, as they are particularly suited to resting and the mending of wounds, and are inhabited by a host willing to welcome travellers.

SPIRITUAL RECOVERY

3 The time spent in front of a cosy hearth while enjoying an everyday life confirms to the Player-heroes that their efforts are not wasted, and restores their faith in a brighter future.

If the Adventuring Phase resulted in what can be considered a positive outcome in the fight against the encroaching Shadow, all members of the Company get to remove a number of Shadow points.

If that's the case, the Loremaster must then weigh the actions of the Company against the broader context of the Twilight of the Third Age, and allow them to remove from 1 to 3 Shadow points, based on how noteworthy their accomplishments are deemed to be.

- ◆ If the Company's actions can be considered to have at least marginally interfered with the return of the Shadow, each Player-hero removes 1 Shadow point.
- ◆ If their deeds can be considered to have actively hindered or damaged the Enemy, each Player-hero removes up to 2 Shadow points.
- ◆ If the Player-heroes have committed feats that would gain the attention of the Dark Lord himself, or at least that of one of his major servants, then the Player-heroes can remove up to 3 Shadow points.

CHOOSE UNDERTAKINGS

4 Undertakings are time-consuming endeavours that Player-heroes can accomplish exclusively during a lengthy stop like a Fellowship Phase.

Players select a number of activities, based on whether the Fellowship Phase is an ordinary one, or if it's Yule, the end of a year (see Fellowship Phase Undertakings on the next page).

YULE

Approximately once every three Fellowship Phases, winter comes, and with it the end of the current year. Normally, the Company spends the entire cold season as a single, prolonged Fellowship Phase. Life in the wild is unforgiving, and adventurers prefer to have a roof over their heads when the wind is howling, and the land is buried in snow.

In most cases, the Company disbands temporarily on occasion of the Yule festivities, as each Player-hero takes the chance to return home and enjoy some time among family and folk. Three months are enough for any Player-hero to return home from any location other than the most remote.

THE PASSAGE OF THE YEARS

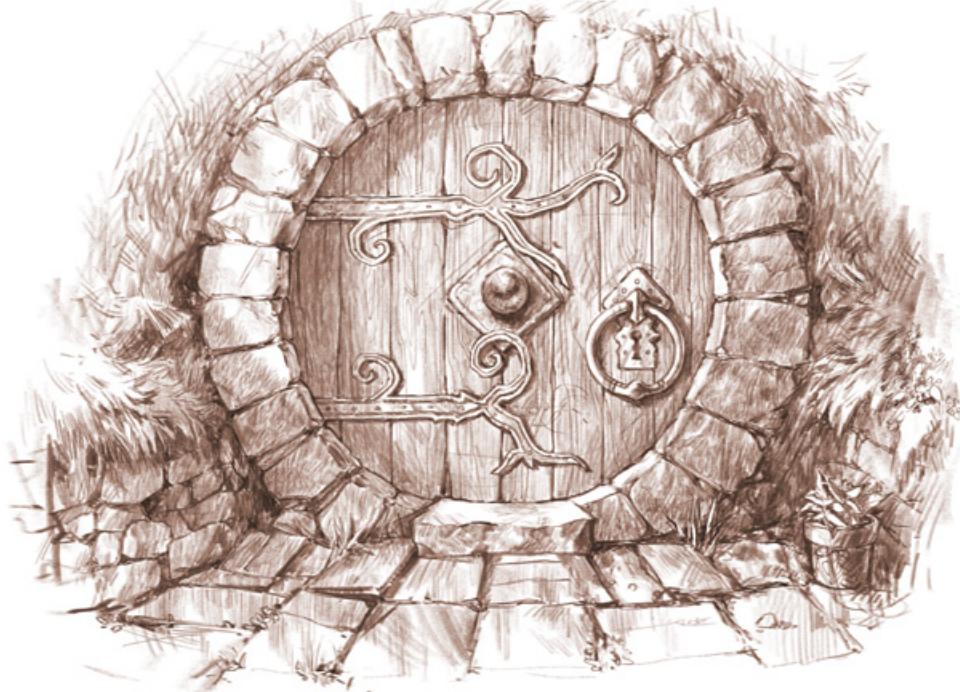
When Yule comes, it means that all Player-heroes have aged one year. Luckily, time does not only slay kings and ruin towns, but may bring wisdom — the time the Player-heroes spend without adventuring allows them to reflect on their experiences, and possibly learn from their mistakes:

During Yule, all Player-heroes who do not choose the Heal Scars undertaking (see page 113) earn a number of bonus XP equal to 10 times their Intelligence score, multiplied by their current level.

For example, a 3rd-level Player-hero with Intelligence 13 gets 390 XP ($13 \times 10 \times 3$).

Then, the Loremaster should take the chance offered by a Yule Fellowship Phase to update the Company on the changes that are taking place in the world and that their Player-heroes should know about. To this end, the Loremaster may use the information contained in the setting chapter to determine what news reaches the ears of the Player-heroes, tailoring the information based on the current circumstances and whereabouts of the Company.

Keeping the Company up-to-date with important news is a way to insert background elements into the next Adventuring Phase.



FELLOWSHIP PHASE UNDERTAKINGS

This section lists the various activities available to the Company during a Fellowship Phase. Players select a different number of undertakings, based on whether the Fellowship Phase is an ordinary one, or if it's Yule — the end of a year.

- ◆ During an ordinary Fellowship Phase, the Company as a group chooses one single undertaking.
- ◆ During a Yule Fellowship Phase, each player chooses one undertaking instead.
- ◆ Finally, during each Fellowship Phase (ordinary or Yule), the Company is entitled to choose one additional undertaking, selecting it from among those that are listed as free, based on the callings or proficiencies of the Player-heroes.

To sum things up, during an ordinary Fellowship Phase the Company will choose a maximum of two undertakings, and a number of undertakings equal to the number of Player-heroes plus one during Yule. Players must always select different undertakings, unless they are marked as Yule activities — such endeavours can be chosen by any number of Player-heroes.

GATHER RUMOURS

News of strange things happening in the world are multiplying with every passing year. Tidings of a gathering darkness, of distant wars, and of the flight of the Elves — vague legends and old songs are proving to be more than just children's stories. Player-heroes gathering rumours try to separate facts from fireside-tales, and to gather stories that may prove useful in their adventures.

Choose this undertaking to receive a rumour from the Loremaster. Until the next Fellowship Phase, Player-heroes in the Company have advantage on Intelligence checks related to the rumour.

A rumour can be a story about an individual, a place, or a coming event, pointing specifically to something that the Company can explore, prevent, or aspire to achieve. Otherwise, a rumour can be something specific that the Player-hero is inquiring about, and directly related to the current adventuring circumstances of the Company.

A Company including a Warden (if in a warded land), or a Player-hero proficient in Investigation, can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

When they appeared they brought news from afar, and told strange forgotten tales which were eagerly listened to...

CHANGE ADVENTURING GEAR

In addition to the various endeavours they may achieve, during each Fellowship Phase the players are free to buy and sell adventuring gear and any weapons and armour that are available in the location chosen as the destination.

HEAL SCARS (YULE)

Heroes feel the burden of the Shadow weigh heavily upon their shoulders long after their adventures are over. Their minds remain bent on dark thoughts, and visions haunt them in their dreams, if not even during their waking hours. Only the passage of time can heal such wounds.

Choose this undertaking to focus on mending your spiritual injuries and remove 1 Shadow Scar (see page 141). If you do so, you do not gain any bonus XP this year (see The Passage of the Years, page 111).

Player-heroes from different Cultures resort to different methods to get rid of their scars. Dwarves often turn to the forge to burn out their frustration, smiting the red iron on the anvil, Hobbits dedicate themselves to a beloved activity, like gardening, or painting, and Elves and Men generally create, play, or recite poems and songs.

"Is it not a strange fate that we should suffer so much fear and doubt for so small a thing?"

MEET PATRON

After a few years of adventuring, the Company will probably count several of the Wise and the Great among their allies. Some of these can be chosen as Patrons of the Company (see page 16).

Choose this undertaking to meet one of the Company's friends and allies when spending the Fellowship Phase in a location where that individual can be found, and if the patron is available for a meeting. In addition, Player-heroes with a calling favoured by the patron start the next Adventuring phase with inspiration.

When this is the case, the Loremaster can work with the Player-hero to set up the encounter. The reasons to see a patron vary based on the current circumstances of a campaign, but generally revolve around the Player-hero asking for some

sort of assistance, possibly accepting a task requested by the patron in return.

The descriptions of the various personalities given on page 210 give directions on how to handle their introduction as patrons in the game.

A Company including a Messenger, or a Player-hero proficient with calligrapher's supplies, can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

Elrond, as was his custom, sat in a great chair at the end of the long table upon the dais...

POUNDER STORIED AND FIGURED MAPS

Middle-earth has changed since the time when lore-masters spent long hours drawing maps of every known corner of the world. Today's maps show mostly white spaces beyond the borders of the realms of Men, Dwarves, and Elves. Yet, looking at them is time well-spent for a travelling hero.

A Player-hero choosing this undertaking studies every map and scroll of lore they can find, to learn as much as possible about the perils the Company may face while on a journey.

Until the next Fellowship Phase, Player-heroes in the Company have advantage on pathfinding checks.

A Company including a Player-hero proficient in Old Lore or with cartographer's tools can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

"There are many maps in Elrond's house, but I suppose you never thought to look at them?"

RAISE AN HEIR (YULE)

Wise adventurers sooner or later realise that all they have done in their lives can amount to nothing if they meet an untimely end. To avoid squandering their legacy, they should spend some money and time choosing and raising a worthy successor.

Choose this undertaking to spend at least 50 silver pennies for your heir's training. The amount is noted (or updated, if you have chosen this undertaking before) on the character sheet. When your Player-hero perishes or retires, multiply that value by the Player-hero's character level: your heir receives that many experience points, up to half the Player-hero's current experience points (rounded up). The heir also receives up to three magical items of the Player-hero as their heirlooms.

If this is the first time that this undertaking has been chosen, the player must also choose a name for the designated heir, writing it down on the character sheet (see Appendix).

When Bilbo was ninety-nine he adopted Frodo as his heir, and brought him to live at Bag End...

RECOUNT A STORY (YULE)

Adventures have a meaning for those who live them, but they can become cautionary tales for others. Player-heroes give a personal account of an event they took part in, describing the episode to members of their own folk in a public place or event, or recording it in a book. Players are encouraged to improvise a short narration.

Choose this undertaking to replace one of your distinctive features with a new one, choosing a quality that you displayed in the narrated episode. Players can choose a trait from the distinctive features of their culture's (or another one's) backgrounds, or even propose a new one of their own creation.

You can choose this undertaking to replace one of your tool proficiencies with another tool proficiency. The proficiency you replace must be one that isn't benefiting from a feature, such as Expertise, that doubles your proficiency bonus.

If you have the Expertise feature, you can choose this undertaking to replace one of the proficiencies you chose for the Expertise feature with one of your other proficiencies that isn't benefiting from Expertise.



SINGING SONGS

During the Adventuring Phase, the Player-heroes may sing a song and rouse themselves to pursue their goals with renewed strength of purpose.

To do so, a Player-hero first chooses a song to sing from among those on the Company's song list. Then, as a bonus action, the Player-hero makes a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check. If the check succeeds, the effect depends on the song chosen:

- ◆ **Lay.** All Player-heroes who can hear the song during a council gain advantage on the first ability check they make before the end of the council.
- ◆ **Song of Victory.** All Player-heroes who can hear the song during combat gain advantage on the first attack roll they make before the end of their next turn.
- ◆ **Walking-song.** All Player-heroes who can hear the song at the end of a journey gain advantage on their fatigue saving throw.

Each song may be used once for each Adventuring Phase. Mark a song off the list once it has been spent. A song must be marked off whether it has been used successfully or not.

If you have the Fighting Style feature, you can choose this undertaking to replace a fighting style you know with another fighting style available to your calling.

To some there Bilbo's tale was wholly new, and they listened with amazement while the old Hobbit, actually not at all displeased, recounted his adventure with Gollum, at full length.

STRENGTHEN FELLOWSHIP

The bond shared by the members of a Company is put to the test by the odds they face in the course of their adventures, and can be reinforced when the Player-heroes are enjoying a moment of respite.

Choose this undertaking to raise the Fellowship rating by +1 until the next Fellowship Phase.

A Company including a Captain, or a Player-hero proficient with brewer's supplies or a gaming set, can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

...in this matter it would be well to trust rather to their friendship than to great wisdom.

STUDY MAGICAL ITEMS

When heroes come into possession of a strange ring, an ancient jewel, or a rune-scored staff, they might not know much about the properties of such an item, especially if they are not immediately observable.

Choose this undertaking to learn all there is to be discovered about the qualities of all magical items in the Company's possession.

A Company including a Treasure Hunter, or a Player-hero proficient in Old Lore, can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

This is an heirloom of our house,' said Éowyn. 'It was made by the Dwarves, and came from the hoard of Scatha the Worm.'

WRITE A SONG

All cultures of Middle-earth play and sing songs to remember things that are fair and to celebrate life.

Choose this undertaking to compose a song, choosing whether it will be a Lay, a Song of Victory, or a Walking song (no ability check is required).

The new composition is added to a Company's list of songs — this list is used to keep track of which songs are available to the Company to sing during an Adventuring Phase.

The player is encouraged to come up with a song title, or its lyrics, for example taking inspiration from events that happened to the Company, or focusing on one or more Player-heroes.

A Company including a Player-hero proficient in Performance or with a musical instrument can choose this activity as a free undertaking.

LAY: A Player-hero creates a short narrative poem, particularly appropriate to narrate heroic deeds, and meant to be recited or sung at gatherings.

SONG OF VICTORY: Warriors sing stirring songs in combat, to lift their spirit and renew their lust for battle.

WALKING-SONG: Travellers trudging along the final hours of a long day of travelling may find it helpful to hum a merry song, especially when they are drawing near to their destination.





CHAPTER 7

~The LOREMASTER~

*It appeared that Gandalf had been to a great council
of white wizards, masters of lore and good magic...*



In the game world, a lore-master is an individual steeped in the old lore of the many cultures of Middle-earth. In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, the player taking the mantle of the Loremaster is the one assuming the task of managing all the elements of the game that do not fall under the authority of the players portraying the heroes.

This section of the volume is dedicated to defining the role of the Loremaster, and offers advice on how to play this fundamental role.

If you are not taking the role of the Loremaster, you do not need to read from this point onwards.

THE MIDDLE-EARTH LOREMMASTER

"This Mithrandir was, I now guess, more than a lore-master: a great mover of the deeds that are done in our time."

The most important task of a Loremaster is to act as the interface between the players and Middle-earth. Evoking the right mood is essential in order to give the players the feeling that they are taking part in the unfolding events composing the Twilight of the Third Age.

It can seem a daunting prospect at first, but being the Loremaster is an immensely satisfying role for a Tolkien enthusiast, a chance to experience the world of Middle-earth as its own creator did — by orchestrating all the elements of the setting to produce new epic tales.

THE QUALITIES OF A LOREMMASTER

The Loremaster's duties can be broken down into three roles: Director, Referee, and Narrator.

THE LOREMMASTER AS DIRECTOR

When framing each scene of an Adventuring Phase, it is useful to think of the job of the Loremaster as being similar to that of a theatre or movie director — choosing and arranging the basic elements of the 'stage' that the characters will act on during the next session of play.

The Loremaster should not think of framing a scene as a complicated process — it is really simply about selecting a location, setting the time of the day, and describing who is present, including any minor or major nonplayer characters (see page 124). Details are important, for example what the weather is like, but they should not clutter a description — everything can be expanded on later, once the players start exploring the scene, asking questions.

What is important is that the Loremaster doesn't have to worry about telling a story, but only needs to provide the players with its basic ingredients. It is up to the players to pick them up, and compose them into a full-blown narrative through their choices and actions.

To facilitate this process, when framing a scene the Loremaster should consider including some immediate prompts to action. Usually, such prompts take the form of visible or otherwise obvious hurdles obstructing their path. An obstacle can be some form of active, direct opposition (from an adversary or a nonplayer character, for example) or the result of 'in-world', natural circumstances or threats, like bad weather conditions.

CONSISTENCY: The key to successfully ‘directing’ a game of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is being able to weave descriptions that are always consistent, taking into consideration the lore and all the disparate elements that emerge from the gameplay session after session — the goals and ambitions of the members of a Company, the places they visit, and the people they meet.

To achieve this, a good level of familiarity with the source material comes in extremely handy. *Chapter 9* presents details about the events, locations, and characters that compose the default setting for *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*.

THE LOREMASTER AS REFEREE

Roleplaying games combine game rules with a set of social and storytelling conventions. While these conventions place roleplaying games outside the constraints of traditional board or card games (which are defined solely by their rules), the correct application of the game mechanics depends on one essential element in order for them to work to their full potential: the presence of an impartial moderator — the Loremaster.

The Loremaster must be ready to adjudicate the rules at all times, whether testing the mettle of the Player-heroes during the Adventuring Phase, or helping players determine the outcome of their choices during the Fellowship Phase.

FAIRNESS: Acting as a referee, a Loremaster should strive to be fair and to apply the rules properly and impartially. The game mechanics are designed to provide players with a challenge, and to determine whether their Player-heroes are up to the test or not; to reward them with success if they are, or to make their lives more complicated (and interesting!) with the consequences of failure if they are not.

A biased Loremaster can easily ruin a game, as an unfair call when applying a rule brings the rules themselves to the players’ attention, and their immersion in the game is disrupted.

THE LOREMASTER AS NARRATOR

As we have seen already, if playing a roleplaying game can create a story, that story arises from the interaction between the Loremaster’s descriptions and the choices of the players. This means that the Loremaster should not prepare too much beforehand, to try and force a prewritten plot into the gameplay.

It is easier, and probably wiser, for the Loremaster to set up each session as if it was a separate episode of a longer,

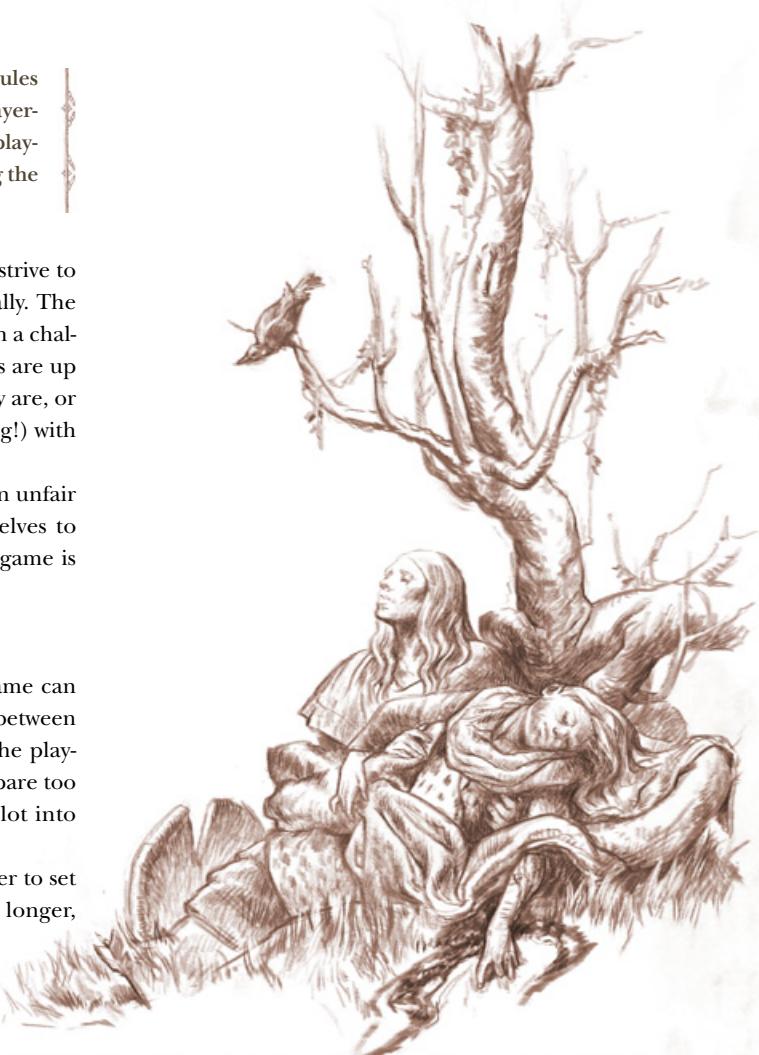
semi improvisational narrative, with each new one building organically upon the consequences of the previous sessions.

This does not mean that the Loremaster should solely improvise. In fact, each Adventuring Phase should feature one or more overarching ‘schemes’, pivotal plot elements that help the Loremaster to come up with new ideas to advance the narrative.

In a way, Schemes are the objectives of the Company’s enemies, managed by the Loremaster, to establish opposition to the actions of the players (published material for *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* presents Schemes as an integral part of the premise and text).

ADAPTABILITY: A quick and rich imagination and the willingness to adapt are precious qualities in a Loremaster, as they make it easier to integrate the actions of the players with the narrative.

The Loremaster should never forget that the Player-heroes are the protagonists of their story, and their choices must always produce tangible effects within the game world.



CANON AND THE LOREMASTER

Fans of the literary works of J.R.R. Tolkien have long debated the existence of a consistent canon — as described in *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and later publications — that firmly defines the world and history of Middle-earth. This has often been cited as one of the major hurdles to roleplaying games set in Middle-earth, claiming as it does that the Player-heroes' adventures will 'interfere' with the actions of the sagas' known protagonists and 'break' the canon's consistency.

The quick and easy answer to such concerns is that 'there is no such thing as an established Tolkien canon'; however, it is interesting to delve a little further into the subject, because a Loremaster can learn a great deal from tackling this apparently insurmountable obstacle.

AN 'UNRELIABLE NARRATOR'

One of the ways a Loremaster can deal with the dilemma of altering facts perceived to be part of the Tolkien canon is to consider the information in the stories not as the words of an infallible, all-knowing narrator, but those of witnesses to the events — individuals who are subject to errors and personal bias (for example, *The Hobbit* relates the content of Bilbo Baggins' memoirs).

This literary device served Tolkien well as he strove to create a believable 'ancient history' which included the inevitable inconsistencies that arise in a narrative composed by different chroniclers over time, and there is no reason why a Loremaster cannot do the same, especially if there is a need to change an 'established' date or the details behind a known 'fact' or 'historical' figure.

To get an idea of how much the perspective of an unreliable narrator can distort perceptions — and possibly facts — one need look no further than the books themselves. Readers of *The Lord of the Rings* often find it difficult to reconcile the image of Gimli, the redoubtable axe-wielding warrior of Erebor, with the Dwarven companions of Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, who, captured by Trolls, Goblins, Spiders, and Wood-elves, more often than not end up being saved by their Hobbit burglar.

FILLING IN THE BLANKS

Tolkien wove a rich narrative tapestry, composed of believable characters set against a vivid landscape and driven by motivations firmly grounded in myth and tradition. But even such an extensive and intricate chronicle does not thoroughly explore every nook and cranny of this imagined world and time period

— far from it. As the narrative focus of the books shifts from one region to another, many locations and the events related to them remain obscure and are only briefly touched upon.

The 'filling-in-the-blanks' approach — based on the concept that the sagas are told from the subjective perspective of their protagonists, who are not familiar with every corner of Middle-earth — gives every Loremaster the freedom to create their own stories.

The setting material provided in this guide and in the various supplements for the game is an example of this. Many of the events occurring in the chosen time frame — the years covering the period from the discovery of the Ring to its destruction — are briefly mentioned in the source materials, and are therefore open for development and interpretation.

IT IS ALL ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

Another interesting view on canon comes from the author himself. While certainly very protective of his own creations in general, J.R.R. Tolkien stressed several times that what was ultimately dear to him was the integrity of his characters and their motivations, more than the preservation of his plots or other elements.

By applying this perspective to a game of *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, it is clear that the game will remain true to its literary sources if the Loremaster pays due attention to the treatment of the canonical characters, and if the players strive to create and play plausible heroes.

LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...

Nowadays, the bulk of Tolkien's Middle-earth-related publications give the impression of an immutable and consistent corpus. But when the author was alive, he was constantly rewriting and rearranging his own material, even making substantial changes to be inserted in new, revised editions of his books. Some of these changes corrected inconsistencies, but more often than not they were introduced to accommodate later plot changes and developments.

For this reason, it is not unreasonable to assume that even Tolkien himself looked at his own work as being mutable — that even the chronologies he himself carefully created were to be considered provisional at best and not restricted to or bound by an established canon.

Taking everything into consideration, a Loremaster should not feel intimidated by the source material; rather, they should push ahead and add their own story threads to Professor Tolkien's wonderful and epic narrative tapestry.

ADVENTURING IN MIDDLE-EARTH

"The brave things in the old tales and songs, Mr. Frodo: adventures, as I used to call them. I used to think that they were things the wonderful folk of the stories went out and looked for; because they wanted them, because they were exciting and life was a bit dull, a kind of a sport, as you might say."

This section presents a number of questions that can help the Loremaster to make the world of Middle-earth itself a main element in the adventures of the Player-heroes.

WHEN?

When is the Adventuring Phase taking place? Time is an important element to consider in *The Lord of the Rings Role-playing*, as whatever happens will become an episode in the Player-heroes' lives. Moreover, important events involving the Company will eventually find their rightful place in the game's Tale of Years, alongside the historical facts which make up the Twilight of the Third Age.

CURRENT SEASON

The passing of the seasons is a powerful descriptive tool. Across the twelve months of the year, the Free Peoples respect seasonal festivals and ceremonies, and the landscape of Middle-earth changes drastically from summer to autumn, and from winter to spring, providing a backdrop to the deeds of the Player-heroes that is always different.

The Loremaster can add flavour to the game by simply keeping a calendar, and reflecting the changes as the seasons pass. But seasons have a direct effect on the gameplay too — climbing a mountain in winter poses a more serious challenge than doing so in spring, as trails disappear and wolves prowl the land in search of food. The mountains themselves appear to heed a more sinister call when their passes are thick with snow, and the winds rage around their peaks (it is for good reason that a Company generally prefers to sit out the winter months in the warmth and safety of a Fellowship Phase).

CURRENT YEAR: There is nothing like taking into consideration the passage of time to make the players feel part of a living world — year after year, the intertwining of the Company's deeds and the events related in the stories and their chronologies creates a campaign with depth and texture.

There are many ways to incorporate wider events into the Player-heroes' adventures. They could witness a great gathering, cross paths with groups involved in the timeline events or discuss the goings-on with the people they encounter on their Journey. Every Adventuring Phase can benefit greatly from making the Company's exploits part of the chronology of Middle-earth, provided that the focus of the narration remains firmly fixed on the Player-heroes' own deeds.

WHERE?

Where is the action taking place? There are two answers to this question — either a precise location is vital to the action, and the Loremaster chooses a specific place from those described in this guide or in the source material (see also Landmarks, on page 220), or the adventure requires nothing more than a generic setting and any ruin, forest glade or river will do.

In either case, the Loremaster should consider a place that is either close to the current location of the Company, or one that they can reach conveniently (using the Journey rules). In the latter case, the trip itself gives the Loremaster the chance to set up a challenging situation for the Company.

EXPLORING MIDDLE-EARTH

Every so often, their adventures will bring the Company to one of the places described in Tolkien's books. For many players, this is what roleplaying in Middle-earth is all about. Having the Company enter the Hall of Fire in Rivendell for the first time, or seeing the White Tower of Elostirion on the horizon, can turn an ordinary Adventuring Phase into a particularly meaningful experience.

When this happens, the Loremaster should allow the Company to interact with the setting. What players remember of a place they have read about should be brought to life and incorporated into the narrative. One way to achieve this is to challenge them with some ability checks. For example, a Company crossing the Trollshaws in the east of Eriador who

succeeds on a Wisdom (Perception) check might locate the glade where three Stone-Trolls lie, forever frozen in their stupor at having been tricked by a Wizard.

WHAT?

What is going on? This question defines the heart of the Adventuring Phase, and summarises the information that a Loremaster presents to the players at the beginning of the first game session.

Sometimes, this is summarised by a rumour that the Company has gathered during the last Fellowship Phase (see page 112), but can otherwise be something tied to what happened in a previous Adventuring Phase — travellers talk of a strange luminescence they see while on the North Road; word of a stolen treasure and the reward offered to recover it reaches the inn at Bree; an important personality the Company was scheduled to meet is kidnapped or killed by an unknown threat. Any situation pointing the Player-heroes in the right direction on their path to adventure is a good starting point.

Another way is to begin an Adventuring Phase with a direct challenge — something that provokes the Company into action right from the start. There's no need to plan a complete series of events, as the Company will provide enough material for the Loremaster to improvise upon as the game progresses.

SIMPLICITY

The objective of an Adventuring Phase doesn't have to be tied to an epic endeavour, or be about a world-threatening menace — at least, not every time. In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying*, an epic level of gameplay is reached by playing through many smaller events that reveal their greater significance only when woven together. In time, everything a Player-hero endures will be easily raised to a greater importance, especially when set against the game's overarching motif — the struggle against the Shadow.

For example, simply picking a worthy opponent from Chapter 8, or an interesting location from this chapter will provide the Loremaster and the Company with enough material to keep the game going for multiple sessions.

PLOT TWISTS: Once in a while the Loremaster might decide to complicate things by adding a twist or two to an otherwise straightforward Adventuring Phase. The Company will then have to figure out how to 'solve' a situation, instead of simply being asked to endure or overcome a series of difficulties.

In some cases, the Adventuring Phase might end without providing a clear answer; this opens up an opportunity to investigate the matter further during the Fellowship Phase which follows, or during a subsequent Adventuring Phase.



why?

Why should the Player-heroes get involved in the current events in the first place? Is there something that interests them personally? This question directly addresses the reasons why the members of the Company choose to become adventurers — heroes brave dangers that other individuals try to stay clear of, usually because they have a personal stake that pushes them to do it. While the very concept of adventuring provides a simple answer to the question, the Loremaster should focus on those motivational ‘buttons’ which are far more effective in capturing the players’ interest.

During the first few games, the callings and distinctive features of the Player-heroes composing the Company can provide enough material to build upon. Once each member of the Company has a number of entries in their personal Tale of Years it will become much easier to find personal reasons for them to get involved in an Adventuring Phase. As the game progresses, the players themselves will start to explore their individual goals, and provide the Loremaster with personalised story hooks.

who?

Tolkien has populated his stories with a multitude of memorable characters, and the Loremaster will need to do the same for an adventure to be successful. Will one or more familiar personalities feature in the story? Will the adventure introduce a new recurring character? The personalities that the Loremaster controls are a fundamental element of any game, as much as any other feature of Middle-earth.

ROLE MODELS

The deeds of a familiar character can be a powerful inspiration for a player looking for an example of what it means to live in Middle-earth. Meeting their favourite hero helps players to integrate into the epic tapestry of the campaign, adding as it does an additional layer of involvement in the events that the Company is witnessing.

SUPPORTING CAST

Nonplayer characters should be used sparingly and with careful judgement. Players don’t like to see their Player-heroes play second fiddle to a powerful individual. To avoid this, the Loremaster could try the opposite — have the famous character in need of the Player-heroes’ help, or even need rescuing outright (a twist that Tolkien himself often utilised).

PATRONS

During play, the Company may adopt an important personality as their Patron. This provides an excellent source of story hooks and support, and is an easy way to make a familiar hero a recurring motif in the Company’s adventuring. However, the Loremaster must make sure that a Patron is not simply reduced to a gameplay asset; instead they should be worked into the narrative as an active element.

The Patrons section on page 210 contains several suggestions on how to introduce important characters as Patrons in the game.

KEEPING IT THEMATIC

A simple way to start out on the right foot with a *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* campaign is to pay tribute to the source material at the very beginning. This is a quick and easy way to establish the right atmosphere, showing players that they really are in Middle-earth now.

To do so, the Loremaster can propose rumours and story hooks that reference the stories directly in a way that the players will easily recognise. For example, they may choose a chapter title from either *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*, and be a little creative with it, always trying to weave in a level of personal investment.

Here are some examples:

The Shadow of the Past. The first meeting of the Company is observed by, or has been organised by, their main Patron. Otherwise, an old letter from a relative who disappeared a long time ago involves the Company in a larger scheme of events.

There and Back Again. The Company uncovers a rumour about a long-lost place, item or treasure hoard that a renowned character from the stories tried to reclaim a long time ago and failed.

Over Hill and Under Hill. The session starts with the Company already on a Journey, travelling to reach a place connected to one of the heroes.

A Knife in the Dark. A safe place, such as the inn where the Company meets, turns dangerous as an agent of the Shadow attempts to murder one of the Player-heroes.

Riddles in the Dark. The Company encounters a dark, ancient creature they heard about as a folk tale in their homelands.

NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

"That's right! Barliman is my name. Barliman Butterbur at your service!"

Nonplayer characters are the best tool a Loremaster has to create a believable setting for the players. The adventurers interact briefly with a great many of them during each scene — they compose the army of ‘extras’ who populate a village they enter, crowd the streets of a town, and frequent the inn the Company stops at to get some rest. Others serve a purpose that goes beyond that of acting simply as a backdrop for the deeds of the Player-heroes, and can be encountered more than once. Finally, there are famous personalities, those characters that are part of the history of Middle-earth as created in the stories — individuals that the Player-heroes will have the chance to meet in the course of their career.

STATISTICS

Usually, what the Loremaster needs to play the part of a non-player character is just a name, a short description, and an idea of the purpose that character serves in the current scene.

Sometimes this is not enough, and additional information becomes necessary, either because the interaction develops (or degenerates!) during play as a result of the Company’s actions, or because the introduction of the nonplayer character served a greater purpose.

The addition of one or more well-chosen traits to the description of a nonplayer character is generally all that is needed to give depth to an individual.

To better define a character, the Loremaster may simply choose an occupation or a field of expertise, and then add one or two distinctive features (choosing from those available to heroes, or even inventing them on the spot).

By doing so, a faceless figure in the background becomes an ‘old but trusted servant’, a ‘grim-faced, keen-eyed guard’, a ‘wise woman learned in herb-lore’ — a short but vivid description that helps the Loremaster and the players to picture the character more readily.

If the Loremaster deems it necessary, nonplayer characters can be given more complete stats, for example to allow the Loremaster to make ability checks for them.

Stats that are directly related to combat are only included if a character can be involved in an armed confrontation.

The box below offers an example of an important nonplayer character — Barnabas Butterbur, the innkeeper of The Prancing Pony!

<i>Barnabas Butterbur</i>		
Medium humanoid (Man of Bree)		
INT 10 (+0)	WIS 14 (+2)	CHA 12 (+1)
OCCUPATION Innkeeper		
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Patient, Rustic		
SKILLS Insight +6, Investigation +4, Persuasion +3		
SENSES passive Perception 12		
LANGUAGES Westron		
For the proprietor of The Prancing Pony, running a clean and welcome house is a matter of family pride. Barnabas dedicates himself to keeping his establishment in order, taking only the briefest of reprieves in his quarters on The Pony’s top floor. While some locals see him as absent-minded or even befuddled, the truth is that Barnabas is both keen and perceptive. He also possesses the uncommon wisdom of knowing when to remain silent as well as being a sharp judge of character. To most of the people who visit The Pony regularly he is known as an affable host and a fine brewer of ales.		

TREASURE

*... about him on all sides, stretching away across the unseen floors,
lay countless piles of precious things, gold wrought and unwrought, gems and jewels,
and silver red-stained in the ruddy light.'*

Travelling across a land that has seen three Ages of the world, the adventurers are sooner or later bound to discover some form of treasure, and possibly claim it for themselves. Whether it is the forgotten hoard of a dead Dragon, a pile of gold and gems closely guarded by a Troll, or the loot accumulated by generations of raiding Goblins, treasure provides the Company with a focus for their adventuring, a means for the Player-heroes to raise their personal prosperity, and another way to bring to light obscure tales from previous ages of Middle-earth.

But there is more than just gold and precious stones to be found in deserted caverns and dark dungeons under the earth — in past ages of the world, Men, Elves, and Dwarves long laboured to craft marvellous things from metal and stone, and put into their work all their lore, power, and subtle skill. These wondrous jewels, famous blades, and suits of armour were given to sons and daughters as gifts, hoarded as treasures by greedy kings, and lusted after and even stolen by thieves and burglars. Finally, they were lost, and passed out of the memory of the living.

Such remarkable things are not meant to remain lost forever. Their original purpose may have been forgotten with the passing of centuries, together with the name of their makers, but a day will come when a worthy blade will be found in a barrow among swords of lesser lineage, ready to serve a new fate in the hands of a hero; or, if the treasure had been left to rot in the shadow for too long, to work a curse upon them and draw them to a miserable end!

hoards

Any treasure encountered by the Company when exploring caverns, lairs, and old ruins qualifies as a Hoard. Not all Hoards that Player-heroes can discover are equal though — as shown in the table below, they are ranked in three levels of increasing rarity: *lesser*, *greater*, and *marvellous*, based on how rich, old, or unspoilt they are.

On average, the Company should find a maximum of two Hoards during the same Adventuring Phase — a *lesser* Hoard and a *greater* one; or, a single *marvellous* Hoard.

When the Player-heroes stumble upon a Hoard, the first thing that the Loremaster must do is make a roll to determine its worth in gold pieces.

As shown on the Hoard table below, the value of a Hoard in gold pieces is determined by rolling a number of dice based on the type of Hoard.

It is up to the members of the Company to divide the resulting value among themselves, splitting the Treasure rating as they see fit, and recording their share on their character sheets.

Generally, a Hoard's value in gold pieces represents an unspecified amount of silver, gold and gems — if the Loremaster wishes to be more specific, the rules for Precious Objects presented below can be used to craft one or more unusual finds.

