



Ulmo

Lord of the seas and one of the greatest of the Valar. In the dark days of the First Age, he kept watch and lent indirect aid to both Elves and Men while the others of his order remained in Valinor. Devotion to him grants a +2 bonus to tests related to the sea (Sea-craft, Weather-sense, Survival, etc.).

Aulë

One of the Aratar, the eight greatest of the Valar, Aulë was the Vala concerned with the substance of Arda; rock and metal. As his name suggests, he was also the builder and inventor of the Valar. Among his greatest creations were the race of Dwarves and the vessels of the Sun and Moon. Devotion to him grants a +2 bonus to Appraise plus Stonecraft or Smithcraft.

Oromë

Oromë, one of the Aratar and the brother of Nessa, is known as The Huntsman of the Valar. In ancient times, he rode often in the forests of Middle-earth, and it was he who first discovered the Eldar at Cuiviénen. Devotion to him grants a +2 bonus to Ride, Survival, and Combat tests when hunting wild beasts.

Mandos

The Doomsman of the Valar and keeper of the slain in his Halls in the west of Valinor; his true name is said to be Námo. Devotion to him grants the Foresighted edge (superseding the edge's requirements if they aren't met).

Irmo

More commonly called Lórien, from the gardens of Lórien in Valinor where he dwelt with his wife, Este. Devotion to him reduces by half the amount of sleep required to recover from Weariness.

Tulkas

The last of the Valar to descend into Arda, and the most warlike; he did battle with Melkor in the years when the World was young. It is said that he laughs more than anything, especially while in battle, instilling great fear into his enemies. Devotion to him grants a +2 bonus to Unarmed Combat or Inspire or Intimidation tests while in combat.

Elbereth

The Queen of the Stars and spouse of Manwë the King of Arda, great among the Queens of the Valar. She set the stars in the sky, for which the Eldar of Middle-earth revered her, calling her by the name of Elbereth. Devotion to her grants a +2 bonus to resist Sorcery and other spells cast by evil powers.

Yavanna

Called the 'Giver of Fruits', Yavanna was the Vala whose province was all growing things upon the earth. She was the spouse of Aulë the Smith. Devotion to her grants a +2 bonus to Lore tests related to plants and animals.





Nienna

A Queen of the Valar, the sister of Námo and Irmo, who dwells alone on the western borders of the World. Nienna ranks as one of the eight Aratar, the most powerful of the Valar. Grief and mourning are Nienna's province; in her halls in the distant west, she weeps for the suffering of Arda. Her part in the Music of the Ainur was one of deep sadness, and from this grief entered the world in its beginning. The Maia Olórin, who was later to travel to Middle-earth as Gandalf, learned much from her. Devotion to her grants a +2 bonus to Insight and Persuade (Oratory) tests.

Estë

A lady of the Valar, the spouse of Irmo, who dwells with him in the gardens of Lórien in Valinor. Devotion to her reduces by half the Weariness penalties applied to movement through natural areas.

Vaire

She is a Queen of the Valar, spouse of Mandos, and the one who weaves the tales of the history of Arda. Devotion to her grants a +2 bonus to Lore: History tests.

Vana

She is a lady of the Valar, sister of Yavanna, and spouse of Oromë. Flowers were said to open, and birds sing, at her passing. Devotion to her grants an additional +2 bonus when spending Courage on social tests.

Nessa

The spouse of Tulkas and sister to Oromë, she delights in dancing on the green lawns of Valimar. Devotion to her grants a +2 bonus to Perform tests.



Morgoth

Followers of evil cults throughout the ages have devoted themselves to Melkor Morgoth, Sauron, and others powerful in the darkest of arts. These cults are savage and brutal, exacting bloody rites and sacrifices to these 'gods' of darkness. Devotees of these faiths do not garner any bonuses as Melkor Morgoth is beyond the reaches of the world to affect it in any way until the End of Days.



FAN FLAVOUR

THE EFFECTIVE LOREMASTER

by Mathew Kearns

Smelling of musty tomes and torch smoke, Loremasters are an integral part of any adventuring party in Middle-earth. The men and women are scholars and students of all types of knowledge, subjects ranging from healing to plants and animals to history. When it comes to researching a cure for a fast-spreading disease or deciphering ancient languages, the Loremaster is your go-to person.

BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice and picking skills, traits, and abilities. Regardless of the Age in which you game is set, the Loremaster is a viable Order that can be used at almost any time. Think about

where he comes from, his motivations, and maybe even sketch out a few of his personal goals. This will help both you in focusing your roleplaying and your Narrator for creating side adventures for developing your character. Work with your Narrator to come up with something suitable for the game in which you will be playing.

RACE

There are no racial restrictions for this Order. While all races of the Free Peoples have Loremasters within their societies, Elves (moreso Noldor and Sindar) would have more characters of this type or least some advancements put toward it.

ATTRIBUTES

Wits is the key attribute for Loremasters as it governs the Order's bread-and-butter skills: Language and Lore. A high score also provides for a higher starting Wisdom. Perception is essential in that it allows a Loremaster to "see" beyond the obvious and understand what is beyond normal senses. Bearing is important when it comes to persuading others of your opinion or casting spells. The latter two attributes also are key to Willpower.

REACTIONS

Willpower is probably the most important for Loremasters as they are typically in situations where resisting forced-upon influences and successfully casting spells (if they ever gain the ability). Wisdom is also a good choice for Favoured Reaction (detecting lies, coercion, etc.). When making a concerted effort for research and investigation, a good Stamina score will help keep you going.