MAGICAL TREASURE ROLLS

Once everyone in the Company has received their share of the treasure, it must be determined if anything possessing exceptional qualities lies buried among the silver and gold.

To do this, the players or the Loremaster roll a d20 a number of times (or many d20s together, if available), again based on the type of Hoard discovered:

Each result of 15 or higher corresponds to the discovery of a magical piece of treasure. To find out exactly what each piece is, consult the *Magical Treasure* table below.

In addition, when Player-heroes find a Hoard they may gain a number of Shadow points from Greed (see page 142) — the result of a history of ill-gotten earnings, or years of possession by a wicked creature.

Roll a d6, checking the result on the appropriate column of the *Magical Treasure* Table in the next page.

The DC to resist is 10 for a lesser Hoard, 15 for a greater Hoard, and 20 for a marvellous Hoard.

Once the number and nature of any Magical Treasure discovered has been determined, the Player-heroes must agree on who is going to keep each piece as their possession.

HOARD TABLE:

HOARD RATING	EXAMPLES	TREASURE VALUE	MAGICAL TREASURE ROLLS
lesser	Solitary Troll's loot, Goblin plunder, bandits' hoard	4d8 (18) g	Roll 1d20
greater	Old hoard, Dwarf-hoard	6d10 (33) g	Roll 2d20
marvellous	Ancient hoard, Dwarven city's treasure trove, or Dragon-hoard	8d12 (52) g	Roll 3d20

MAGICAL TREASURE TABLE:

D20	MAGICAL TREASURE	DESCRIPTION	Tainted (roll a D6)...
1-14	-	No magical treasure	...on a 1 (gain 1d3 Shadow points)
15-17	Marvellous Artefact	An enchanted object graced by a blessing	... on a 1-2 (gain 1d4 Shadow points)
18-19	Wondrous Item	An enchanted object possessing two blessings	...on a 1-3 (gain 1d3+1 Shadow points)
20	Famous Weapon or Armour	A weapon or suit of armour of superior make	...on a 1-3 (gain 1d4+1 Shadow points)



CREATING PRECIOUS OBJECTS

Precious objects are gemstones, jewels, and other valuable ornaments whose main quality could be of particular significance as a family heirloom or antique, or an extraordinary and enchanting beauty, possibly due to a prodigious level of craftsmanship or a subtle virtue.

The value of a Precious Object in gold pieces is the amount that the Loremaster assigns to it, out of the rating generated for the Hoard discovered by the Company, but its inclusion in the game might serve a different purpose.

For example, a golden crown found among the ruins of an ancient castle on the hills of Rhudaur may have more than a simple monetary value if it is brought to someone able to recognise it as a relic from a familiar past — should a Player-hero make a gift of, or otherwise offer, such an item to members of a folk whose tradition hearkens back to the time when the item was crafted, they would receive more than its intrinsic value in return.

The tables presented below can be used to create an item at the moment it is uncovered, or to design it carefully

beforehand. The Loremaster is encouraged to enrich the description of all Precious Objects or spend some time imagining wonderful things with rich backstories. It is not necessary to track down the full lineage of every crystal hanging from a fillet of Mithril; a few hints to a tragic or heroic heritage are more than enough to evoke the right mood.

This sort of information may be revealed to a player who chooses the *Meet Patron* undertaking during a Fellowship Phase (see page 113).

PRECIOUS OBJECTS TABLES

Roll a d6 for each table and check the result.

TABLE 1: FORM

1	Jewel (single gem)
2	Brooch
3	Necklace
4	Circlet or crown
5	Belt, chain, or armband
6	Ring

TABLE 2: MAIN MATERIAL

1	Pearl
2	Sapphire
3	Ruby
4	Amethyst (pink to purple)
5	Roll again: 1-2: Adamant (diamond); 3-4: 'white gem'; 5-6: clear crystal
6	Roll again: 1-2: Emerald; 3-4: 'green gem'; 5-6: green crystal

TABLE 3: CRAFTSMANSHIP

1	Mannish, Westernesse
2	Elven, Eregion
3	Dwarven, Khazad-dûm
4	Dwarven, Erebor
5	Dwarven, Beleriand (Nogrod or Belegost)
6	Elven, Beleriand

EXTRAORDINARY PRECIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE STORIES

The following Precious Objects are examples of valuable items whose worth greatly surpasses their simple rating in gold pieces:

- ◆ *The Ring of Barahir* — A ring made by the Noldor ages ago, it is an heirloom of the house of the Chieftains of the Rangers of the North.
- ◆ *The Necklace of Girion* — A necklace crafted for the Lord of Dale, made of five hundred emeralds "green as grass".
- ◆ *The Arkenstone* — A wonderful, multi-faceted great white gem, called the Heart of the Mountain, a heirloom of the Kings of the House of Durin.

"This is a thing of worth beyond your reckoning. For its ancienctry alone. It has no power, save the esteem in which those hold it who love my house."

GEMS, JEWELS, AND CRYSTALS

Many beautiful gems freed from the roots of mountains and hills were cut and set in necklaces, crowns, circlets, and bracelets of precious metals by Dwarven smiths of great renown, in cities like Nogrod and Belegost, before Beleriand was broken. Many crystals and white or green gems of surpassing beauty were not dug from the earth, but created by the hands of Elven craftspeople and gem-smiths, and filled cunningly with flaming light.

THE TREASURE INDEX

Finding a magic ring or a famous sword in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* is not simply a matter of stumbling upon an exotic object. There is more to chance than coincidence in Middle-earth, as there are other powers at work far stronger.

A Loremaster wanting to add spell-bound gems and Elven blades to a game must first take some time to create a Treasure Index:

A Treasure Index is a list detailing all the magical items that can become part of the campaign. When something is uncovered with a Magical Treasure roll, the Loremaster refers to the Treasure Index to check exactly what has been brought to light.

Using the index allows the Loremaster to keep a tight control over the desired level of magic to introduce into the game, avoiding the problem of having too many heroes wandering around Middle-earth wielding Beleriand-forged blades or wearing Mithril armour.

Additionally, the index lets the Loremaster ‘time’ the appearance of certain magical items in the campaign — for example, to follow a wide-arching plot involving the discovery of a particular object. Certain events might be triggered by the fortuitous finding of a lost artefact, or the Player-heroes could be left wondering how to confront a seemingly invincible threat, until they finally ‘stumble’ upon a weapon capable of giving them an edge.

Finally, the index helps in keeping magical objects unique and wondrous. Finding a magical item should represent a major turning point in a campaign, with definite consequences related to the future of a hero. A magical object isn’t just a new special ability, but a new feature in the game world.

COMPILING A TREASURE INDEX

Magical items in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* are categorised as Marvellous Artefacts, Wondrous Items, and Famous Weapons and Armour. Treasure Index sheets can be downloaded from freeleaguepublishing.com — one to keep track of Marvellous Artefacts and Wondrous Items, and another for Famous Weapons and Armour.

When compiling a Magical Treasure Index, the Loremaster includes as many Marvellous Artefacts as desired, while a specific list must be made to indicate precisely the number and nature of any Wondrous Items and Famous Weapons and Armour that the Player-heroes will have a chance to find (ideally, 1 to 3 Wondrous Items and 1 to 3 pieces of war gear for each Player-hero in the Company).

SAMPLE INDEXES: Available for download from freeleaguepublishing.com are a number of sample indexes, created with different goals in mind. The title of each index and its description detail its goal and application. Loremasters are encouraged to create their own indexes though, based around the composition of the Company playing in their campaigns.

FATE AND PREDESTINATION

The creation of custom special items to be found among Treasure is meant to represent *predestination*, the potential of a hero to become the instrument of a higher purpose and to play a role in the long-term development of a campaign. To further reinforce this, Magical Treasure is meant to be strictly individual: heroes should never pass the object found over to a different companion, especially when Famous Weapons and Armour are concerned. After all, it was Bilbo who was meant to find the Ring, not Balin, Gandalf, or Thorin.

MARVELLOUS ARTEFACTS AND WONDROUS ITEMS

Objects included in this category possess characteristics that mortals wouldn't hesitate to call magical: cloaks that hide their wearers from observing eyes, war-horns capable of setting fear in the hearts of enemies and joy in the hearts of friends, staves blessed with virtues of finding and returning.

Such objects are wound about with powerful enchantments called *blessings*. An object possessing one blessing is called a *Marvellous Artefact*, while one possessing two blessings is a *Wondrous Item*.

A single blessing bestowed upon an object lets its bearer affect the result of all ability checks made using a specific skill. An object possessing two blessings will then modify the outcome of ability checks made using two different skills.

- ◆ The bearer of a Marvellous Artefact or Wondrous Item can roll a Blessing die and add the number rolled to the ability checks affected by the blessings. The Blessing die is determined by the bearer's proficiency bonus, as shown in the table below. A character can roll only one Blessing die on each check.

A FATEFUL DISCOVERY

Marvellous Artefacts and Wondrous Items can become a meaningful addition to a campaign especially if their discovery is tied to some significant event, or if their introduction is meant to serve a particular purpose.

When the Loremaster is compiling the Treasure Index, some time should be dedicated to considering the objective of an item, in the context of the campaign being played. Or, its goal might be left undefined, to be then filled in when the players provide the Loremaster with the right suggestions through their own actions.



- ◆ Additionally, a Marvellous Artefact or Wondrous Item allows the bearer to achieve a magical success when making an ability check using a skill affected by the blessings. The bearer can do so a number of times equal to half their proficiency bonus (rounded down) if the item is a Marvellous Artefact, or to their proficiency bonus if it is a Wondrous Item, and must finish a long rest to regain all expended uses.

PROFICIENCY BONUS

BLESSING DIE

+2	1d4
+3	1d6
+4	1d8

When a blessed item is found, the Loremaster either chooses an object included in the Treasure Index, or uses the Blessings table on the next page to create one.

Marvellous Artefacts and Wondrous Items should be rare and unique, lest their worth be diminished in the eyes of the players. The Loremaster should use the directions contained in this chapter and their knowledge of the source material to create a limited number of such objects for inclusion in a Treasure Index – two or three per Player-hero at most. Should that list run out, the Loremaster may create additional ones, either taking the time to design them or rolling them up on the spot.

The capabilities of an object may not be readily apparent upon discovery. While it is possible that a hero finds out while adventuring, a Player-hero may either use Rune-craft if they have it (see page 65), or learn about an item's blessings by choosing the Study Magical Items Fellowship Phase undertaking (see page 115).

BLESSINGS TABLE

To determine which skill is affected by a blessing the Loremaster rolls a d20 and consults the Blessings table. Roll twice (rerolling identical results) if the object is a wondrous item bestowed with two blessings.

In brackets are listed options to help the Loremaster in choosing the type of object discovered, whether it is a ring, a cloak, a belt, or something else. If the same item possesses two blessings, choose the type of object that seems more appropriate. To determine the craftsmanship of the find, you may use the tables on page 127.

BLESSINGS

D20	SKILL (OBJECT)
1	<i>Acrobatics</i> (boots, cloak, ring)
2	<i>Animal Handling</i> (circlet, ring, staff)
3	<i>Athletics</i> (belt, boots, ring)
4	<i>Deception</i> (amulet, circlet, ring)
5	<i>Explore</i> (boots, ring, staff)
6	<i>Hunting</i> (boots, cloak, ring)
7	<i>Insight</i> (circlet, pipe, ring)
8	<i>Intimidation</i> (cloak, horn, ring)
9	<i>Investigation</i> (amulet, circlet, ring)
10	<i>Medicine</i> (healer's kit, herbalism kit, ring)
11	<i>Nature</i> (book, circlet, ring)
12	<i>Old Lore</i> (book, circlet, ring)
13	<i>Perception</i> (amulet, circlet, ring)
14	<i>Performance</i> (musical instrument, pipe, ring)
15	<i>Persuasion</i> (amulet, circlet, ring)
16	<i>Riddle</i> (circlet, pipe, ring)
17	<i>Sleight of Hand</i> (cloak, gloves, ring)
18	<i>Stealth</i> (boots, cloak, ring)
19	<i>Travel</i> (boots, ring, staff)
20	Roll twice and choose one

FAMOUS WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

Weapons of extraordinary craftsmanship are already dealt with in the game using the rules for rewards. While those items could arguably be considered magical, their lineage can hardly be compared with that of swords forged in Gondolin for the Goblin-wars.

When a Player-hero gains possession of such an extraordinary weapon, the Loremaster must consult the campaign's Treasure Index — If the circumstances are appropriate, the Loremaster may select an item from those added to the Index specifically for the Player-hero.

DESIGNING FAMOUS WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

To design a magical sword or a wondrous coat of armour for insertion into the Treasure Index, the Loremaster must follow a 5-step process, making a number of choices based on the current campaign and the composition of the Company:

1. Choose Item Type
2. Determine Craftsmanship
3. Select Banes (Elven or Númenórean weapons only)
4. Attribute Qualities
5. Name the item

1. CHOOSE ITEM TYPE: The first thing to choose is the most important one: what piece of war gear is the object of the design? Is it a weapon, or a piece of armour, like a mail shirt, or a shield?

A Treasure Index must only include items that are designed explicitly for specific members of the Company; there is no place for a wondrous shield that none of the players will be interested in using.

For example, the Loremaster is designing a famous weapon meant for the Barding Warden of the Company. The warrior uses a sword as his primary weapon. The Loremaster selects a sword as the item type.

2. DETERMINE CRAFTSMANSHIP: Weapons and armour can be of Elven, Dwarven, or Númenórean craftsmanship. The following paragraphs give some insight about which item types are most suited to a particular origin. Apart from defining in broad terms the history of an item, the choice of craftsmanship also determines whether a weapon should feature Banes or not, and affects the choice of Qualities (see Steps 3 and 4).

Elven Craftsmanship: The best enchanted weapons that may be found in forgotten hoards were made by Elven-wrights in Beleriand in the Elder Days, or in Eregion, for the wars against Sauron.

Glamdring and Orcrist are good examples, not to mention Bilbo's (and later Frodo's) sword Sting.

The Elves forged many famous swords, daggers, and enchanted spears. Other weapons or pieces of armour are not unknown, but more difficult to find.

Dwarven Craftsmanship: Many extraordinary swords, helms, and suits of armour were wrought by Dwarves in their cities of Nogrod and Belegost, either for use by their most renowned chieftains and champions, or as gifts to the greatest lords amongst Elves and Men.

The works of Telchar, the smith of Nogrod, are particularly renowned: the sword Narsil and the Helm of Hador were among his chief creations.

The smiths of Nogrod and Belegost crafted especially swords and axes, shields, helms, and suits of armour.

Númenórean Craftsmanship: The weaponsmiths among the Men of Westernesse were taught by the Noldor in the making of swords, axe-blades, spearheads, and knives. They acquired great skill, and put it to good use in forging many weapons using strange metals.

The barrow-blades Tom Bombadil gave to the Hobbits were weapons of this sort; swords forged by the Númenóreans for their bitter wars against Carn Dûm in the Land of Angmar.

The Men of Westernesse excelled in the making of many weapons, but rarely devoted themselves to the creation of suits of armour, recognising the greater ability of Dwarf-smiths.

3. SELECT BANES: Bane weapons describe instruments of war that have been wrought to defeat a specific enemy. If the magical item is of Elven or Númenórean craftsmanship, then it may be attributed with one or more banes, as several of the special virtues that may be attributed to it are effective only against bane creatures (see Enchanted Rewards, on the next page). A bane weapon provides special benefits against one or more creature types.

Blades, spears, and arrow-heads forged in Númenor may have been wound about with spells for the bane of two creature types.

Choose two types from the following: Orcs, Trolls, Wolves, Evil Men, Undead.

Items crafted by the Elven-smiths of Beleriand or Eregion were generally created with only one type of enemy in mind.

Choose one type from: Orcs, Wolves, or Spiders.

Particularly ancient and rare, some blades may have been wrought for the bane of the Enemy itself, and as such may be particularly dangerous to all his servants and minions.

4. ATTRIBUTE QUALITIES: Player-heroes may improve their war gear by upgrading their weapons of choice using rewards. Similarly, Famous Weapons and Armour owe their qualities to rewards and enchanted rewards.

Upon creation, a number of qualities must be attributed to the magical item, choosing among the rewards listed on page 78, and the enchanted rewards described in this chapter, starting overleaf. The mix and number of qualities attributed to an object determine how powerful it will be.

- ◆ Generally, a famous weapon or piece of armour should feature a maximum of 3 qualities, and must include a minimum of one enchanted reward.
- ◆ All qualities of an item can be recorded on the Magical Treasure Index in any order desired, keeping in mind that the qualities that are listed first are the ones that the owner will discover soonest (see next page).

5. NAME THE ITEM: Precious Objects and Wondrous Artefacts rarely possess proper names — They are usually named after their maker, or after their most famous owner ('The Necklace of Girion', 'The Arkenstone of Thrain', 'The Phial of Galadriel'). On the contrary, Famous Weapons and Armour often have a name, or even more than one, if the item is known by different folks.

All pieces of war gear included in a Treasure Index should be given an appropriate name, along with a set of historical notes. The name of an item can be revealed to its bearer who researches it or asks a Lore-master about it (see the Meet Patron Fellowship Phase undertaking, on page 113).

A player is, of course, free to name an item themselves much as Bilbo did with Sting — either because the object does not have a known name or the companion isn't interested in discovering it. The notes about Named Weapons on page 79 can provide useful suggestions.

BANE WEAPONS

In addition to being possibly more effective against the types of creatures they were crafted to defeat, bane weapons are destructive to elements connected to the creatures that are the object of the bane, and would immediately be recognised as such by them.

For example, Orcs would not dare touch a blade forged for the bane of their kind, and a sword created for the destruction of giant Spiders would easily cut through the thickest of their webs.

HOW FAMOUS WEAPONS AND ARMOUR WORK

When a companion finds a Famous Weapon or Armour, the item displays the following number of qualities based on the current level of the Player-hero, in the order listed in the Loremaster's Treasure Index — the remaining features are secret and considered to be 'dormant':

- ◆ One quality for Player-heroes at levels 1-4
- ◆ Two qualities for Player-heroes at levels 5-8
- ◆ Three qualities for Player-heroes at level 9 or higher

Player-heroes at levels 1-4 already possessing a Famous Weapon or Armour get to discover the next qualities as they reach 5th and 9th level (always unlocking the new characteristic in the order listed on the Treasure Index).

For example, before leaving Rivendell for the Quest of the Ring, Frodo receives two precious heirlooms from Bilbo: the Elven short sword Sting, and the Mithril mail-shirt that Thorin gave him. Frodo is

level 4, so he can immediately activate the first quality in each of the two items: Luminescence (for Sting) and Mithril (for the mail shirt). Later in the Quest, Frodo reaches 5th level, therefore he can now activate the second quality of both Sting and the Mithril mail-shirt.

ENCHANTED REWARDS

All the qualities described below set the craftsmanship of an item apart from any other. The extraordinary characteristics of the object may be the result of ancient spells or graven runes, or they may be due to the innate qualities of the materials used for its crafting, or a combination of all such elements.

Often, the magical power of the object makes the item gleam with an unnatural light or appear as if burning with an enchanted flame, but in other cases the magical quality is more discreet, if noticeable at all. The Loremaster is encouraged to embellish the description of each Famous Weapon or Armour with appropriately epic details (or leave them to the owner of the object to devise).

Each enchanted reward's description includes any requirement that the enhanced object must satisfy for the quality to be applied to it. Qualities indicating a specific craftsmanship (Elven, Dwarven, or Númenórean) exemplify the features of war gear created by weapon smiths and armourers belonging to that culture.

Loremasters must keep in mind that they may apply a maximum of 3 rewards (enchanted or ordinary) to a Famous Weapon or Armour, always including a minimum of 1 enchanted reward. All enchanted rewards are unique, meaning that they can only be applied once to the same item.

The Loremaster should note that the first six enchanted rewards are enhanced versions of those described on page 78 — qualities sharing a common descriptor cannot be attributed to the same item. (For example, a Grievous sword cannot be given the Superior Grievous enchanted reward.) Moreover, when designing an Elven or Númenórean weapon, the Loremaster should be sure to bestow upon it at least one enchanted reward that possesses the Bane requirement.

SEEKING A LORE-MASTER

Player-heroes who wish to know more about a Famous Weapon or Armour may either use Runecraft if they have it (see page 65), or choose the Study Magical Items undertaking during a Fellowship Phase (see page 115). Once they have learned all there is to know about the qualities of a Famous Weapon or Armour, they can choose the order in which the item's qualities are activated, ignoring how they have been listed on the Treasure Index.



ANCIENT CLOSE FITTING**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Elven, Dwarven**ITEM:** Armour

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armour. While you're wearing it, any critical hit against you becomes a normal hit.

ANCIENT CUNNING MAKE**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Elven, Dwarven**ITEM:** Armour

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armour. This armour is half the normal weight, and if it normally imposes disadvantage on fatigue saving throws, this version doesn't.

SUPERIOR FELL**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Elven, Númenórean**ITEM:** Any weapon**SPECIAL:** Bane (if Númenórean)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In addition, you can roll two additional weapon damage dice when determining the extra damage for a critical hit with this weapon. This increases to three additional dice if it is of Elven craftsmanship, or to four additional dice against bane creatures (if Númenórean).

SUPERIOR GRIEVOUS**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven, Númenórean**ITEM:** Any weapon**SPECIAL:** Bane (if Númenórean)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The bonus to damage rolls increases to +2 if it is of Dwarven craftsmanship, or to +3 against bane creatures (if Númenórean).

SUPERIOR KEEN**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven, Elven**ITEM:** Any weapon**SPECIAL:** Bane (if Elven)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In addition, attacks using this weapon score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20, or 18-20 against bane creatures (if Elven).

SUPERIOR REINFORCED**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Any**ITEM:** Shield**SPECIAL:** Bane (if Elven or Númenórean)

While holding this shield, you have a +1 bonus to AC. The bonus increases to +2 if the shield is of Dwarven or Elven craftsmanship, or to +3 against attacks from bane creatures (if Númenórean). This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.

BITING DART**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Elven**ITEM:** Ranged weapon**SPECIAL:** Bane

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. If you hit a bane creature using this weapon, it also has disadvantage on attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

CLEAVING**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Any**ITEM:** Melee weapon

You can make one melee attack with this magic weapon as a bonus action on each of your turns.

FLAME OF HOPE**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven**ITEM:** Melee weapon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While you hold this weapon drawn, it creates an aura in a 10-foot radius around you. You and all creatures friendly to you in the aura have advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws.

FOE-SLAYING

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Elven, Númenórean
ITEM: Any weapon
SPECIAL: Bane

When you hit a bane creature with this magic weapon, you can roll one additional weapon damage die, or two additional dice if it is of Elven craftsmanship.

GLEAM OF TERROR

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Dwarven
ITEM: Melee weapon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. As a bonus action, you can cause the weapon emit dim light in a radius equal to its reach until the start of your next turn. The light is sunlight. While the weapon gleams, it also deals radiant damage instead of its normal type.

HAMMERING

CRAFTSMANSHIP: any
ITEM: Melee weapon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In addition, when you hit a creature with it, the creature must succeed on a Strength saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier) or fall prone.

HOLLOW STEEL

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Númenórean
ITEM: Ranged weapon
SPECIAL: no Bane required

You can make one ranged attack with this magic weapon as a bonus action on each of your turns.

LUMINESCENCE

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Elven
ITEM: Melee weapon
SPECIAL: Bane

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The weapon glows with a pale, cold light when a bane creature is within 500 feet of it, shedding dim light in a radius equal to its reach. While the weapon is

glowing, you and any of your companions within 30 feet of you that can see you cannot be surprised by these creatures, and have advantage on initiative rolls.

MITHRIL ARMOUR

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Dwarven
ITEM: Mail-shirt

A Mithril mail-shirt is half its normal weight, and can be worn under normal clothes. When you are wearing it, your base Armour Class is $14 + \text{your Dexterity modifier}$, and you are considered proficient with it if you have proficiency with light armour.

RUNE-SCORED ARMOUR

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Dwarven
ITEM: Armour

You gain a +1 bonus to AC and saving throws while you wear this armour.

RUNE-SCORED SHIELD

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Dwarven
ITEM: Shield

While holding this shield, you gain a +1 bonus to AC (in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC) and saving throws.

RUNE-SCORED WEAPON

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Dwarven
ITEM: Melee weapon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While the weapon is on your person, you also gain a +1 bonus to saving throws.

STRAIGHT FLIGHT

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Any
ITEM: Ranged weapon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. When you make a ranged attack roll with this magic weapon, your target gains no benefit from cover, other than total cover, and you suffer no disadvantage due to long range.

CURSED ITEMS

Items that have been buried in darkness for centuries represent a potential threat to adventurers and their lust for power. Sometimes, a treasure has been left to rot long enough for the Shadow to have wound about it an even darker fate.

If a Player-hero uncovered a piece of Magical Treasure, be it a Marvellous Artefact, a Wondrous Item, or a Famous Weapon or Armour, the Loremaster may additionally take the chance to introduce a curse.

A cursed item does not differ from an unmarred one in its virtues. The Loremaster simply proceeds to design the curse that is laid upon it, either by choosing a curse designed previously for the campaign, or by creating one on the spot using the rules below.

CURSED PRECIOUS OBJECTS

Generally, only Magical Treasure can be cursed, but if the Loremaster wishes, it is of course possible to lay a curse upon a heap of gold or a chest of precious gems, but usually that type of treasure just has an ill feeling about it and a character may struggle to sell it. To make things slightly darker, a cursed Precious Object might be denied any sentimental value (see page 127).



HOW TO DESIGN A CURSE

A curse bestows an item with an additional feature, similar to a blessing or a reward, except that it has a detrimental effect rather than a positive one. The Loremaster may consult the list of sample curses found below to select the most appropriate one, or to use them as inspiration to design new ones.

A curse may not be initially apparent, but instead be activated by a specific circumstance. Examples of circumstances that might trigger a curse include: leaving the area where the cursed item was found; exposing the object to the light of the moon; at the first shedding of blood; in the presence of a specific type of creature; upon entering a dark land.

When creating a cursed item, the Loremaster must also secretly decide how its curse can be lifted. This should be no small task and should definitely form the focus of an Adventuring Phase in its own right. For example, a curse might only be lifted at the place of the item's forging, or by the light of the same moon by which it was made. It might require the

casting of an ancient spell lost to the ages or by the slaying of a particularly dangerous creature.

Note that a cursed item is not an evil artefact, or a device created by the Enemy or meant to condemn a companion to a life of misery. It is a wonderful object bearing a lasting trace of darkness. While it may make a hero's life more dangerous for a while, the introduction of a cursed item is primarily meant to make the game more exciting!

Once a curse has been removed, the item reverts to being a regular magical item.

Here follow a number of examples.

CURSE OF WEAKNESS: The cursed Player-hero displays the worst flaw connected to their own Shadow Path.

- ◆ *Cowardly (Wandering-madness).* When the curse takes hold of the bearer, all they can think of is turning tail and fleeing into the night.



- ◆ *Fearful (Path of Despair)*. The curse undermines the spirit of the bearer, casting a shadow of fear and doubt over every action and decision.
- ◆ *Murderous (Curse of Vengeance)*. A terrible thirst for blood and malevolence lies within the item, provoking the bearer to dark thoughts of violence and murder.
- ◆ *Thieving (Dragon-sickness)*. The item glitters with a sickly light that causes the bearer to desire more and more.
- ◆ *Tyrannical (Lure of Power)*. The item foments a sense of overconfidence and arrogance within the bearer, causing them to belittle and undermine their companions.
- ◆ *Traitorous (Lure of Secrets)*. The item fosters thoughts of paranoia and discord within the mind of its bearer, causing them to mistake their friends for foes.

Note that this flaw is considered temporary, and does not count for the purposes of succumbing to the Shadow.

DARKEN: When the item is revealed (a sword is unsheathed, a glove is removed to reveal a ring and so on) all shadows in the area seem to deepen, and all sources of light seem to grow weak: bright light in a 30-foot radius becomes dim light, and dim light becomes complete darkness.

HUNTED: The presence of the item does not go unnoticed, and one type of enemy (Orcs, Evil Men, the Enemy) perceive it when they come near it. In addition, journey events experienced by a travelling Company may be made to revolve around this hunt.

ILL-LUCK: Bad luck dogs the bearer at every turn, their victories turned to defeats by simple — but persistent — misfortune. When the bearer rolls a 20 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, they must reroll the die and use the new roll.

ILL-OMEN: The bearer's arrival is preceded by dark warnings and fell omens, filling the hearts of former allies with dread and fear. This increases the DC of all ability checks made by the bearer during a council by +5.

MALICE: The object does not love its bearer, and will try to cause them harm, or otherwise trouble them. The bearer has disadvantage on all saving throws.

OWNED: The item is owned or was created by another creature, much as the Ring was owned by Sauron. The item may have found its way into the hands of the Player-hero so it might eventually return to its master. The Loremaster should

decide upon a specific enemy to be the owner of the item, possibly choosing a recurring villain in the campaign. When in the presence of its owner, the item becomes useless: its special features turn out to be completely ineffective.

SHADOW TAINT: The item bears a greater shadow-stain upon it than most cursed items. As long as the hero carries the item, their Shadow score is augmented: by 1 point for an artefact with one blessing, 2 for one with two blessings; in the case of a Famous Weapon or Armour, the Shadow increase is equal to $1 + \text{the number of enchanted rewards on the item}$. This Shadow increase cannot be removed or healed, and will raise the hero's Shadow score until the curse is lifted.

WEAKENING: The item's curse worms away at its bearer, bringing with it a terrible weakness. The Loremaster chooses an ability score. The bearer sees that ability score reduced by 2 points until the curse is lifted.

DISCOVERING THE ONE RING

Bilbo's discovery of the One Ring in Gollum's cave is a shining example of predestination, as discussed on page 128. Bilbo was meant to find the Ring, and then to pass it over to Frodo. Perhaps the Loremaster of Bilbo's campaign was planning very far ahead indeed — maybe even not realising at the time quite what they had created — the goal might have been merely to give the Burglar a Marvellous Artefact bestowed with a blessing of Stealth.

But how can the Ruling Ring of Sauron be created under the Magical Treasure rules? The short answer is that it cannot: it is the greatest magical artefact ever created in the history of Middle-earth after all. But let's indulge a little bit more... The Ring would probably have a blessing of Stealth for its capability to make its wearer invisible, but eventually reveal later to bestow another blessing on the skill that better defines its wearer's ambitions and desires: Intimidation for a mighty warrior, Persuasion for a leader of Men, Old Lore for someone who desires to learn ancient secrets, Insight for those who seek to know the hearts of others... But what about its curses? Well, let's not even get started...





CHAPTER 8

“The shadow”

“And that is another reason why the Ring should be destroyed: as long as it is in the world it will be a danger even to the Wise. For nothing is evil in the beginning.”



The Middle-earth has been under attack by the forces of darkness since its creation. Across each age, the world has been threatened by the designs of a Dark Lord, a powerful Enemy relentless in the desire to dominate all. Sauron the Great, an evil spirit of immense power, might already be far closer to victory than any dare dread. The presence of the Enemy weighs upon the hearts of most inhabitants of Middle-earth, with the exception of a fortunate few living in the havens of the northwest. Multitudes living to the east and south worship him already as the only god they have ever known.

The Free Peoples are among those few who have cherished a glimmer of hope: the knowledge that, as powerful as he appears to be, Sauron can be resisted and even defeated by

steadfast opposition. Countless battles have been won or lost by alliances of the folk of Middle-earth. Though the Shadow has never failed to return in a new shape, even after the most resounding defeats, neither has hope ever fully deserted the hearts of those who fight against it.

But the Shadow does not rely solely upon instruments of war and the devious deeds of its servants to breed fear and doubt. The temptations that dwell even in the hearts of the brave have ever been its ally — valiant warriors, adventurers, and kings can all stray from their path willingly, given the right circumstances. No matter how pure they believe their motives to be, or how just the ends, giving in to their darkest desires will eventually lead them to exert their power for personal gain or the domination of others.

shadow points

To his distress and amazement he found that he was no longer looking at Bilbo; a shadow seemed to have fallen between them, and through it he found himself eyeing a little wrinkled creature with a hungry face and bony groping hands.

Challenging an almost all-powerful Enemy and facing its terrible minions is bound to instil a sense of fear and doubt in the Player-heroes, a sentiment that in time comes to weigh heavily on their hearts and minds.

In the game, this burden is represented by the accumulation of Shadow points, and by the sources that force their gain.

In the course of play, the Player-heroes see their Shadow score ebb and flow, as they gain points during the Adventuring Phase as a consequence of their actions, and then they possibly lose them by making a saving throw, by strengthening their resolve (see Harden Will), or by mending their spiritual hurt during a Fellowship Phase (see Spiritual Recovery, page 111).

Shadow points are kept track of by marking them in the appropriate box on the character sheet. Heroes cannot accumulate Shadow in excess of their maximum Wisdom score (any additional points gained do not raise a hero's Shadow score).

SAVING THROWS AGAINST SHADOW

A number of sources of Shadow allow players to make a saving throw to cancel, or at least reduce, the amount of points gained. These saving throws use either Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, depending on the specific source of Shadow (see Sources of Shadow on the next page).

When a saving throw against Shadow is successful, the hero reduces the number of Shadow points gained by 1 point. If the saving throw succeeds by 5 or more, the Player-hero reduces the number of Shadow points gained by 2 points.

The sources of Shadow that can be resisted with a saving throw (Dread, Greed, and Sorcery) are described later in this chapter.

SHADOW CONDITIONS

The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying introduces two new conditions to describe the effects of Shadow on Player-heroes: *miserable* and *anguished*. Both conditions are triggered as a character accumulates Shadow points.

If a Player-hero's Shadow score matches or exceeds half their Wisdom score (rounded up), they become *miserable*.

A miserable character decreases the Fellowship rating of the Company by 1. In addition, if a miserable character's d20 roll is a 1 or 2, the roll is a failure regardless of the DC for any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Player-heroes whose Shadow score reaches the full value of their Wisdom score become *anguished* instead.

An anguished character is miserable, and has disadvantage on all ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. There is only one way to recover from such depths of desperation — the Player-hero must experience a bout of madness.

A bout of madness is a violent outburst, a dangerous crisis that frees a Player-hero from the burden of the Shadow, but that may have serious, long-term consequences (see Madness, on page 143).

HARDEN WILL

Adventurers who are struggling under the burden of the Shadow may tap into their innermost reserves of spiritual energy to harden their determination, before it's too late. For some, this effort takes the form of a demonstration of desperate strength; others enjoy a moment of clarity in their darkest moment, when all seems lost, and suddenly all doubts are cast away:

In game terms, Player-heroes whose accumulated Shadow does not yet match their Wisdom score may choose to remove all their current Shadow, replacing it with a single Shadow Scar.

A Shadow Scar is a 'permanent' Shadow point that can be removed only during a Yule Fellowship Phase, by choosing the Heal Scars undertaking (see page 113), but is otherwise considered as a normal Shadow point for all purposes.

Sam's plain hobbit-face grew stern, almost grim, as the will hardened in him, and he felt through all his limbs a thrill, as if he was turning into some creature of stone and steel that neither despair nor weariness nor endless barren miles could subdue.

SOURCES OF SHADOW

Adventurers gain Shadow in many ways. When their determination is shaken by witnessing distressing events or facing terrible foes, then the source of Shadow points is Dread; if they are committing despicable actions, they are tainting their conscience with Misdeeds; if they take possession of precious or powerful objects, they may be tempted by Greed; finally, if they fall victim to dark magics they have to resist the effects of Sorcery.

DREAD

Terror is a spear in the hand of the Enemy. Adventurers gain Shadow points whenever they witness something capable of striking fear or sowing doubts into their hearts, be it facing a horrible creature out of the darkest pits of Mordor, entering a place where shadows are made thicker by an ancient curse, or experiencing directly the terrible power of the Enemy.

The extent of the Shadow gain depends on the source of Dread — the table in the next page provides a number of examples to help the Loremaster adjudicate (other sources, like the terror caused by a creature or a dark spell, are discussed in detail in the Adversaries section, on page 146).

Adventurers may resist the effects of Dread with a Charisma saving throw.

But the king sat upon Snowmane, motionless, gazing upon the agony of Minas Tirith, as if stricken suddenly by anguish, or by dread. He seemed to shrink down, cowed by age.

SOURCES OF DREAD:

SOURCE	EXAMPLE	SHADOW POINTS GAINED
<i>Natural but unexpected tragic event, or very grievous occurrence.</i>	Serious or mortal accident, death in the family, natural catastrophe	1
<i>Gruesome killing, dreadful experience, Orc-work.</i>	Discovering villagers savagely mutilated, experiencing slavery	2
<i>Harrowing experience, physical and spiritual torment.</i>	Experiencing torture, being haunted by a Wight	3
<i>Experiencing directly the power of the Enemy.</i>	Seeing the mustering of a Shadow army, seeing the Eye in a Palantír	4

GREED

Hoards of gold and great stores of enchanted weapons and armour lie in forgotten caves. Heroes risk being corrupted by their own desire whenever they put their hands on gold and precious objects that were tainted by laying in the dark for a long time.

When the Player-heroes find a Hoard of treasure, they may gain a number of Shadow points if the Hoard was tainted (see page 125).

Adventurers may resist the effects of Greed with a Wisdom saving throw.

"It is mine, I tell you. My own. My Precious. Yes, my Precious."

MISDEEDS

Companions often confront challenges that are so demanding that they might be tempted to adopt extreme measures, especially if they aim to achieve a noble goal. When this happens,

the Loremaster must consider if a course of action can be considered a Misdeed.

Player-heroes gain Shadow points whenever they commit an act that is essentially wrong or even nefarious in nature, regardless of the objective they are trying to achieve. The Misdeeds table can be used as the basis of the Loremaster's decision.

A Misdeed is a special instance of Shadow gain, as it cannot be reduced or cancelled by a saving throw of any kind.

The Loremaster should usually warn the players when they are about to carry out a Misdeed.

"You can say that I was too strong and took it by force. For I am too strong for you, halfling," he cried; and suddenly he sprang over the stone and leaped at Frodo."

MISDEEDS:

ACTION	SHADOW POINTS GAINED
Violent threats and malicious lies; heedless cruelty	1
Manipulating others; abusing your authority; deliberate cruelty	2
Theft or plunder; oathbreaking or cowardice; treachery	3
Torment or torture; killing or crippling a surrendered foe or harmless folk	4
Murder; willingly taking actions in the service of the Enemy	4 plus 1 Shadow Scar

INTENTION

It is important to note that merely attempting to do something despicable is a Misdeed, regardless of whether the action succeeds or not. Moreover, it is possible to commit a Misdeed unknowingly, for example, attacking someone considered to be guilty of a heinous crime, but who later turns out to be innocent. In this case, the Player-heroes should not gain Shadow automatically, but only if they don't attempt to make reparations when their mistake comes to light. If their reaction is one of contrition and they show an earnest attempt to put the situation right, then they can be allowed to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to resist the Shadow gain.



SORCERY

It is said that those who are in the favour of the Dark Lord are often rewarded with evil knowledge. Some are able to wield such knowledge to terrible effect, twisting it into a form of dark magic. Adventurers gain Shadow when they fall victim to the dreadful spells of the Enemy and his minions.

The number of Shadow points gained by the Player-heroes depends on the power of the sorcerous spell. Often, failing a saving throw against Sorcery has additional negative consequences.

Adventurers may resist the effects of Sorcery with an Intelligence saving throw.

Then the leader, who was now half across the Ford, stood up menacing in his stirrups, and raised up his hand. Frodo was stricken dumb.

MADNESS

As seen on page 141, Player-heroes whose Shadow score reaches the full value of their Wisdom score become anguished. Once they reach this point, they can get rid of Shadow only in one way — by playing out a bout of madness, a violent reaction marking a significant step in their downward course towards degeneration.

To play out a bout of madness, players must describe how their characters lose control for a short period of time, doing something they will later regret.

To describe their loss of control, players should take into consideration the source of the last Shadow gain that pushed their heroes beyond their limit, a character's Shadow Path, or one of their flaws (see Shadow Paths overleaf).

Here are some examples of the consequences of a bout of madness:

- ◆ **BETRAYAL:** The Player-hero fails to keep their word or to perform an assigned duty, and the Company suffers the consequences. For example, the hero fails to watch over a prisoner properly and the prisoner escapes.
- ◆ **FEAR:** The heroes fall prey to their fears, and flee from any source of danger, thinking only about preserving themselves from any threat.
- ◆ **LUST:** Lusting characters feel an irresistible desire for an object not belonging to them, and try to take it, secretly or overtly.
- ◆ **RAGE:** Raging characters brood over real or imaginary wrongs until they react aggressively to a perceived threat or source of opposition.

If nothing seems to fit the circumstances, a standard bout of madness can take the form of an aggression of any type, verbal or physical, upon the most likely and available target (a character's Fellowship Focus often qualifies as such).

Player-heroes quickly regain control of themselves once their bout of madness passes (or they regain any hit points, in the case of Elves). They see their mind finally cleared of the tangle of fear and doubt they fell into before facing the crisis.

They are no longer anguished and remove all their current Shadow points, but they advance one step along their Shadow Path (see next page).

A bout of madness must take place during the current Adventuring Phase (player-heroes ending the Adventuring Phase with a Shadow score matching their Wisdom score can be considered to have left the Company and are retired from the game).

"What have I done? Frodo, Frodo!" he called. "Come back! A madness took me, but it has passed. Come back!"

SHADOW PATHS

In addition to resetting their Shadow score, every time a hero suffers a bout of madness they advance along the Shadow Path corresponding to their chosen calling. All paths are articulated along a number of steps towards degeneration, with each step marked by the acquisition of a different flaw — a Distinctive Feature with a negative connotation.

A Player-hero's calling determines which flaws are acquired, based on the character's Shadow Path (see table above).

SUCCUMBING TO THE SHADOW

Heroes who develop the full complement of four flaws risk succumbing totally to the Shadow:

The next time that their Shadow score reaches their Wisdom score they do not become anguished but are taken out of play instead.

SHADOW PATHS:

BOUT OF MADNESS	CURSE OF VENGEANCE	DRAGON-SICKNESS	LURE OF POWER	LURE OF SECRETS	PATH OF DESPAIR	WANDERING-MADNESS
# 1	Spiteful	Grasping	Resentful	Haughty	Troubled	Idle
# 2	Brutal	Mistrustful	Arrogant	Scornful	Wavering	Forgetful
# 3	Cruel	Deceitful	Overconfident	Scheming	Guilt-ridden	Uncaring
# 4	Murderous	Thieving	Tyrannical	Traitorous	Fearful	Cowardly

USING FLAWS

Every time heroes develop a flaw they are renouncing their higher ambitions and embracing simpler, more primitive emotions. They are trading respect for arrogance, love for lust, trust for suspicion.

The Loremaster should take into account the effects of a flaw whenever the performance of a Player-hero can be made worse by it.

If a Player-hero is making an ability check that plausibly be affected by a flaw, the check has disadvantage.

EXAMPLE

An Arrogant hero is making a Charisma (Persuasion) check. The Loremaster considers that her pompous conduct may worsen her chances to succeed, so the check has disadvantage.

A Player-hero who succumbs to the Shadow is going to disappear from the game soon, probably as a consequence of one of the following events:

- ◆ **LOST TO MADNESS:** When Men, Hobbits, or Dwarves fall under the Shadow, they succumb to madness. More often than not, this results sooner or later in their death, as they threaten others to the extent that they end up being killed, or starve to death in some solitary place, forsaken by folk and beasts.
- ◆ **RETURN TO VALINOR:** When the burden of the Shadow overpowers Elves, they seek to leave Middle-earth as soon as possible, to sail for the Uttermost West and be healed of the sadness and misery of this world.

The details about the fate of a Player-hero who descends a Shadow Path to its bottom are up to the Loremaster and the player controlling the fallen character. They should work together to find a way to incorporate the hero's destiny into the ongoing game.

The following sections describe the various flaws that Player-heroes may develop as a result of their degeneration, grouped by Shadow Path. The Loremaster can use the definitions listed here to determine the effects of a bout of madness,



and the players may use them to keep in mind how a flaw should affect the behaviour of a Player-hero.

CURSE OF VENGEANCE

SPITEFUL: You often repay real or imagined wrongs with vicious rudeness. Depending on the provocation, you may simply be very impolite, or downright insulting.

BRUTAL: You react violently to provocations and show little restraint under most circumstances.

CRUEL: You don't care if your actions cause pain and suffering to others, and are needlessly savage with your enemies.

MURDEROUS: You become murderous when you start to consider killing as a perfectly natural way to achieve a goal or simply to make things go your way.

"I wish I had Gandalf here! Curse him for his choice of you! ... As for you, I will throw you to the rocks!" he cried and lifted Bilbo in his arms.

DRAGON-SICKNESS

GRASPING: If you become grasping, you seek to accumulate gold and precious items above all else, just for the sake of possessing them.

MISTRUSTFUL: When your prized possessions start to weigh you down and become a treasure to be guarded, even the good advice of friends appears to mask dubious intentions.

DECEITFUL: You feel no shame in misleading others with lies and stratagems, as long as your machinations further your ends and corrupted needs.

THEIVING: You have discovered that anything you desire can be yours — you just have to take it. You have earned the right to take all you want when you sacrificed the love of your peers and your own self-respect.

...he fell under the Dragon-sickness, and took most of the gold and fled with it, and died of starvation in the Waste, deserted by his companions.

LURE OF POWER

RESENTFUL: You risk becoming bitter and angry with the people you ought to lead. You often feel that you risk your life for individuals that fail to see the wisdom of your words.

ARROGANT: You don't miss an opportunity to underline your own importance, often belittling your peers and companions.

OVERCONFIDENT: Overconfidence denotes overweening pride, a sentiment that blinds you to your own limits and weaknesses. You endeavour to do anything you set your mind upon, regardless of the consequences that might befall others.

TYRANNICAL: You escalate your actions and desires to the level of a just cause. Your disregard for the lives of others is so profound that you go to any lengths to achieve your ends, regardless of the cost or methods employed to accomplish them. Any dissenting opinion is considered as utter betrayal.

*"It is by our own folly that the Enemy will defeat us," cried Boromir.
"How it angers me! Fool! Obstinate fool! Running wilfully to death
and ruining our cause."*

LURE OF SECRETS

HAUGHTY: You don't easily recognise the wisdom found in the words and actions of others, and tend to turn aside all advice and offers of help.

SCORNFUL: You treat the propositions of others with disdain, making use of every opportunity to mock them for their presumed inadequacy.

SCHEMING: You keep your thoughts and intentions to yourself at all times, never giving advice and heeding only your own judgement. You might sometimes agree with the propositions of others, but only to be free to follow your own choices later.

TRAITOROUS: When you become traitorous you cannot be trusted to keep your word. You are ready to betray your own friends and allies, if it would turn to your advantage.

"The roots of those mountains must be roots indeed; there must be great secrets buried there which have not been discovered since the beginning."

PATH OF DESPAIR

TROUBLED: You feel a sense of disquiet that makes it hard for you to read a situation clearly and offer counsel to others.

WAVERING: Caution can be the enemy of action, and when you become wavering you cannot set your mind upon a choice quickly and effectively. You vacillate between the various options you see before you.

GUILT-RIDDEN: The curse of those who defend others is to feel remorse when their actions go amiss, pushing you to refuse any daring course of action.

FEARFUL: When you become fearful you are so beset by worries and concerns that you cannot force yourself to risk doing anything that will potentially endanger yourself and those you care for.

"Now the Company is all in ruin. It is I that have failed. Vain was Gandalf's trust in me. What shall I do now?"

WANDERING-MADNESS

IDLE: It takes a lot to stir idle adventurers into action. You are easily distracted, and must be cajoled to fully participate in endeavours.

FORGETFUL: Being forgetful indicates that you are often day-dreaming and absent-minded, and find it difficult to remember even important things.

UNCARING: When you become uncaring you lose touch with the world outside of yourself. You cannot bring yourself to feel compassion, and quickly lose interest in matters that do not concern you directly.

COWARDLY: You care only for your own safety under any circumstances, and will go to any lengths to save yourself when a threat arises.

"I feel I need a holiday, a very long holiday, as I have told you before. Probably a permanent holiday: I don't expect I shall return."

adversaries

For the folk of Arnor dwindled, and their foes devoured them...

Not all the servants of the Enemy are Orcs, Trolls or Wraiths. Among the foes of those who choose to oppose the Shadow are many who cannot be distinguished easily from their friends, if at all. And in times of doubt, a deadly threat may come from otherwise steadfast allies, turned into ruthless adversaries by simple misunderstanding, or, worse, by treachery or betrayal.

This chapter presents a selection of adversaries, from the various cunning and evil creatures of Middle-earth, to misguided individuals that end up opposing the deeds of the Player-heroes.





EVIL MEN

Cruel individuals like brigands, marauders and slavers prowling the Lone-lands of Middle-earth fall within this category. Their malicious will notwithstanding, Evil Men are not servitors of Sauron, and they can end up opposing the Player-heroes for reasons not dependent on an allegiance with the Dark Lord.

HOSTILE SOUTHERNERS

The people of Bree call ‘Southerner’ every foreigner coming up the Greenway. The vast majority are simply moving away from some trouble, looking for lands where they can find some peace. Others are not so well-meaning...

“If room isn’t found for them, they’ll find it for themselves. They’ve a right to live, same as other folk...”



Southerner Raider

Medium humanoid (Evil Man)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (hide armour, shield)

HIT POINTS 16 (3d8 + 3)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +1

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Dunlendish, Westron

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

RECKLESS HATE. At the start of its turn, the Southerner Raider can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

AXE. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

SPEAR. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

When a particularly harsh winter has passed, Men from the South may assemble war parties and look for some isolated homestead to plunder, before retreating just as quickly back into the mists where they came from.

Southerner Champion

Medium humanoid (Evil Man)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

ARMOUR CLASS 17 (scale armour, shield)

HIT POINTS 58 (9d8 + 18)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +3

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Dunlendish, Westron

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

RECKLESS HATE. At the start of its turn, the Southerner Champion can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Southerner Champion makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

BATTLE AXE. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

SPEAR. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

A Southerner Champion may be a chieftain from Dunland, a bandit lord capable of uniting a number of fractious warriors into a small army, or just a particularly vicious brigand.

Ruffians

Local robbers, cut-throats, brigands and other assorted criminals fall within this category of potential adversaries. Such foes can be encountered on the lonely roads of Eriador, but they are met as likely in a dark alley in Bree.

"Where d'you think you're going?" said one, the largest and most evil-looking of the crew.

Footpad

Medium humanoid (Evil Man)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 11 (leather shirt)

HIT POINTS 11 (2d8 + 2)

SPEED 30 ft.

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

GANG TACTICS. The Footpad has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Footpad's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

GREAT CLUB. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

DAGGER. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

A cowardly bandit, ready to rob a defenceless victim, but capable of ambushing a lonely companion with the help of others.

Ruffian Leader

Medium humanoid (Evil Man)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 11 (leather shirt)

HIT POINTS 32 (5d8 + 10)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +2

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

GANG TACTICS. The Ruffian Leader has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Ruffian Leader's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Ruffian Leader makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

GREAT CLUB. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

DAGGER. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

YELL OF TRIUMPH (Recharges after a Long Rest). Each creature of the Ruffian Leader's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it gain advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of the Ruffian Leader's next turn. The Ruffian Leader can then make one attack as a bonus action.

Tougher or simply fiercer, a leader is a ruffian who has reached the top with the help of a sharper mind, or blade.

Highway Robber

Medium humanoid (Evil Man)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (leather shirt)

HIT POINTS 22 (4d8 + 4)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Perception +2, Stealth +5

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

AMBUSHER. In the first round of combat, the Highway Robber has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

SURPRISE ATTACK. If the Highway Robber surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Highway Robber makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

SHORT SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

BOW. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

More dangerous than a common brigand, a Highway Robber is used to a life in the Wild, and has learned how to deal with armed victims.



ORCS

Bred by the first Dark Power in the early years of the world to serve him in many wars, Orcs are once again multiplying. They are strong and agile creatures, quick and robust, and ready to learn or devise new methods or instruments of torment. Their appearance and size differs from tribe to tribe, but many prominent features are common to all Orcs, such as short legs, broad, squinting eyes, wide mouths and long fangs.

Their malicious spirit is full of hatred for all living things, including their own kind, and when left to their own devices, Orcs often end up quarrelling fiercely over futile questions. But when they face their enemies they are quick to set their disagreements aside.

Some Orcs direct their spite towards some specific folk. To reflect this, the Loremaster may add to an Orc adversary the Hatred special trait.

- ◆ **Hatred (subject) (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** As a bonus action, the creature can gain advantage on attack rolls against the subject of its hatred until the start of its next turn.

For example, the Orcs and Goblins of Goblin-town hate Dwarves, and will attack a Company that includes Dwarves with blind fury. The Orcs of Mount Gram fiercely hate all Hobbits instead, and will relentlessly attack a Company including any.

GREAT ORCS

A powerful breed of Orc, Great Orcs are said to descend from servant spirits that once took an Orcish shape to serve the Dark Power's purposes. King Golfimbul, the Great Goblin, Azog and his son Bolg were Great Orcs.

...he was a great Orc with a huge iron-clad head, and yet agile and strong.

Great Orc Chief

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

ARMOUR CLASS 18 (heavy orc-mail, shield)

HIT POINTS 85 (10d8 + 40)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Insight +3, Intimidation +5

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES Orcish, Westron

CHALLENGE 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

AGGRESSIVE. As a bonus action, the Great Orc Chief can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

HORRIBLE STRENGTH. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Great Orc Chief hits with it (included in the attack).

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Great Orc Chief has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Great Orc Chief makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

HEAVY SCIMITAR. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

SHIELD BASH. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

YELL OF TRIUMPH (Recharges after a Long Rest). Each creature of the Great Orc Chief's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it gain advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of the Great Orc Chief's next turn. The Great Orc Chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.

REACTIONS

PARRY. The Great Orc Chief adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Great Orc Chief must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

REDIRECT ATTACK. When a creature the Great Orc Chief can see hits it with an attack, the Great Orc Chief chooses another Orc within 5 feet of it. The two Orcs swap places, and the chosen Orc becomes the target instead.

Great Orcs are often encountered as leaders and chieftains of their weaker-blooded relatives.

Great Orc Bodyguard

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 18 (heavy orc-mail, shield)

HIT POINTS 60 (8d8 + 24)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +2, Perception +2

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

AGGRESSIVE. As a bonus action, the Great Orc Bodyguard can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Great Orc Bodyguard takes 7 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

HORRIBLE STRENGTH. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Great Orc Bodyguard hits with it (included in the attack).

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Great Orc Bodyguard has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Great Orc Bodyguard makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

BATTLE AXE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Less cunning than those who lead them, these fell creatures protect their captains at the cost of their lives.

Orcs of the North

Among the most numerous of the malicious creatures serving the Shadow, the Orcs of the Mountains are used to living and making war in the deep places beneath the earth, where their sight is keener than any other Orc. When they are encountered in their mines, they are savage fighters and reckless in

assault, but they leave the dark under the mountains only when marching to war or to avenge their fallen kind, as they suffer badly the light of the sun.

The Orcs of the North are a wild and independent lot, bent on their own purposes and aims when the Shadow's influence is weak, but ready to obey the will of their Master when directly subject to it. The smallest among them are often referred to as Goblins.

"We have come all the way from the Mines to kill, and avenge our folk."

Goblin Archer

Small humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

ARMOUR CLASS 13 (orc-leather)

HIT POINTS 9 (2d6 + 2)

SPEED 30 ft.

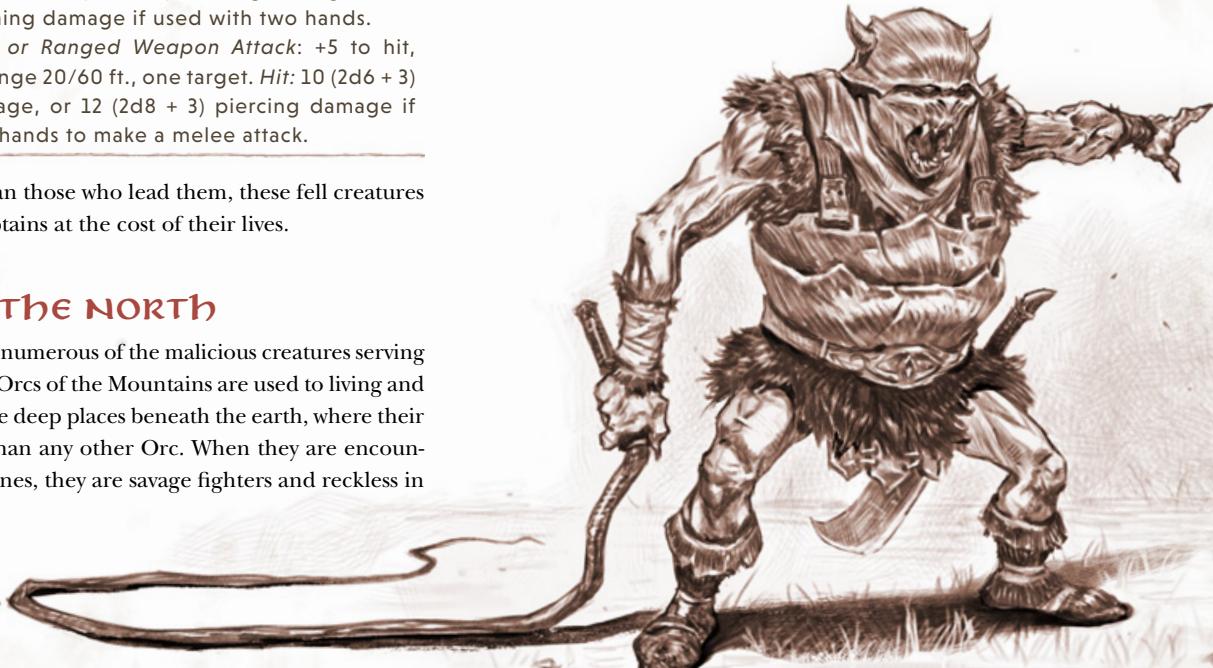
SKILLS Perception +2, Stealth +6

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

NIMBLE ESCAPE. The Goblin Archer can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.



SNEAK ATTACK (1/Turn). The Goblin Archer deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the Goblin Archer that isn't incapacitated and the Goblin Archer doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Goblin Archer has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

JAGGED KNIFE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

BOW OF HORN. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target cannot regain hit points and has disadvantage on death saving throws while poisoned in this way.

A Goblin Archer is an Orc chosen for his keen eyes. His ability to see in the dark, coupled with a steady hand, lets him shoot arrows with precision by night or day.

Orc-chieftain

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

ARMOUR CLASS 17 (orc-mail, shield)

HIT POINTS 39 (6d8 + 12)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +3

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

SNEAK ATTACK (1/Turn). The Orc-chieftain deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the Orc-chieftain that isn't incapacitated and the Orc-chieftain doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Orc-chieftain has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.



ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Orc-chieftain makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

SCIMITAR. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

SHIELD BASH. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

YELL OF TRIUMPH (Recharges after a Long Rest). Each creature of the Orc-chieftain's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it gain advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of the Orc-chieftain's next turn. The Orc-chieftain can then make one attack as a bonus action.

REACTIONS

PARRY. The Orc-chieftain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Orc-chieftain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Only the most wicked and cruel Orcs live long enough to become chieftains and lead their tribe or warband to battle. An Orc-chieftain is easy to recognise, as it is usually the largest in a group, wielding the meanest weapons and donning superior armour. Often, tell-tale scars or mutilations mark a chieftain's long service under the Shadow.

Orc Guard

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 16 (orc-mail, shield)

HIT POINTS 26 (4d8 + 8)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Perception +2

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

SNEAK ATTACK (1/Turn). The Orc Guard deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the Orc Guard that isn't incapacitated and the Orc Guard doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Orc Guard has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Orc Guard makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

SCIMITAR. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

The strongest and boldest Orcs are equipped with the toughest armour they can find or put together, and are placed to keep watch on an area wielding a sword and sturdy shield.

Orc Soldier

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

ARMOUR CLASS 15 (orc-leather, shield)

HIT POINTS 11 (2d8 + 2)

SPEED 30 ft.

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

SNEAK ATTACK (1/Turn). The Orc Soldier deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the Orc Soldier that isn't incapacitated and the Orc Soldier doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Orc Soldier has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

SCIMITAR. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Armed with characteristic bent swords, Orc soldiers are a loud, undisciplined lot. Only a forceful chieftain with a cruel whip and a sharp blade can keep them in line.

TROLLS

Trolls were created by the Great Enemy in the Elder Days, to fight in many bitter wars. They were made strong and powerful, and appear monstrous and mishapen, as if left unfinished by their cruel maker. It is not known whether Trolls were generated in many forms, or if they evolved since their first appearance, but by the end of the Third Age several breeds of Trolls can be encountered.

CAVE-TROLLS

Cave-trolls are bred to fight and hunt deep under the earth. They have a dark skin with a greenish hue, covered with tight, robust scales, and appear shorter than other Trolls, as they are extremely hunched and often advance on all fours walking on their knuckles. Nobody knows if Cave-trolls can endure sunlight as they never leave their hunting grounds under mountains, hills and fells.

A huge arm and shoulder, with a dark skin of greenish scales, was thrust through the widening gap.

Great Cave-troll

Large giant

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 105 (10d10 + 50)

SPEED 40 ft.

SAVING THROWS Str +8, Con +8

SKILLS Intimidation +4

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

LANGUAGES -

CHALLENGE 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the Great Cave-troll takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Great Cave-troll makes two melee attacks, only one of which can be with its bite. It can use its Strike Fear instead of its bite.

BITE. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

SLAM. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 16). If the target is Small or smaller, it is also restrained until this grapple ends. While grappling the target, the Great Cave-troll has advantage on attack rolls against it and cannot use this attack against other targets.

STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of the Great Cave-troll's choice that is within 60 feet of the troll and aware of it gains 2 Shadow point from Dread, resisted by a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains 3 Shadow points instead of 2 and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the troll's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.

Feared by its own handlers, a Great Cave-troll is sent by Orcs to smash the defences and the morale of the foes they fear the most.



Cave-troll Slinker

Large giant

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

ARMOUR CLASS 15 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 34 (4d10 + 12)

SPEED 40 ft.

SAVING THROWS Str +5, Con +5

SKILLS Intimidation +2, Stealth +2

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9 (14 when relying on smell)

LANGUAGES -

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Cave-troll Slinker takes 7 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

KEEN SMELL. The Cave-troll Slinker has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Cave-troll Slinker makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its great club.

BITE. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage.

GREAT CLUB. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

This breed of Cave-troll is smaller than many of its kin, but still larger than most Orc-kind. Used to living in the depths of the earth, a Cave-troll Slinker often hunts alone and in the dark, relying on its acute sense of smell.

STONE-TROLLS

Stone-trolls are predators, living in small groups in filthy caves strewn with the remains of unwary travellers. They seem to be somewhat more intelligent than other Troll types, maybe thanks to their habit of prowling in the proximity of populated areas.

A very ancient breed, Stone-trolls owe their name to the fact that they turn to stone if exposed to the light of the sun.

...there were three fair-sized trolls at hand in a nasty mood, quite likely to try toasted Dwarf, or even pony, for a change...

Stone-troll Robber

Large giant

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 57 (6d10 + 24)

SPEED 40 ft.

SAVING THROWS Str +6, Con +6

SKILLS Intimidation +2

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 8

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Stone-troll Robber takes 7 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT CURSE. The Stone-troll Robber becomes petrified if it ends its turn in sunlight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Stone-troll Robber makes two melee attacks. It cannot use its great club if it is grappling a creature.

GREAT CLUB. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

SLAM. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14). If the target is Small or smaller, it is also restrained until this grapple ends. While grappling the target, the Stone-troll Robber has advantage on attack rolls against it and cannot use this attack against other targets.

A Stone-troll Robber's appearance, while always frightful, is made less monstrous by their tendency to wear simple clothes, cook their food and use tools like drinking jugs and barrels.



Stone-troll Chief

Large giant

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 76 (8d10 + 32)

SPEED 40 ft.

SAVING THROWS Str +8, Con +7

SKILLS Intimidation +5

DAMAGE RESISTANCES poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

CONDITION IMMUNITIES poisoned

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 8

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Stone-troll Chief takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT CURSE. The Stone-troll Chief becomes petrified if it ends its turn in sunlight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Stone-troll Chief makes two melee attacks. It cannot use its great club if it is grappling a creature.

GREAT CLUB. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

SLAM. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 16). If the target is Small or smaller, it is also restrained until this grapple ends. While grappling the target, the Stone-Troll Chief has advantage on attack rolls against it and cannot use this attack against other targets.

YELL OF TRIUMPH (Recharges after a Long Rest). Each creature of the Stone-Troll Chief's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it gains advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of the Stone-Troll Chief's next turn. The Stone-Troll Chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.

Small groups of Stone-Trolls may band together around a stronger member of their breed, to attack caravans of merchants or isolated farmhouses.



undead

Many horrors haunt the lonely lands of old Arnor, in the shadow of the darker woods and under the still waters of rotting marshes. Some say those shades are what remains of the ill-will of Evil Men and proud Elves, others that they are spirits out of Angmar, sent to infest barren hills and lonely barrows; others more blame dark sorcery and evil curses.

Whatever is their true nature, all Undead creatures are hard to defeat and provoke a sentiment of horror in those who encounter them.

wights

Wights are malevolent creatures inhabiting the cold flesh of the dead. They hunger for the life and warmth of those who are unlucky enough to stumble into a region troubled by their presence. They strike from the cover of thick mists, or under the cloak of night, seeking to subdue their prey with their spells. They are hard to kill, and even if their bodies are destroyed, the spirit that animates them is unharmed, and flees to find some other barren place to haunt.

Barrow-wights walked in the hollow places with a clink of rings on cold fingers, and gold chains in the wind.

Barrow-wight

Medium undead

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

ARMOUR CLASS 15 (ring-mail)

HIT POINTS 45 (6d8 + 18)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +5, Stealth +2

DAMAGE RESISTANCES cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

SENSES truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Black Speech, Westron

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP)

DEATHLESS. If damage reduces the Barrow-wight to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant, from a critical hit, or from a weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead. On a success, the Barrow-wight drops to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Barrow-wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Barrow-wight can use its Strike Fear or its Wight Song. It then makes two long sword attacks. It can use its icy touch in place of one long sword attack.

LONG SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

ICY TOUCH. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) necrotic damage on a failed save.

STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of the Barrow-wight's choice that is within 60 feet of the Barrow-wight and aware of it gains 1 Shadow point from Dread, resisted by a DC 13 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains 2 Shadow points instead of 1 and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the Barrow-wight's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.

WIGHT SONG. The Barrow-wight chants a low, chilling song to subdue a foe within 30 feet of it that can hear it with the dark enchantment of its voice. The target gains 2 Shadow points from Sorcery, resisted by a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target succumbs to a magical slumber, falling unconscious for 1 minute or until it takes damage, or someone uses an action to shake it awake. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target is also paralysed for the same duration and cannot be shaken awake. A creature that successfully saves against the effect is stunned until the end of the Barrow-wight's next turn unless it succeeds by 5 or more, and is immune to the Barrow-wight's song for the next 24 hours.

Sent to the hills of Tyrn Gorthad by the Witch-king of Angmar to plague his enemies in the wars against Arnor, a Barrow-wight appears as a tall, dark figure, with cold eyes lit by a pale light. It wears rings on its skeletal fingers, and gold chains around its neck. In its grip is an ancient, pitted blade.

WRAITHS

It is said that many who fought in the wars against Angmar fell victim to the Black Shadow, a terrible illness spread by the Nazgûl. Many did not perish, and were slowly consumed by it instead.

Wraiths are creatures that once were living beings but whose lives were consumed by sorcery or by another evil power. They are now undead, and live in both the living world and the wraith-world. Wraiths maintain a physical shape, albeit partially faded and thus resistant to harm.

"Begone, if you be not deathless! For living or dark undead, I will smite you, if you touch him."

Fell Wraith

Medium undead

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

ARMOUR CLASS 13

HIT POINTS 26 (4d8 + 8)

SPEED fly 30 ft. (hover)

SKILLS Stealth +7

DAMAGE VULNERABILITIES radiant

DAMAGE RESISTANCES bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from weapons that aren't enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES cold, necrotic, poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

SENSES truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

LANGUAGES Black Speech, Westron

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

DEATHLESS. If damage reduces the Fell Wraith to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant, from a critical hit, or from a weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead. On a success, the Fell Wraith drops to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT WEAKNESS. While in sunlight, the Fell Wraith has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Fell Wraith can use its Strike Fear. It then makes a melee attack.

SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of the Fell Wraith's choice that is within 60 feet of the Fell Wraith and aware of it gains 1 Shadow point from Dread, resisted by a DC 12 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains 2 Shadow points instead of 1 and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the Fell Wraith's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.

Fell wraiths appear as crooked wanderers, roaming among ancient ruins, wrapped in cloaks hiding their spectral features. Their flesh is almost transparent, and their eyes seem to glow like embers. If encountered in the hours of twilight, they may pass as Men, as they can speak, even if with an unusual hissing voice and strange accents. Fell Wraiths carry old weapons, relics from an age of strife that they employ to deadly effectiveness.

Marsh-dwellers

Medium undead

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

ARMOUR CLASS 12

HIT POINTS 22 (4d8 + 4)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +0, Stealth +4

DAMAGE RESISTANCES necrotic

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

DEATHLESS. If damage reduces the Marsh-dweller to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant, from a critical hit, or from a weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead. On a success, the Marsh-dweller drops to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Marsh-dweller has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

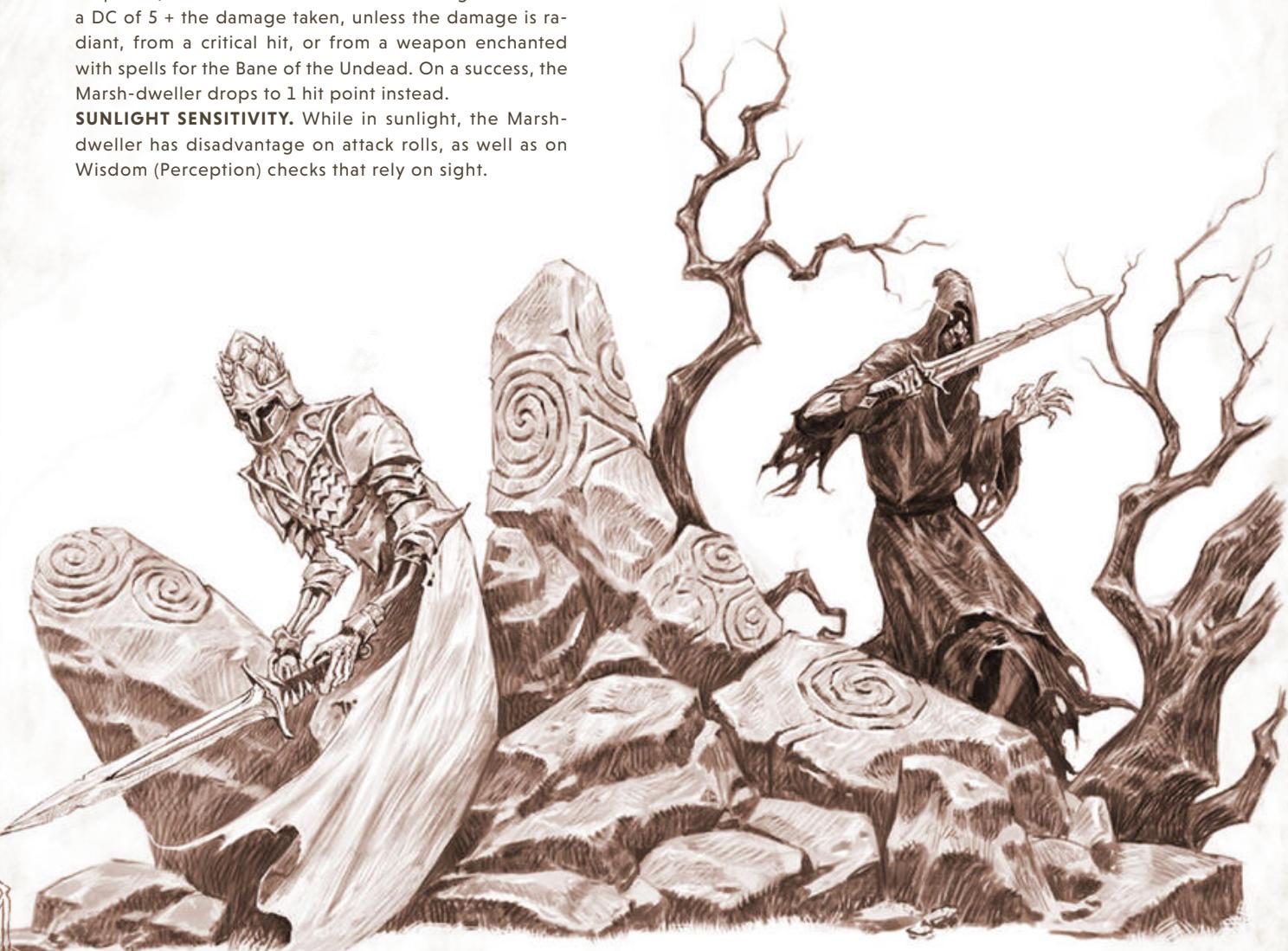
ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Marsh-dweller makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

BITE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

CLAWS. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 11) and the Marsh-dweller cannot use its claws on another target.

The Marsh-dwellers are shambling humanoid creatures with a clammy pale flesh, like that of a corpse left to rot in the water. A fell light in their small eyes suggests a wicked vitality and intent. They dwell among ruins where Men used to live, often by dark pools of stagnant water. They hide underground in small groups, ready to ambush unwary travellers and drag them into the cellars where they hoard their stolen gold.





WOLVES OF THE WILD

By the time of Bilbo's adventures, Wargs and Werewolves could be encountered at night in the eastern vales close to the Misty Mountains, where they prowl in search of prey. Years later, packs of Wolves have crossed the Hithaeglir, and can be found across Eriador.

All Wolves share a prodigious agility that prevents their enemies from keeping a distance in combat.

WARGS

Wargs are a particularly evil breed of Wolves, possessing wicked cunning and displaying malicious intent. They communicate using a dreadful language, foul to the ears of listeners not sharing their love for cruel and hateful deeds. Wargs generally look like lean and powerfully-built grey wolves, with eyes shining in the dark, but their size and appearance vary according to age and experience.

"How the wind howls!" he cried. "It is howling with wolf-voices. The Wargs have come west of the Mountains!"

Wild Wolf

Medium beast

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

ARMOUR CLASS 13 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 16 (3d8 + 3)

SPEED 50 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +0, Perception +5, Stealth +4

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15 (20 when relying on hearing or smell)

LANGUAGES Warg-speech

CHALLENGE 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

FEAR OF FIRE. If a Wild Wolf takes fire or radiant damage, it must succeed on a Charisma (Intimidation) check (DC 10 + damage taken) or be frightened until the end of its next turn.

KEEN HEARING AND SMELL. The Wild Wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

PACK TACTICS. The Wild Wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Wild Wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

BITE. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must make a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

The average Warg, a Wild Wolf is slightly larger than an ordinary wolf, and much more vicious. It can be encountered in a pack, but also as a solitary hunter or scout, ready to howl and alert other Wargs and evil creatures for miles around. Orcs learn how to ride upon Wild Wolves like men do on horses.