SKILLS

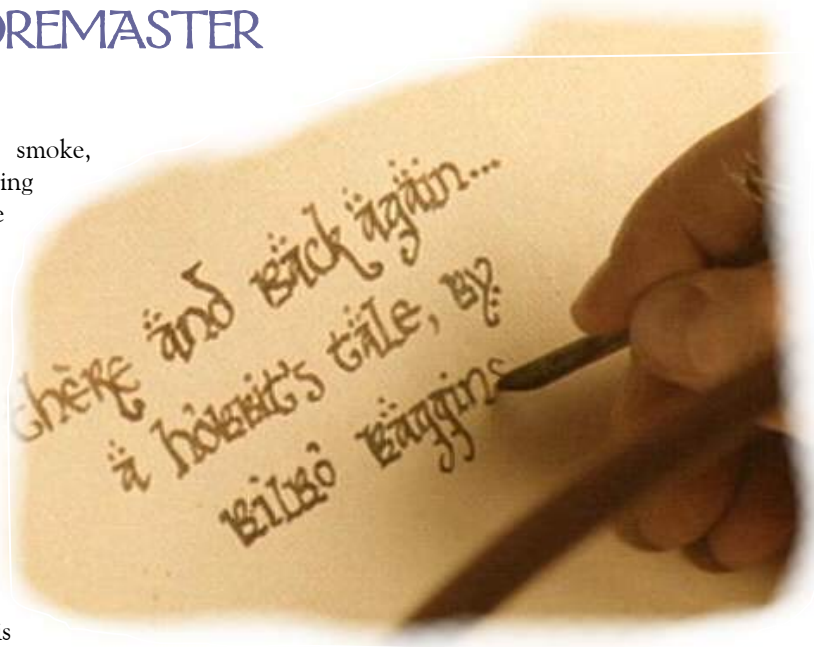
Language and Lore, governed by Wits, in their various incarnations are what Loremasters specialize in, representing their vast knowledge and worth. The other Order skills are all great choices for a Loremaster, except maybe Games. If there were a Cross-Order Skill a Loremaster should acquire, it's Search as it complements his investigative and studious nature (Note: Consider spending Racial Skill picks on this).

EDGES

There are many edges that enhance the effectiveness and give a bit of flavor to the Loremaster: Ally, Curious, Eloquent, Friends, Gift of Tongues, Healing Hands, Honour's Insight, Stern, Strong-willed, Tireless, Wakefulness, and Wise.

FLAWS

With the pros of being a Loremaster, there are always cons -- the flaws -- that reflect their erudite and, at times, idiosyncratic nature: Dark Secret, Proud, Rival, Stiff-necked, Weak, and Weak-willed.



ABILITIES

Ancient Scripts - This is a very useful ability and reasonably priced. It fits the best for Loremasters who focus on doing research, treasure-hunting, or traveling through foreign lands.

Expertise - This high-priced ability provides nothing more than a bonus for a skill (or maybe multiple skills in certain situations) that already should provide a fairly large bonus to roll and happens to be the prerequisite for the ability. The bonus isn't worth the 3 picks spent either unless it could be applied to multiple skills.

Scroll Hoard - This ability is almost the same as Expertise in its results, but could be considered more powerful as it doesn't have prerequisites and, as written, applies to any Lore or Language skill when he has access to the scroll hoard. This may "tie" a character to a location and could become abused by players. An idea to cut down on the abuse is to have the player specify the types of knowledge contained in the scroll hoard and/or scale the amount of time required for research in the hoard along with the bonus for the test by how much info in the scroll hoard pertains to the topic being researched.

Secretive - This ability is very powerful compared to its cost as early on it could double your Willpower bonus (potentially equivalent of 6 picks or more), this being its base use. The specialized use of the ability is probably worth the 3 picks alone when adding 2x Wits modifier to Willpower tests (instead of 1x) for resisting torture/ domination.

Spellcasting - Through your intense studies, the Loremaster has happened upon the knowledge being able to manipulate the fabric of the world around them by casting spells. This ability is wholly less powerful than the same for Magicians and has expensive prerequisites, but it still is a worthwhile ability.

Vala Virtue - An interesting ability as its thematic quality could be considered a bit dubious (where devotion to a Vala isn't all that canonical in my opinion outside of Maia), but its practical quality can be quite potent when used appropriately along with a few choice edges and/or abilities. This ability would gain the most use if the character gains advancements in other Orders.



MULTIPLE ORDERS

Craftsman - This Order would make a good complement to Loremaster, giving him the ability to apply his accumulated lore to the creation of items, including enchanted or magical items or aiding in Craft test from Vala Virtue for Aulë.

Magician - Being so close to what the Loremaster already is, it isn't a likely choice to be acquired unless it is for the more powerful Spellcasting ability or Secretive to make casting spells easier.

Mariner - Like the Craftsman ability, Loremaster can complement this one quite well, gaining the most from probably Vala Virtue for Ulmo.

Minstrel - Someone of this Order coupled with an expanded base of lore through the Loremaster Order could create

interesting and memorable ballads about far off places and times long past. The Spellcasting ability could be used to increase the evocativeness and/or persuasiveness of his performances.



Noble - Shrewd and wise rulers would either have or benefit by gaining the Loremaster Order.

Rogue - When it comes to a well-timed and executed heist or investigating potential prospects, a Loremaster's expanded knowledge base can come in handy when attempting to pull one off.

Warrior - Many soldiers, especially those considered officers and captains of men, know the value of a good education and do what they can, when they can, to increase their knowledge.

Archer - This Elite Order is a far stretch for the Loremaster as the prerequisites are quite expensive for any Order that doesn't have Ranged Combat as an Order Skill, and high Nimbleness scores would almost never exist.

Captain - Your commanding presence can only be enhanced by having or acquiring the Loremaster Order. This is especially true when using Vala Virtue for Elbereth when leading men against the forces of the Shadow.

Knight - Like the Archer, this Elite Order wouldn't be likely to gain much by already having or gaining advancements in the Loremaster Order.

Ranger - Loremaster would be an okay choice for the Ranger when it comes to lore about plants, animals, etc. and Vala Virtue for Oromë or maybe Yavanna.

Spy - Like the Ranger, Loremaster would help in expanding your Lore and Language skills and maybe the Secretive ability when resisting domination if caught and trying to resist revealing your secrets.

Wizard - This Elite Order is quite likely the one that a Loremaster would attempt to achieve, while the reverse isn't true except for maybe the same reasons as listed for Magician.



SPELLS

If your Loremaster does acquire the Spellcasting ability, he is limited to 2 spell picks to spend per rank in the ability. This can hamper your expansion of power (unless you join the Magician or Wizard Orders), but there are plenty of useful spells for you: Crafting-spell, Create Light, Display of Power, Healing-spell, Ithildin-fire, Scribe Moon-letters, Voice of Suasion, and more.

PLAYING A LOREMASTER

The greatest value a Loremaster hero brings to any game is his great wealth of information, be it in books, tomes, scrolls, or his mind. When he speaks, the Loremaster should be listened to, especially if you are relying on him to get out of a particularly difficult situation where brawn is useless. If ever you should need assistance in finding good examples of Loremasters, look to Elrond, probably the greatest of all Loremasters in Middle-earth, Gandalf and any of the other Istari, and smallest of all, Bilbo Baggins.

ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

THE LORDS AND KINGS OF DALE by Mathew Kearns



RACE: Man, Middle

RACIAL PACKAGE: Line of Girion*

ORDER: Noble

ABILITIES: Domain (Dale), Noble Mien

SKILLS: Debate (Oratory) +4, Intimidate (Majesty or Power) +5, Inspire +6, Language: Sindarin +3, Language: Understand Bird-speech (Thrush) +4, Lore: History (Dale, Erebor) +4, Lore: Race (Man, Elf, Dwarf) +3, Lore: Realm (Dale, Erebor) +3, Ranged Combat: Bows +5

EDGES: Ally (Master of Esgaroth, King Under the Mountain, King of the Woodland-realm), Command 2-3, Friends (City Council of Esgaroth, Dwarves of Erebor, Elves of Woodland-realm, Noble thrushes of Erebor), Hoard 3-4, Rank 2 (Girion to Bard the Bowman) or 4 (Bard, after being crowned, and all after)

FLAW: Duty (Govern Dale) or Fealty (Master of Esgaroth)

RENOWN: +7 (minimum)

* - see HOF, Issue #9

Girion

The Lord of Dale when Smaug descended on Erebor and ravaged the lands about. Girion died in Smaug's assault, but his wife and son escaped. He was avenged nearly two hundred years later when his descendant Bard slew Smaug with an arrow.

Bard

Bard is long descended from the line of Girion, the last king of Dale. He led the defense of Esgaroth against Smaug, and the army of Men in the Battle of Five Armies. Before this time he was known as a capable warrior and occasional soothsayer or doom-speaker. After the great battle, he took the share of the dragon hoard given him by Dain Ironfoot and gave a portion to rebuild Esgaroth and his rightful kingdom of Dale. His rule in the reconstituted realm lasted many years and he left the throne to his son, Bain.

Feel free to alter Bard from HOF, Issue #9, to fit the template above.

Bain

The son of Bard the Bowman, Bain succeeded his father to become King of Dale and soon annexed Esgaroth to the kingdom. His rule was quite expansionist, as the kingdom soon claimed the lands south of the Lonely Mountain during his thirty year reign. He also saw Balin and his companions leave Erebor on their fateful journey to Moria, giving aid in supplies and ponies (and possibly more). The Dale-branded toys seen at Bilbo's Farewell Party were made during Bain's time. He died of old age and was succeeded by his son Brand, whose realm was said to extend far to the south and east of Esgaroth.

Brand

Brand was King of Dale during the fateful and costly War of the Ring. As the Shadow made more forays into the West, Dale and Erebor were, of course, the first to feel its wrath. During his reign, he knew little time of peace and too much of war -- too much in fact as he fell at the side of Dáin Ironfoot in the War of the Ring and was avenged by his son Bard II.

Bard II

The son of Brand and most like Bard than any of his other descendants, Bard II was justly named. He was a man grim of disposition, but just and fair, wise and tempered. His father was slain in the Battle of Dale, and Bard was forced back to Erebor, where he was besieged with his ally and new king of Erebor, Thorin III, for seven days. When news came from the south of the destruction of Sauron, Bard and Thorin emerged from the Lonely Mountain, breaking the siege in a rout and driving the evil Men from their lands for many, many years.



THE ROAD GOES EVER ON...

TRIUMPH OF THE WITCH-KING:

CHAPTER 5, A PROMISE KEPT by Doug 'Tomcat' Joos

Interludes:

1. *He sat in the cold damp cell, the smell of moldy straw filling the room. Too many risks were taken, too many times he tempted the fates, and now he sat here and waited for his death. What of his men? What of the Prince? Did they survive? How does a commander face being captured and the potential loss of his troops – to know that he lives and that they may lie dead on the field. He hung his head low. The clang of the metal bar startled him back to his surrounds as the door swung open... the man again, he was definitely an Easterling. "We will hear soon," he said. "Soon the Witch-king will call for you and I will have the great pleasure of giving you over to him!" He laughed as the door closed...*
2. *She did not feel anymore, not in the way that the living felt, but she sensed it... there was a faint tug on the thread and then a violent jerk. It was caught, what ever it might be... the shadow lumbered forward, darker than the blackness that surrounded her.*

Setting: The characters have spent the last sixteen days in the city of Fornost, tending to Prince Arvegil. Great celebrations were made for the restoration of the prince's health and the King showed great favour to those who brought the healing plant to the city. But now that this errand has been performed, there is another that needs done - the rescue of the commander of the King's Third Host, Camentir.

SCENE 1 - A MUSTER TO MARCH FORTH

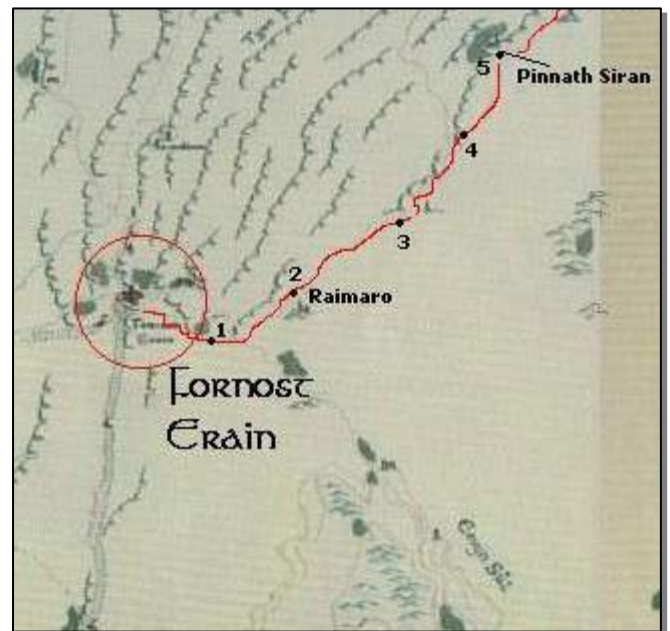
Days 1-5 January 1-5, Fornost Erain and the travel to Pinnath Siran

This scene will be dominated with roleplaying by the characters. The players must discuss the best means by which they should march north into upper Rhudaur and lower Angmar. Will they decide on traveling in a small, but discreet group or will they muster a force behind them with the aid of the King of Fornost to march north against the forces of Angmar with the goal of rescuing Camentir.

The Narrator should let the players make their decision, but if they decide to muster a force, he or she should limit the size of the force that they can gather based on their chronicle. In my campaign, I let the players gather a host of 25 made up of warriors, scouts, and utilitarian type orders (i.e. Loremaster/Healer, etc.)

Once on the road out of Fornost, the travel should be relatively easy as the host rides through the safer lands of Arthedain. Still, the spying eyes of Angmar are always present so the Narrator has many options to introduce challenges, skirmishes, or any other exciting addition to the scene.