Wolf-chieftain

Large beast

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 37 (5d10 + 10)

SPEED 50 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +3, Perception +5, Stealth +4

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15 (20 when relying on hearing or smell)

LANGUAGES Warg-speech

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

FEAR OF FIRE. If a Wolf-chieftain takes fire or radiant damage, it must succeed on a Charisma (Intimidation) check (DC 10 + damage taken) or be frightened until the end of its next turn.

KEEN HEARING AND SMELL. The Wolf-chieftain has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

PACK TACTICS. The Wolf-chieftain has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Wolf-chieftain's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

BITE. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Greater in stature, cruelty and cunning than ordinary Wargs, a Wolf-chieftain is called upon by its lesser kin to deal with serious threats, like bands of travelling adventurers trespassing into Warg territory. A Wolf-chieftain is never encountered alone, but always surrounded by a pack of Wild Wolves.

WEREWOLVES

It is suspected by the most learned among the Wise that the cruellest packs of Wargs might be led by the foulest of creatures: trusted servants of the Dark Lord returned from the Ancient World to serve him once again. Devouring spirits trapped in wolf-form, they hate the very soil they walk upon, and desire only to defile and ruin in an attempt to quench the dreadful hunger that consumes their mortal bodies.

"Listen, Hound of Sauron!" he cried. "Gandalf is here. Fly, if you value your foul skin! I will shrivel you from tail to snout, if you come within this ring."



Hound of Sauron

Large beast

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

ARMOUR CLASS 15 (natural armour)

HIT POINTS 52 (7d10 + 14)

SPEED 50 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +4, Perception +5, Stealth +4

DAMAGE RESISTANCES bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed

SENSES darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15 (20 when relying on hearing or smell)

LANGUAGES Warg-speech

CHALLENGE 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

KEEN HEARING AND SMELL. The Hound of Sauron has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

PACK TACTICS. The Hound of Sauron has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Hound of Sauron's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Hound of Sauron makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

BITE. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

CLAWS. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14) and the Hound of Sauron cannot use its claws on another target.

Chosen for its ferocity and malicious intelligence, a Hound of Sauron is a minion of the Dark Lord, a servant sent on a precise errand, be it the gathering of forces for a coming war, the hunt for a specific individual, or spying on an area. Hidden behind the shape of an ordinary Warg, a Hound of Sauron conceals much greater powers.

NAMELESS THINGS

"There are older and fouler things than Orcs in the deep places of the world."

The darkest legends of the Dwarves whisper of ancient things living in the pools and lakes of remote dales, and lurking in dark tunnels dug before the Orcs came to the mountains. So little is known about these beings that no one ever gave them a name. They do not seem creations of the Great Enemy, Morgoth, for they are older than his lieutenant Sauron, and unknown to him. Their accursed breed might be akin to that of the monstrous Ungoliant, the mother of all Spiders, but they might be something else entirely. Whence they came no one can say — they are evil, but they do not heed the call of the Shadow.

What is certain about all of them is that they are always a horrible sight to behold, and that they are very dangerous. They are not just simple beasts, but have a primitive intelligence, linked to their survival instinct, certainly, but often betraying some deeper drive or craving. They all hate the light, and thus live in the darkest recesses of the earth, or in the depths of lakes or underground rivers, which is the reason why no one has ever seen one of them in their entirety. If they come to the surface, they do it for a short time, enough

to spread fear and despair, and then they return to their hidden lairs to rest undisturbed.

NAMELESS THINGS IN THE THIRD AGE

Nameless Things can be introduced to the game by a Loremaster looking for a formidable adversary for their Company of heroes. Differently from most opponents presented in this volume, they do not really belong to a specific breed, and thus must be designed by the Loremaster personally, using the guidelines offered below. The result will be a unique creature, complete with a level of backstory, to underline the long years that the creature has spent troubling the unhappy world.

CHILDREN OF DARKNESS

To create a Nameless Thing, the Loremaster either rolls dice on the following tables or directly chooses the entries they consider to be most fitting.

The tables numbered from 1 to 5 are used to create the identity of the thing, and give it a story.

- ◆ Table 01 is used to determine *how the Thing is referred to*
- ◆ Table 02 is used to generate its *general description*
- ◆ Table 03 is used to determine what the Player-heroes notice moments before the *Thing appears*, and then *what they see first*
- ◆ Table 04 is used to generate a *rumour about the Thing*
- ◆ Table 05 is used to discover *where the Thing is remembered*

Tables 06 to 08 are instead used to determine the characteristics of the Nameless Thing in gaming terms, in conjunction with the stat block presented overleaf.

- ◆ Table 06 determines all the usual stats required to use the Thing as an adversary, including its Armour Class, Hit Points, and physical ability scores. It also provides the recommended challenge rating of the Thing.
- ◆ Table 07 is used to determine the forms of attack that the Thing employs. There are suggestions for each type, but you'll want to use the previous entries as well to help fill in the details.
- ◆ All Nameless Things, being creatures of darkness, suffer badly the light of the sun, and so display the Sunlight Sensitivity trait. Each Thing may possess additional special traits, chosen from Table 08.

TABLE 01. THE THING IS REFERRED TO AS...

ROLL 1D12 THREE TIMES

1	The Bane	... in the Dark	...by Men
2	The Scourge		
3	The Horror	... of the Abyss	...by Elves
4	The Terror		
5	The Defiler	... in the Shadows	...by Dwarves
6	The Devourer		
7	The Stalker	... of the Pit	...by Orcs
8	The Hunter		
9	The Watcher	... in the Water	...by the Wise
10	The Crawler		
11	The Lurker	... of the Deep	...in ancient lore
12	The Creeper		

Nameless Thing

Huge or Gargantuan monstrosity (see Table 06)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
Table 06	Table 06	Table 06	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

ARMOUR CLASS See Table 06

HIT POINTS See Table 06

SPEED 20 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

SKILLS Stealth (proficiency bonus + Dexterity modifier)

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralysed, petrified, poisoned

SENSES blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 8

LANGUAGES -

CHALLENGE See Table 06

AMPHIBIOUS. The Nameless Thing can breathe air and water.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Nameless Thing has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Nameless Thing makes two attacks: one with its primary natural weapon and one with its secondary natural weapon.

TABLE 02. THE THING CAN BE DESCRIBED AS...

ROLL 1D12 TWICE

1	Bat-like	...with remorseless eyes
2	Spider-like	
3	Fish-like	...with great horns
4	Slug-like	
5	Worm-like	...with luminous skin
6	Centipede-like	
7	Insect-like	...with a huge head
8	Crustacean-like	
9	Octopus-like	...with a swollen body
10	Mole-like	
11	Toad-like	...yet greater
12	Troll-like	

TABLE 03. WHEN FIRST ENCOUNTERED...

BEFORE YOU SEE IT, YOU... (ROLL 1D12)

WHAT YOU SEE FIRST... (ROLL 1D12)

1	...notice a deadly silence	1	...is a great shadow, in the middle of which is a dark form
2	...hear a sinister hissing	2	...are its great claws
3	...hear a low growl	3	...are its eyes, glowing in the dark
4	...see the bones of its victims	4	...is that its body is flaccid and translucent, as if composed of gelatinous material
5	...feel your skin crawl	5	...is its gaping mouth, opening and closing as if gasping for air
6	...hear a deafening sound or scream	6	...is a large maw, with fangs eerily similar to human teeth
7	...notice its tracks	7	...is that swarms of insects or other vermin are crawling before it
8	...hear a terrifying scream	8	...is a long, sinuous tentacle, slithering towards you
9	...smell a hideous stench	9	...are its huge fangs, so big and long that it cannot close its mouth
10	...feel a violent gust of air	10	...are its wide, blind eyes
11	...hear a piping sound	11	...are many twisted horns of stained ivory
12	...feel a terrible cold	12	...is a vision of a beautiful creature, a phantom of the mind

TABLE 04. A RUMOUR ABOUT THE THING:

ROLL 1D12

1	When Sauron reoccupied Dol Guldur, he sought the allegiance of the many dark things living in Mirkwood. Some refused, and were imprisoned in the vast dungeons of the fortress. When the White Council attacked, one such creature was still kept there in chains, dying. Later, it managed to break free and vanish into the darkness, a sworn enemy of any living being.
2	When Annúminas was young, the Men of Arnor disturbed something monstrous that had been sleeping on the bottom of Lake Evendim for millennia. One summer night, the thing lashed out in fury at several ships anchored near the harbour, dragging them into the depths, along with their crews. Then, it disappeared again. For a while.
3	Forced long ago to serve Sauron, the thing fought at the battle of Dagorlad, spreading terror among the ranks of the Elves. Since no one had the courage to face it, Gil-Galad himself had to intervene. Surprised by the steadfastness of the High King and the splendour of Aiglos, his great spear, the thing chose to retreat. With the defeat of its master, the thing regained its free will and fled across Middle-earth.
4	After the Great Plague, the once wealthy Tharbad fell into decay, and its population diminished. One night, some among those who still lived in the city saw a large black shadow slowly approach the bridge, encompassing it. After a few moments, with a great roar, the bridge crumbled into a thousand pieces.
5	Ohtar, Isildur's squire who was among the few to save himself from the ambush of the Orcs, escaped the disaster of the Gladden Fields, taking with him the sword of Elendil. Some say he was chased for a long time by a monstrous creature, which moved only at night. The thing seemed able to 'smell' his movements.
6	Fornost didn't fall by normal means. The Witch-king of Angmar unleashed against the city a terrifying creature that owed him a debt of gratitude. It was this enemy of all light and life that disrupted the defences and brought them down. The debt paid, it returned to the darkness from which it had been called.
7	The Dwarves spoke of many horrors haunting the Grey Mountains. Emerging from who knows where, they crawled into the mines, killing and destroying. Eventually the Dwarves managed to drive them out, but one of them just wouldn't go away. It is said that it was Thorin I who defeated and drove it away, in a long duel that took place in the dark depths of the mine.
8	For a long time, the thing dwelt in a deep cave in the northernmost foothills of the Misty Mountains. The Hillmen worshipped it as a god, feeding and caring for it. Then war came to those territories. Armies of Elves and Men drove out the Hillmen, and the thing was deprived of its followers, developing an irrepressible hatred against the invaders.
9	Centuries ago, the thing dwelt in the darkest recesses of a valley on the east side of the Misty Mountains. One day, it came to a village of the Woodmen, when the hunters were away. When they returned, they were met by a gruesome scene: dismembered bodies, destroyed houses, a terrible smell that filled the air. No survivors.
10	Once every certain number of years, the thing returns to the Mountains of Mirkwood. When it does, hundreds of Spiders, large and small, swarm as if crazed to the south or west, overwhelming whatever they encounter in their path.
11	The thing is greedy. Not for treasure, but for bones. Animal ones are easy to get, and so are those of Orcs, Men, or Dwarves – this has made the thing hungry for the bones of Elves.
12	When Beleriand was broken, many creatures fled its ruin. Among them is a thing that is particularly large and cruel. Since that time, it has been moving east.

TABLE 05. WHERE THE THING IS REMEMBERED:

ROLL 1D12

1	Orcs hate the evil things that crawl in the dark perhaps even more than Men, Elves, and Dwarves. For they are more often the ones who end up as food to feed them. Being able to talk to an Orc could prove very useful, if the thing is nearby.
2	The Great Eagles see many things from above, but they don't speak of them unless they have a good reason. They do not tell, for example, of the monstrosity that after darkness haunted the banks of the Great River long ago, devouring lonely travellers. They spied it incessantly. One day, it was gone. The Eagles searched the surroundings for a long time, but to no avail.
3	There is only one Elven song that tells of the mournings caused by the thing, but being immensely sad, it is seldom sung in the Hall of Fire of Rivendell. Some say that if it's nighttime and you fear the thing is nearby, singing the whole song will keep it from getting closer.
4	A sentence carved onto the wall of a dark cave in the north near the Grey Waste, reads: "Here Belegorn son of Bergil of Dol Amroth banished the thing from the Abyss but died of its foul wounds. Glorfindel of the Elves retrieved his body to return to his family"
5	Among the ancient scrolls and books preserved in Minas Tirith, there is a brief chronicle of the times when the city itself was built. Despite numerous missing pieces of text, it is clear that it concerns the presence of an evil thing under Mount Mindolluin, horrible to look upon and very aggressive.
6	Few traces remain of the countless generations of Northmen who inhabited the southeastern edge of Mirkwood. Among them is a burial monument covered in soft moss. An inscription speaks of the death of Crinna, a village chief probably, caused by a terrible thing that came out of the woods at night and could only be kept at bay by lighting large fires.
7	Since many Hobbits are afraid of the water, there is a common test of courage among the youth of the Eastfarthing that involves reciting a nursery rhyme while sitting on the shore of the Brandywine, at night. The rhyme, handed down since the dawn of time, speaks of a thing made of darkness, which comes out of the water and devours those who look at their reflection in the moonlight.
8	The Rangers tell many tales of the horrible and mysterious things that prowl in Eriador. Most are made up, the Elves laughingly say, but one is definitely not. A creature that can suddenly appear at your side while you're sleeping. The Elves speak of it as well, but they are less concerned, since they never sleep...
9	Saruman loves secrets. And he is adept at keeping quiet about his well-stocked collection of texts concerning the presence of dark creatures roaming Middle-earth. He tried to classify them once, but soon desisted: too many, and too different from each other.
10	The Seeing Stone on the tower of Elostirion, in the Emyn Beraid, constantly looks westwards, beyond the sea. Only on very few occasions does it turn its gaze elsewhere, when a creature both ancient and evil approaches the Grey Havens. It follows this hideous thing in all its movements, and only when it passes out of sight does the Stone return to look towards the immortal lands.
11	In the private library of Elrond, in Rivendell, there is a parchment entirely dedicated to the creature, with many indications about its habits and the places where it might lurk.
12	Only the wisest of Middle-earth know anything about this dark creature as old as the earth. And they fear it. But by asking them directly, some good advice might be acquired. If you want to avoid it or flee from it of course, not on how to fight it, for no one would be so foolish...

TABLE 06. CHARACTERISTICS:

D20	SIZE	AC	HIT POINTS (HIT DICE)	ABILITY SCORES	CHALLENGE (PROFICIENCY BONUS)
15-20	Huge	13	105 (10d12 + 40)	Str 19 (+4) Dex 12 (+1) Con 18 (+4)	4 (+2)
10-14	Huge	14	138 (12d12 + 60)	Str 21 (+5) Dex 10 (+0) Con 20 (+4)	5 (+3)
6-9	Huge	15	175 (14d12 + 84)	Str 23 (+6) Dex 8 (-1) Con 22 (+6)	7 (+3)
4-5	Huge	16	216 (16d12 + 112)	Str 25 (+7) Dex 6 (-2) Con 24 (+7)	9 (+4)
3	Gargantuan	17	296 (16d20 + 128)	Str 27 (+8) Dex 4 (-3) Con 26 (+8)	13 (+5)
2	Gargantuan	18	351 (18d20 + 162)	Str 29 (+9) Dex 2 (-4) Con 28 (+9)	15 (+5)
1	Gargantuan	19	410 (20d20 + 200)	Str 30 (+10) Dex 1 (-5) Con 30 (+10)	17 (+6)

TABLE 07. ATTACK FORMS:

D3*	NATURAL WEAPON	DESCRIPTION
1	Slam, tail, or tentacle	<i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> proficiency bonus + Strength modifier to hit, reach 15 ft. (Huge) or 20 ft. (Gargantuan), one target. <i>Hit:</i> 3d4 (Huge) or 4d4 (Gargantuan) + Strength modifier bludgeoning damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained (escape DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus + its Strength modifier), and the Nameless Thing cannot use this attack on another target.
2	Beak, bite, or horns	<i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> proficiency bonus + Strength modifier to hit, reach 5 ft. (Huge) or 10 ft. (Gargantuan), one target. <i>Hit:</i> 3d8 (Huge) or 4d8 (Gargantuan) + Strength modifier piercing damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it must make a Strength saving throw (DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus + its Strength modifier) or be knocked prone.
3	Claws, talons, or tusks	<i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> proficiency bonus + Strength modifier to hit, reach 10 ft. (Huge) or 15 ft. (Gargantuan), one target. <i>Hit:</i> 3d6 (Huge) or 4d6 (Gargantuan) + Strength modifier slashing damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus + its Strength modifier), and the Nameless Thing cannot use this attack on another target.

*Roll twice on this table to determine a primary and secondary natural weapon, ignoring double results.

TABLE 08. SPECIAL TRAITS:

D20	SPECIAL TRAIT
1-2	HIDEOUS TOUGHNESS. If the Nameless Thing takes 14 damage (21 if it has Challenge 11-16, 28 if it has Challenge 17 or higher) or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.
3-4	FOUL REEK. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the Nameless Thing must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus + its Constitution modifier) or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the foul reek of the Nameless Thing for 1 hour.
5-6	HORRIBLE STRENGTH. The Nameless Thing's attacks deal one extra die of their damage when the Nameless Thing hits with them.
7-8	POISON. The Nameless Thing's primary attack inflicts 7 (3d4) poison damage (or 10 (4d4) damage if Gargantuan), and the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus + its Constitution modifier) or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target cannot regain hit points and has disadvantage on death saving throws while poisoned in this way.
9-10	MULTIATTACK. The Nameless Thing makes one additional attack either with its primary or with its secondary attack.
11-12	SNAKE-LIKE SPEED. The Nameless Thing can take the Dash or Disengage or as a bonus action on each of its turns.
13-14	STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of the Nameless Thing's choice that is within 120 feet of the Nameless Thing and aware of it gains a number of Shadow points equal to half the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus (rounded down) from Dread, resisted by a Charisma saving throw (DC 8 + the Nameless Thing's proficiency modifier + its Strength modifier). On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains a number of Shadow points equal to the Nameless Thing's proficiency bonus instead of half as much, and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the Nameless Thing's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.
15-16	DENIZEN OF THE DARK. While in dim light or darkness, the Nameless Thing has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, and can take the Hide action as a bonus action.
17-18	THICK HIDE. The Nameless Thing has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons.
19-20	REGENERATION. The Nameless Thing regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

*Roll a number of times on this table to determine the additional Special Traits of the Nameless Thing, ignoring double results. Every additional Special Traits, raise the challenge rating of the Nameless Thing by 1.

The Eye of Mordor

"The number must be few, since your hope is in speed and secrecy. Had I a host of Elves in armour of the Elder Days, it would avail little, save to arouse the power of Mordor."

As the Twilight of the Third Age darkens and the War of the Ring approaches, the will of the Dark Lord pushes all wicked things to evil ends. Since his revelation in the year 2951, Sauron is awake and his spies and servants are abroad once again.

Many unfriendly things having little love for Elves, Dwarves, and Men are stirred into action, and those who dare to leave their homes find themselves often plagued by an ill-fortune. Distant folks grow suspicious and estranged once again. The arm of the Enemy grows longer every day.

The possibility that a Company catches the Eye of the Enemy is expressed in gaming terms through the rules for Eye Awareness and its major and most terrible consequence — *the Hunt*.

- ◆ *Eye Awareness* is a rating measuring the level of attention that the Enemy reserves for the Company of Player-heroes. Its rating ebbs and flows based on their actions and wandering, and is kept track of from session to session.
- ◆ When the Eye Awareness of a Company reaches a certain limit, it triggers *the Hunt*, representing the way that the Enemy is able to focus the hostility of the world itself towards the group of Player-heroes.

OPTIONAL RULES?

The rules concerning the Eye of Mordor are particularly suitable to be introduced later in the game, when the Company has already been playing for a few years of game time. This is because they add a layer of complexity that not every group may find to their liking, and also because they are meant to represent how the Enemy reacts to the deeds of a successful group of adventurers.

EYE AWARENESS

In general terms, the Eye Awareness rating of a Company is based on the number of Player-heroes in the group, which Heroic Cultures are represented in it, and the intensity of their adventuring activity. A larger and more active group of Player-heroes, including Heroic Cultures recognised as enemies of Sauron such as Rangers or Elves, has more chances to raise suspicions and stir the minions of the Shadow into action than a smaller group composed solely of Hobbits.

To keep track of Eye Awareness it is best to use a number of counters or tokens (glass beads work fine) that should be placed on the gaming table, within reach of all players (about 20 tokens should suffice).

STARTING EYE AWARENESS SCORE

The starting Eye Awareness of a Company is calculated at the beginning of each Adventuring Phase. This value is determined by the composition of the group, as the Enemy keeps a closer watch on those individuals he hates, or fears, the most.

Check the table below to find out the individual score corresponding to each hero in the Company (nonplayer characters journeying with the Company are not normally considered part of it for the purposes of calculating Eye Awareness).

- ◆ To find the starting Eye Awareness of the Company, find its basic score using the table below (apply only the highest applicable entry), then add 1 for each Player-hero with a proficiency bonus of +4 or more.
- ◆ Additionally, the spies of the Enemy can be attracted by adventurers carrying powerful weapons: add 1 for each Famous Weapon and Armour carried by members of the Company.

PLAYER-HEROES	EYE AWARENESS
Only Hobbits or Men	0
One or more Dwarves	1
One or more Dúnedain or Elves	2
One or more High Elves	3

INCREASING EYE AWARENESS

A Company's Eye Awareness score increases in the course of an Adventuring Phase as a consequence of a number of circumstances, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

The Loremaster must keep track of these instances, and update the Eye Awareness score of the company accordingly.

ROLLING 1S: When under the Shadow, even the most successful exploits can be tainted by fear and self-doubt.

- ◆ Raise the Eye Awareness of the Company by 1 point whenever the d20 roll on an ability check is a 1, regardless of whether the roll resulted in a success or a failure.

If the Loremaster considers it appropriate, rolling a 1 under particularly dramatic or otherwise grave circumstances may increase the Eye Awareness by 2 points or more instead of 1. Conversely, if the company is currently in a place deemed by the Loremaster to be safe, a 1 might not provoke an increase at all.

SHADOW GAIN: A Player-hero tormented by grief and beset by the threat of corruption carries a burden that the Shadow is quick to recognise and exploit.

- ◆ Whenever a Player-hero gains 1 or more Shadow points, increase the Eye Awareness level by an equal amount.

USING MAGIC: Blatant displays of magical power further augment a Company's Eye Awareness score, in a measure that is proportional to the magical effect.

- ◆ Spells cast by a Wizard or another nonplayer character capable of such feats provoke the increase of the Eye Awareness score by 1 point in case of a *lesser effect*, 2 points for a *major spell*, and 3 points for a really *powerful spell* (see examples below).

Note that this does not apply to every use of magic — for example, tracing signs on a surface that will be visible only to friendly eyes, or embellishing pipe-smoke or fireworks with shapes and colours does not provoke the increase of Eye Awareness — unless they are done in the wrong place, or at the wrong time, of course!

Examples of display of magical power include:

- ◆ *Lesser effects* (+1 point): Illuminate a dark passage with a short blaze of magical light, open a locked door, play tricks with voices or sounds.
- ◆ *Major spells* (+2 points): Light a fire in a storm, block a door against a powerful adversary, make a tree burst into flames.
- ◆ *Powerful spells* (+3 points): Rain lightning down upon an advancing enemy, lend speed to a travelling company, make the waters of a river swell with rage.

RESETTING EYE AWARENESS

When an Adventuring Phase ends, the tally for Eye Awareness is suspended for the length of the Fellowship Phase. The Eye Awareness score of the Company is set again at its starting score at the beginning of the following Adventuring Phase.

The hunt

Using the rules explained above, the Eye Awareness level of a Company grows session after session during the Adventuring Phase as a consequence of the actions of the Player-heroes. To determine whether this puts the Company at the risk of being noticed by the Enemy, the Loremaster must compare the Eye Awareness rating to another value, called the Company's *Hunt threshold*.



HUNT THRESHOLD

At any given time, the Hunt threshold of the Company is determined by the region where the heroes are located, based on the Region table below. If the Player-heroes travel from one region to another, the Hunt threshold will change accordingly.

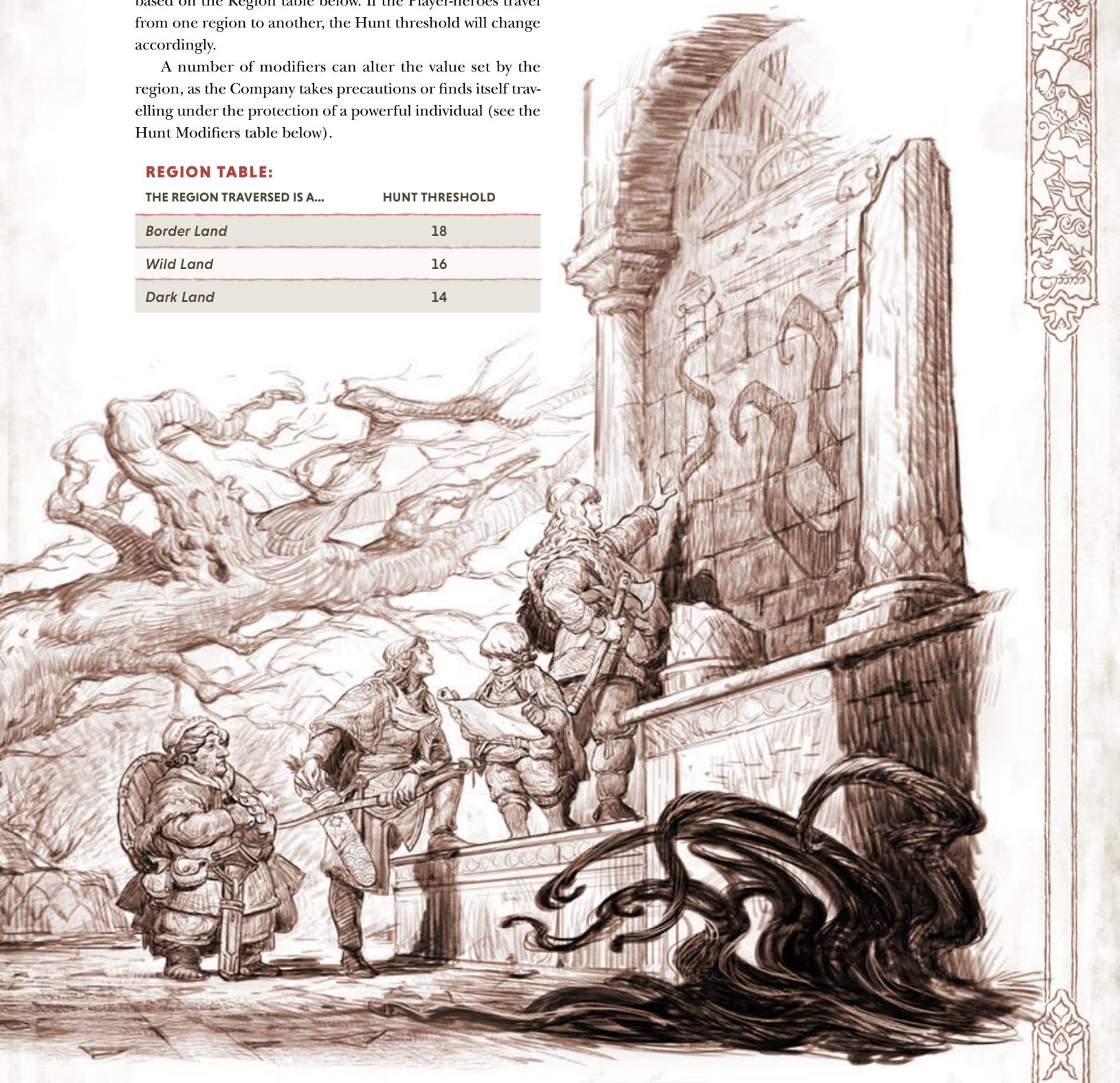
A number of modifiers can alter the value set by the region, as the Company takes precautions or finds itself travelling under the protection of a powerful individual (see the Hunt Modifiers table below).

REGION TABLE:

THE REGION TRAVESED IS A...

HUNT THRESHOLD

<i>Border Land</i>	18
<i>Wild Land</i>	16
<i>Dark Land</i>	14



HUNT MODIFIERS TABLE:

HUNT MODIFIER	DESCRIPTION
+4	The Company is protected by the blessing of a Wizard, or another powerful nonplayer character
+2	The Company is travelling under false names, treading paths that are seldom trodden, or otherwise taking actions to be discreet and unobtrusive
-2	The Player-heroes have gained great renown in the area thanks to some exceptional deed
-4	The Enemy is actively looking for the Player-heroes, or their mission or goal is known to them

The status of the Company as far as the perception of the Enemy is concerned is evaluated comparing the Hunt threshold to the Eye Awareness rating:

As long as the Eye Awareness rating of the Company is lower than the Hunt threshold, the Player-heroes are considered to be *hidden*.

In the eyes of the Enemy the adventurers are just a group of stray wanderers, and their actions are of small concern.

Should the Eye Awareness match or exceed the Hunt threshold, the group would be *revealed* to the Eye, and something bad will happen as a consequence.

REVEALING THE COMPANY

A Company is revealed to the Enemy when the Eye Awareness score of the company matches or exceeds the current Hunt threshold. When this happens, the Loremaster will introduce a *Revelation episode*, a dangerous event reflecting the increased hostility of the game world towards the members of the Company.

The source of this hostility may differ wildly from one Revelation episode to another: it may be the result of the direct actions of servants of the Enemy aimed to thwart the Company's plans, an accident caused by the ill-will of another unfriendly power, or simply an unusual and sinister stroke of

bad luck. There are many strange and dark powers in Middle-earth, and not all of them are necessarily in league with the Dark Lord...

As soon as the Loremaster has played out a Revelation episode, the Company is considered to be hidden again, and the Eye Awareness level of the company is set back to its starting level.

From that moment on, the tally for Eye Awareness is resumed normally; and thus may lead to another Revelation episode should the score reach the Hunt threshold once again, and so on, until the end of the Adventuring Phase.

REVELATION EPISODES

To determine the precise nature and consequences of a Revelation episode, the Loremaster should weigh the current circumstances of the Company and choose a course of events that will change the heroes' predicament for the worst. If the Player-heroes were already heading towards a difficult situation, now they will face one of their worst moments instead.

Regardless of the details, whatever happens to the Company must spring naturally out of the ongoing flow of events experienced during a session; no Orcs appearing out of nowhere to attack while the Player-heroes are sleeping at Bag End!

Additionally, the nature of a Revelation episode should always suggest that there are strange forces at work; a distinctive aura that smells of something dark and foul; a malicious misfortune, the unusual behaviour of Men or beasts, the faint trace of sorcery.

Generally, the current situation should provide the Loremaster with enough suggestions upon which to improvise. If this is not the case, then the resolution of a Revelation episode should be held off, until an appropriate situation appears (possibly even waiting for the following session of play).

A typical Revelation episode may include a hero losing the other companions during a journey or while fleeing, the group running out of food as provisions are found to be unexpectedly spoilt, a decision taken by heroes proving to be the worst possible choice, an individual the Company was waiting for failing to show up at a crucial moment, and so on.



EXAMPLES OF REVELATION EPISODES

"Is it the will of the Dark Tower that steers us? All my choices have proved ill."

Here follow several examples of how the Loremaster may worsen the situation of a revealed Company. A level of customisation is required, to adapt all suggestions to the actual situation of play.

1. *Out of the Frying Pan...* All actions concerning the resolution of a chosen situation inexplicably prove harder – all ability checks have disadvantage. For example, all rolls made for the length of a journey's leg, or for the entire next encounter.
2. *Láthspell.* The arrival of the Company at a location is interpreted as ill-news, and the heroes are given a colder welcome than expected: the goal of a Council as chosen by the Company is made more difficult – a reasonable request becomes bold, and a bold one becomes outrageous, as suspicions are roused and old prejudices flare up.
3. *Do not tempt me!* A Player-hero gains 3 points of Shadow from Greed. The nature of the challenge may be overt or subtle, and should be based on the character's Shadow Path.
4. *Lies and Threats.* An ally becomes an enemy, through coercion, betrayal, or even sorcery. The individual is

now bent on doing harm to the Player-heroes, and either acts directly or schemes in the dark.

5. *A Weariness of the Heart.* An unnatural sense of tiredness has gotten hold of the Company. Whether it is due to some subtle sorcery or else it is not clear, but all Player-heroes suffer one level of exhaustion until the Loremaster deems it appropriate to the circumstances.
6. *A Will That Lends Speed.* An enemy that the Company was chasing or holding prisoner escapes, as if helped or hidden by an unseen hand, or pursuers that were hunting the Company catch up with them unexpectedly.
7. *Guided by Sinister Purpose.* A potential threat the Company had a chance to avoid is now waiting for them. An Orc patrol they could try to ambush now automatically spots them; a Troll they could sneak past sniffs them out at the worst possible moment; an unnamed terror that was sleeping in the deep places of the world is now aware of their passage.
8. *Reckless Hate.* One enemy type that will be faced in combat next gains the special trait Reckless Hate.
9. *Deadly Strife.* One enemy type that will be faced in combat next gains the special trait Aggressive..
10. *We Come to Kill.* One enemy type that will be faced in combat next gains the special trait Horrible Strength.





CHAPTER 9

„The World“

*... he kept in a drawer at Bag End the old cloak and hood
that he had worn on his travels; and the ring,
secured by a fine chain, remained in his pocket.*



This chapter contains background material describing the default setting for *The Lord of the Rings Role-playing* — the region of Eriador as it was towards the end of the Third Age. It introduces key locations, personalities and events, to be used mainly by the Lormaster to set up a great number of gaming sessions that will be both entertaining and faithful to the source material.

The best way to use the information presented here is to adopt a starting location (for example, the town of Bree, or the Shire), and have the heroes explore Eriador from there.

As anticipated in the Introduction to this volume, the game is set ‘officially’ in the year 2965 of the Third Age — Bilbo Baggins’ great adventure was accomplished less than 25 years

before, and war is brewing in distant lands. There is again a Dark Lord in Mordor, and his chief lieutenants, the Ring-wraiths, have reclaimed his fortress in the depths of Mirkwood, to the east.

In the quiet west, in Eriador, not much is heard of this turmoil. Dwarves are encountered travelling on the great East Road to and from the Mountains in greater numbers, carrying strange and rich wares, a testimony of their newfound wealth and that of the Men of Dale; Elves wandering out of their own lands beyond the Tower Hills can sometimes be met wandering the woods in spring and autumn.

But the long peace that seems to reign in the pleasant land of the Hobbits can be deceitful — there are dark things moving again in the world outside, and they are guided by an evil will.

ERIADOR

In the westlands of Eriador... the Hobbits found both Men and Elves. Indeed, a remnant still dwelt there of the Dínedain, the kings of Men that came over the Sea out of Westernesse...

Some say that ‘Eriador’ means “the lonely land” in the tongue of the Grey-Elves, and a more apt name is unlikely to be found. Though it was once the domain of ancient kings, as the ages passed and the world darkened, it became a mere shadow of its former self. Only ruins of crumbling white stone, forgotten by Men, are left, the domain of terrible creatures who serve dark masters.

Small pockets of civilization endure, settlements inhabited by people more concerned with their own affairs than with any glories of the past, and who feel that what lies more than a few miles beyond their own front door is none of their business. But this lack of interest, or even awareness, makes what stalks the ruined realms of Eriador even more dangerous. If they only knew what lurks beyond their isolated settlements, they would keep their doors locked at night and

would not dare to stray too far beyond the borders of their towns and hamlets.

For all its danger, there is a melancholy and a beauty to even the most desolate and blasted parts of Eriador. Old songs are remembered, even if most ignore the origin of these lays, nor know their meanings. Perhaps those who wander the Lone-lands will live to see a day when hope and prosperity will take root in this region once again.

THE SHIRE

The Shire, the land of the Hobbits, is found at the heart of Eriador, bordered by the Brandywine River and the Old Forest to the east, and by the hilly range of the Far Downs to the west. It is a peculiar land, sheltered from the wild regions

NORTH-WESTERN MIDDLE-EARTH

The region where the Free Peoples and their foes dwell at the end of the Third Age is dominated by the great range of the Misty Mountains. To the west of its snow-capped peaks lies Eriador, where once the North-kingdom of the Men of the West rose. To the east lies wild Rhovanion, where the dark forest of Mirkwood lies. Beyond the forest to the northeast is the Long Lake and the Lonely Mountain, where a great Dragon used to rule. To the far south open the green plains of Rohan, bordered by the White Mountains. Further east is the South-kingdom of Gondor, the Realm of Stone, whose Tower of Guard faces the land of Mordor, where the shadows lie.



surrounding it by watchful guardians, and inhabited by a folk that is almost never encountered anywhere else. For very few Hobbits ever leave their land to travel far. They prefer to keep to themselves, enjoying their green land and comfortable traditions. Dwarven traders often pass through the Shire, but never stop for more than what is required to cross it.

The existence of Hobbits has been hitherto overlooked by most folks outside Eriador, and their involvement in the great events of the age has been so far of little or no consequence — but there is still time for them to play a part that neither the Enemy nor the Wise have foreseen.

LAKE EVENDIM

Nestled against the base of the Hills of Evendim is the great lake for which those rolling lands are named. Its white, sandy shores have seen many generations of Men and Dúnedain live and prosper, thanks to the trade that once sailed along the waters of the Brandywine river, from here to the distant





sea. But that age has passed, and the buildings that once rose along the banks of the lake have been abandoned so long ago that often not even a memory remains. Today, countless broken stones have become little more than a refuge for wild beasts. Sometimes, they serve as lairs for even worse things, creatures that come down from the lone-lands to the north in search of prey.

The waters of the lake are uncommonly still in summer, in spite of the wind sweeping down from the hills, as if those draughts were unwilling to disturb their peace. In winter, the surface often freezes solid for months, blanketing the entire lake in a white canopy. Fog rolls in from the east, settling across the waters and onto the shores in both late summer and winter, absorbing all sound. This mist rapidly burns off under the summer sun, but lingers to envelop everything it touches once the darker, colder seasons have taken hold.

Rumours persist that small islands lay unexplored in the middle of Lake Evendim, perhaps hiding forgotten treasures, heirlooms left behind when the great city of Annúminas was abandoned, more than two thousand years ago. Stories tell that the fog of the lake is summoned by some ancient magic, cast by the last High Men to keep these artefacts from falling into the hands of the Enemy.

THE BRANDYWINE RIVER

The Baranduin river flows south out of Lake Evendim and across the North Moors before it descends south dividing the Eastfarthing of the Shire from Buckland and the Old Forest. Then, it flows in a southwesterly course, serving as the northern border of the wide region known as Minhiriath, south of the Shire. Finally, it empties into the sea near the woodland cape of Eryn Vorn. The Brandywine has two known crossings: The Brandywine Bridge, where the East Road leaves the Shire, and Sarn Ford, far to the south, which is seldom used.



ANNÚMINAS

The great city of Annúminas has lain in ruins for more than two thousand years. Once the capital of the North Kingdom of the Men of the West, it was abandoned when the Dúnedain moved their capital to the east, to Fornost Erain. The broken stonework of the ruined city cast its long shadows on the shores of Lake Evendim for many centuries, like the bones of an immense dead beast. About fifty years ago, the waters of Lake Evendim rose dramatically, as a consequence of the terrible floods following the Fell Winter, changing the shoreline and submerging much of what remained of the once glorious city. Now, not even brigands and tomb-robbers visit Annúminas, for little of its ancient greatness is left to be remembered.

The Rangers of the North sometimes come here, and they speak of the city of Annúminas in a voice that mingles both sorrow and hope. According to their songs and rhymes, here were once housed great works of art and magnificent artefacts that came from the lands beyond the sea. Though the greatest of these were lost to the tides of time or are now held in secret by the lords of the Free People, many believe that a great number of treasures remain hidden, waiting to be discovered by explorers doughty enough to brave the waters that now claim the ruins.

THE WESTERN TOWER: The rising waters of Lake Nenuial have claimed much of what was left of Annúminas. Today, only the tallest and unbroken towers and walls emerge from

the surface, and only about once a year, when the depth of the lake diminishes for a while in winter. But there's one tower that is tall enough to rise above the surface all-year round. Called the Western Tower by the Rangers of the North, it stood at the end of a pier, extending above the surface of the lake, looking west. Today, the pier is broken and submerged, and the tower can only be reached by boat, or by walking on the surface of the lake when it freezes solid, in the coldest winters.

Some say that if one climbs the tower to look upon the shores of Lake Evendim on starry, moonless nights, they can hear a song drifting over its still waters, a dirge both mournful and beautiful. Then, strange, ghostly ships with high sails appear at the edge of vision, drawing ever closer to the tower, but never reaching it. Then, they fade and vanish on the mist-swept surface of Lake Evendim.

THE HILLS OF EVENDIM

The Hills of Evendim give the nearby lake its Sindarin name — Lake Nenuial, “the Lake of Twilight”. This is maybe because the shadows of the hills lengthen over its waters, making them look dull and flat, except on starry nights, when the surface reflects the beautiful sky above. Once, the hills were the home of a folk that built upon their slopes even



THE FORGOTTEN HAMLET

Eskerdale is an isolated village of Men, hidden in a deep valley on the northeastern slopes of the Hills of Evendim. Wanting little to do with other denizens of Eriador or the Shire to the south, its inhabitants make their homes in small stone houses by a swift running stream, and survive by hunting among the hills and fishing from the waters of the Lake. They are not accounted among the Rangers of the North, but they sometimes have dealings with them. More than twenty years ago, a chieftain by the name of Oswin rose to prominence in Eskerdale. A young and energetic man at the time, he resented the interference of the Rangers in the life of his community. As a result, the village grew more and more withdrawn, and its already small population began to dwindle.

In recent times, the few Rangers that are still welcome in Eskerdale have noticed a sullen look on the faces of the locals, and it is feared that they may have fallen prey to some curse, or that their isolation has finally broken their spirit.

Finding Eskerdale is not easy, even for those who are told of its existence or receive hints of its location. Finding it requires a DC 20 Wisdom ability check, using Explore, Hunting, or Perception. Those who find the hidden community need to demonstrate that they are not a threat, for example with a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, though Rangers have disadvantage on this roll. Consulting with the people of Eskerdale allows a hero to gain advantage on the next Wisdom (Explore), Wisdom (Hunting), and Wisdom (Travel) checks associated with the region of Evendim.

THE TWILIGHT SHIPS

Player-heroes who partake in the vision of the ghost ships sailing on Lake Evendim may react differently::

- ◆ Player-heroes who are miserable must exchange a point of Shadow for a Shadow Scar. Those who are not miserable gain inspiration instead.

before the Men of the West settled there, and many stones still bear their markings. These days, they have become a wild and dangerous place, threatened by wandering Trolls and other monsters. They come down from their lairs in the northern lone-lands, to prowl along the shores of the lake in hopes of catching a wayward traveller or foolish treasure hunter. They make sport of anyone unlucky enough to fall under their gaze, and there are even rumours that a few of their strange kind sometimes slip into the south along the Shire's North Moors.

ARIN AND BEINION OF EVENDIM: Unlike most Rangers of the North, Arin and Beinion do not often wander across Eriador. Instead, they remain close to Lake Evendim and its surroundings, where they maintain a close watch. A wife and her husband, their self-appointed tasks include warding off all evil creatures threatening to defile the ruins of Annúminas, and guiding wayward travellers back to safer lands. Beinion is a grim and short-spoken man, and Arin is equally silent, unless she's singing — when she does, her voice is clear and can be mistaken for that of a fair Elf-maiden. The two see themselves as the appointed keepers of these lands, and they feel honour-bound by this duty.

Arin and Beinion live together in a small stone house that was once little more than a hovel on the edge of Annúminas. Over time, they have made this ruin into a warm and cosy home, in spite of all the desolation around them. Recently, Beinion has grown concerned with his wife's well being, as she is now with child, making her life as a Ranger an even more dangerous business. Beinion secretly wishes Arin would agree to abandon their obligation as guardians, and retire to live the simple life of the Bree-folk. For the moment, she refuses to be left home. Maybe, they might agree to leave their post if someone took their place.

Arin and Beinion

Medium humanoid (Dúnadan)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

OCCUPATION Rangers

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Faithful, Fair-spoken (Arin), True-hearted (Beinion)

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (leather corslet)

HIT POINTS 52 (8d8+16)

SPEED 35 ft.

SAVING THROWS Con +4, Cha +3

SKILLS Athletics +5, Explore +6, Hunting +6, Intimidation +1, Perception +6, Stealth +4, Travel +6

SENSES passive Perception 16

LANGUAGES Sindarin, Westron

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

STRENGTH OF WILL. Arin and Beinion have advantage on saving throws against being frightened, and they gain a bonus to these saving throws equal to their Wisdom modifier (included in the stat block).

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. Arin and Beinion make two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

LONG SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

REACTIONS

PARRY. Arin and Beinion add 2 to their AC against one melee attack that would hit them. To do so, they must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

THE BREE-LAND

If any credit is to be given to the tales recounted in Bree, there has always been a settlement here, on the Road, since the Elder Days. What is sure is that the simple Bree-folk — a colourful community of Men and Hobbits, have endured the fall of kingdoms, fell winters, and terrible invasions from Orcs and Evil Men from the north.

Today, the Bree-folk, Big and Little, look out from behind their hedge wall and its great encircling ditch to see a landscape of rolling fields and stone-capped hills that are riddled

with traces of a past time of glory. But they are not deceived — they know that there are ancient riddles that are best left to others to answer, and instead, they focus their efforts on the responsibilities of daily life.

BREE

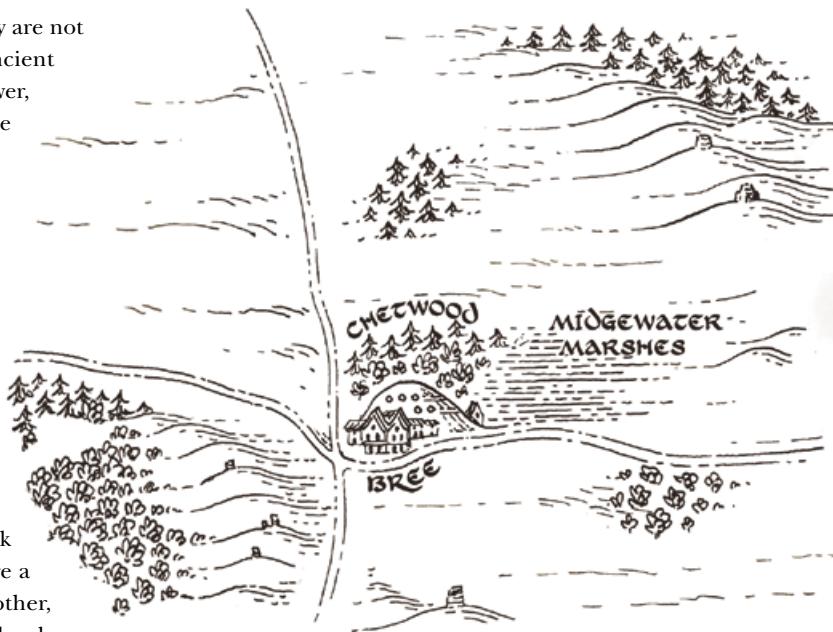
Bree is the chief village of the Bree-land. Some call it a town, especially when comparing it to its lesser cousins, the hamlets of Archet, Staddle, and Combe. Travellers who approach Bree journeying upon the great East Road see plumes of chimney-smoke first, and then a thick green hedge, flanked by a deep dike. The road coming from the west crosses over the dike on a causeway, leading to a break in that thorny row of lush greenery, where a heavy gate of wood and iron stands. Another, similar gate pierces the hedge to the south, where the road leaves the village on its way east.

The gates of Bree are a welcome sight to most travellers, and sit open every day from dawn until dusk, regardless of the season or the weather. Each gate is guarded by a gatekeeper at all times, less of a watchman and more of an observer of the comings and goings of those who enter the town upon the hill. Most visitors are given a courteous welcome, unless the hour is late — after nightfall, it is the duty of the gatekeepers to ask questions of those who wish to pass the gates when they are closed.

A smaller gate can be found opening near the end of the northern arm of the great hedge, where it turns eastward towards the hill once again. It is seldom used, if ever, as it is crossed by a path leading to the Greenway, the North Road used only by Rangers and other wanderers of ill-repute.

Most Bree-folk, whether Big or Little, work as crafters or labourers, and build their simple homes using wood harvested from the Chetwood and stone mined from the quarry. The Bree folk also collect stones from old ruins, at least enough to keep the town in repair.

The Big Folk live mainly in stone houses built on the lower hillside, mostly above the road, their windows looking west. The Little Folk dwell in the higher slopes of the hill instead, the part of Bree the Big Folk still refer to as the ‘new town’, despite it being probably more than a thousand years old. But these differences aside, the people of Bree get along in a remarkably peaceable way, and are surprisingly welcoming to visitors, being ever curious about tales from beyond the gates of their town.



THE BIG AND THE LITTLE

There are many families of Hobbits spread among the villages of the Bree-land, especially in Staddle. These Bree-hobbits are of course closely related to their neighbours in the Shire — indeed, to most Big Folk, it is impossible to tell the difference (unless one makes the mistake of asking one of the Hobbits, in which case get comfortable — you are in for a long talk about family trees, obscure legal issues, and exceedingly minute cultural differences).

If you desire to create a Bree-hobbit, use all the rules concerning the Hobbits found on page 37, with the following exceptions:

- ♦ Bree-hobbits have proficiency in Insight instead of Stealth.
- ♦ They must pick their cultural virtues from the following list: *Bree-pony, Desperate Courage, Small Folk, Strange as News from Bree, The Art of Smoking, Tough as Old Tree Roots.*

Bree-hobbits share many family names with the local Big Folk (Mugworts, for example), but most have Shire-sounding names, such as Banks, Brockhouse, Longhole, Sandheaver, Tunnely, and Underhill.

A Reeve holds a nominal position of leadership over the community, but they are rarely called upon to settle disputes, as most folk are able to keep any disagreements civil and private. Equally underutilised, but present, are the Bree-wardens, men and women ostensibly tasked with keeping the peace and maintaining law and order. In practice, their duties consist primarily of idly wandering the streets to engage in pleasantries or gossip along with the occasional request to manage the large crowds that gather upon the Green on market day.

THE PRANCING PONY: The great East Road cuts through the heart of Bree, and at the centre of the town stands the inn of *The Prancing Pony*. Known locally just as *The Pony*, it has stood for as long as anyone in Bree can recall. Rising above the cobblestones of the East Road and looking out upon the Green, it is always a welcome sight to both locals and weary travellers. Though its most common patrons are Bree locals, it sees its fair share of Dwarven travellers moving between Dale, the Lonely Mountain and the Iron Hills in the east and the Blue Mountains in the west, or the occasional Hobbit of the Shire. The proprietor even claims his grandfather once hosted an Elf that was travelling west to the Great Sea.

On any given night, *The Prancing Pony* is filled with the sound of raucous laughter and the scent of fine food and fresh beer — all of it under a cloud of aromatic pipe smoke. Even during the day, a few patrons can be found either enjoying a brief reprieve from their daily work or exchanging idle gossip. Day or night, regardless of the season, a crackling fire is set in the hearth and a soothing golden glow can be seen in its frosted windows. All who step under the lamp and signboard (showing a fat white pony rearing up and ‘The Prancing Pony’ in white letters) and enter *The Pony* are welcome, by order of the innkeeper, Barnabas Butterbur (see page 124). Even the ill-favoured Rangers are given a table when they patronise his establishment, though always one in the back and away from the regular customers.

Those looking for lodging will find simple, comfortable rooms with warm feather beds. Barnabas even makes sure to keep a few smaller rooms on the ground floor of the inn to ensure the comfort of his Hobbit patrons. Though not as grand as an Elf hall or as cosy as a Hobbit smial, travellers will be hard pressed to find better accommodations west of the Last Bridge. Guests can even pay a few extra silver pennies for a hot bath to wash away the dirt of the road, and are assured the comfort of their loyal mounts, who are well-stabled in the Pony’s sheltered courtyard. Simple but hearty food fills the belly of all who visit, and partners perfectly with Barnabas’s Best, an ale brewed on site and served fresh.

EAST ROW: The last side street branching out of the main road going towards the south gate is called the East Row. Its houses make up what is probably the youngest district in the town of Bree, even if it may seem to outsiders to be the most ancient. Until recent decades, it was little more than grazing lands for caravan horses, but when refugees came north out of Tharbad, they settled the open fields as their own land with the blessing of the Reeve of Bree. Bringing with them the grim determination of those who grew up in the farthest corners of Eriador, these refugees taught their children to survive and endure with little aid from others. This has led to East Row being a bit more insular and less welcoming than the neighbourhoods of other Bree-folk, who have called the town home for hundreds of years. As a further reflection of their unwillingness to abandon their roots, the people of East Row brought with them some of the very stones of their abandoned city to serve as the foundation of their new domain. Statues of ancient kings, though worn and cracked, stand next to traditional Bree homesteads, and icons of seafaring people mingle with the more rustic local imagery.



AN EVENING AT THE PRANCING PONY

Rarely is there a quiet night at *The Pony*. When the Player-heroes spend an evening at the inn, the Loremaster can roll on the following table to determine who or what they encounter while sampling a bit of ale and taking a break from the troubles of the road.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Skulking Southerner	A sallow-faced southerner is lingering about the shadows of the common room, asking rude questions and bullying locals for the latest news in Bree-land.
2	Ill-Favoured Ranger	One of the Rangers of the North is quietly minding their own business in a corner of the inn's common room. Several locals are leering or making cross remarks, but no one knows why they are here.
3	Visitors from Buckland	A small company of Hobbits from Buckland is spending an evening at <i>The Pony</i> , meeting with distant cousins, and hoping to trade for some of the local crop of pipe-weed.
4	Dwarf Travellers	Dwarves, travelling to the land of their kin along the great East-West Road are sampling some of Barnabas's Best, and have raised a raucous song this evening.
5	Greenway Refugees	A small family of homesteaders who once lived along the Greenway have come to the <i>Pony</i> in search of refuge. They are cautious, but anyone who asks politely can learn from them that their farm was burnt and sacked last night.
6	Fitch Talltree	The Forester of Archet has come to <i>The Pony</i> this evening looking for stout warriors to join him in a hunt for a new threat prowling the Chetwood. He is having little luck in his efforts.
7	Impending Brawl	John Ferny is having a pint in the common room and several other patrons are cross with him. They are engaged in a loud argument and it seems like things are about to come to blows.
8	Rousing Ballad	The common room is filled with patrons roaring out bolstering ballads of heroes and hearthfires! Characters who join in and succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check gain inspiration.
9	Showing Some Coin	A wealthy merchant is passing through Bree and has bought a round of drinks for everyone in attendance this evening. Unfortunately, some less than savoury drinkers seem to have a keen eye on his money purse.
10	Ponies Loose at <i>The Pony</i> !	The <i>Pony</i> 's ostler comes running into the common room, yelling that the horses have gotten loose from the inn's stables! Was this an accident or an attempted theft?
11	Bragging Treasure Hunters	A group of glorified tomb robbers have come to spend ill-gotten riches they claim to have retrieved from a tomb in the Barrow-downs. The coins are ancient and marked in a strange script.
12	The Grey Pilgrim	Gandalf himself is visiting the <i>Pony</i> this evening and his presence alone has the whole house astir! Perhaps he is on a secret errand of his own, or searching for the Player-heroes to gain their aid against some hidden threat.

FERNY'S HOUSE

One of the less hospitable-looking houses in East Row belongs to the sallow-faced and cross-tempered horse trader and ostler, John Ferny. In previous generations, the Ferny family name was associated with the trade of some of the finest horses in Eriador — today, it has become synonymous with deception. The quality steeds and workhorses traded by his father and grandfather have given way to wretched and ill-treated nags that he sells at inflated prices. The good will of his family name has withered to worthlessness, and to maintain profits, John has even taken to trading with foreign folk. More than once, locals have seen him taking silver pennies from foreigners and southerners, and John has little more than snide remarks for any who question his business practices. The only matter upon which the townsfolk seem to agree with the foul ostler is his constant suspicion of the Rangers whenever they make their way into Bree.

John Ferny

Medium humanoid (Man of Bree)

INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)
OCCUPATION Horse-trader, Ostler		
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Cunning, Secretive		
SKILLS Deception +5, Insight +2, Perception +2		
SENSES passive Perception 12		
LANGUAGES Westron		

THE GREEN: The heart of Bree, the Green is a wide grassy field at the centre of the town on the western side of the East Road, across from the Prancing Pony. This lush lawn is framed on one side by the administrative buildings of Bree: The Counting-House, the Armoury, and the Reeve's Hall. Except for on market days, the Green acts as little more than a playing field for local children. Here, they can often be found playing blind man's buff, wrestling, or play-acting at being knights of old.

During festivals and on market days, the Green is filled with tents, stalls, and carts, as Bree-land traders sell their goods alongside rare visitors from the tiny communities of southern Eriador, and even the occasional Dwarf from the Blue Mountains. As much a social gathering as an event for commerce, it is not uncommon to see barrels of Barnabas's Best setup beside long wooden tables, to help keep the thirst of the day at bay. Bree-wardens serve to keep the peace during these gatherings, though they rarely have to do more than settle a

contentious negotiation or prevent a drunken brawl started by a reveller who's had one too many.

The day-to-day administration of Bree is carried out from the Reeve's House, which serves as both the town court-house and home to its senior official. The current Reeve is Cole Pickthorn, who, prior to his election, served for over a decade under the previous Reeve and has adopted many of his principles and policies. The Wardens' Armoury, more commonly known as simply the Armoury, is a squat stone building that is officially the headquarters of the Bree-wardens, but is little more than a storehouse for rarely used spears, shields, and helms, kept ready should the town ever face a threat from the wilds outside.

Larger than either of these buildings is the Counting-House. In ancient days, it was manned by a representative of the King, who collected taxes in his name and saw to the proper allocation of funds to the town. Sitting upon stone pillars and rising as tall as even the Prancing Pony, its size hints at its noble past. Now it serves as little more than a drafty hall for brief and inconsequential meetings of members of the town council, who are concerned with little more than small town politics and ensuring their own re-election.

LOWER HILLSIDE: The lower slopes of Bree-hill are dotted with stone houses, the living quarters of many of Bree's craftsmen. Blacksmiths, tailors, leatherworkers, and many other skilled tradesmen practice their crafts on the ground floor of their homes, while living on the first or even second storey. It is a tradition among many of the local residents to work in tandem alongside families of Hobbits that typically live and work in the basements of the Big Folk's stone homes. For example, one farmer by the name of John Andrews keeps a crop of Southern Star growing on his hillside land, but rents out space below his home to a small Hobbit family who aids in the curing and preparing of the leaf for sale. Hobbits living under this arrangement are sometimes known as Cellar-Hobbits.

As proud as they are skilled, the craftsmen of the lower hillside come from long family lines that set down roots during the days of the king. Because of this, they often regard outsiders or even other Bree-folk as less cultured or somehow beneath their concern. It is indeed a fact that their homes are among the first ones to have ever been built in Bree. This noble lineage authorises the local residents to call it the 'old town', in contrast to the houses built on the upper hillside — the area they call the 'new town' with a good hint of superciliousness.

At the southern end of this 'old town' is the ancient quarry of Bree, clearly visible as a deep cut into the hillside, the result of centuries of excavations. But the most important landmark in the lower hillside is the Old Town Well. A source

of pride to all the Bree-folk, the Well is said to grant luck to any traveller who takes a drink from it before heading off on a journey down the East Road. Given that it's the source for the water used to brew Barnabas's Best, perhaps it's true that there's always a taste of home on the lips of those travellers who partake of this tradition. Many Bree-folk looking for a bit of adventure often gather around the Old Town Well after Market Day is over, hoping to sign on with a caravan of Dwarven merchants either travelling west to the Blue Mountains or, in rare cases, far east to Dale and the Halls of the Lonely Mountain.

So welcome are the Dwarves that bring their trade to Bree, that the lower hillside is home to another remarkable establishment: the Dwarf-house. Overlooking the Well and purchased long ago by a Dwarf from the Blue Mountains, it is now a temporary home for any Dwarf merchants during their visits to Bree. The only permanent resident is Luki, the grey-bearded steward, whose bawdy songs can be heard ringing through the area whenever he hosts young visitors and distant kinsmen.

UPPER HILLSIDE: Compared to the lower hillside, this part of Bree is generally less affluent, and its homes more humble. It is an area inhabited mostly by Bree-hobbits, who favour low, one-story houses, fronted by colourful, fenced gardens. The exception to this rule is a large wooden building, the Schoolhouse. A recent establishment, it is open to all residents of Bree, whether Big or Little, and regardless of income. Its costs are covered by taxes taken from locals and tariffs levied on traders — though neither of these is extreme. Because of the existence of the school, nearly all of the Bree-folk are capable of doing simple sums and know their letters. Little beyond these basics is provided, and scholarly pursuits are not common nor particularly encouraged. Even so, it is not uncommon for families from Combe, Staddle, and even Archet to pay an upper hillside family to house their child for a time so that they can receive a “proper education”.

The upper hillside is also home to the town's largest smithy, which is a squat stone building high on the Hill. Few weapons are crafted here. Instead, the local smith is kept busy with crafting horseshoes, nails, and other day-to-day implements.

TOSS A COIN IN THE WELL

Whether because of tradition, superstition, or some ancient enchantment, there is a strange luck associated with the Old Town Well. Player-heroes tossing a coin into the well on the same day that they depart for a journey from Bree have advantage on their first check for Event Resolution made during that journey.



COMBE

Tucked between the valley of Bree-hill to the south and the eaves of the Chetwood to the north, the village of Combe seems to sit in the shadow of both the land and its larger, livelier and more famous neighbour. Combe is only second in size among the area's settlements, and is populated primarily by Men, with a handful of Hobbit families. Its inhabitants are dour and gloomy farmers, happy to have to deal with visitors only rarely. The few who come to Combe find themselves greeted by the sounds of bleating sheep or barking hounds, before receiving suspicious stares and half-hearted welcomes from the locals.

This sullenness is not without cause. Living between Bree-hill and the Chetwood means that heavy spring rains or melting snows can lead to sudden floods which destroy homes and crops at least once a decade, though none was so devastating as the great flood that came in the spring following the Fell Winter. As if that were not trouble enough, unlike the vigilant and well-armed people of Archet, Combe locals have little protection should a Troll choose to come down from the Weather Hills, cross the Chetwood, and make mutton of their grazing sheep — something which has happened in past generations and remains a source of constant concern.



Oswald Breeker

The most well-known resident of Combe is one Oswald Breeker, a wizened old man who lives alone in his ancient family estate on the edge of the village. He is the master of much of the farm and grazing lands of Combe, and extracts a heavy tax from those who tend these fields and hills. A widower who lost his only child over twenty years ago, he offers the people of Combe little more than cross words and demands for prompt payment. Rumours say that his wife, in despair at the cold heart of her husband, disappeared in the ruins of an ancient mansion that is visible at the end of the valley of Combe. No locals dare to visit these ancient and broken stones, as many have said to have seen a spectre haunting the grounds when the moon is new and the sky is black.

In truth, while quite cantankerous, Oswald Breeker is no villain. He is a hard man and pushes the people under his charge to be equally hard, so they might endure the dangers that lurk so close to the edges of Combe. He is well-versed in old lore, maintaining a vast library of ancient books and tomes in his estate. In secret, he meets with Rangers of the North, who patrol the land around the ruined High House of Combe, trading news and providing aid where he can.

Goblin Raids

Word of a Troll raiding the livestock of Combe has begun to circulate, after years of peace. This time, it is not simply the disappearance of a wayward ewe or sow. No livestock has been stolen. Instead, they are found savagely butchered, with hunks of their bodies carted away while the remnants are left on the side of Bree-hill to rot. The people of Combe haven't asked for assistance, but rumours of this have reached as far as Bree.

An official intervention on the part of the Bree-wardens has been dismissed, and the people of Combe have demonstrated to be unwilling to cooperate, regardless of the obvious danger. Maybe the Player-heroes can convince the locals to let them inquire on the matter?

After scouting the grazing fields on the first night of their visit, the Player-heroes discover signs of an unsuspected culprit: A band of Goblins! Tracking them to an abandoned Troll-hole hidden in the side of one of the hills to the north, the Player-heroes must drive them out before news of their success draws more Goblins down from the Weather Hills to raid the village itself.

Should the Player-heroes prove themselves to be both allies of the Free Folk and capable of keeping his secrets, they might find a benefactor in Oswald, who may permit regular use of his library for research.

Any Ranger of the North or other character able to win over Oswald is able to make use of his collection of ancient texts, and gains advantage on Intelligence (Old Lore) checks related to the history of Bree-land and Arnor.

Oswald Breeker

Medium humanoid (Man of Bree)

INT 14 (+2)	WIS 14 (+2)	CHA 9 (-1)
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OCCUPATION Wealthy landowner

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Grim, Secretive

SKILLS Insight +4, Intimidation +1, Investigation +4, Old Lore +4

SENSES passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Westron

STADDLE

The village of Staddle is barely a stone's throw from Bree proper, just on the other side of the Hill. In fact, many Bree-folk consider it more a suburb of Bree — much to the consternation of the many Hobbits of the Tunnely family that call Staddle their home. As populated by Hobbits as it is by Men, nearly two dozen stone homes serve as the residences of the Big Folk who dwell there.

The majority of the Hobbits in Staddle are not only related to the Tunnely family line, but also make their home in smials dug into the eastern side of Bree-hill. These underground homes are all interconnected by a series of tunnels that go deep into the ground, allowing kinfolk and cousins to visit one another without ever going above ground. This great network of smials is known locally simply as "the Smial".

Most folk in Staddle, whether Big or Little, are quite welcoming to visitors coming from Bree, or who slip off the great East Road to quench their thirst at the Lamplighter Inn. The Lamplighter itself is cosy and warm, built more to suit the Hobbit residents of Staddle than local Men or far off visitors. It serves the finest fare outside of The Prancing Pony, personally prepared by the proprietor, Karla Tunnely. Visiting guests looking for a room for the evening will find warm, if a bit small, beds, and a good night's rest that ends with a

robust morning breakfast of fresh eggs from local chickens and rashers of crispy bacon.

Anyone who does make trouble in Staddle is likely to face the wrath of the town matriarch, Grandmother Tunnelly. She seems to know every whisper and rumour that passes through Staddle, and according to legend, she even stared down a company of brigands caught attempting to raid the village one night several winters ago, fending them off with nothing more than her umbrella. Her duties are nominal at best, with her only regular obligation being presiding over the Summer Smoke Ring Festival. Instead, it is her reputation and the general respect of the townsfolk, both Men and Hobbits, that keeps the peace in Staddle.

ADELARD TOOK: A young, vigorous Hobbit, Adelard loves blowing smoke rings above everything else. He was inspired by Balin, son of Fundin, who Adelard met several times at Bag End. Balin taught him a smoking trick or two (Dwarves are in general less experienced smokers than Hobbits, but show some great ingenuity when it comes to blowing smoke rings). His prize-winning trick is a large mushroom-shaped cloud he dubbed ‘the umbrella’.

Adelard Took

Medium humanoid (Hobbit)

INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

OCCUPATION Champion Smoker

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Bold, Honourable

TOOL PROFICIENCIES Pipes +6

SENSES passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Westron

ARCHET

Hidden under the southern boughs of the Chetwood, Archet lies all but invisible beneath the eaves of the forest. Fewer than twenty cabins make up what can barely be called a proper village, and the locals greet outsiders with grim glances and sharp words. In an effort to keep outsiders from surprising them in their concealed hollow, and to keep a wary eye on lingering dangers that might come out of the Chetwood, a number of locals have taken to living in tiny huts among the tree-tops. Even the scant few Hobbits that make their home in Archet have adapted the ways of their people to the local woodcraft traditions, and they dig strange Hobbit-holes under the roots of particularly large and ancient trees.

THE SUMMER SMOKE RING FESTIVAL

Every year on Midsummer's Eve, Men and Hobbits from the many villages around Bree-hill gather for the annual Summer Smoke Ring Festival. This celebration of the Hobbit art of pipe smoking finds competitors trying to blow ever-greater and more elaborate smoke rings, rings-within-rings, and even silhouettes of birds and beasts in wispy blue clouds. For the past several years, the winner of the Summer Smoke Ring Festival has been Adelard Took, a Hobbit whose skill in the art of his people is said to rival even that of Gandalf the Grey.

- ♦ Player-heroes can participate in the Festival if they so choose. The contest is either an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check using pipes (DC 20).

Failing one roll represents a lack of imagination or skill and allows the player to continue. A second failure is a coughing fit, knocking the hero out of the competition. If a Player-hero succeeds at the endeavour, Adelard surrenders an elegantly crafted pipe inlaid with silver accents and a pearl stem to the hero. The pipe is worth 1 gold piece and grants advantage on ability checks using it.



When occasional visitors come to Archet, they spend their brief stay at the Green Fletcher Inn, enjoying its warm, rustic charm and fine stout. Foreigners come here almost exclusively to trade goods or services for one of Archet's finely crafted hunting bows. It is said in Bree-land that the skill of the bowyers of Archet rivals that of the Elves — a claim that is, of course, absurd, but certainly there is something extraordinary about them. But Archet locals are loath to trade their wares, even to other Bree-folk, and demand a high price for even the least of their creations.

Archet has no mayor, and is instead led by a Forester, who serves more as a chieftain and protector of the village than as an administrator. The current Forester is Fitch Talltree, who took up the mantle after his father was slain by a Troll while the two were on a hunting expedition between the Chetwood and the Weather Hills. Like his father before him, Fitch is grim and proud. He leads his people with a firm but fair hand.

Unknown to all but the locals, there is a small stone fort atop a hillock between the East Road and the eaves of the Chetwood, where the villagers can watch in secret the comings and goings of travellers on the road. To the casual observer, this fort appears to be nothing more than a ruin from ancient days, but the Forester of Archet requires that at least one watchman be kept there at all times. Through some secret path known only to the locals, that sentry is able to alert the people of Archet long before outsiders arrive.

FITCH TALLTREE, THE FORESTER OF ARCHET

Fitch is not quite thirty, though his wild beard and fierce eyes make him appear older. Like his father before him, he holds the protection of Archet and its people as a sacred duty, and would gladly lay down his life to protect anyone in the tiny community. He blames himself for the untimely death of his father nearly ten years ago, when the two were hunting a brutal Stone-Troll from the Weather Hills that his father had nearly bested in combat previously. Not only was Fitch unable to aid his father in defeating the Troll, but the elder Talltree died saving his son from a particularly grievous blow from the Troll's massive stone club. To this day, Fitch seeks to alleviate his guilt over the death of his father, but fears facing the Troll alone. He is torn between this personal quest to avenge his father, and carrying out his promise to protect the people of Archet.

Fitch Talltree

Medium humanoid (Man of Bree)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)

OCCUPATION Forester

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Fierce, Rustic

ARMOUR CLASS 14 (hide armour)

HIT POINTS 19 (3d8+6)

SPEED 30 ft.

SAVING THROWS Cha +1

SKILLS Hunting +7, Insight +5, Intimidation +1, Nature +4,

Perception +7

SENSES passive Perception 17

LANGUAGES Westron

CHALLENGE 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

DEFIANCE. As a bonus action, Fitch Talltree can spend one Hit Die to heal himself.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. Fitch Talltree makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

ARCHET HUNTING BOW. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

DAGGER. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

ARCHET HUNTING BOWS

Purchasing a famed Archet hunting bow is not a matter of simply paying the right price. Player-heroes wishing to acquire a bow will need to both prove themselves worthy and perform some great deed of service to the people of Archet. For example, a Player-hero may address some danger in the Chetwood or the Weather Hills, protecting a group of woodsmen who have encountered some trouble while felling trees in the forest, or anything else the Loremaster deems appropriate to their campaign.

Once a Player-hero has proven worthy, they must then demonstrate that they are a skilled archer by spending three days on a solitary hunt in the Chetwood, and returning with a buck of no less than ten points (a DC 20

Wisdom (Hunting) check; the Player-hero can make two rolls each day, and has three days to complete the task).

After completing this, the Player-hero can choose the Archet hunting bow as their next reward, or replace one of their rewards with it.

- ◆ When making a weapon attack roll with an Archet hunting bow, you can use your Wisdom modifier instead of your Dexterity modifier for the attack and damage rolls. You must use the same modifier for both rolls. In addition, when you score a critical hit with an Archet hunting bow, you can roll one additional weapon damage die and add it to the extra damage.

TRAVELLING IN THE CHETWOOD

The Loremaster can use the following table if Player-heroes decide to venture into the deep parts of the Chetwood or its more dangerous regions near the Midgewater Marshes or the Weather Hills. Simply roll a d12 and consult the table below.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Troll of the Weather Hills	A Stone-Troll is tearing through the Chetwood, making no effort at subtlety or stealth. It spots the Player-heroes and immediately moves to attack, in search of a fresh meal.
2-3	Mistaken for Orcs	A Chetwood hunter fires an arrow at the Player-heroes from a concealed position some distance off. They have mistaken them for a party of Orcs in the shadowy light of the forest.
4-5	Abandoned Homestead	The Player-heroes come across an abandoned cabin that appears to have been ransacked by Goblins, with signs of a bloody struggle.
6-7	Hunted by Wolves	The Player-heroes notice they are being tracked by a small pack of wolves. If they don't succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Hunting) check to throw them off, they'll likely attack in the coming hours.
8-9	Sinkhole	Caught in a morass of mud concealed by a layer of leaves and lichen, the characters sink and find themselves trapped. They will need to succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, otherwise the struggle to get free will cause them to suffer one level of exhaustion and lose a day of travel.
10-11	Goblin Scouts	Goblins have come down from the Weather Hills to scout the Chetwood. They have spotted the Player-heroes and will try to ambush them.
12	Fitch Talltree	The Player-heroes encounter the Forester of Archet himself. Depending on the nature of their errand, he may aid them or offer them insight into the goings-on of the Chetwood. He can also easily guide them back to Archet.

Player-heroes who have proven themselves through previous adventures or have come requesting an Archet Bow, are asked by Forester Talltree to join him in his hunt for the Troll that slew his father.

They must brave the natural hazards of the Chetwood as they move north into the Weather Hills. The Troll, knowing that Fitch has been seeking vengeance, has laid a trap and ambushes the party as they wander the region. Eventually the party tracks the Troll to a dark and crumbled ruin in the Weather Hills, where the creature is able to hide from the sunlight — but Fitch is consumed by his lust for revenge and the Player-heroes must find a way to defeat the brute as the Forester charges headlong into battle — and likely his death.