See the map to the right (the numeric points signify the amount of distance covered with each full day's ride):



Overland Travel: *This optional rule simplifies Weariness for long overland travel.* Rather than making many Stamina tests over time intervals, one roll is made with the TN of the test equaling the number of miles traveled (i.e. 20 miles = TN 20). Apply modifiers for Pace (Walk -2, Jog/Trot +0, Run +2, Sprint/Gallop +4), Terrain (easy ground -2, average ground +0, rough ground +2, very rough ground +4), and if any Beasts of Burden are used to make the travel (i.e. riding a horse +5 to Stamina Test). Degree of success determines the number of Weariness levels suffered: 3 on a disastrous failure, 2 on a



complete failure, 1 on a failure, 0 on any success. Also, if a Disastrous failure is rolled, the character must stop there and then, too exhausted to keep going for that day. Roll 2d6 and subtract it from the TN to determine how many miles were actually covered before the character needed to stop.

LOCATIONS

Raimaro - The town of Raimaro is along the northern road out of Fornost. The road is now mainly used by the soldiers that travel to and from the borders of the land of Arthedain. Long ago, merchants used to travel from Bree to Pinnath Siran and beyond bringing their wares to the many people that inhabited the lands. Nowadays, this mercantile traffic has bled off as the region has become more and more dangerous. The Narrator can use the following narrative to describe the travel and the town of Raimaro:

Their course chosen, the Company of Arthedain moved out of the King's city and onto the old roads that would take them east. Their goal would be Eldanar and each person began to let that thought sink in - fourteen days on the wintry road to a Castle that lies in the Enemy's hands. The Company members all girded themselves for the coming trials.

The rain fell heavy for the whole day and due to the cloud cover, the winter night seemed to settle in quickly. Still, it was demanded of them all a full day's travel - ten hours in the saddle with intermittent breaks. For some, the experience was nothing new, for others it was a nightmare.

To the north, the great steppe like terrain rose in an easterly direction and the Company was forced to go a bit south and east. On the second day of their travel, they picked up the northern road. This day had a much more grateful ending as the troop rode into Raimaro.

Raimaro was still a thriving city that dated back to the early years of the Kingdom of Arnor. Like Bree to the south, it was a trading town and was readily able to tend to large groups of travelers with its many inns and taverns. Yet, these days of late, little merchant traffic made its way along the north road (which in itself was in great disrepair) and the prosperity of the town had dwindled. Predominantly it was the lonely soldiers of Arthedain that trekked between Fornost and their assigned duties at the many watchtowers that they still controlled all the way to Sirranar. Now watchful eyes and unsure looks greeted the troop as they rode in, wet with the rain.

Pinnath Siran - The town of Pinnath Siran is named from the northernmost garrison of Arthedain troops in Sirannar, a fortification that sits 20 miles north of the town. Like Raimaro, it has declined too and being on the frontier there are more opportunities for run-ins with shady individuals or for observing spies.

It is here that the players should get their first sight of Sacal, a large Easterling that sits in a tavern in the town. A potential problem could erupt when one of the rogue scouts of the Host (or any NPC the Narrator chooses) sits down to have a quiet conversation with Sacal. Of course, the meeting will need to be observed, but due to the noise in the tavern, cannot be overheard (TN 25). The rogue if observed and questioned will be very difficult to pry any information from (Interrogation/Intimidation TN 20). In either case, he will be found dead in the morning. The Narrator can use the following narrative to describe the travel and the town of Pinnath Siran:

Moving on, the main Host of soldiers and support picked up their pace along the road. They continued on and soon come out of a small forest they had been riding through. To the west, the lands fell in great steppes for as far as the eye could see, the sun sitting low on the horizon, but causing the snow covered ground to gleam an orangish-white.

To the north, the dark outline of another forest - a thick pine forest that sat on Pinnath Siran's western edge - could be seen. Just beyond the forest, the land dropped in a great cliff, only to continue some 120' below.

Also, the gates to the town could be clearly seen from the distance. A thick, thorny hedge that provided excellent, natural defense surrounded Pinnath Siran, but along its roads - north and south - large gates had been erected to keep out the unwanted. The town was notorious for trouble, but only for those that come looking for it.

Note to Narrator: The frontier town of Pinnath Siran is populated by the many folk of the northern region of Arthedain (i.e. Dúnedain, Eriadorians, and some of the simpler hill folk related to the southern Dunlendings). Stranger folk have been making their presence known, men with strange garb and speech - Easterlings. Though the Men of the West see them as potential threats, the few stragglers that come into town do not cause problems and therefore are not persecuted for being who they are.

SCENE OBJECTIVE

The players must get the troop to Pinnath Siran and try to avoid any spying eyes that they can and overcome any minor challenges put before them. They must also find out about the traitor in their midst before he is murdered. The narrator may reward XP for roleplaying, picking up clues regarding the treacherous rogue, and for any combat or successful skill tests made.



SCENE 2 - Those that Oppose

Days 6-9 January 6-9, Pinnath Siran and the travel north...

The Host will leave Pinnath Siran and continue north. They will reach the garrison at Sirannar by the end of day 6 and this will be the last permanent hold that the forces of Arthedain maintain. The lands beyond Sirannar, though still controlled by Arthedain, are mainly unsettled and are traveled by folks with both good and ill intentions.

Travel should be relatively easy due to the flat land and the old road that runs along a ridgeline towards the hills of Dol Gormain, but the Narrator may feel free to challenge the players with weather, random encounters of brigands, wolves or wargs, or with tests of stealth and hiding. The Narrator may use the following narrative to describe the travel:

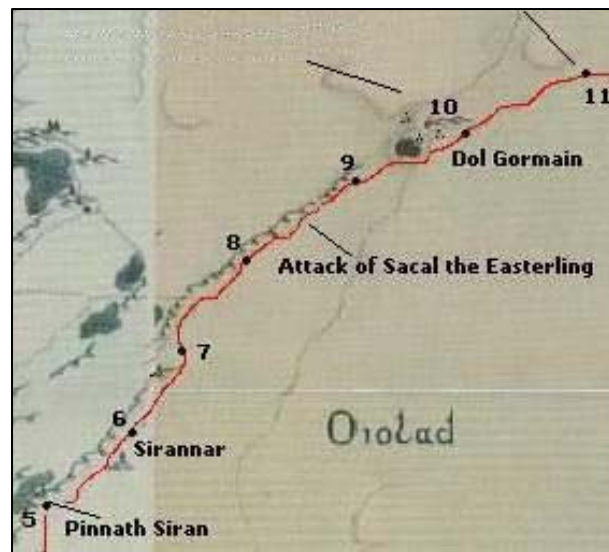
The next few days could have been considered perfect, if not for the bitter winds that blew. The sky above the Host was a rich blue with wispy, thin clouds high above. The sun shone brightly but offered only a little warmth. The terrain around them offered little in the way of shelter from the elements or the unwanted observer, again only sparse trees and scrub covered the landscape. Bright, white snow stretched in all directions until it met the deep blue sky upon the horizon.

Still, spirits were high as the company continued north passing the great tower of Sirannar that had stood since Elendil himself had seen to its construction. As the Host rode past the Dúnedain tower, the commander of Sirannar greeted them upon the road – his name was Arannel and his reputation was great indeed. He and his honour guard stood in salute as the Host passed, respect and pride beaming in their eyes. This was the frontier... the last foothold of the strength of the North.

By mid-day on the eighth day out of Fornost, the Host will be waylaid by a force of Angmarim under the command of Sacal. Sacal is the great Easterling that may have been seen (or met) in the town of Pinnath Siran a few days past. Through his spies, he knew of the oncoming force out of Arthedain, though he does not know the Host's intent, and has set up an ambush. The Easterling is one of the many commanders of the Witch-king's forces and he is great tactician and commander.

The Narrator must adjust the size of the force under Sacal as is appropriate for his or her chronicle. They may even alter the statistics given for Sacal as needed. The combat can be done using *Mass Combat Rules* (depending on the size of the force) or with the *Mook Rules*, or with the standard *CODA Combat System* (if the number of combatants is low enough that it will not bog the game down). No matter what the method of combat, make sure that the fight is a bit desperate for the heroes and their followers.

Sacal will not fight to the death and will withdraw his force, or what is left of it, if the tide is moving in an unfavourable direction. The Narrator will want to use Sacal as an antagonist to the Host for the rest of this chapter and perhaps for the rest of their chronicle.



Sacal the Easterling

RACE: Man of Darkness

ABILITIES: Bearing 9 (+1)*, Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 10 (+2), Strength, 10 (+2)*, Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftiness +2, Willpower +3*, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Warrior

ADVANCEMENT: 5

ABILITIES: Evasion, Swift Strike

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +14, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Inspire +6, Intimidate (Power) +6, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged Combat (Shortbow) +14, Ride (Horse) +3, Run +5, Siegecraft +4, Track (Men) +3, Unarmed Combat (Brawling) +7 (all skills include all applicable modifiers except Specialty Bonus)

EDGES: Accurate, Command, Dodge, Warwise, Weapon Mastery

FLAW: Fealty (Witch-king)

HEALTH: 10 (6 wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

INITIATIVE: +2 **DODGE:** +5 **DEFENCE:** 12

ARMOUR: 5 (Chainmail)

DAMAGE: Longsword 2d6+6 / Shortbow (arrow) 2d6+1 (all include Strength Bonus)

SCENE OBJECTIVE

The players must overcome any random encounters that the Narrator puts before them and successfully drive off the Angmarim that ambush them on day 8.

SCENE 3 - CREEPING HORROR

Days 9-10 January 9-10, The Ruin of Dol Gormain



This scene was previously released as the Hostile Haunt I wrote in *Hall of Fire issue 13*. The Host will be subjected to Gorvorsang's spell ability Misdirection. She will attempt to bring the group into the lowland that lies beneath the three hills of Dol Gormain where her brood can waylay them and she may take a 'trophy' or two.

Once within the area of effect of her power, the horses will begin to panic and only on a Superior Success Ride Test will the riders be able to remain mounted. The Narrator must get the details of Gorvorsang's lair from the above-mentioned issue, but he or she may feel free to use the following narratives and interludes to describe the scene:

On the approach:

The Host continued on through the day passing on the east side of a large pine forest that stretched north and west to butt up against a series of low hills. The region was called Dol Gormain and in times past three active towns had sat along the hillsides - those were happier times. But unfortunately the Kingdom of Arnor had slowly decayed and finally broke into three and those three smaller parts became easy prey for the Witch-king and his hordes. These small towns were the victims of that deterioration.

Finding the entrance:

They walked across an old road that had traveled through the center of the north-most village and climbed over a large, long, stone wall. There stood the old foundation of a house or building but the ground was broken and a large sinkhole went down into the darkness. As they approached, the smell became overwhelming and the men needed to put their hands to mouth and nose to try and block the stench. The ground around the hole was frozen and littered with 'pellets' of sorts. Long icicles ran down what appeared to be leafless vines (or ropes?) that draped down into the hole. The pit was about twenty feet from top to bottom and below could be seen a passage that went deeper into the ground. A terrible feeling of unease settled on the group and they wished to be away as quickly as possible. What they did not know was that hundreds of eyes watched them.

Interludes (if Narrator likes to add colorful narratives regarding things going on unbeknownst to the players):

Winter was normally a time of inactivity for them, but this was the second time in many long weeks that 'food' had walked into their realm. Silent and still, they sat and watched as the Company had entered first the southeastern town and then come north - by her. Well, she had always claimed that type of 'food' for her own never letting them partake in the sweet meat. Still, they had gorged themselves on the warm, fat, brown furry ones that had wandered into their home the day before.

"The two-legs had come in alone... leave them to her", they thought. There were many of the four-legs just outside of town and they would see to the capturing of them! They began to move, coming out of cracks and holes, silent and unseen, all the while weaving a net that would ensure that none of the 'food' would escape.

She knew they were there. *She* could sense them; both by her unholy powers and by the simple pad of their feet on the ground above. In her stirred feelings - not of hunger, she had no more need for that - but a thrill. A thrill to hunt. A thrill to capture and watch as her 'prey' hung, and a thrill to torture and fill them with utter despair. *She* knew her brood also desired the 'food', but no... these were hers. *She* would have some pretty new pieces to add to her collection. The young ones could eat the four-legged food. *She* would have the rest for herself... well maybe all for herself. Perhaps she would share...

This scene is meant for the players to enter into Dol Gormain by themselves, misled by Gorvorsang. If the characters are accompanied by a host of men, the Narrator will want to devise a reason to separate the main characters from the rest of the host. The Misdirection ability is perfect for this, causing the characters to lose contact with the rest of their group. Or perhaps they must go to the rescue of a few NPC's that were separated by Gorvorsang and have been set upon by the spiders about the Spider-wraith's lair. In my chronicle, my players could not get the horses to enter the valley and thus ordered the main host to move to the north side of the hills and wait why they went to aid one of the others that had been drawn into Dol Gormain.