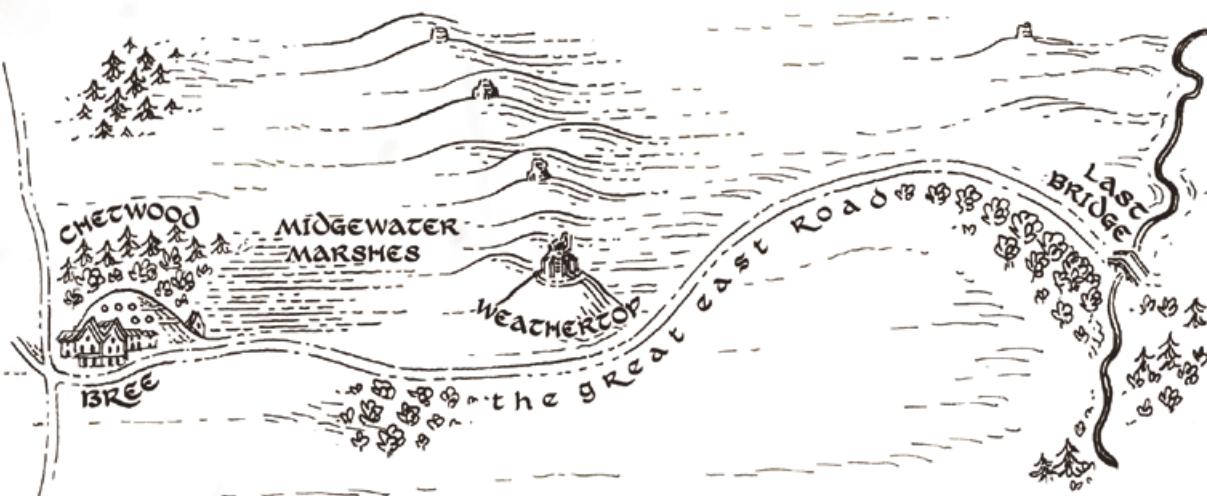
THE CHETWOOD

The residents of Bree and the surrounding villages regard the Chetwood as a delightful forest to look upon from atop the hill, or even stroll under its eaves during long summer sunsets. But this wide patch of woodland stretches much farther to the north from the slopes of Bree-hill, and is a wild place. Expanding to meet the Midgewater Marshes on its eastern

edge and the Weather Hills in the north eastern corner, at its heart it is far more diverse and mysterious than most sensible folk are willing to discuss. Only the people of Archet know that the Chetwood can be a truly dangerous place.

Wisely, few venture into the heart of the forest, where the trees seem as old as time. Large and gnarled, with twisting roots and clawing branches, they can turn any pleasant walk into a perilous journey, especially after sunset. Even during the day, its thick green canopy can block out the summer sun, forcing a lost wanderer to find their way by thin beams of light broken by long shadows. Here, only birds and beasts are welcome.

In recent years, news of Orcs, wolves, and worse coming down from the Weather Hills and entering the Chetwood have reached even the Bree-wardens with such frequency that they can no longer be dismissed as simple rumours or idle gossip. Fitch Talltree has forbidden the people of Archet from venturing too deeply into the forest alone, and more than one of the woodsmen that dare to dwell in this area have abandoned their cabins, or worse, these homesteads have been discovered abandoned and burnt.



THE MIDGEWATER MARSHES

East of the Chetwood, the ground falls steadily, and soon becomes damp and boggy. This flat expanse of country is dotted by pools of water, lined by patches of reeds and rushes. Keeping a proper course becomes difficult, even for experienced travellers, as no tracks can be made out among the shifting quagmires. After a few miles, one enters the proper Midgewater Marshes, a treacherous wetland owing its name to clouds of tiny midges.

No one goes into this marshland, unless they must flee from mortal danger. Camping is cold and uncomfortable, and the insects make sleeping a misery — because if the midges were not enough, the bog is also infested by a noisy relative of the cricket that never ceases to squeak, all night long.

THE GREAT EAST ROAD

No Man, Dwarf, or Hobbit in Eriador can recall a time before the East Road — it is likely that its history reaches into the misty past of previous ages of the world. The Dwarves claim it began in the Iron Hills, far to the east beyond the Misty Mountains, beyond even Erebor. From those distant peaks it runs all the way to the Grey Havens on the Gulf of Lhûn.

Originally built to facilitate swift travel between the many Dwarven kingdoms of the Elder Days that have since fallen, the East Road is still widely used today by all manner of travellers in Eriador — though it is by no means safe or kept in good repair, save in the Shire where those peaceable people maintain their ancient duty, all the while hoping that no outsider would bother coming through their land at all.

The quality of the East Road is inconsistent at best, with some stretches running for miles as paved stones and well-packed earth, while at other times it seems little more than a wide muddy scar across an abandoned landscape. Merchants

and wanderers who make use of the East Road are likely to see broken towers and ruined castles that have been reclaimed by time or fallen to neglect.

As far as the Bree-land is concerned, the East Road is its lifeblood. Merchants from the Blue Mountains pass



OVER THE EDGE OF THE WILD

For those who travel east along the road, there are still many miles from the *Forsaken Inn* to the Last Bridge and then from there to the High Pass over the Misty Mountains. The wide land on the other side of the mountains is known as Rhovanion, the Wilderland. There are many good reasons for such an ominous name. Not only did the region once host a Dragon's lair, but its greater part is occupied by the forest of Mirkwood, home to Giant Spiders, Orcs, and other dangerous creatures.

But of late the Wilderland has become a little less wild. Smaug, the Dragon who once occupied the Lonely Mountain, was slain by King Bard and the kingdoms of Dale and Erebor were restored. The Necromancer was driven from his fortress of Dol Guldur in southern Mirkwood, and the inhabitants of Rhovanion have new hope for the future. Merchants and adventurers set off to explore Wilderland or distant Eriador, and the East Road has never seen such traffic in the living memories of all but the Elves.

ENCOUNTERS ON THE EAST ROAD

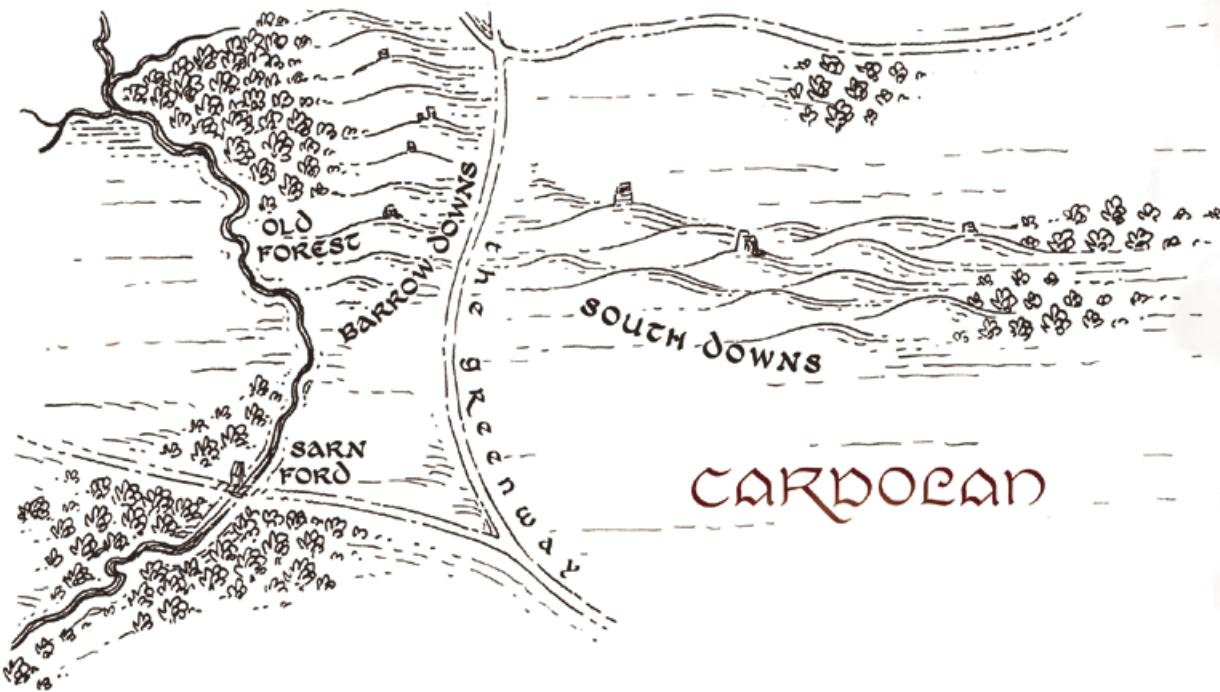
The Loremaster can use the following table if Player-heroes decide to venture into the deep parts of the Chetwood or its more dangerous regions near the Midgewater Marshes or the Weather Hills. Simply roll a d12 and consult the table below.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Troll-hole	The Player-heroes stumble too close to a Troll's lair and awaken a Stone-Troll! It lumbers out and attempts to slaughter them for a fine meal!
2	Mournful Stones	While travelling, a strange howling wind blows through the broken stones of a nearby ruin. It is unnaturally cold, and its melancholy takes hold in the characters' bones.
3	Fallen King	Walking past what seems a dense thicket of brambles, the Player-heroes spot the fallen statue of some ancient king of Men. It is shaped like a grim and resolute warrior, now covered in dirt and worn by time. But at its feet, a wreath of flowers grows, and anyone who examines it and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check can identify the plant as Kingsfoil. A sprig of it can be harvested, allowing a hero to use it as if it was a healer's kit (1d10 uses left).
4	Carrion Eyes	A flock of ill-tempered crows watches the characters, flitting from tree to tree, stone to stone, for a mile or so before suddenly taking flight and heading to the mountain ranges to the north. Are they spies for the Goblins of Mount Gram? Or worse, for Angmar itself?
5	Predators in the Firelight	A small pack of wild wolves stalks around the Player-heroes as they camp or walk upon the East Road at night. If not driven off with a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check, they will attack. Fearsome, but ultimately cowardly, they will flee if they discover that the Player-heroes are no easy prey.
6	Sun Upon the Stone	While passing close to a half crumbled stone tower, the sunlight reflects off an unblemished wall of the ancient structure, and for an instant, a hint of its original greatness is revealed.
7	Lost Merchant	A Dwarf merchant returning to the Blue Mountains is injured and weary from his travels, and asks the Player-heroes to guide him to the nearest farmstead. If they aid the Dwarf, the merchant will reward the heroes with 10 silver pennies each.
8	Highway Robbers	Masquerading as an innocent traveller who has been separated from his companions, a Highway Robber will attempt to lead the Player-heroes a short distance off the road and into an ambush where several of his allies wait.
9	Strange Stars in High Towers	As the sun fades, the Player-heroes see a cold light twinkling in the window of a broken tower near the horizon. The light seems to linger and follow them, dogging their steps from a distance before vanishing into the night.
10	Goblin Scouts	A Goblin Archer starts to track the Player-heroes. If they do not notice or detect him with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, that night they will be ambushed by his allies.
11	Song of Kings	Upon the banks of the Hoarwell or another body of water, the Player-heroes see a beautiful maiden singing a sad song of the Elder Days in Sindarin. She looks at them, offers a melancholy smile, and fades from existence... though the song lingers on for a few moments.
12	Rangers	The company is being followed, but their pursuers reveal themselves to be Rangers of the North, and offer to guide the characters for a brief time on their journey. The Company has advantage on the next Wisdom (Travel) check made while on the East Road.



on through it and continue further east as in olden days, to trade with their kinfolk on the other side of the Misty Mountains or the Men of Dale. These adventurous merchants arm themselves well for such a journey, for the road is long and hard and fraught with peril. Between the trees

that loam over the road, one can see distant hills occupied by broken castles. Travellers describe them as having an evil look, as if they had been built by wicked people. Strange lights can be seen lingering inside them on cold, moonless nights.



THE FORSAKEN INN

On the eastern edge of the Bree-land there is a ramshackle wooden hovel that is easily mistaken by the casual observer for a forgotten and abandoned cabin, rotting by the road. It is only the steady stream of unsavoury characters trickling in and out of the crooked front door that reveals it to be an inn – if only in the most broad sense of the word.

Aptly called the *Forsaken Inn*, this establishment attracts patrons fitting its appearance and name. Criminals, desperate wanderers, and those who are best avoided seek refuge here, drinking the worst kind of swill, and sleeping on flea-infested mattresses set out beneath the leaky roof of the common room. Those who complain of a draft in the evening are given a lice-ridden blanket and charged an extra silver penny for the privilege.

Even the ill-favoured Rangers of the North do not often go here. The proprietor, who refuses to give his name even to paying customers and is then called simply 'Jack the Forsaken' by most, has no concerns about who enters his establishment, as long as they have silver to spend. Unfortunately, those with coins to pay had best sit with their backs to the wall, lest a patron make quick use of a dagger and relieve them of their wealth.

The Greenway

The Greenway crosses the East Road at the ancient meeting of ways to the west of Bree. Once known as the North Road, it fell into disrepair long ago, and in the vicinity of Bree it became so grass-grown that it earned its current nickname. Long ago, its north-south course joined the kingdom of Arnor to its southern counterpart, the realm of Gondor, running for thousands of miles. On its way, it passed the great bridge at Tharbad, until it was flooded and mostly abandoned, and the crossing reduced to a dangerous ford.

Having lost most of its traffic, the Greenway has earned a dark reputation as a dangerous thoroughfare, plagued by bandits and cutthroats. Yet, groups of honest folk endure in small communities, spread thinly along the way. Many of these settlements are composed of a handful of homesteads, populated by refugees from Tharbad and their descendants. Huddling together for protection, they live an isolated existence, leaving their fortified sanctuaries exclusively to trade. They are often glum and taciturn, and may seem concerned only with their own survival in this wild, lonely place.

But the folk of the Greenway are not without kindness in their hearts, and have, on occasion, offered refuge to wayward travellers. Some still cling to very ancient traditions, considering themselves scions of the ancient kingdom that once held all this land under its protection. Proof of their ancient ancestry, they say, is evident in the many ruins that can be

RUINS ALONG THE GREENWAY

The Greenway is lined with many ancient ruins. If the Player-heroes decide to investigate such a site during their travels between Fornost Erain and Tharbad, the Loremaster can roll a d12 and use the following table.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Corrupted Tomb	Long ago, wars raged across these lands as kingdoms fought against the armies of the Witch-king and each other. This tomb once held a great captain, but now it is only home to Fell Wraiths from ancient Angmar who will harass and delay the company.
2	Abandoned Stable	Stumbling upon the ruins of an abandoned roadside stable, the Player-heroes see a wild steed grazing in the grass. The majestic beast can be calmed with a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, then the horse can be ridden.
3	The Watch Ends	A battered tower stands a little distance from the road. A crescent moon is carved in stone upon its arched entryway. If the Player-heroes climb to its top on a night with a crescent moon, they find a single soldier standing watch. The guard politely asks if they are there to relieve him and if they say yes, the soldier bows and then heads downstairs – if any follow, they lose sight of the guard.
4	Ring of Petals and Stone	A small ring of white stones, overgrown with beautiful wildflowers lies not far off the road. No dangerous natural predators will cross the circle.
5	Elven Minstrel	One afternoon, the Player-heroes meet an Elf who asks to walk with them for a time. She tells them that she is composing songs to honour Menelmacar who will arrive soon. If the heroes have patience with the minstrel, then they are in for a night of song and celebration. Each hero gains inspiration. If they are rude or impatient with the Elf, she excuses herself before nightfall and they gain no benefits.
6	Southerner Ambush	A Southerner Raider is hobbling up the Greenway, masquerading as an injured farmer. He asks the characters to walk with him to his nearby homestead, but when they arrive they find it to be a ramshackle barn where several of the Raider's allies ambush the Player-heroes.
7	Orc Stragglers	A long stone wall follows the Greenway for a time here, and a handful of Orcs crouch beneath the wall, waiting for the Player-heroes to pass so they can ambush them. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check detects their presence.
8	Collapsed Cairn	A great mound of stones has been scattered near the road, a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a large barrow has been dug down into the wet earth. Unfortunately, this makeshift tomb has become the lair of a Barrow-wight, who will attack anyone who intrudes upon its resting place.
9	Burnt Homestead	Once the farmhouse of someone who lived upon the Greenway, it is now a ruined pile of burnt rubble. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the occupants did not escape the fire, and that several appear to have been slain by Orc arrows before the flames took them.
10	Displaced Southerner	A wandering Southerner, weary and travel-worn, asks for the Player-heroes' charity by letting him share their food and fire for the evening. If treated kindly, he will provide them with many stories about his distant country.
11	Slain Wanderer	The characters come upon the corpse of a Man slain no more than a few days ago with vicious cuts and Orc arrows. His clothing is tattered, and a small brooch is clasped under his cloak, in the shape of a rayed star. Anyone who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence check can identify him as a Ranger of the North. If his brooch is returned to his people, a small favour might be asked in return.
12	Ancient Hospitality	The Player-heroes come upon a small keep some distance off the Greenway, tended by a lordly old man who offers them hospitality. If they accept and treat him well by making a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check that night they will dream of the glory of the towers of Annúminas and the shining shores of Lake Evendim. By dawn, they reduce their Shadow by 1, though in the morning the kindly old lord is gone, and there is no sign of the keep having ever been inhabited.

found near their settlements along the Greenway, and in the remains of the ancient buildings that are found under their very homes, every time that anyone digs for just a few feet.

THE BARROW-DOWNS

To the east of the Shire, beyond the Old Forest, rise the green-grey hills known in Hobbit-legend as the Barrow-downs. It is a maze-like country, made of grassy ridges rising one after another, with deep green hollows in between. If on a journey, it is much wiser to travel around them, especially since the great East Road lies immediately north of the Downs. If a traveller must pass through them, they go quickly and only when the sun is up.

By day, the scent of turf is strong and sweet, and the air itself is often still when caught between hillside and hillside, silent except for the high calls of strange birds. As one proceeds eastward coming from the forest, the hills grow higher and steeper, their tops crowned with mounds and standing stones. When the sun begins to set, a mist rises to obscure the landscape, slowly turning into a thick and cold fog, covering the land as a shroud.

Anyone caught in this white sea risks falling prey to the dreadful spells of the Barrow-wights, spirits inhabiting the hollow chambers buried under the green mounds on top of the hills. These crypts served as tombs for those who once ruled over Eriador, in the time of the kings, but there is no rest for them, as their bones are stirred by an evil will. Travellers who lose their path in the fog find themselves suddenly in the shadow of huge standing stones, and hear cold voices coming out of the ground, calling them. If they fail to resist the call, they will be taken by the Barrow-wights and imprisoned.

THE GREAT BARROW

Rising on one of the highest hills in the Barrow-downs, this burial mound conceals a vast underground complex, descending deep into the bowels of the earth, with dark and cold tunnels winding into many lesser burial chambers, where dozens of warriors are entombed with their gear of war and precious treasure. The stink of decay, stagnation, and rot chokes any who are foolish enough to push aside the great carven stone that blocks the entryway into this labyrinth of the dead.

This is the haunted lair of the Wight-king, the chief of all blighted creatures who dwell in Tyrn Gorthad. Some say he was the last King of Cardolan, buried in the Barrow-downs before the Great Plague. Others hold him to be the malicious spirit of some fell captain who once served Angmar. What is certain is that in the ages since the barrow was dug, the Wight-king has carved for himself a great throne room,

deep in the darkness. Concealed from the light of day, he sits and festers in his own hatred, his lust for death satiated only when intruders dare enter his domain, or on the rare occasions when he walks among the mists of the Barrow-downs under cover of darkness. Stories of his empty eyes, his broken blade, and his terrible song have kept most would-be tomb robbers from daring to come near his domain — and those who do are seldom heard from again.

The Wight-king

Medium undead

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

ARMOUR CLASS 17 (mail hauberk)

HIT POINTS 68 (8d8 + 32)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +7, Stealth +3

SAVING THROWS Con +7

DAMAGE RESISTANCES cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

SENSES truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Black Speech, Westron

CHALLENGE 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

THE COLD STONE

At the very centre of the Barrow-downs is a hill with a wide and flattened top, rimmed by a low raised edge. A single monolith stands tall in its middle, like a finger raised in admonishment. Its stone surface is always cold to the touch, even when hit directly by the light of the sun.

- ◆ Whoever climbs to the top of the hill is cursed to encounter a Barrow-wight as soon as the night comes. Additionally, anyone touching the monolith gains 2 points of Shadow, resisted by a DC 15 Charisma saving throw.

DARKER THAN DARKNESS (Recharge 6). As a bonus action, the Wight-king can summon a magical darkness spreading from a point of the Wight-king's choice to fill a 30-foot-radius sphere for 1 minute. The darkness spreads around corners. Non-magical light cannot illuminate this darkness.

DEATHLESS. If damage reduces the Wight-king to 0 hit points, he must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of $5 +$ the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant, from a critical hit, or from a weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead. On a success, the Wight-king drops to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, the Wight-king has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. The Wight-king can use its Strike Fear or its Wight Song. It then makes two long sword attacks. It can use its Icy Touch in place of one long sword attack.
LONG SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

ICY TOUCH. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) necrotic damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) necrotic damage on a failed save.

STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of the Wight-king's choice that is within 60 feet of the Wight-king and aware of him gains 2 Shadow point from Dread, resisted by a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains 3 Shadow points instead of 2 and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the Wight-king's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.

WIGHT SONG. The Wight-king chants a low, chilling song to subdue a foe within 30 feet of him who can hear him with the dark enchantment of his voice. The target gains 3 Shadow points from Sorcery, resisted by a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target succumbs to a magical slumber, falling unconscious for 1 minute or until it takes damage, or someone uses an action to shake it awake. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target is also paralysed for the same duration and cannot be shaken awake. A creature that successfully saves against the effect is stunned until the end of the Wight-king's next turn unless it succeeds by 5 or more, and is immune to the Wight-king's song for the next 24 hours.

Scant few have seen the Wight-king and lived to tell the tale, but mad tomb-robbers who have come out of the Barrow-downs tell of a fleshless warrior wearing the blackened raiment of an ancient noble. Empty black eyes burn behind a great, cracked helm, and a pitted blade is clutched in his left hand. All that is dead and yet still lives by sorcery or the will of the Enemy is his to command.

The Wight-king leaves the Great Barrow only at night, and moves in darkness and silence across Tyrn Gorthad, singing songs of hopelessness and sorrow in both the Common Tongue and the Black Speech of Mordor.

THE NORTH DOWNS

The North Downs are a landscape of high hills and gullies, covered in grass and dotted by many ruins. They stretch in a north-eastern direction for many leagues from where the Greenway ends, until they give way to the empty lone-lands running towards Angmar of old. Once the North Downs stood at the heart of a great kingdom, but these wild lands are now deserted, and all that is left are broken towers and crumbling walls. The region is not entirely devoid of life though, quite the contrary — wild hares and sheep roam the land, grazing on the lush grassland, and kestrels cross the sky searching for prey. If this place wasn't shunned as cursed, the North Downs would prove bountiful as a hunting ground.

Recently, a particular type of predator has made its lair in the North Downs, profiting from its ill-repute and contributing to it — a good number of reckless robbers and brigands have found refuge in its half-ruined towers and stone homesteads. They waylay travellers along the Greenway, and exact payment from merchants heading to Bree or returning from there, ready to disappear into the North Downs if pursued.

The presence of these bands of rogues is starting to worry those who have sworn to keep safe the land of old Arnor. Indeed, the Rangers of the North used to maintain several of their secret refuges in hidden dales close to where the city of Fornost Erain used to be, centuries ago, and they have been forced to abandon them when the bandits moved into the North Downs. Of course, the Rangers won't suffer this interference for long. Talandil, a veteran Ranger and self-appointed guardian of Fornost Erain, is already seeking help among adventurers willing to fight to free the area from the bandit threat.

FORNOST ERAIN

In the southern foothills of the North Downs lies what remains of a great city of stone, now almost completely reclaimed by time and nature. This place is called Deadmen's Dike by those who live in Bree and fear it, and Norbury by the most scholarly

among Shire-hobbits. But only those mysterious wanderers called the Rangers recall its former glory as a great fortress and city built in the time of the kings out of the sea, and called Fornost Erain.

Centuries ago, the walls and towers of Fornost were broken when the city was attacked by Angmar and sacked. Though the Witch-king sat upon the throne of Fornost for only a brief while, the defilement of the city left a scar so deep that it never rose again. In the Twilight of the Third Age, the roots of trees hundreds of years old have broken through the stones that paved its streets, and ivy and lichen have covered its once white walls. The folk of the Bree-land call this place cursed, and none dare dwell there. Even the most callous tomb-robbers do not cross into the ruins of Fornost Erain, for it is said that the spirits of the men who died protecting the city still linger there, hoping to redeem their name by forbidding anyone to enter.

Only the Rangers of the North venture into that broken place, and for their bravery, they are scorned by the people of Bree, for they believe that anyone willing to live in the shadows of the fallen city must themselves be as cursed as the place itself.

THE DOME OF SIGHT: Caved in upon itself from the weight of the years, this great, domed chamber once housed the Seeing Stones of the North Kingdom: the chief stone that once was kept at Amon Sûl, and the Stone of Annúminas, now both lost. A part of the chamber is now underground and is still accessible from the surface. If reached, one can observe part of the dome that hasn't collapsed yet, a high vault covered by mosaic tiles displaying the image of a starlit sky. Some among the Rangers say that the ceramic tiles of the mosaic still retain images of faraway places.

THE THRONE ROOM OF ARVEDUI: Some among the older Rangers of the North talk of a vast, underground chamber, surviving intact under the ruins of what they claim was the Hall of Eärendur, the royal palace of Fornost. It's the throne room of Arvedui, a long hall with tall pillars reaching up towards the ceiling, carved with a craft now lost to the ages. A raised throne stands among broken stones that fell from the ceiling, its high marble back decorated with the image of a single, many-rayed star. The throne itself seems untouched by time.



THE RECORDS OF THE LAST KING: The life of Arvedui Last-king was ill-fated, and most of what is remembered of him concerns his fall. Few recall that in life he was considered Elven-wise, and that he held council with many among the Fair folk. He kept many books of lore and records of these meetings in a private library, a chamber of records now concealed beneath the ruin of his palace. Should it be discovered, its content would offer great insight into the mind of the last king and the affairs of his final days.

The south downs

Bordered to the west by the Greenway and to the north by the East Road, the South Downs is a range of hills running from east to west for about a hundred miles. Dreary, empty and featureless, the hills sport little vegetation and few animals make their lairs there. The Bree-folk and the Rangers have little reason to travel across this wild region, and avoid it whenever possible, disliking in particular the occasional miasma that drifts east from the Barrow-downs.

THE HOWLING HOLLOWES

Long ago, Wolves from the Misty Mountains came west into Eriador to hunt. Some never returned, and made new lairs in the South Downs, as they found the desolate hills to offer good sanctuary. In time, they have burrowed deeply under the hills, creating a web of caves. From here, they go out at night to search for prey.

These secret hollows give shelter to a pack of a dozen Wolves, but word is spreading among the cunning beasts, and more wicked creatures are coming to the South Downs.

BÚRGUL

Medium humanoid (Orc)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

ARMOUR CLASS 17 (orc-mail, shield)

HIT POINTS 52 (8d8 + 16)

SPEED 30 ft.

SKILLS Intimidation +4

SENSES darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

LANGUAGES Orkish, Westron

CHALLENGE 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

SNEAK ATTACK (1/TURN). Búrzgul deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Búrzgul that isn't incapacitated and Búrzgul doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY. While in sunlight, Búrzgul has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. Búrzgul makes two melee attacks, or one melee attack and one ranged attack.

SCIMITAR. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

SHIELD BASH. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

SPEAR. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

YELL OF TRIUMPH (Recharges after a Long Rest). Each creature of Búrzgul's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it gain advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of Búrzgul's next turn. Búrzgul can then make one attack as a bonus action.

REACTIONS

PARRY. Búrzgul adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Búrzgul must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Búrzgul is a wicked Orc warrior, the chieftain of a ragged band of Orcs from Goblin Gate that made the trip from the Misty Mountains to the South Downs, to join forces with the Wolves of the Howling Hollowes. Búrzgul heard of the place from his most trusted friend, a Wolf-chieftain with midnight-black fur and gleaming yellow eyes, going by the name of Ash. For the moment, no one, not even the Rangers of the North, knows of the threat festering under the hills of the South Downs. For their part, the Wolves and Orcs bide their time, and for the moment have made only a few careful attacks, leaving no survivors. Perhaps most dangerous of all is that Búrzgul regularly sends runners back to larger Orc forces in both Angmar and the Misty Mountains, so news of Bree is never far from the ears of the agents of the Shadow.

RUINS AND BROKEN STONES

Characters exploring the North Downs will often stumble upon ruins and ancient testimonies of the war that destroyed this place. The Loremaster can roll on the following table to determine what they find.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Spirits out of Angmar	A group of Fell Wraiths rise out of the darkness of a burned ruin that projects from the fields of the North Downs like a jagged wound. They attack, filled with malice for all who live and would dare to trespass on their long absent Witch-king's field of victory.
2	Forgotten Words	The Player-heroes uncover an inscription in Adûnaic (on a wall, a slab of marble, or on a mosaic floor, for example). A DC 15 Intelligence (Old Lore) check is required to translate it. The content hints at the whereabouts of one place among <i>The Dome of Sight</i> , <i>The Throne Room of Arvedui</i> , or <i>The Records of the Last King</i> (see page 199).
3	A Lingering Shadow	With a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, the Player-heroes discover that they are being shadowed by someone. The mysterious spy disappears after a few hours, or if called out.
4	Home Brought to Ruin	The Player-heroes discover the remains of a stone house that is still accessible. Inscriptions allow them to identify it as the ancient home of a noble from Arthedain, but idle scrawls and foul symbols also indicate that the building suffered from the ruin that Angmar brought upon the city.
5	Scavengers	The Player-heroes stumble upon a group of Highway Robbers in the middle of plundering what might be a tomb. Whether or not they become violent depends on how they are treated by the Player-heroes. What treasures they have on them (if any) should be determined by the Loremaster, but their finds would typically be worth 1d3 g.
6	Voices from the Past	While travelling across the North Downs, the Player-heroes hear the galloping of steeds at full charge, the sound of steel on steel, and the cries of both the victorious and the dying. The sound appears and fades without warning, seeming to come from all around the characters.
7-9	Unstable Foundations	The earth beneath their feet gives way, and the Player-heroes tumble into a chamber of a long-collapsed building.
10	Battered War-gear	The Player-heroes discover a helm that, though dented and weather-worn, looks like it could easily be repaired and polished. It bears the crest of the Kings of Arnor, and might once again protect a noble brow.
11	Restless Soul	The Player-heroes share a dream where a warrior of Arthedain asks them to give their remains a proper burial. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check around their night camp uncovers a collapsed watchtower and the skeleton of a fallen guard.
12	A Secret Hoard	The Player-heroes uncover a spiralling mosaic on the floor of a ruined building. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a removable slab of marble. Under it lies a greater Hoard of treasure, hidden there before the city was plundered. Golden dishes, cups studded with precious stones, lacquered drinking horns, and a small armoury of items of worth is secreted here.

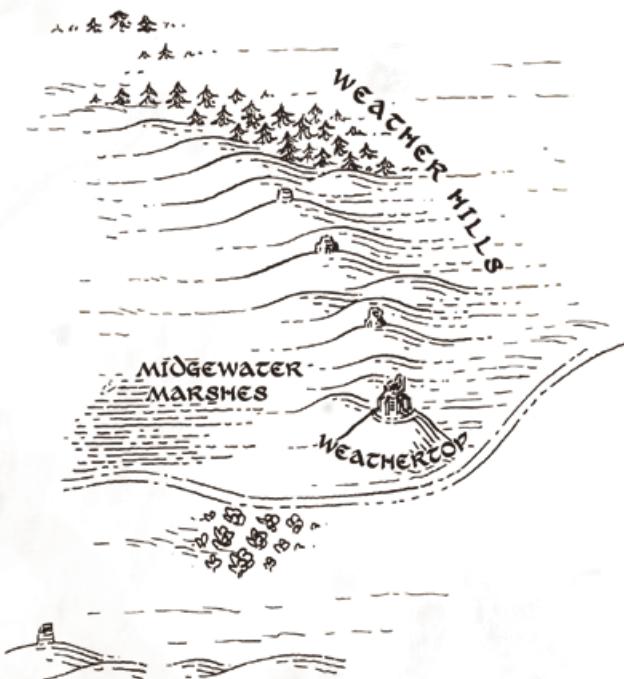
The Weather Hills

The Weather Hills rise in a long, northward undulating ridge, starting in the south where the East Road passes under the shadow of their tallest rise, the hill of Weathertop. Overgrown walls and old, broken stonework are on full display atop these high hills, visible to any wanderer travelling on the road. The Men of the West did not live here, but fought and died in bitter wars against Angmar — the ruins that dot the hills are what reains of ancient forts and watchtowers, and the paths and tracks that served them. A mournful air hangs over the Weather Hills. The hilltops are bleak and treeless, and the dells deep and shadowy.

Weathertop

Weathertop, or Amon Sûl, as the Rangers call it, is the southernmost hill of the Weather Hills. On its summit once stood a tall and fair watchtower, built in the days of the North Kingdom. It was once used to store a Seeing Stone, one of the greatest treasures that Elendil brought out of Númenor. The tower was burned and broken during the wars with Angmar, and only a ring of stonework remains to crown the hilltop.

The Rangers of the North often come here, to watch over the surrounding land, and to pay tribute to one of the places they hold in greater regard. Those few who make the long ascent to reach this ancient place often find encrypted notes and supplies left by the mysterious wanderers of Eriador.



ANGMAR

In the northern reaches of eastern Eriador, beyond the Ettenmoors and the peak of Mount Gram, lies the land that of old saw the witch-realm of Angmar. Long ago, the Chief of the Ringwraiths himself ruled this land from his fortress of Carn Dûm, wielding fear and terror and commanding great armies of Orcs, Goblins and Hill-men. He made war against the North Kingdom of Arnor and its successor kingdoms, destroying them. But his kingdom was obliterated in turn, when a great host of Elves and Men came north to challenge him. He fled from the ruin of his armies, deserting them.

Now, as a new darkness descends on Eriador and smoke issues forth from Mount Doom once again, the ancient realm of Angmar seems to stir once more. A cold wind blows from the north and all evil things feel a call to return to Carn Dûm. The Wise worry that a new servant of Sauron occupies the fortress again. Orcs are coming north from the south and east; Trolls venture out from their hiding holes in the Ettenmoors, crossing the Grey Waste northwards. Even tribes of Hill-men from Rhudaur have started to answer the call.

Although the High Elves and the Dûnedain keep a careful watch on its borders, few dare to venture into that desolate land. Who has explored Angmar and returned speaks of a grey desert of gnarled trees and broken stones. Freezing winds blast down from the mountains, to bite at every traveller. It seems that winter rules all year long in this land and that Carn Dûm itself lies still and waiting under the ice.

Beneath the snow are bare traces of the roadways that once crossed this land. Towers, encampments and entire villages lay dead beneath the cold. But at night one can sometimes see lights in the towers and hear strange sounds on the wind. It may be that Angmar is waking up, and that may bring doom to the North and prevent the Wise from sending any help south to combat the growing threat of Mordor.

CARN DÛM

Once the seat of power of the Witch-king of the North, this icy tower is hidden in the endless labyrinth of passes and tunnels that snake through the Mountains of Angmar. Even though the Witch-king himself has yet to return home, rumours of rekindled forges, gathering armies, and fell sorcery occurring in the dungeons of the broken tower are heard as far as Bree itself. Whether these rumours have any substance to them or not remains to be seen, but the growing threat of the Enemy's forces and their increased presence in Eriador hints at there being a terrible truth behind these dark whispers.

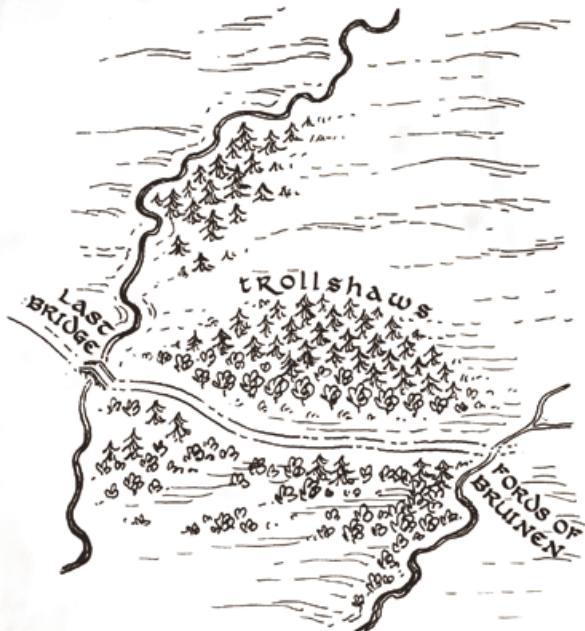


THE ETENMOORS

Under the looming reach of the Misty Mountains is a bleak highland of fog-shrouded moors and marshland that is inhospitable to all but the hardiest. Even the Rangers of the North are loath to travel there, for it's a cold and unforgiving land. Its close proximity to both Mount Gram and the Misty Mountains keeps the Ettenmoors wrapped in a thick fog that sunlight never seems to fully pierce. A great many Trolls wander this region, eager to catch wayward travellers lost in the wilderness and devour them. So brutal are these terrible beasts that, as if driven to madness, they have even turned their attention to Mount Gram itself and on more than one occasion raided the Goblin tunnels that are still hidden from the sun beneath the stone cliffs of that rocky terrain.

MOUNT GRAM

A long mountain range rises west out from the Misty Mountains and marks the southern border between Angmar and the Ettenmoors. Its highest peak is Mount Gram, a name remembered mostly in songs from the Shire as the domain of Golfindbul, who was slain by Bandobras "Bullroarer" Took during the Battle of Greenfields several hundred years ago. In that silent and shadowy region, Orcs, Goblins, and even some Trolls have restored their numbers, now rivalling those of the days when Angmar drove them to war. Though they remain secret, it is only a matter of time before their craving for blood and the will of their master drives them to fall once more on Eriador.