There is no number given for the number of lesser giant spiders or giant spiders outside of Gorvorsang's lair. The Narrator should stock the area around Dol Gormain with as many spiders that would be appropriate for their chronicle.



SCENE OBJECTIVE

The primary objective here is for the players to survive the encounter with Gorvorsang. If she is killed, it will certainly be many more experience points, but she has lived for many hundreds of years - she will not go down idly.

SCENE 4 - THE ASSAULT ON BARAD ELDANAR

Days 11-17 January 11-17, the travel to and attack on Barad Eldanar...

After the harsh road north, the force out of Arthedain has come to within striking distance of the castle named Eldanar. The bad thing is that there is little known about this ancient Dúnedain fortress as it has been in the hands of the Witch-king for over 300 years. If the characters seek any information from their own personal lore or from any loremasters in their group, the Narrator may read the following:

The castle Eldanar was built in the early part of the Third Age. It was one of the first official landgrants given by Elendil to Eldanar, one of his faithful followers. It became the center of the northernmost county of Arnor, and unfortunately, it was the first to fall into the hands of the Angmarim... in 1325 T.A., as I have been told. Needless to say, the King in Fornost knows very little about the castle and even the heirs to Eldanar who live within Fornost, in 'exile' from their family lands, have little recollection of the castle's layout.

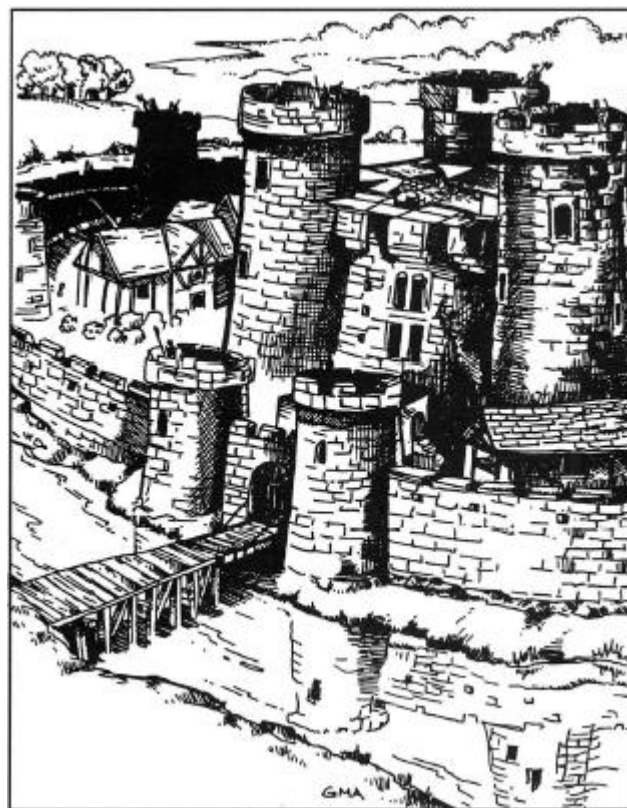
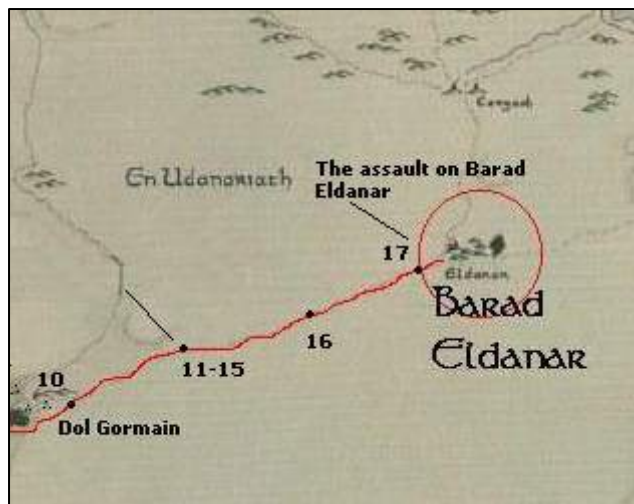
An opportunity lies before the players to garner some information regarding the fortress and its occupants. Two Easterling riders from Eldanar can be found out on the plains heading west. These two men are carrying an important message and request from Arkish, the Asháktur of Eldanar. The Narrator may decide on any tests that they wish to capture these two men, hopefully alive (i.e. Stealth tests). If they do capture them, the next thing will be to get them to talk or reveal what is written on their parchments (i.e. Intimidate or through spells - *Command*, *Voice of Command*), as it is written in a foreign language (requiring Language tests). If the players pass the Narrator's designated tests, the following may be read (the Narrator needs to fill in the blank line below):

To Sakalure,

My Liege, I write this note to impress upon you the urgency of my position in Eldanar. We have, over the last few months, been ordered to initiate offensive attacks against the Dúnedain of Arthedain... in particular against my captive and his forces that have ranged my territory for the last three years.

Needless to say, the last orders came from Carn Dûm itself nearly a month ago and I was commanded to issue forth my cavalry to attack into the Ettenmoors, and then again not two weeks later. In both cases we attacked the forces of Camentir and have at last prevailed over them. Still, my numbers here at Eldanar have dwindled.

I urgently request reinforcements to bolster my defense. We have received word via our many spies that a force has marched out



of Fornost against us. A reconnaissance force and I fear what troops follow on behind.

Eldanar is a vital fortress in our Angmarim defenses and I will need more men to hold it than the _____ that are present. Even now I am ordered to send our 'captive' north by command of the Witch-king himself - with him I will need to send a guarding force that will reduce my numbers even greater.

Please send a small contingent of at least 200 to re-support my garrison... perhaps your commander Sacal may come? I look forward to your reply to this request.

Humbly,
Arkish



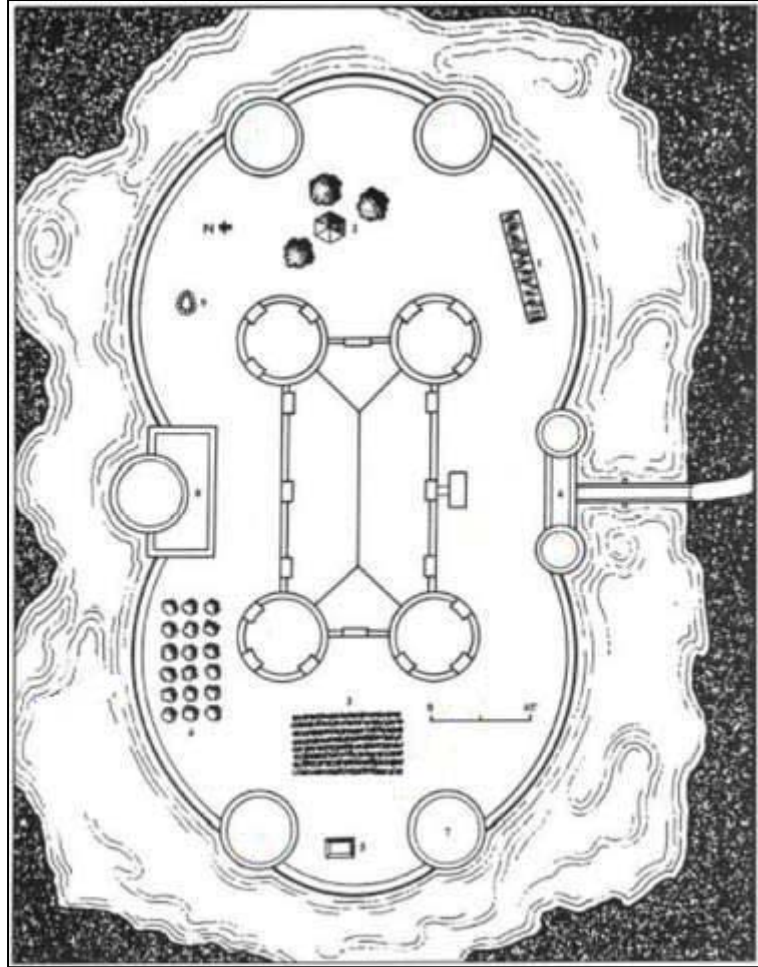
From the letter, the Host will know the strength of Eldanar and if they are a small band can try to enter the castle by stealth; if they are a large host, than a siege could commence. The Narrator will need to prepare the appropriate forces and their disposition depending on how they wish to conduct this scene.

The commander of Barad Eldanar is Arkish, the Ashâktur. He has come far from his home to command the forces of Eldanar under Sakalure and has done well for many years. He longs for his home and returning to the warm lands beside the ocean from whence he came, but he is as much a thrall to the Witch-king as those that suffer in the pits of Carn Dum.

The stats for Arkish are not given but the Narrator may mirror those of Sacal's (just give him some additional Advancements up to 10). Arkish also has a lieutenant within Barad Eldanar named Rhukar - his stats may also mirror Sacal's as given.

SCENE OBJECTIVE

The objective of the scene is the capturing and searching of Eldanar for the commander Camentir. As in scenes past of this Chapter and past Chapters, the Narrator will want to make the scene as desperate as they can for the Host out of Arthedain. This keeps with the theme of the North and the long struggle made only to end with the loss of those kingdoms.



This scene is also meant as a cliffhanger to lead into our future *Chapter 6: Nan Angmar!!* If the Host is successful in the taking of the keep, they will find no trace of Camentir and the Narrator will want to read this last narrative:

Above, on the battlements and unbeknownst to the Dúnedain Company below, a sole surviving Easterling ran the length of the parapets towards a far tower. He moved as stealthily as possible and prayed to his 'faith' to deliver him from these attackers and to let him escape without harm. When he arrived at his destination, he reached down to open the trap door so he could hide within. He pulled it up and as he did, his eyes were averted to the east... towards movement in the morning gloom. Yes! There was movement! It appeared to be a great number of riders! The messengers that they had sent had made it - they had summoned aid!

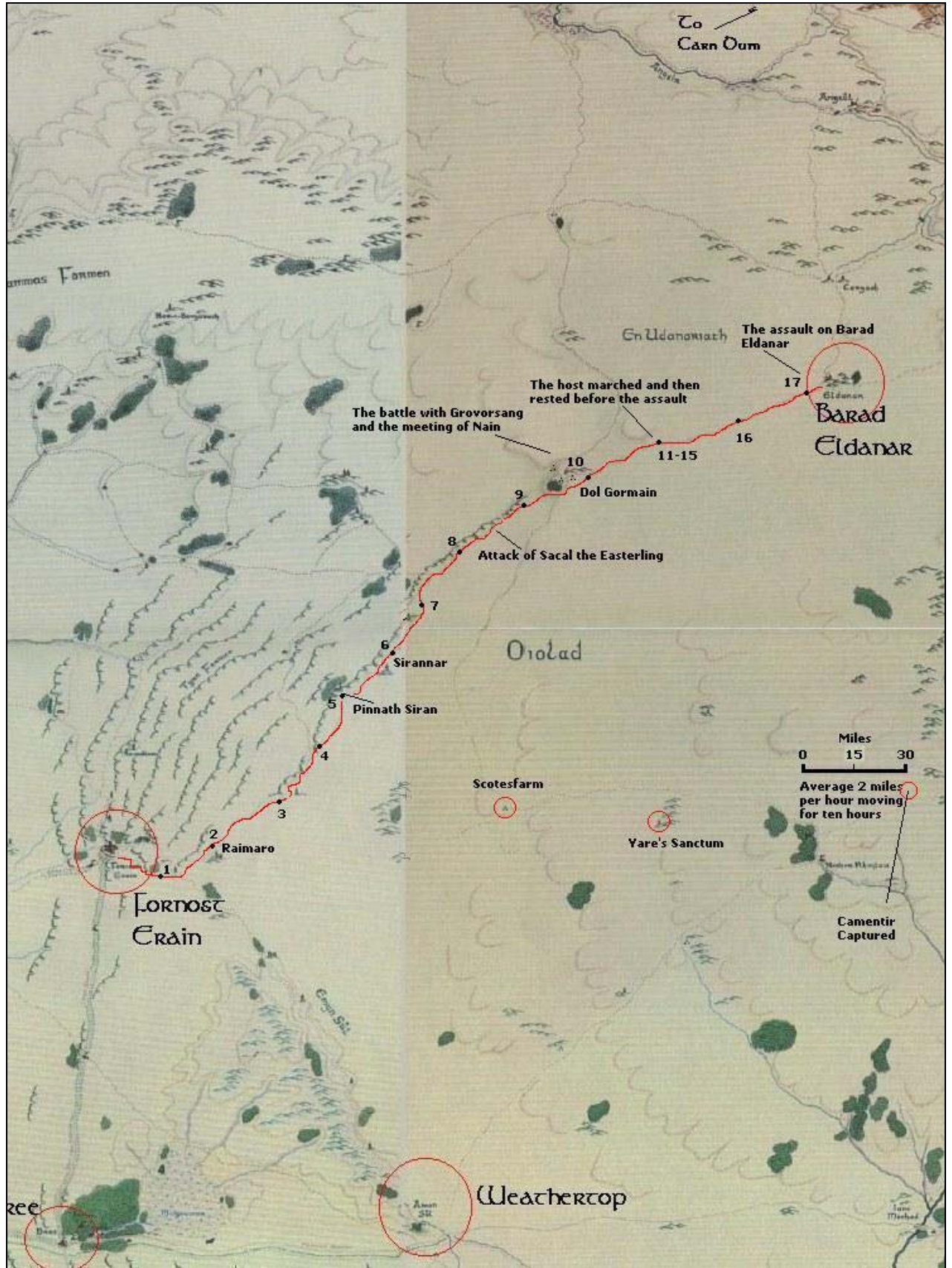
The Easterling archer let slam the trap door and ran over to a shelf where lay an old ox horn. He grabbed it up and put it to his lips and let air a tremendous call that echoed through the morning sky.