The TROLLSHAWS

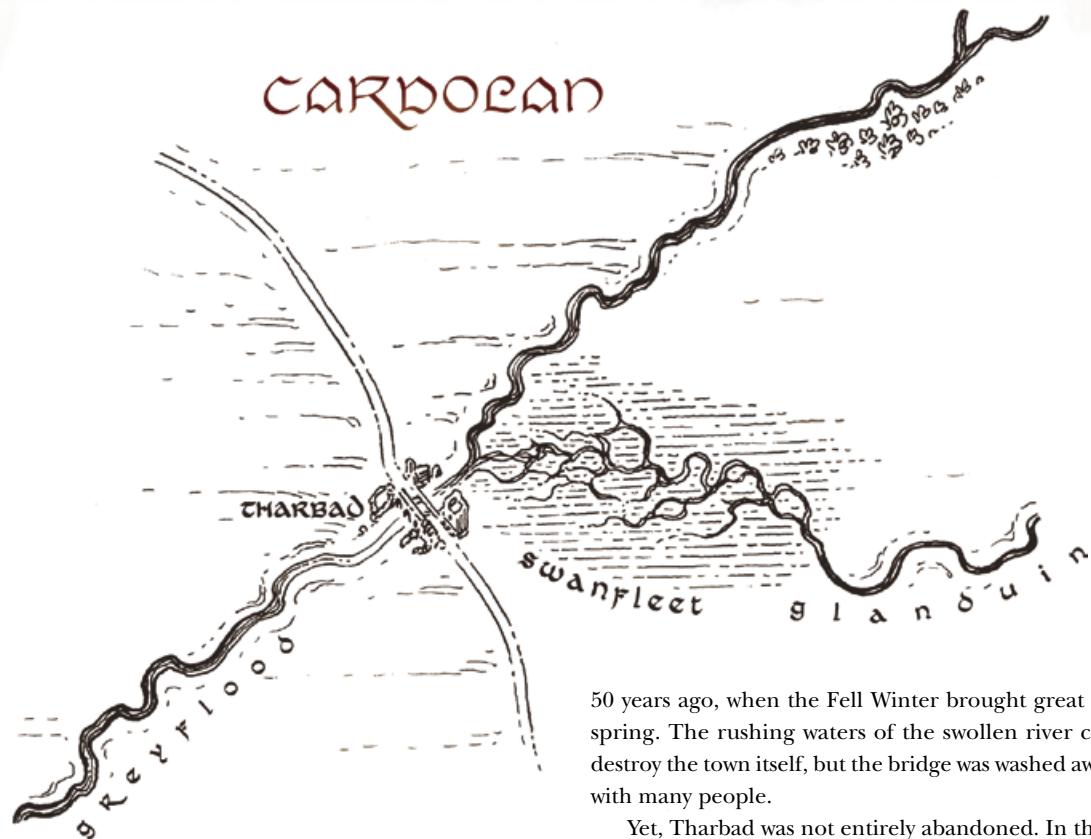
In the land beyond the Last Bridge, between the Hoarwell River in the west and the Loudwater River in the east, the East Road is almost swallowed by a rough, rocky landscape, broken only by thick patches of woodland. The horrid brutes that hide in the numerous caverns that dot the stony landscape are the source of the land's name: The Trollshaws. The few hardy (or foolish) travellers that dare go so far from civilization and travel so near to the Misty Mountains should be wise to never stray from the Road.

Should some reckless wanderer step off the path, they will find broken towers and ancient castles dragged down to rubble, hidden atop the low stony highlands that cast long shadows over the East Road, while the forests between these long abandoned buildings are filled with dangerous predators and savage foes — many of whom have come down from the Coldfells or out of their dark holes in the Misty Mountains. Regardless of their origin, they have no love for the Free People, seeing them as little more than prey to be slaughtered.

TROLL-HOLES

Characters exploring the North Downs will often stumble upon ruins and ancient testimonies of the war that destroyed this place. The Loremaster can roll on the following table to determine what they find.

D12	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
1	Not Alone	The Player-heroes begin to explore a cave that seems both shallow and abandoned. But looks are deceiving and when they find their way deeper into the cave, they suddenly come face-to-face with a fearsome Great Cave-troll!
2-3	Root Nest	A large tree has split wide open at its base and descends into a shallow, muddy hole that serves as lair to a Stone-Troll Chief. It is slippery and difficult to navigate.
4-5	Crumbling Tower	A once magnificent tower that has collapsed in on itself has become the home of a Stone-Troll Robber. It is of dubious stability and could cave in entirely at any time.
6-7	Shallow Cave	A cave that goes no more than a few feet into the side of a small stone hill is as close to a traditional Troll-hole as one can imagine, and could easily be avoided were it not so close to the East Road.
8-9	Behind the Falls	A small pool of water with a low waterfall coming off a stone rise serves as the home to a Stone-Troll Robber, who wades into the water before ducking beneath the falls and coming up on the other side in an easily overlooked lair.
10-11	Under Construction	The characters stumble upon a Cave-troll Slinker who is tearing away at trees and rocks, freeing an opening leading to a cave.
12	Abandoned	The Player-heroes stumble upon a Troll that has been turned to stone by the sun while within sight of its Troll-hole. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a lesser Hoard.



CARDOLAN

THE LAST BRIDGE

Approximately one hundred miles east from Weathertop, a great stone bridge crosses the Hoarwell River in three arches over a deep gorge. Crossing it means entering the Trollshaws, a very dangerous wild land. As its name implies, this bridge is the last opportunity for a wanderer to turn back and return to more civilised areas.

The stones of the Last Bridge are old and worn, often slick when rain has fallen, with little more than a knee-high barrier on each side to prevent travellers from slipping and falling into the cold, rushing waters of the Hoarwell far below. This is taken as yet another sign of both the Bridge's age and the impending doom awaiting any who cross it.

Tharbad

This ruined city lies where the Greyflood is no longer navigable for sea-going ships. Of course, this hasn't mattered for many, many years, but there was once plentiful commerce in Tharbad, even before the founding of the city proper. A great bridge was built first, then a fortress to guard it, and then an entire city grew up around the crossing. Tharbad endured, through wars, plagues, and worse, though its population dwindled. It became no longer a place where travellers met, but a market town for the locals. The latest calamity struck about

50 years ago, when the Fell Winter brought great floods in spring. The rushing waters of the swollen river could not destroy the town itself, but the bridge was washed away, along with many people.

Yet, Tharbad was not entirely abandoned. In these years of Twilight, a former bandit by the name of Gurnow rules the city with a strong hand. He has promised to keep the road safe, repair the bridge, and protect the surviving inhabitants from harm. He tells the folk that he has many friends in other lands and that Tharbad will be restored. The city waits to see if his speeches will yet turn into actions.

More detailed information on Tharbad can be found in *Ruins of the Lost Realm*.

LINDON

The wide seaward land to the west of the Blue Mountains is the Elven realm of Lindon. The region is what remains of the great country of Beleriand, destroyed almost entirely in wars that only the long-lived Elves remember. Originally populated by the survivors of that land, it was for a while the greatest nation of the Elves in Middle-earth. Gil-galad, the last king of the Noldor, dwelt there, as did Celeborn and Galadriel, before they went to Lórien. In time, Celebrimbor led many of the High Elves away east, to found Eregion, after hearing of the discovery of Mithril in the mines of Moria.

The land of Lindon comprises Forlindon and Harlindon, the coastlands to the north and south of the Gulf of Lhûn. It once included land to the east of the Ered Luin, but today the Tower Hills represent its most eastern borders. No Men cross into Lindon, but Dwarves still maintain some remote halls in the Blue Mountains, both north and south of the Gulf of Lhûn.

OTHER LANDS

Where the Misty Mountains reach their southernmost end, there opens the Gap of Rohan, the gate leading from Eriador to the lands of Calenardhon. It is a green province of rolling hills and meadows, bordered to the south by the Ered Nimrais, the White Mountains. It is today known as the Riddermark, the Mark of the Riders.

Further to the East, the Great River descends from the North in wide bends, eventually slowing its course into a vast marshland. Before the Anduin reaches the Sea, it enters the land of Gondor, the South-kingdom of the Men of the West. Beyond its borders lies Harad to the south, and to the east, the black land of Mordor.

MORDOR: Encircled by ranges of broken and barren peaks to the north, west and south, lies the Land of

Mordor. It is a vast, desolate region, made of mournful plains of ash and blasted rock, dominated in the north by Orodruin, the Mountain of Fire.

It is here that Sauron forged the One Ring, long ago, in the Chambers of Fire of Mount Doom, when he tried to seize dominion over all the Rings of Power. And it is here that he has returned, when he left his fortress of Dol Guldur.

Since his return, Sauron has bent his will on the rebuilding of his power and the Dark Tower of Barad-dûr. In the last twenty years, his many servants have bored all the hills and rocks about the Black Gate of Mordor, filling every tunnel with deep armouries for the mustering of a great host. Away south, by the dark waters of Lake Nûrn, slaves till the fields for the provision of many armies.



At the mouth of the Gulf of Lhûn is Mithlond, the Grey Havens, from where the Elven-ships bound to leave Middle-earth set sail and where Círdan the Shipwright is master. Since the death of Gil-galad at the time of the Last Alliance of Elves and Men, the rule of the master of the Grey Havens is acknowledged all over Lindon. Accounted among the Wise, he sends messengers often to Elrond, to offer and receive counsel.

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

The Ered Luin are an ancient mountain range, where two of the greatest cities of the Dwarves once were found. Nogrod and Belegost are no more, as they were destroyed at the end of the First Age, when Thangorodrim was broken. At that time, many Dwarves went to Khazad-dûm, but the Ered Luin were never entirely forsaken. Many halls and mines are still open and populated, especially now that the Kingdom Under the Mountain has been restored, and there is travel and commerce between the Blue Mountains, Erebor, and the Iron Hills. In fact, Dwarves passing along the great East Road are the most reliable source of news in places like the Shire and Bree.

Most of the mines that are still active in the Blue Mountains are in the southern reach, below the Gulf of Lhûn. Many Dwarves dwelling there do not belong to the House of Durin. Some veins have been worked for thousands of years, slowly and steadily by the same family of Dwarves over the ages.







appendix

“But great though his lore may be, it must have a source.”



The following sections contain information on a variety of topics — Patrons presents biographical data and rules concerning many wise or otherwise distinguished individuals living at the end of the

Third Age and suited to become allies of the Company, while Landmarks discusses one of the main ways that *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying* presents playable material, including *The Star of the Mist*, a full example of the new format.

PATRONS

“And now,” said the wizard, turning back to Frodo, “the decision lies with you. But I will always help you.”

As seen on page 16, in the course of their adventures the Player-heroes will sooner or later encounter others who, like them, oppose the encroaching Shadow. Among them are Men, Elves, and Dwarves, even Hobbits, who started to fight the Enemy long before them, and are actively seeking worthy allies to join in their fight.

Whenever a Company makes the acquaintance of such an individual, they might adopt them as their Patron. A Company typically encounters a potential Patron during play, in the course of an Adventuring Phase.

In time, the Player-heroes are bound to meet several such individuals throughout their career, but may designate only one of them as their main Patron at any time — a Company enjoys exclusively the Fellowship Bonus and advantages related to the Patron they choose as their main one.

The Player-heroes designate their main Patron when they are in the same place as the selected individual during a Fellowship Phase, by choosing the Meet Patron undertaking (see page 113).

The following section presents some of the most influential individuals living at the end of the Third Age who may act as Patrons for the Company.

BALIN, SON OF FUNDIN

...there was a very old-looking Dwarf on the step with a white beard and a scarlet hood; and he too hopped inside as soon as the door was open, just as if he had been invited.

Born in the year 2763 of the Third Age, Balin is the eldest son of Fundin, one of Durin's Folk. He and his younger brother Dwalin are of royal blood, as they count King Náin II among their ancestors. A venerable Dwarf, Balin has seen much, including the death of too many allies and dear friends. He fought the Orcs when his father died defending Moria, was there when Thráin disappeared in Mirkwood, and was with Thorin Oakenshield on the quest that ended with the liberation of Erebor and the death of the Dragon.

For decades, Balin was Thorin's counsellor, and now serves Dáin Ironfoot, the King Under the Mountain. One of Dáin's most trusted officers, he is an adventurer at heart, and rarely remains at court for long periods of time. Despite his status among his kin, he is surprisingly humble and polite. While still doughty, Balin's age is beginning to show. He sometimes mutters to himself and dodders as if every day of his years presses upon him.

Balin, Son of Fundin

Medium humanoid (Dwarf)

OCCUPATION Adventurer, Envoy

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Eager, Honourable

LANGUAGES Khuzdul, Westron

ENCOUNTERING BALIN

According to his nature as a wanderer and his duty as a messenger of Dáin, Balin is often on the road, travelling across Wilderland and Eriador. He sometimes journeys with Gandalf, to suit his own or the Wizard's purposes. Balin enjoys his visits to the Shire to see his dear old friend Bilbo Baggins, and out of a general fondness for Hobbits and their excellent hospitality. He also goes to the Blue Mountains regularly, to work with the Dwarves residing there.

Balin is unusually woodcrafty for a Dwarf, adept at tracking, fire-making, and pathfinding. He often serves as a lookout and takes pride in his acute sight. Balin knows well the regions he traverses when he journeys from Erebor to the Blue Mountains, having made the trip several times, though he prefers not to cross Mirkwood, even to this day.

One might encounter Balin in a small inn along the way between Erebor and the Blue Mountains, camping in the wild near the road, or sharing a pipe with old friends. He is generous to a fault, kind of spirit, and easily the wisest and best of those who reclaimed the Lonely Mountain. He may accompany a group of adventurers if their purposes align, or even for a while if they are going roughly in the same direction.

BALIN AS A PATRON

Unlike many Dwarves, Balin is genuinely interested in other folks and takes kindly to Hobbits especially. Of the Dwarves of Thorin's Company, Balin is the only one still associating with Gandalf long after the death of Smaug, as he shares the Wizard's concern about the growing Shadow.

In addition to that, Balin aims to restore the strength and prominence of the Dwarves in Eriador, whether through direct action, or by setting into motion agents who might affect the change he wishes to see. Like all his folk, he hates Orcs and their ilk, and seeks in every way to drive them back wherever he can. His adventuring has made him wiser and more cautious though, and he often counsels patience and observation as a tactic, versus rash or violent action.

Balin is eager to know anything that can be learned regarding Dwarf-holds fallen to the Enemy, and actively encourages his allies to scout those places or rid them of any foul denizens therein. In particular, Balin is interested to find out



all he can about Moria, where his father was slain. Together with two of his fellow survivors of Thorin's company — Ori and Óin — he speaks often about entering Khazad-dûm and exploring it. So far, King Dáin of Erebor has cautioned them against such an endeavour, though it is clear that they are not to be dissuaded.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS

+1

ADVANTAGE: BALIN'S COUNSEL

You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after an attack roll (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used.

BILBO BAGGINS

...he looked and behaved exactly like a second edition of his solid and comfortable father; got something a bit queer in his make-up from the Took side, something that only waited for a chance to come out.

In the year 2965, Bilbo is a vigorous Hobbit — At seventy-five he is very much the same as he was at fifty, at the time of his remarkable disappearance and surprising return. On the surface, the son of Bungo Baggins and Belladonna Took is a

prime example of a respectable Hobbit. He is a great lover of pipe-weed, good food, and fine waistcoats, and lives in one of the cosiest Hobbit-holes in the Shire. But this is not all there is to Mr Baggins.

Bilbo's unexpected journey with Thorin Oakenshield and company changed him profoundly, setting him apart from his fellow countrymen. Perhaps that adventure provided a spark that ignited his Tookish and more adventurous side, and he certainly returned from Erebor a wealthier Hobbit. All this estranged him from much of the (admittedly tedious) Shire society, leading him to focus on his own, peculiar lifestyle, the company of friends, and working on his diary.

Twenty years after his great adventure, Bilbo remains curious about news from outside the Shire, and is always gathering rumours and bits of lore to add to his personal records — he is planning to turn his private diary into a real book.

Bilbo Baggins

Small humanoid (Hobbit)

OCCUPATION Retired adventurer, Burglar

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Cunning, Fair-spoken

LANGUAGES Westron



ENCOUNTERING BILBO

The Bagginses have lived in the neighbourhood of The Hill from time out of mind, and Bilbo has no desire to break that long-standing tradition. His address is at Bag End, Underhill, Hobbiton, and it's at Bag End that the Hobbit is likely to be found, probably having tea, or standing at the door, smoking a pipe. That said, his experiences with Thorin's Company and a Dragon have awakened in him a certain appetite for adventure, and sometimes he stays away from home for much longer than is considered appropriate in the Shire. When travelling further away than Buckland, or Michel Delving, he is often in the company of Dwarves.

If encountered outside the Shire, Bilbo might carry his Elf-dagger, Sting, sheathed at his side. But he has yet to encounter a danger that might require him to use it — if threatened, the Hobbit displays an uncanny ability to disappear almost instantly, a talent far outstripping the normal Hobbitish affinity for escaping notice. He always remembers to bring a pocket-handkerchief along.

BILBO AS A PATRON

Unbeknownst to his fellow Hobbits who just consider him to be strange, if not completely mad, Bilbo knows a lot about the world outside the Shire, and is well aware of its dangers. He keeps himself as informed as he can, exchanging tidings



BILBO'S MAGIC RING

Bilbo found many valuable things in the course of his last adventure, but the greatest treasure he brought back is one he doesn't know much about. It's the magic ring he found in an underground cave, under the Misty Mountains, and that he has kept a great secret. To him, it's a precious commodity, as wearing it makes him invisible — a quality that Bilbo finds invaluable when unpleasant callers come looking for him.

This ring has been in Bilbo's possession for more than twenty years now, and what in the beginning seemed nothing more than a curiosity to the Hobbit is slowly developing a growing hold over his mind. He keeps it in the pocket of his waistcoat upon a fine silver chain at all times, and has developed the habit of slipping a finger or two in the pocket to touch it, as if to reassure himself that it's still there.

with travellers and by writing and receiving letters. When he learns about potential threats that might affect the Shire, he does what he can to enlist the help of anyone who might do something about it.

Being a Hobbit of considerable means, Bilbo is all too happy to arrange hospitality, finance expeditions, and to generally encourage those who would dare to go out and have adventures. He provides support merely in return for a good story and perhaps a souvenir or keepsake — he is especially interested in maps, and geographical lore in general, which he uses to amend his own charts.

Contrary to this inclination towards hosting a veritable rogues gallery of guests from far afield, he is growing increasingly isolated when it comes to his fellow Hobbits. He finds them staid, close-minded, and demonstrates little patience for their shenanigans and petty foibles. To the eyes of the Shire-folk, Bilbo is becoming more and more an eccentric recluse.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS**ADVANTAGE: BILBO'S HOSPITALITY**

+2

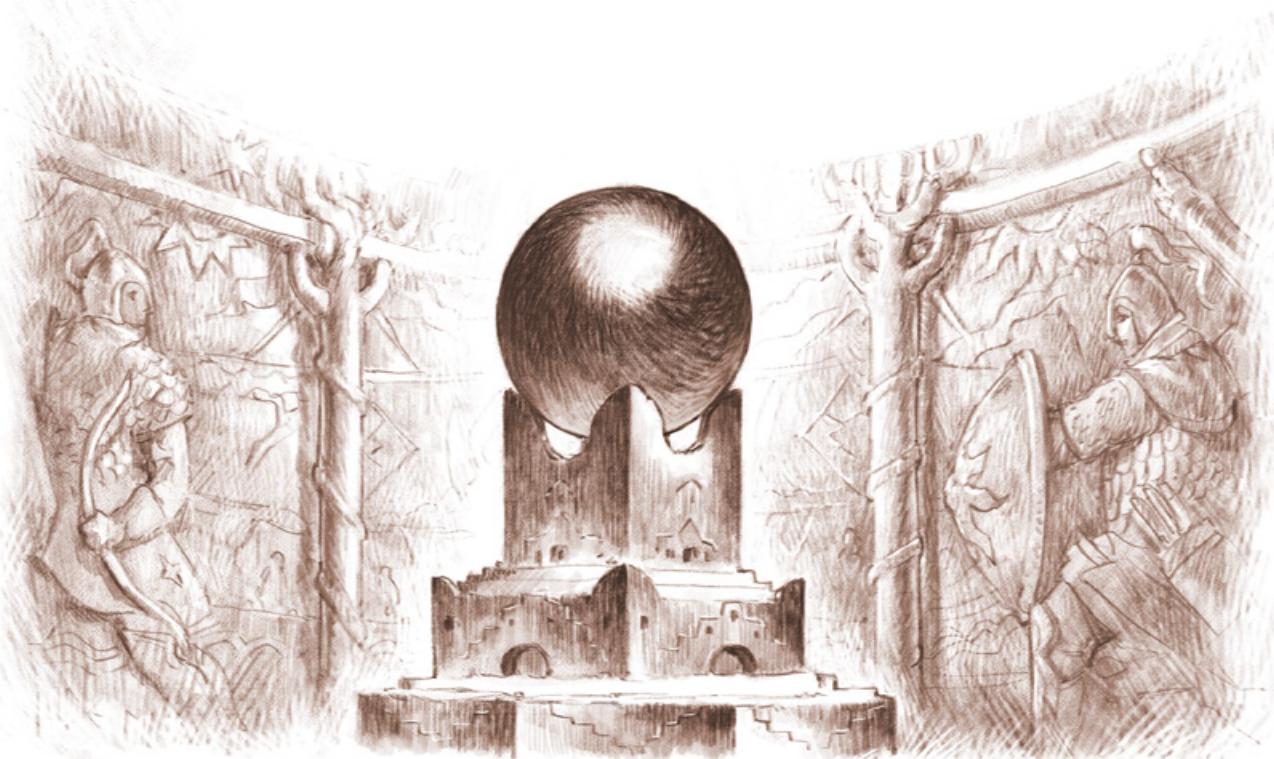
By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to visit Bilbo you additionally raise the Fellowship rating by +1 until the next Fellowship Phase.

CÍRDAN THE SHIPWRIGHT

As they came to the gates Círdan the Shipwright came forth to greet them. Very tall he was, and his beard was long, and he was grey and old, save that his eyes were keen as stars...

Círdan is perhaps the most ancient Elf still living in Middle-earth. He has witnessed three ages of the world, and has been given many titles. Today, he is mostly known as the Shipwright, and the Master of the Grey Havens. He is accounted among the Wise and the Great, and has served as a member of the White Council for many long centuries. For a time, he was the keeper of one of the three Elven Rings of Power, for he bore Narya, the Ring of Fire, until he gave it to Gandalf the Grey.

Círdan is currently the chief of all Elves residing west of the Blue Mountains, in Lindon. He has been leading them since Gil-galad died fighting Sauron in the War of the Last Alliance. Many consider him to possess the greatest gift of foresight, and thus to be able to see further and deeper than any other in Middle-earth. That is perhaps why the task of preparing the ships that all Elves board when leaving Middle-earth to cross the sea to Valinor is appointed to him.



THE ELENDEL STONE

Círdan and the Elves of Lindon guard one of the seven "seeing stones" brought to Middle-earth from Númenor by Elendil. It is locked away in the tower of Elostirion, in the Tower Hills. Also known as a *palantír*, this stone is a perfectly smooth globe, made of a dark, glassy material, about a foot in diameter. According to old lore, the *palantíri* allowed their owners to see things from a distance, and could communicate with each other. Only a few among the Wise know whether the Elendil Stone is still capable of revealing any vision, as the other stones are deemed lost, or destroyed.



Círdan the Shipwright

Medium humanoid (Elf)

OCCUPATION Emissary, Lore-master

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Lordly, Patient

LANGUAGES All

ENCOUNTERING CÍRDAN

Círdan dwells with his people at the great port of Mithlond, on the banks of the Gulf of Lune. He rarely ventures forth from the Grey Havens, but all who are of good spirit and come in peace are welcome to come and see him there. Galdor of the Havens is his herald and envoy, and often travels across Middle-earth representing the Shipwright wherever needed, and speaking with his full authority.

In person, Círdan is very tall, even for an Elf. His appearance is that of a grey but vigorous individual, with a long, silver beard, a rarity among the Fair Folk. He is gracious and hospitable, receiving all guests with full courtesy and kindness. His bright eyes are keen, yet profound — If anyone was to look into them for a few moments, they would see a deep well of memory and experience, telling of the countless things that Círdan has accomplished over his long lifetime.



CÍRDAN AS A PATRON

Círdan knows that the Grey Havens play a role of primary importance in the war against the Shadow. The Five Wizards landed here when they came to Middle-earth almost two thousand years ago, and it is here that many great fleets armed for the defeat of Sauron found safe harbourage. In the twilight of the Third Age, Mithlond serves as the last refuge for those who desire to leave Middle-earth, and Círdan considers it his duty to ensure that their passage is made as safely as possible.

The Grey Havens also guard a great wealth of knowledge. Círdan's memory goes back to a time before the light of the Sun and Moon, and his knowledge rivals that of Elrond, greatest of lore-masters. The Lord of the Havens and that of

Imladris seek the counsel of one another, and their messengers can be often found on the great East Road on errands from their masters.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS**ADVANTAGE:
THE SHIPWRIGHT'S FORESIGHT****+1**

You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after an ability check (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used. By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to go and see Círdan you additionally receive a rumour from the Loremaster.

GANDALF THE GREY

At the end of the second week in September a cart came in through Bywater from the direction of the Brandywine Bridge in broad daylight. An old man was driving it all alone. He wore a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, and a silver scarf.

To the Hobbits of the Shire, Gandalf the Grey is just a pilgrim, a wanderer without a home. He says he's a Wizard, but the extent of his magical skill seems to be limited to his wonderful fireworks and to the prodigious smoke-rings he produces with his pipe. But the wanderings of Gandalf have brought him much farther than his beloved Shire, to lands where he is known by different names: to the Elves he is Mithrandir, Tharkûn is how the Dwarves know him, and Men in the South call him Gandalf Greyhame. In these countries, Gandalf is not always welcome — indeed, some call him a bringer of ill-news, as he often comes when a threat is near.

In truth, Gandalf is the greatest enemy of Sauron in the Third Age. Few among the Wise know that the Wizards first came to Middle-earth out of the Uttermost West almost two thousand years ago, on a mission to thwart the Dark Lord's machinations. Gandalf's appointed task is to bolster the hearts of those who would fight against evil everywhere, and that's what he has done for centuries now, counselling Dwarves, Elves, and Men, always bringing light where darkness lies.

Gandalf is the secret bearer of Narya, the Ring of Fire, the third Elven-ring created by Celebrimbor of Eregion. It was given to him for safekeeping and for his own use by Círdan the Shipwright. Narya is an invaluable aid to Gandalf in his mission to inspire others in their struggles against the Shadow. If pressed into combat, the Grey Pilgrim unsheathes w, an ancient Elven blade, forged in Gondolin for the Goblin-wars.

Gandalf the Grey**Medium humanoid (Wizard)****OCCUPATION** Adventurer, Wizard**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES** Bold, Cunning**LANGUAGES** All**ENCOUNTERING GANDALF**

Gandalf can be encountered almost anywhere — riding across the countryside on horseback, walking alone or in the company of friends or allies, or even in the seat of a horse-drawn cart. He may not show up when called but often appears when needed. Gandalf holds a particular fondness for the Hobbits of the Shire and when he is meeting someone in Eriador, he will always choose the inn in Bree as a meeting place.

When encountered along the road, the Grey Wizard may appear just as an old man, with a long white beard and carrying a staff that he sometimes leans upon as he walks. But





when he sits in council, his white hair and piercing dark eyes make him look like a wise king from some ancient legend.

Gandalf does not resort to using magic lightly, as he fears it would betray his presence to the eyes of the Enemy. When he does, he displays a mastery of fire and smoke, a reflection of his personality. Seemingly irascible, the old Wizard is also just as quick to burst into warm laughter. He might gently chide a friend, offer words of reassurance, then wax wroth at those who fail to show him due respect.

GANDALF AS A PATRON

Once, Círdan of the Havens said that the Grey Wanderer's mission is to 'rekindle hearts in a world that grows chill'. In accordance with this mandate, Gandalf labours to inspire all individuals into action, and set events in motion that will eventually spiral into greater consequences. The Quest of Erebor is an example of how Gandalf acts — helping Thorin Oakenshield to reclaim his lost kingdom led to the elimination of a Dragon that could have become a terrible weapon in the hands of the Enemy.

Unlike the head of his order, Saruman, who deals in devices and instruments from his high tower in Isengard, Gandalf moves among those who oppose Sauron, listening to their pleas and providing help when emergencies occur. This has made Gandalf welcome in most places, despite his reputation as a troublemaker.

A member of the White Council, Gandalf is the one among the Wise that is most likely to act promptly. While the others may counsel patience and caution, Gandalf moves decisively, putting himself in danger, infiltrating the lairs of the Enemy, and facing evil without hesitation. His goal is to lead the Free Peoples by example, encouraging them to set aside ancient rivalries and petty disputes, and to work together in defence of all that is good and worth keeping.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS

+2

ADVANTAGE:

THE WISDOM OF THE GREY PILGRIM

You can spend a Fellowship point to roll an additional d20 after a saving throw (but before the outcome is determined), and choose which of the d20s is used.

GILRAEN THE FAIR

After a few years Gilraen took leave of Elrond and returned to her own people in Eriador, and lived alone...

A woman of noble lineage, Gilraen is the mother of Aragorn, the current chieftain of the Rangers of the North and Heir of Isildur. She was quite young when she married, and became a widow soon after she gave birth to her son. When that came to pass, Elrond took her and her newborn to dwell with him in Rivendell, and he raised Aragorn as a son of his own — Aragorn was called 'Estel' in Imladris (Sindarin for 'Hope'), to conceal his lineage and true name from his enemies.

In the year 2965, Gilraen is not yet sixty years old. Being one of the long lived Dúnedain, she is in the fullness of her strength of body and mind, and possesses a measure of the foresight of her people. When her son left Rivendell to seek adventure a few years ago, Gilraen decided to remain in Imladris. She often leaves the Last Homely House on short trips, to visit her own people in Eriador and confer with the captains of the Rangers of the North, in the absence of their chieftain.

Gilraen the Fair

Medium humanoid (Dúnadan)

OCCUPATION Counsellor, Seer

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Grim, Wary

LANGUAGES Sindarin, Westron

ENCOUNTERING GILRAEN

Gilraen is accorded great respect among the Dúnedain of Eriador as the widow of Arathorn, their previous chieftain, and as the mother of the Heir of Isildur. She is also deemed to be foresighted, having inherited that gift from Ivorwen, her mother. Many captains of the Rangers seek her advice, knowing her to be a wise and prudent counsellor.

Anyone who meets her will find Gilraen to be a tall and slender woman, her demeanour marked by sorrow, but who refuses to be bent under the weight of her misfortune.

Gilraen can be met in the company of small bands of Rangers, along the many paths trod by her folk in the vicinity of Rivendell, or in the Weather Hills and the North Downs. She never stays away for more than a few weeks at a time though, always returning to the safety of the house of Elrond to rest.

GILRAEN AS A PATRON

Having lost her husband Arathorn to an Orc-arrow, and his father Arador to the ferocity of Hill-Trolls in the Coldfells, Gilraen has experienced personally the hatred of the Enemy for her folk. She knows full well that the Dúnedain of the North and the entire region of Eriador will never be safe if evil creatures are allowed to prowl undisturbed. In the absence of her son the chieftain, Gilraen makes sure that the Rangers don't forsake their duty as guardians of the land of old Arnor and the borders of the Bree-land and the Shire. In this, she has found a staunch ally in the Wizard Gandalf. When she is in Rivendell, she never misses a chance to encourage the sons of Elrond to go out and hunt all monstrous creatures.

Adventurers worthy of Gilraen's trust find themselves enjoying the respect of the Rangers of the North. When out in the wild, they can count on the help of many scouts, and are provided directions to find their hidden refuges and caches of supplies.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS

ADVANTAGE: GILRAEN'S FOLK

0

At the start of a journey, you can spend a Fellowship point. During that journey, as long as you are within the territory that once was the old realm of Arnor, you can roll a d20 after each roll on the Journey Events table (see page 105), and choose whether the Loremaster uses their roll or yours. By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to go and see Gilraen you additionally receive a rumour from the Loremaster.

TOM BOMBADIL AND LADY GOLDBERRY

'Tom Bombadil is the Master. No one has ever caught old Tom walking in the forest, wading in the water, leaping on the hill-tops under light and shadow. He has no fear. Tom Bombadil is master.'

Old Tom Bombadil roamed all over Eriador, when the woods that today are called the Old Forest reached Dunland in the south. As the forest shrunk, so did his domain. He is a strange creature, known by many names — to the Elves he is Iarwain Ben-adar ('oldest and fatherless'), a name that attempts to define him. For he is ancient even for the long-lived Elves, and they don't know whence he came. He was there before the Dark Lord arrived, he welcomed the first rivers and trees, and his life is tied inextricably to that of his land.

Tom appears as a red-cheeked man with curly brown hair, wrinkles around his eyes etched deep from mirth, usually clad in a blue coat and yellow boots. He is often engaged in seemingly frivolous activities, like picking water-lilies, as if he hasn't a care in the whole of Middle-earth. In truth, the opposite is true: Tom cares about all living things, so much so that he cannot distinguish the worth of one life over another.

Bombadil shares his life with Goldberry, the River-woman's daughter. She is a lady as fair as an Elf-maiden, and she is as enigmatic as her companion. Just standing in her presence provokes a marvellous delight in those who enter the house of Tom Bombadil, a joy that is felt deeply in their hearts.

Tom Bombadil and Goldberry

Medium humanoid (Ranger)

OCCUPATION The Master (Tom),
River-daughter (Goldberry)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Absent-minded,
Merry (Tom); Fair, Fair-spoken (Goldberry)

LANGUAGES All

ENCOUNTERING TOM AND GOLDBERRY

The house of Tom Bombadil is found just beyond the Old Forest to the east, where the Withywindle runs down from its spring in the Barrow-downs. Under Tom's roof and at his table, guests will find their heart contented with peaceful slumber, fine company, joyous song, and all the simple pleasures that come with a humble heart.

Bombadil is known to journey into the Old Forest and the Barrow-downs, having no fear of Old Man Willow nor the wight-haunted hills. With a laugh and a wink, Tom charms all he encounters, singing the fierce to sleep and rousing the rest with a song and a merry dance.

Goldberry can be found anywhere along the course of the Withywindle, braiding daisies or water-lilies, or singing to the gurgling waters. She acts as if there is no menace in the world



worth her concern, as she knows that Tom will come running if ever she needs him. The two are friendly to strangers but are no less strange to their friends, and they open their doors to any who they meet.

TOM AND GOLDBERRY AS PATRONS

Though Tom's power is as deep as the earth is old, his mastery seems to be limited to his little land, within bounds that he has set. Within those bounds he fears nothing, and he is seemingly unconquerable, but he won't step beyond them for any reason. Adventurers winning his friendship and that of Goldberry will find that when called, they appear almost instantly anywhere within their domain. Even the weather itself seems to behave according to their needs and whims.

Tom knows all the ways and the lore of the Old Forest, and he can speak at length about all manner of such things, for

there is little in his realm that he does not understand fully. He tells many remarkable stories, speaking softly or even singing, inspiring strange flights of fancy, vistas of untold history and of things forgotten, both majestic and meagre.

Tom asks little of his friends directly, but he might point them in the direction of a problem that needs solving, whether it's an unruly Wight from the Barrow-downs or a calf lost within the Old Forest. Goldberry seems to have no need of anything beyond what she has, but she might call upon a Company of well-meaning heroes to aid others in need.

FELLOWSHIP BONUS

+2

ADVANTAGE:

MASTER OF WOOD, WATER AND HILL

Spend all your remaining Fellowship to call Tom or Goldberry's intervention anywhere in Tom's country.

LANDMARKS

Not far ahead were dreary hills, rising higher and higher, dark with trees. On some of them were old castles with an evil look, as if they had been built by wicked people.

A look at the map of Eriador shows how northwestern Middle-earth is a vast region, seemingly empty for the most part. What the map cannot reveal is the long history of this area, the borders of the many kingdoms that rose and fell in centuries long past.

The land still bears many traces of that long history — ruins dot the countryside, broken towers and walls that the current denizens of Eriador use as landmarks to find their bearings, or to delineate the boundaries of their fields, or even quarry to build their modest houses.

But many more hide under the tall grass, or lie buried under dirt accumulated over countless years. Some are known and shunned, and even more have not been visited by the living in centuries.

THERE AND BACK AGAIN

In the course of the game, the Player-heroes learn of the existence of landmarks by gathering rumours, small snippets of legends and hearsay, speaking of frightening creatures and hidden treasure (see page 112). When they decide to explore them during an Adventuring Phase, the Loremaster uses the rules for journeys to get the Company there, and then refers to the description of the landmark to play out its exploration.

In brief, landmarks allow the players and the Loremaster to play open-ended, self-contained scenarios, complete with the description of locations, denizens, and events. What they don't provide is a predetermined plot, articulated in orderly scenes.

Loremasters can design their own landmarks using the guidelines below, but complete landmarks are included in supplements for the game.

The *Star in the Mist*, the section starting on page 222, is an example of a fully-developed landmark.

STRUCTURE OF LANDMARKS

All landmarks presented for the game will follow the same structure of presentation. Loremasters can use this information to create their own adventure locations.

1. NAME

Generally, this is the name that local superstition or legend gives the place ('Deadmen's Dyke', 'Norbury of the Kings', 'Moria', etc.)

2. RUMOUR

A rumour is the piece of information about the place that the Player-heroes pick up while adventuring or during the Fellowship Phase. It might contain a mix of true and false information, filtered through local prejudices, superstitions, etc.

OLD LORE: Further information available to Player-heroes who research the landmark, while adventuring or during the Fellowship Phase. Generally, *Old Lore* has more precise and truthful information that can be obtained with a successful Intelligence (Old Lore) check (DC 15 or higher).

3. BACKGROUND

This is an overview of the place for the Loremaster, summarising its main features and relating why it is interesting or dangerous.