The Narrator may award experience as they please, or they may feel free to award as follows: 1,000 for the Primary Objective of taking the keep, 30 points per scene to each character that adds to the scene with good roleplaying; 5 points for each important Test Success; and any points scored for the defeating of enemies.

Lastly about treasure: I have not seeded the Chapter with any treasures. I have always played my Lord of the Rings sessions with heroics in mind - not treasure-seeking. Still, the Narrator may add any treasures that they see fit especially in the realm of Gorvorsang.



The following map is from my chronicle and how my players progressed:



POSTMASTER



1. I don't fully understand the ruling on Falling Damage on p. 245 CRB. Does the victim makes a swiftness test for half damage or is it an acrobatic test? May the victim make some kind of test to prevent falling?

I'll address your second question first. The Swiftness test is to prevent the character from falling. Upon failing the test (TN listed in Table 9.33), the corresponding damage listed in the table is dealt to the character. I think that Acrobatics reference is either a typo or just a descriptor for the action taken. But I wouldn't disagree with allowing the character to make an additional free Acrobatics test against the same TN to cut the damage in half (rounded up).

2. Does the Perform skill work like the Lore skill or as any other skill with specialization? Does the artist possess the ability to sing, write verses and play an instrument and gaining a +2 only for specialization?

Perform as listed in the CRB is a skill and has specialties as Tell Stories, Sing, etc., so yes, a performer would be able to tell stories, sing, play an instrument using just the Perform skill. Personally, I would change this to be a Skill Group and the specialties into individual skills with allowing subsequent specialties as a Narrator fiat.

3. Do you have any news about any LOTR RPG products coming out soon and where do you get your info?

The Helm's Deep Sourcebook is due out during the month of June. An exact date at the time of this answer is unknown. I get my info from the Decipher messageboards.

Note: The most recent news is that Helm's Deep has been delayed by the printer and now is forecasted for early July at Origins and general release in mid-July.

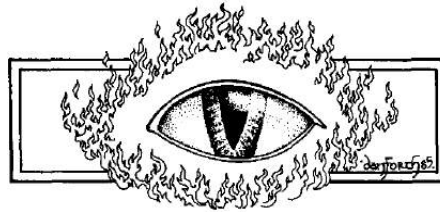
4. [Pray] tell, my good friends, I have a Knight of Dol Amroth in my group and I want to do a tournament with jousting but my problem is this: the only rule about unhorsing an opponent is in the "Extra Successes in Combat" (p.231 CRB). I was wondering if you guys (or gals) had a better way to deal with this than waiting to have one of the opponents to roll an Extraordinary Success? Do you know of a good ruling on this subject (from you and others)???

I have a couple suggestions. First, have the character attack the mounted opponent. Upon a successful attack, besides normal damage being dealt, have an opposed Strength test between the two with the attacker getting 1.5x Strength bonus to the roll while the defender can use the Strength bonus of his mount (this is probably best used for an unmounted attacker against a mounted opponent, also see my Set maneuver in Fan Flavour of the upcoming issue). Another (and probably better) way to do this is to rule that when jousting, the characters are charging one another (each making the Charge maneuver) and resolving per the Charge maneuver (being knocked back would equate to being dismounted). I would even consider giving a Ride affinity bonus to resist being dismounted.



WHAT'S OUT THERE

This is a list of websites along with Decipher's official websites. We have found they supply useful information to *Lord of the Rings* gamers.



DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/index.html>

DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD

<http://forums.decipher.com/viewforum.php?f=44>

DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG SUPPORT DOCS

<http://decipher.com/lordoftherings/rpg/support/index.html>

THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE

<http://halloffire.inspiring.us>

FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules>

THE MAD IRISHMAN

<http://www.mad-irishman.net>

STARBASE CODA

<http://www.starbase-coda.com>

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA

<http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm>

SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL

http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/

CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH

<http://roleplay.avioc.com/lotr/index.htm>

RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/>

THE SLAVE PITS OF BARAD-DUR

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/smaugrob/lotrmain.html>

THE STEWARD AND THE KING

<http://www.stewardandking.net>

THE TOWER HILLS

<http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills>

VALINOR

<http://sauron.misled.us>

TREK-RPG.NET

<http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php>

CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine

TOLKIEN ONLINE

<http://www.tolkienonline.com/>

TALES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales_of_middle_earth/

CALLING ALL GAMERS!

Interested in submitting...

- A mini or side adventure?
- Racial/Personal Development or Order/Professional Development packages?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- NPC's?
- Weapons, equipment, or magical items?
- Fan Art?

If so, write to us for details on submission at: codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Fan Content' in the subject line. Please include your name and/or pseudonym (handle/online identity) and email address(es) with which one of our editors may contact you.

Please note that if you would like to submit a mini-adventure, Decipher will not consider it for publishing. Please do not directly submit your items to us without prior approval.

Fancy yourself a writer and would like to contribute to the webzine?

If so, write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Writer' in the subject line. One of the editors will get back to you with details about writing for **THE HALL OF FIRE**.

If you would like to post an advertisement for:

- A local or online RPG that you are hosting
- An RPG convention or tournament
- Or any events pertaining to The *Lord of the Rings* RPG or Star Trek RPG by Decipher

Write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Ad' in the subject line along with your advertisement. The advertisement is to be less than 100 words and a graphic to go with it no more than 1' x 1'

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Note to any that wish to print out their copies of *The Hall of Fire*: If you wish to print this document in a book style (front and back pages), understand that the cover was intended to be printed by itself on one page.