It should include general directions on how to get there starting from a known place ('three days north of Amon Sûl'), but no information about how to get there in game terms is presented — for that, the Loremaster needs simply to use the rules for journeys.

JOURNEY EVENTS: This section relates information useful to set up potential accidents or other noteworthy events that might occur when the Company is approaching the landmark.

4. MAP

A drawing illustrating the landmark in as much detail as possible. It may be a map or cutout, always keyed to the descriptions given in the *Locations* section (see below).

5. LOCATIONS

A number of paragraphs describing the place in detail, including information on Treasure, or potential encounters with denizens and nonplayer characters. Some encounters may be connected to the *Schemes and Trouble* section (below).

6. SCHEMES AND TROUBLE

This final section describes how external forces can interfere with the exploration of the site. Also, here are listed potential self-contained events and accidents that may occur in the course of the Adventuring Phase.

Sometimes, this section contains information potentially tying a landmark to a greater picture, for example, including the schemes of a recurring villain.

A NOTE ABOUT RULES PRESENTATION IN LANDMARKS

Landmarks offer descriptions that are as simple and to the point as possible. The text assumes that the Loremaster is able to direct the Adventuring Phase conforming to the decisions of the playing group, and can adjudicate all situations by simply applying the rules as presented in the game.

For example, this means that if a landmark requires the Company to travel many miles to reach it, the Loremaster will set up a scene using the Journey rules — without the text of the landmark addressing this specifically.

Likewise, if the description of a landmark confronts the Player-heroes with an obstacle, for example a sheer tower to climb, the Loremaster will set up a scene using the rules that apply best to the situation.

As an exception to this rule, the sample landmark presented in the following pages provides an additional level of description, as far as the rules are concerned, for the sake of illustrating the concept. These suggestions are presented under the 'Tutorial' heading.

THE STAR OF THE MIST

...the Witch-king came down upon Arthedain before winter was ended.

RUMOUR

"There's an ancient tower in the easternmost foothills of the southern Ered Luin, what remains of a powerful castle from the time of the Kings. Wanderers speak of an eerie blue light that sometimes can be seen even from Sarn Ford, like a star shining above the river mists. No one goes there, and recently people have started to disappear in its vicinity."

OLD LORE (DC 15)

"The tower is what is left of a fortress built at the time of the North Kingdom of Arnor. It was built atop a Dwarven subterranean ruin. It was besieged at the time of the war with Angmar, and fell after a long resistance. Some say that treasonous Dwarves betrayed the Dúnedain, allowing the forces of the Witch-king to enter the castle by secret ways."

BACKGROUND

There was once a fortified town in the foothills of the southern Ered Luin, in what was the kingdom of Arthedain. It had been built above an abandoned Dwarven city, an underground complex extending for miles into the roots of the mountains. The castle was the seat of a valorous Dúnadan lord who fiercely resisted the Witch-king in the time of the wars with Angmar.

Eventually, the fortress was put under siege, and the lord captured alive during a sortie. He was tortured in sight of the castle's battlements, before the eyes of his spouse. She was a valiant warrior herself, a daughter of sea-kings, and she continued to defend the castle, despite her grievous loss. Eventually, the stronghold fell to black treachery, and both the castle and the surrounding town were razed, the ruins cursed by the Lord of the Ringwraiths himself. The noblewoman was consumed by grief, and with the passing of the years she became a Fell Wraith, while her followers degenerated into horrible, almost deathless creatures.

What remains of the fortress and town today is a tower in the midst of ruins. The area can be accessed only by finding the entrance to an

underground guard post, and by a bridge crossing a narrow but deep ravine.

The entrance is currently used by a band of brigands as their base of operations. Influenced by evil men from the south, they are responsible for the disappearances of several wanderers in the area.



JOURNEY EVENTS

Once the Company gets to Sarn Ford, at sunset they spot a faint luminescence to the west, and can follow it easily, like a beacon. As they head in its direction, they can find traces of the presence of a large band of brigands operating in the area — they find the remnants of their camps, and may even hear stories about them told by a lonely wanderer or two.

If the Player-heroes are not careful, the brigands may notice the Company and send a group of fighters to ambush them while they camp (see *Schemes and Trouble*, on page 229). If the players are careful enough, for example, by following the brigands' tracks and trying to stay one step ahead of them, they may be able to avoid them and reach their encampment without having to face them before that (see *The Brigands' Camp*, below).

LOCATIONS

Advancing towards the southern Ered Luin, the Company sees the distant mountains rise steadily, like a high wall lining the horizon from north to south. But even closer to them are mountains running away from the main range, forming an eastward arm. When twilight comes, the light that guides them appears at the feet of that arm. It's a land of bleak hills, and deep valleys filled with turbulent waters, running to join the river to the south.

Once they get near, the Player-heroes find that the tower they are seeking lies on the other side of a deep ravine. No means to traverse the chasm seem to be available — if the Player-heroes scout the ravine, for example walking along its border, they eventually spot a broken bridge some yards below the edge of the fissure, the two sides joined by a makeshift wooden ramp.

1. THE BRIGANDS' CAMP

As they look for a passage across the ravine, the Player-heroes find the camp of the brigands. It is located in front of a small cave, near the edge of the chasm. This is easily spotted, as a plume of smoke can be seen rising from a distance.

The camp is garrisoned by a small group of brigands, composed of one Southerner Raider for each Player-hero (see page 149). The majority of the brigands are away, looking for unwary travellers to rob.

The brigands look like a mix of southerners and mean-looking Men of Eriador, maybe coming from Tharbad. Among them is a short, wiry fellow by the name of Sabian, swarthy and dressed in black (see page 229). When the Player-heroes get close enough to the brigand's camp, Sabian is seen emerging from the cave, telling the others to be alert, as 'she is unquiet'.

TUTORIAL — MEETING THE BRIGANDS

A scene taking place at the Brigand's Camp is likely to concern the Company trying to ambush the garrison there. The precise circumstances are going to vary a lot though, based on what the Player-heroes have done so far. For example, the Player-heroes might have encountered the brigands on their way here, and maybe someone escaped to tell the others of the threat the Company poses. The Loremaster must take what happened before into due consideration, to make this new scene an ideal continuation of those that preceded it.

If the scene is going to involve combat (very likely), then the Loremaster should remind the players how killing non-monstrous enemies without provocation may be considered a Misdeed, and thus cause a Shadow gain. Then, the Loremaster should provide a description of the area, trying to visualise the location and adding details to what has been written above. For example, a clear path might lead directly to the mouth of the cave, but that is certainly going to be in plain sight of the brigands in the camp. On the contrary, less visible tracks may lead to the back of the cave, behind a rise allowing the Player-heroes to stage a surprise attack using ranged weapons from superior ground, and thus giving them an additional ranged weapons volley.

All the Loremaster needs to do is to 'see' the location with their mind's eye, and be consistent in describing it to the players.

THE CAVE: If the Player-heroes deal with the brigands they can enter the cave. Once inside, they discover that ancient steps cut into the rock lead underground to a stone bridge that once crossed the ravine.

The bridge is now broken, but a makeshift wooden ramp joins the two sides. If the Company attacks the brigands without denying them the ability to retreat into the cave, Sabian seeks refuge underground, and cuts the ropes that hold up the ramp, letting it fall into the seemingly bottomless crevice.

The distance separating the two sides of the bridge is 20 feet (probably too much to be jumped across by any Player-hero), and the fall seems very dangerous — a noisy stream of water runs many yards below, among broken rocks. The Company will have to find a way to cross the chasm safely...

TUTORIAL – SETTING UP OBSTACLES

Crossing the broken bridge is a good example of those obstacles that the Loremaster should use to challenge the players. The situation should lead them to discuss at length about how to overcome it — when they have declared their intentions, the Loremaster translates their approach into game terms.

A few examples follow, referencing the rules used to set them up, just to give an idea on how to apply the rules to model the choice of the players:

- ◆ The Player-heroes try to build a ramp — a DC 15 Dexterity check using carpenter's tools. On a failure, the ramp collapses as the Player-heroes cross it.
- ◆ An Elf character jumps across, and then builds a rope bridge with the help of the others — the Elf achieves a magical success on a Strength (Athletics) check, then everyone else must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to get across.
- ◆ The Company goes down into the ravine using ropes, and then climbs up on the other side — a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check each.

As a reward for passing this challenge, the Loremaster should award each Player-hero from 25 to 100 XP, depending on the chosen approach and how they fared.

2. THE DWARVEN GATE

This was one of the entrances that led to the Dwarven underground ruin. The Men of the West made it into a guard post. Now, the mostly empty room is littered with debris and refuse

left by the brigands, as they use it as their sleeping quarters (not daring to go deeper into the ruins).

Player-heroes spending time here (a suitable place for a long rest) can hear the sound of dripping water, and the occasional gurgling sound coming from the next chamber. The only door leading somewhere interesting is the arched gate leading to the Flooded Chambers (see below).

THE PANTRY: A small but deep niche on the west wall of the chamber was used as a pantry by the brigands. If the Player-heroes inspect the niche, they find that a small cache of stolen gold is hidden here, behind a supply of dry kindling, stale bread, and dried meat.

The gold is worth a total of 7 (2d6) gold pieces.

Among the gold are several personal items, that certainly belonged to the victims of the brigands:

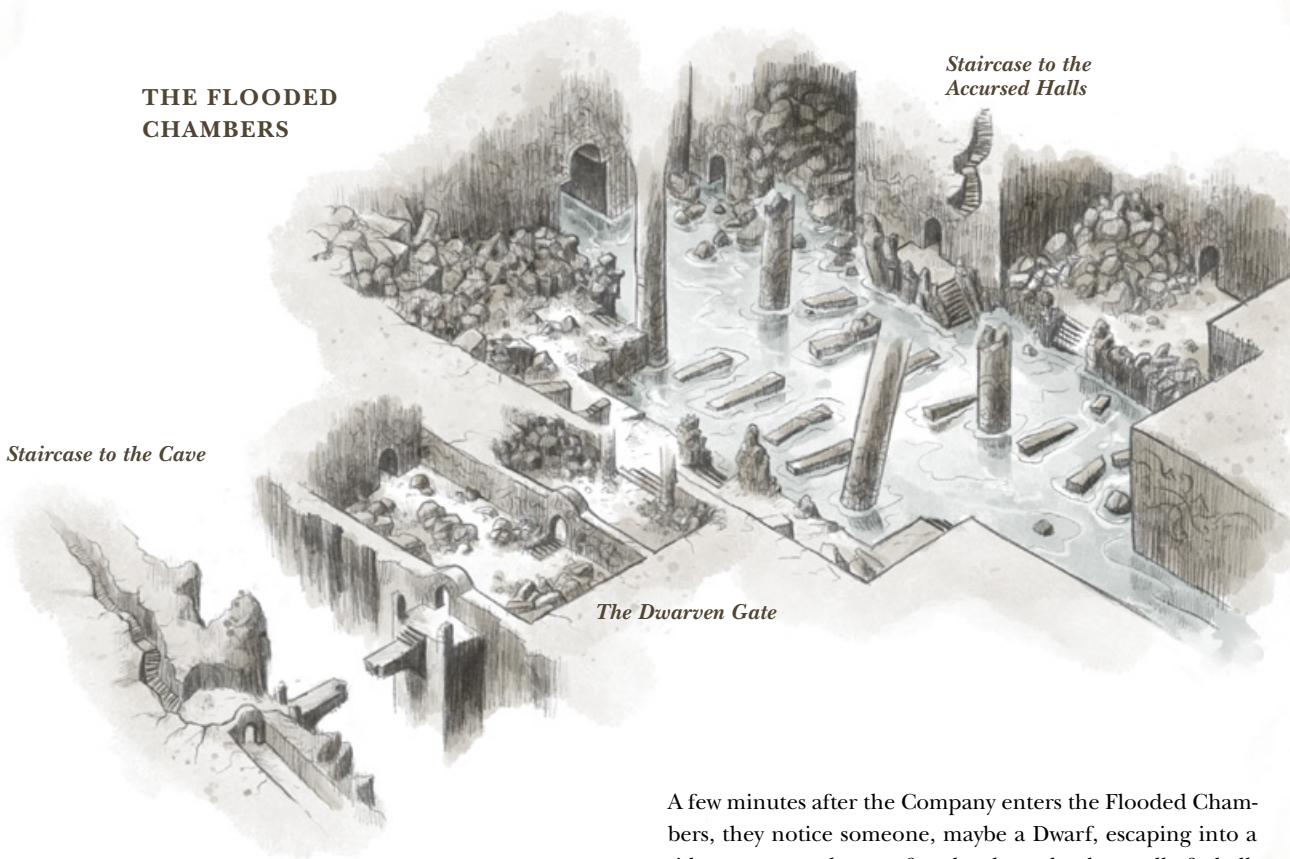
All Player-heroes who take a share of the gold gain 1 point of Shadow (DC 10 Wisdom saving throw to resist).

THE RUINS OF NARAG-NÂLA

The Dwarven underground complex is a small part of a Dwarven domain, the city of Narag-Nâla (Player-heroes paying attention to the runes inscribed on the walls and arches of the place discover the name quickly). It is a dark maze of narrow passages, often leading to empty rooms, corridors blocked by fallen rocks, and half-collapsed halls.

If the Player-heroes show an interest in exploring the various doors opening into the rooms shown in the Locations maps, the Loremaster must improvise the description of a seemingly endless labyrinth, or simply limit their exploration by describing how most passages lead to dead ends.

But the ruins are not entirely deserted. There are several Dwarves yet in Narag-Nâla who still draw breath... (see Schemes and Trouble, page 229).



3. THE FLOODED CHAMBERS

When the Player-heroes cross the threshold leading here, an inexplicable sense of dread falls over them. This pillared hall was once a Dwarven chamber of records, that was later adapted by the Arnorian lords to become their Hallows. The survivors of the siege were buried alive here. The Witch-king then flooded the area, and laid a curse on it.

The air is unwholesome, and seems thick and stuffy, as if a weight is gradually oppressing the Player-heroes — staying here causes all Player-heroes to gain 2 points of Shadow, resisted by a DC 10 Charisma saving throw.

The hall is partially collapsed, and almost completely filled with muddy water, waist-high. The walls are decorated by Dwarven inscriptions and carvings (Dwarves of Durin's Folk recognise the art as typical of the houses that used to dwell in this area - probably the Firebeards). Opposite the entrance opens a passage leading to a flight of steps, going up to the surface (they lead to the Accursed Halls, see next page).

A few minutes after the Company enters the Flooded Chambers, they notice someone, maybe a Dwarf, escaping into a side passage, and soon after they hear the deep toll of a bell. Moments later, a group of ghoulish creatures with sharp teeth and clawed hands emerge from the muddy waters of the chamber, and attack the Company!

- ◆ The Marsh-dwellers (see page 160) are half the number of Player-heroes in the Company (rounded up).
- ◆ The creatures concentrate their attacks on any Ranger of the North in the Company.
- ◆ Hobbits and Dwarves who confront the monsters while immersed in the water have disadvantage on attack rolls.

No one can say if these creatures are what became of the Dúnedain that were trapped here long ago, cursed by the King of Angmar, or if they are evil creatures that came here on his command, to haunt the ruins.

THE SEPULCHRES: In the central section of the hall are a series of stone sepulchres. Some are intact, while others look like they were damaged by violent upheavals of the earth. All are carved with a skill far surpassing that of most stonewrights living today — that of the Men of the West.

THE HOUSE RECORDS

"Here is recorded the Fall of the House of Hadirion, and his wife Elwen. I, Angnir, steward and captain of the guards, write this record to preserve its memory. It was in the time of ..."

"They built a wooden seat, in mockery of a throne, in plain sight of the castle walls. Then, they tied our lord Hadirion to it, to torment and ridicule him. They tortured him for hours ... When the Orcs nailed an iron crown to his head, hailing Hadirion as the rightful ruler of the land, the lady Elwen summoned me, and asked me to prove my reputation as the best Bowman of Arthedain. I chose an arrow

from those that I received from my father, and he from his father before him. A white plumed, slender dart."

"I bent my bow with all my strength, and the arrow flew straight, piercing the hand of a huge Orc who was tormenting Hadirion, and burying itself deep into the chest of my lord. I broke my bow after the deed..."

The rest of the records chronicle the fall of the castle, in broken fragments — treasonous Dwarves allowed the enemy to enter the castle undetected. Those who survived the onslaught fled underground, and were trapped. The lady Elwen disappeared.

Two sepulchres stand out for the exquisite detail of their carvings. The two marble slabs are shaped to represent a sleeping figure — one shows a lord and the other a lady, composed in the sleep of death. Both sepulchres are empty.

Inside the other tombs are buried the stewards and house-guards of the noble house that once ruled here. One of them contains the mortal remains of Angnir, the chief steward, and the house records, telling the story of the fallen lord. The text is incomplete, having been damaged by the passage of time. (See The House Records box nearby for the relevant information contained therein).

A LESSER HOARD: A small arched gate opens in the north-eastern corner of the chamber. Accessible easily only by Dwarves and Hobbits, it leads to a small room, where many precious things have been hoarded by the Marsh-dwellers.

The treasure chamber contains what amounts to a lesser Hoard (see page 125 for the rules on Treasure).

4. THE ACCURSED HALLS

Once they get back to the surface, the Player-heroes emerge among a vast expanse of ruins, floating in a sea of dense mist. It is dark, regardless of the hour of the day — if morning or afternoon, the sun can be seen as a pale disc, incapable of penetrating the veil of fog.

Advancing among the rubble is difficult — crumbling walls and pillars jut out from thick tangles of vegetation, and twisted and bare trees split ancient flagstones with their roots. Nothing rises for more than a few yards — the city of Lord Hadirion and Lady Elwen was literally razed to the ground.

The exception to this is the Tower of the Star (see page 229), and what appears to be an island of broken stonework, a cluster of ruins rising where once was a majestic palace. The shape of a main hall is still recognisable, a flight of wide, cracked steps leading to it. Its walls are covered in crude graffiti, probably drawn by Orcs.

Among the graffiti are mixed sentences composed using Elvish letters, of an ancient mode — they are written with horrible care, using the Black Speech, to form the curse of the Witch-king.

Player-heroes who read the words gain 2 Shadow points resisted by a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, regardless of whether they can read Elvish or understand the language of Mordor.

Whoever succeeds on the saving throw learns the meaning of the curse — it was laid by the Witch-king of Angmar himself, wroth at how strongly the Dúnedain opposed him. The ruins are bound to suffer from its effects, as long as the torment of Lord Hadirion continues (see The Tower of the Star).

THE ACCURSED HALLS



*Staircase to
the Flooded Chambers*

TUTORIAL – EXPANDING THE ACCURSED HALLS

The Accursed Halls are just a part of the vast ruins that once were a city of the Dúnedain. For the most part, they're just ancient, cold stones, but who can say what lurks there, in the shadow of the tormented spirit of Elwen?

If the players show an interest in exploring the place, the Loremaster can expand its description as they see fit. Here follow a number of ideas that can help the Loremaster in giving further substance to the ruins:

- ◆ An old well, covered by rotten planks. It is very deep, and at its bottom lies the skeleton of an exceptionally large Orc, a veritable monster. He was a lieutenant of the Witch-king, and died in the attack – a Númenorean arrow still pierces his skull.

- ◆ A wild apple tree, grown among the rocks. Anyone eating one of its sour apples and resting in its shade experiences strange visions belonging to the past of the city.
- ◆ An enormous, leprous deer haunts the ruins. It is an eerie apparition and a sign of ill-omen. Player-heroes gain 1 point of Shadow, resisted by a DC 10 Charisma saving throw.
- ◆ Beyond a rusty iron gate lies a patch of greenery, where the orchard of an herbalist once was. Several ancient and useful herbs still grow there, and can be gathered by a Player-hero proficient with the herbalism kit – they grant advantage on Intelligence (Medicine) checks, for 1d6 applications.
- ◆ Jalin, a lunatic Dwarf of Narag-Nâla, sometimes comes to dwell in the ruins. An outcast from his own people, he

lives off rats and other disgusting things. Jalin's dreams are haunted by the spirit of Elwen, as he feels a mix of love and fear for her. He will try to kill or drag into a trap any trespassers in "his city". Use the stats for a Southerner Champion (see page 149), but with only half of its hit points left and the anguished condition.

- ◆ The pieces of a battering ram forged in the smithies of Angmar lie among the fragments of a shattered gate. Its huge metal head is shaped like that of a monstrous Orc with a gaping maw. It is imbued with dark magic – If the heroes touch it, the ground under their feet collapses, causing them to fall for several yards into a buried chamber below.



THE COMING OF THE LADY ELWEN: Once the Company reaches the Accursed Halls, at a moment when the Loremaster considers it most appropriate, the Lady Elwen approaches. She was once a valorous Dúnadan noble lady, but when her city fell, she survived, only to be slowly consumed by grief and by the curse of the Chief of the Ringwraiths — she is now a Fell Wraith, bound to roam the ruins of her castle.

As a Fell Wraith, she appears as a crooked hag, wrapped in tatters hiding her spectral features. Her flesh is almost transparent, and her eyes glow like embers. Thin strands of white hair escape her hood. She addresses the Company speaking in a hissing voice and strange accent:

"Why have you come? There's nothing here, only death. Leave this place, or join me in my torment!"

She is armed with a pitted sword, the weapon she used to defend her city and fortress.



Lady Elwen - Fell Wraith

Medium undead

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

ARMOUR CLASS 13

HIT POINTS 26 (4d8 + 8)

SPEED fly 35 ft. (hover)

SKILLS Intimidation +4, Stealth +7

DAMAGE VULNERABILITIES radiant

DAMAGE RESISTANCES bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from weapons that aren't enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead

DAMAGE IMMUNITIES cold, necrotic, poison

CONDITION IMMUNITIES charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

SENSES truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

LANGUAGES Sindarin, Westron

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

DEATHLESS. If damage reduces Lady Elwen to 0 hit points, she must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant, from a critical hit, or from a weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead. On a success, Lady Elwen drops to 1 hit point instead.

SUNLIGHT WEAKNESS. While in sunlight, Lady Elwen has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

MULTIATTACK. Lady Elwen can use her Strike Fear. She then makes two melee attacks.

SWORD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

STRIKE FEAR. Each non-undead creature of Lady Elwen's choice that is within 60 feet of Lady Elwen and aware of her gains 1 Shadow point from Dread, resisted by a DC 12 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a target becomes frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target gains 2 Shadow points instead of 1 and is also stunned while frightened. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Lady Elwen's Strike Fear for the next 24 hours.

TUTORIAL – BUILDING UP THE CLIMAX

The confrontation with Elwen can be run in many different ways, based on what the players choose to do. The Loremaster can have her appear as a ghost would, in the middle of the night while the Player-heroes are sleeping (hopefully with someone standing guard), or, they may spy her from afar, climbing down the stairs of the tower, and then turning towards them, slowly but inexorably. The ruins of the town offer many hiding places, should the Player-heroes choose to stay away from her, but they won't be able to get near the Tower without engaging her in combat. Moreover, she seems to possess an uncanny ability to sense where the Player-heroes hide.

highest floor was damaged in the war, and its jagged stone-work makes it look like a hand with stunted fingers.

It is here at the top of the tower that the mortal remains of the Lord Hadirion lie, a mummified body tied on a rotting throne of wood, a metal crown nailed to his head. A shining blue gem is set on the crown, its luminescence visible for miles and miles.

If the crown is removed from the brow of Hadirion, the curse is lifted (see *The Curse of Lady Elwen*) and the mummified body of the Dunadan lord finally is reduced to dust. Until that moment, Elwen continues to haunt the ruins of the town and castle, attacking everyone on sight, until no living soul remains to remind her of what she lost...

A GREATER HOARD: Once the curse is lifted, the Player-heroes have time to search the ruins. On the ground floor of the tower, hidden by debris, is a trapdoor. This leads to an underground chamber, probably used as a dungeon once.

The dungeon contains what amounts to a greater Hoard (see page 125 for the rules on Treasure).

THE CURSE OF THE LADY ELWEN

The first time that Elwen is defeated, the Player-heroes will experience for a moment a vision of a high Númenorean lady, in full armour, beautiful but terrible — she looks at the Player-heroes, then screams!

As they recover their senses a moment later, they discover that Elwen is gone, only to return at some point later, fully restored and ready to fight (when the Loremaster deems it most appropriate for dramatic effect).

During the time needed for her to return, the luminescence at the top of the Tower of the Star intensifies (it's the stone set on Hadirion's crown, the focus of the curse).

The Lady Elwen can be finally put to rest if the crown nailed to the head of Hadirion is removed (see below). When this happens, Elwen recovers her lost beauty for an instant — then, her body crumbles to dust. The curse has been lifted.

5. THE TOWER OF THE STAR

Beyond the Accursed Halls rises the Tower of the Star. Built of a harder and more ancient stone than the rest of the ruins, it proved impervious to the power that crushed this place centuries ago, and time itself was unable to cast it down. Only its

SCHEMES AND TROUBLE

This section presents events that can occur in the course of the Adventuring Phase session, based on the actions of the Player-heroes. How to employ them is up to the Loremaster.

THE BRIGANDS

The band of brigands sheltering in the area west of Sarn Ford is a large company of ruthless men. Driven by necessity and greed, they waylay those few travellers they meet on the road, and plunder the many ruins dotting the land, looking for treasure. They are careful to hide any proof of their misdeeds, to avoid raising the attention of the Rangers of the North — so far their strategy is working.

If the Company is not careful and the Loremaster deems it appropriate for the brigands to notice them, a group of bandits composed of one Footpad for each Player-hero, led by a Ruffian Leader (see page 150) tries to ambush them.

SABIAN, THE SPY FROM UMBAR

The brigands are being manipulated by a group of Men from Umbar, who seem to have an interest in exploring the ruins of Cardolan and Eriador. They have infiltrated the group of robbers, and are slowly taking the lead among them. Sabian is among them, a Southron mariner who now is leading the

band operating beyond the Brandywine river. He is a spy, using the brigands' activities as cover to explore Eriador and its ruins.

- ◆ How to employ Sabian is up to the Loremaster. He is stealthy and clever, and can hide easily, unless the Player-heroes make capturing him their primary goal. Sabian can spring traps on the Player-heroes, or sabotage their plans. If left to his own devices, Sabian will eventually leave the ruins, and join the brigands outside (see Trapped!, below).
- ◆ Sabian is a Highway Robber (see page 150).

TREACHEROUS DWARVES

A colony of Dwarves from the southern Ered Luin lives deep underground, far below the Flooded Chambers. They are the descendants of the Dwarves that betrayed Hadirion and Elwen, and they still pay the price for the misdeed of their ancestors: to this day, they haven't been able to reclaim the upper halls of their underground realm, as they are infested by the Marsh-dwellers.

A suspicious lot, they initially intend to harm the Player-heroes, as they see them as trespassers in their domain — one of them rings the bell attracting the Marsh-dwellers when the Company first enters the ruins.

If the Company deals with the Marsh-dwellers efficiently, the Dwarves might stop harassing them, as they start to believe they might indeed be able to lift the curse once and for all.

From time to time, the Loremaster should give the Player-heroes a chance to notice they are being spied upon from a distance, always by one single figure, perhaps a Dwarf, who immediately disappears when noticed.

If the Player-heroes are determined to contact the Dwarves, see A Council Underground (below).

TRAPPED!

In all likelihood, the Player-heroes will spend the best part of their adventure inside the ruins, on the other side of the ravine. As they are busy dealing with the creatures haunting the place, the brigands will return to their refuge, and find out what happened to their garrison there.

*Staircase to
The Accursed Halls*



**THE TOWER
OF THE STAR**

In general terms, the brigands won't enter the accursed ruins, and will lay in wait for the Player-heroes to come back out.

They are too many for the Company to tackle head-on — the Loremaster can consider them to be at least four times as numerous as the Player-heroes, counting among them an assortment of hostile southerners and ruffians (see page 148).

One way could be to search for another way out by exploring the Dwarven underground city. It seems very hard to navigate, and seems only to go deeper and deeper.

If the Player-heroes do so, the Loremaster can use the A Council Underground event, presented below.

A COUNCIL UNDERGROUND

If the Company is determined to explore the underground city, they are eventually beset by fire-bearded, fierce Dwarven warriors, armed with great axes. They say that they cannot pass without leave from their lord, nor will they be able to find the way out without assistance — do they wish to seek counsel with him?

If they ask to see their lord, an underground bell tolls, and a single female Dwarf shows up: "You have asked to meet Veiko, lord of Narag-Nâla" (the Black River).

All Player-heroes must accept being blindfolded. Then, they are led even deeper underground, to a dark hall resounding with the noise of running water.

Veiko is an ancient Dwarf, sitting on a crude throne of stone. She is blind, and speaks exclusively in the Dwarven speech, almost whispering — her daughter, Ilmi, leans over to hear what she says, and translates. Her guard stands by, old, grizzled Dwarven warriors armed with axes. Between themselves, they speak using the secret sign-language of the Dwarves.

The meeting with Veiko can be set up using the rules for Councils, considering the audience as open. If the Player-heroes are only asking to be led out of the Dwarven city and nothing else, their request can be considered reasonable (1 success required) if they have lifted the curse, or bold (2 successes required) if they haven't.

If the council results in a Failure, the Dwarves deny safe passage, and lead the Company to the upper halls again. On a Success with Woe, they allow the Company to pass on a condition — they must yield the stone that was set on Hadirion's crown (it was made by the Dwarves). On a Success, they are allowed safe passage simply on a promise that they will leave the Dwarves alone. They add that they want to be forgotten.

The Player-heroes are led out by secret passages, still blindfolded, until they emerge on the surface once again, at a safe distance from the entrance, where the brigands lay in wait.

VEIKO'S TALES

The following information can be used by the Loremaster in the course of the Interaction stage of the council.

Veiko and her folk are among those who decided not to go to Khazad-dûm when Thangorodrim was broken, and chose to remain in the Ered Luin. But Veiko is so old she fought at Azanulbizar, and saw many Dwarves of

her kin die in vain. If asked about their treachery, Veiko confesses with a broken voice that long ago a misguided Dwarf belonging to their kin helped the Witch-king, but was betrayed himself. For centuries, they have waited for the day when the curse would be lifted from the upper halls, so that they could reclaim them.

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THE LORD OF THE RINGS™ ROLEPLAYING

NAME

Calling and Level

Distinctive Features

Player Name

Culture

Shadow Path

Experience Points

STRENGTH

INSPIRATION

DEXTERITY

PROFICIENCY BONUSES

CONSTITUTION

- Strength
- Dexterity
- Constitution
- Intelligence
- Wisdom
- Charisma

SAVING THROWS

INTELLIGENCE

- Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- Explore (Wis)
- Hunting (Wis)
- Insight (Wis)
- Intimidation (Cha)
- Investigation (Int)
- Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Old Lore (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- Performance (Cha)
- Persuasion (Cha)
- Riddle (Int)
- Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- Stealth (Dex)
- Travel (Wis)

SKILLS

WISDOM

CHARISMA

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

TOOL PROFICIENCIES AND LANGUAGES

ARMOR
CLASS

INITIATIVE

speed

HIT POINT MAXIMUM

Temporary
Hit Points

CURRENT HIT POINTS

HIT DICE

Successes

Failures

death saves

Heir Name

Investment

heir

Disadvantage on ability checks

Speed halved

Disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws

Hit point maximum halved

Speed reduced to 0

6- Death

EXHAUSTION

WEAPON

Atk Bonus

DAMAGE

RANGE

ATTACKS

Rewards

Copper Coins	
Silver Pennies	
Gold Pieces	

EQUIPMENT

FEATURES, TRAITS, AND VIRTUES

THE
LORD OF THE RINGS™
ROLEPLAYING

NAME

Age	Height	Weight
Eyes	Skin	Hair

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

FELLOWSHIP AND PATRONS

ADDITIONAL FEATURES, TRAITS, AND VIRTUES

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND TREASURE

JOURNEY LOG

Year

Name

Journey Role

PONIES AND HORSES

Name

JOURNAL

Season

Journey from

Destination

Days of travel

the company

Journey Role

Ability Check

N

C

JOURNEY PATH

EVENT 1

Target

Event

Result

EVENT 2

Target

Event

Result

EVENT 3

Target

Event

Result

EVENT 4

Target

Event

Result

EVENT 5

Target

Event

Result

EVENT 6

Target

Event

Result

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SET JOURNEY PATH

Set a journey path connecting the point of departure to the destination, and record it on the Journey Log (counting the hex containing the destination but not the departure).

MAKE PATHFINDING CHECKS

The Guide of the Company makes a pathfinding check (see page 102) to determine where journey events take place along the journey path.

- ♦ If the check succeeds, an event takes place 3 hexes away. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the event occurs 4 hexes away.
 - ♦ If the check fails, an event takes place 2 hexes away. If the check fails by 5 or more, the event occurs 1 hexes away.

Follow the Event Resolution rules (page 104) to determine the precise nature of the event.

Once an event has been resolved, the Guide makes a new pathfinding check to determine where another event will take place.

- ♦ The journey ends when a pathfinding check result matches or exceeds the number of hexes left between the Company's current position and their point of arrival — the Company has reached its destination.

ENDING THE JOURNEY

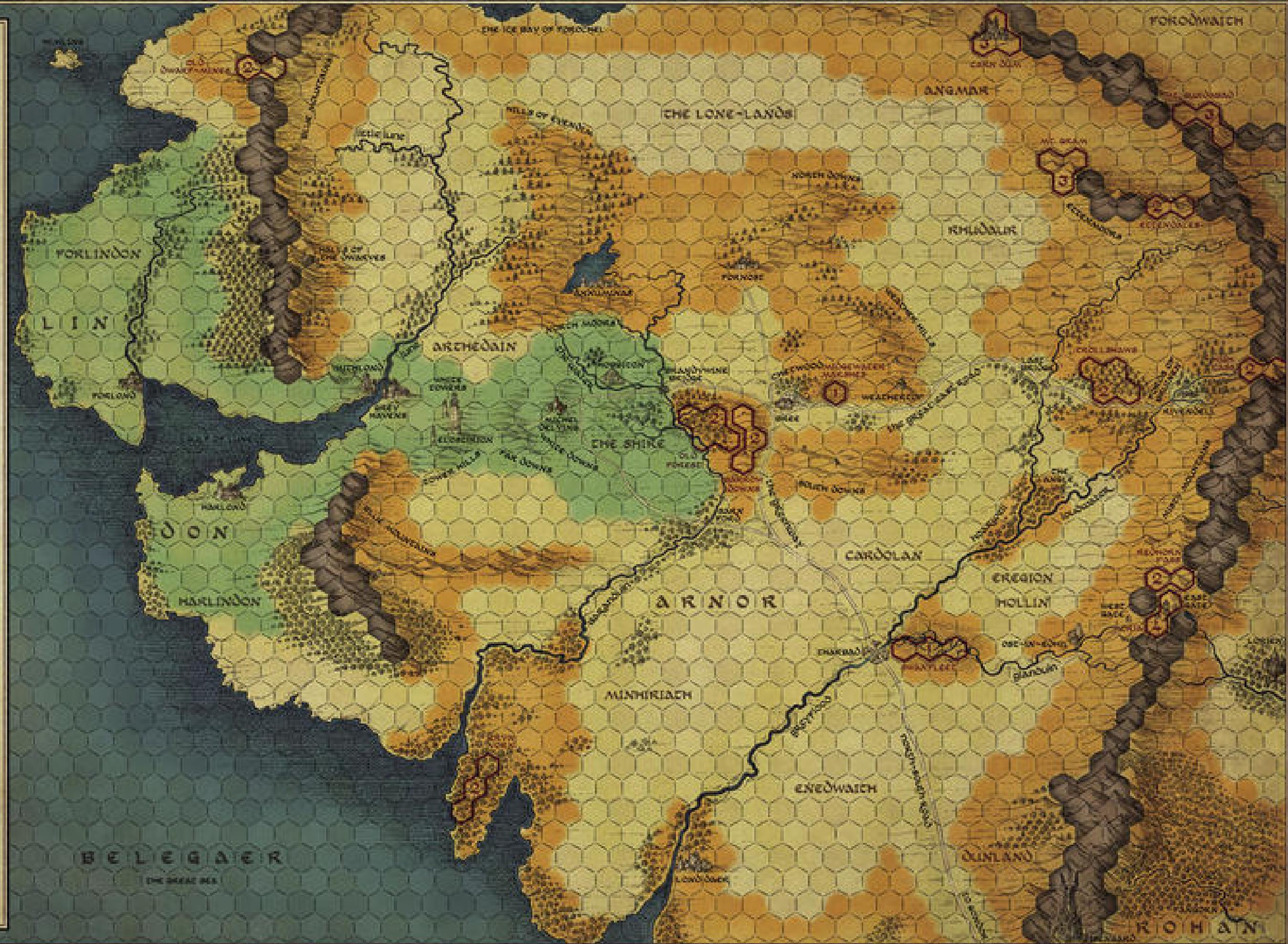
Traversing each hex takes 1 day, or 2 days for each hex suggesting hard terrain. If the Company moves at 15 feet or lower, add 1 day for each hex. If the Company moves at 50 feet or higher, count 1 day for each two hexes (three hexes if at a speed of 70 feet or higher), or 1 day for each hex of hard terrain.

- ◆ On a forced march, double the speed but each Player-hero must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the end of each day, gaining one level of exhaustion on a failure.

FATIGUE SAVING THROW

At the end of the journey each Player-hero must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. The DC is increased by an amount determined by the number and type of events faced by the Company (see table on page 105).

- ♦ If the saving throw fails, the Player-hero suffers one level of exhaustion.
 - ♦ If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the Player-hero suffers two levels of exhaustion instead.
 - ♦ If the saving throw fails by 10 or more, the Player-hero suffers three levels of exhaustion instead.





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FREE LEAGUE



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