

THE HALL OF FIRE FAN WEBZINE

ISSUE THIRTY-THREE
AUGUST 2006

White Tower of Elwing - by John Howe



GREETINGS,

SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

For 32 months straight now we've been putting out a webzine dedicated to enhancing your play of the Lord of the Rings RPG and by golly, wouldn't you know it? This would be #33!

Not much has come from the mouths at Decipher about the game but it's good to know that those reading this still have hope or are at least excited about what else can be found to further inspire your creative processes. This issue is chock full of yummy tidbits like a new adventure, information on some societies in the East, a bunch of new optional rules and errata for old ones, a Fan Flavour bursting at the gills, plus a whole lot more! So dig in and don't worry about the napkins!

Happy Gaming,

Matthew A. Kearns
aka GandalfOfBorg
Editor

THE MRKX:FN:CA HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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ADVENTURING IN

THE EAST

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

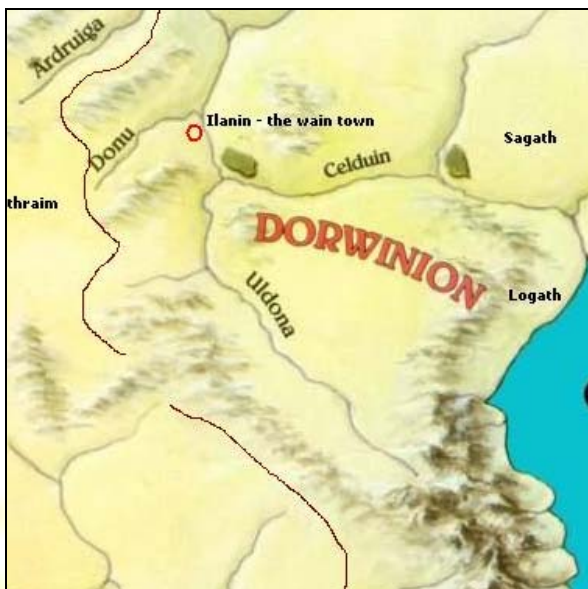
'These were Men of other race, out of the wide eastlands, gathering to the summons of their Overlord;...'
 — *The Black Gate is Closed, The Two Towers*

'Easterling' is a general name given to any who come from lands east of the free realms in western Middle-earth, which could encompass Man, Elf, and Dwarf, yet it predominantly refers to the Men of Darkness allied to Morgoth and Sauron. This article discusses some of the realms of Men and Elves, while information about Dwarves from the East can be found in the Moria supplement.

DORWINION

Man of Dorwinion (Man of Darkness) - Craft +2, Debate (Bargain) +2, Survival (Plains) +1, Sea-craft (Boating) +1

Lying upon the northwestern coasts of the inland sea of Rhûn, Dorwinion is a peaceful and picturesque realm of many gardens and vineyards, basking in the high regard held for their wines and exotic fruits. The realm sprawls along the fertile lands through which passes the River Running -- the same river that has its head at the Long Lake near Erebor and Mirkwood. For as long as memory serves, these people of the vine have held amicable relationships with realms in the West. Fortunately for this realm, it has been spared the ravages of war and so remains neutral as much as it may. Because of this, much spying from the East and West is done here, yet no conflict arises here as it would devastate all involved, both economically and militarily.



KHAND

Man of Khand (Man of Darkness) - Armed Combat +2, Craft +1, Ride +1, Survival (Plains) +2, Ranged Combat +1; Battle-fury
Variag of Khand (Man of Darkness) - Armed Combat +2, Ride +1, Ranged Combat +1, Survival (Plains) +2, Teamster +1; Battle-fury

A barbaric and beastly people, the men of Khand are renowned for their savage viciousness on the battlefield. They are especially hated by those in the West for their ancestors' betrayal when they sided with Morgoth back in the First Age. Since then, they have gone to war with Dúnedain and Elf in the name of their people and that of The Lidless Eye as well. Khand lies to the east and south of Mordor, bordering upon the realm of Nurn, and therefore it enjoys the benefits of association with Barad-dûr. Not content to just destroy the realms in the West, these nomadic folk also bicker and war with each and any other realm on their borders, notably those in Harad and Rhûn; it is only the might of Mordor that keeps them in line when there is war to be made against Gondor and the Elf-realms. The Variags are the "noble" upper-class of this society, analogous in many ways to the Dúnedain of Gondor in the Third Age.

NURN

Man of Nurn - Armed Combat +1, Craft +2, Sea-craft (Boating) +1, Survival +2

Dark are the skies and grim are the Men of Nurn. There is no recollection of when its people were not under the heel of Barad-dûr and the whip of their orc taskmasters. Nurn is a fertile land sweeping around the southern to the eastern side of the sea of Nurnen, breadbasket of the war-machine of Mordor. Most of the people here are actually prisoners-turned-slaves taken from Mordor's battles with realms in the East and West -- Man, Elf, and Dwarf can be found pressed into the forced servitude of Mordor, with the latter two's small populations segregated and used as labor in the mines beneath the Ephel Duath.

Note: All prisoners found here -- Elf, Dwarf, or Man -- use the racial package of their origin.

RHÛN

Balchoth - Armed Combat +2, Craft +1, Ranged Combat +1, Sea-craft +1, Survival +1, Weather-sense +1; Battle-fury

Man of Rhûn - Armed Combat +1, Craft +1, Ranged Combat +1, Ride +1, Survival +1; Craftmaster

Like their kin in Khand, men from the realms in Rhun live nomadic lives upon the sprawling plains and steppes, on the shores of the Sea of Rhun and among the rocks of its bordering mountains. They live in peaceful solace tending their livestock and gathering food as they need it. That is, most of them are this way.

One clan that would rather conquer than farm are the Balchoth, who rival even the Men of Khand in their thirst for blood and war. They are raiders from the coasts of the inland sea, known for their prowess in battle upon the water and on land. It was this knowledge that enabled them to perform the incredible crossing of the Anduin to lay siege to Gondor.

Another warlike people are the clans that made up the confederation known as the Wainriders. With the help of Khand and Harad, they nearly destroyed the South Kingdom, but were routed after killing Gondor's king.

CUIVIÉNEN

Elf of Cuiviénen - Armed Combat +1, Craft +1, Ranged Combat +1, Survival +2, Sea-craft +1

Long ago in ages past, the Firstborn of Ilúvatar awoke upon the shores of the Sea of Helcar. The place where they awoke and spent uncounted days came to be called Cuiviénen, the Water of Awakening. When Oromë came to lead them to Valinor, many stayed behind or were lost upon the road. It is here that these remaining Eldar founded a home that would last through the ages, even after many changes to the world. But once Valinor was removed from the world and the power of the Eldar began to wane, the elves of Cuiviénen were affected as well. Eventually they would succumb to the longing to cross the land and sea, forsaking Cuiviénen to rejoin their kin, and fading into myth and legend.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Note: Since Easterling is a reference to a collective group of different peoples, these hooks are really for chronicles instead of chapters.

**Ancient Memories**

Long ago in the depths of time, the Firstborn of Ilúvatar found themselves waking in the twilight on the shore of a great body of water, the Sea of Helcar, that glittered with the brilliance of all the stars in the sky; this place was called Cuiviénen. When the elves were beseeched to travel to the West, some didn't leave and some of those who left deserted the path and eventually returned to the place of their birth. Now in western Middle-earth there are elves who still remember the glorious beauty of Cuiviénen; a stirring has risen within them to see it again if it still exists and to rediscover friends and loved ones that did not follow their path.

Emissaries to the East

The White Council has concluded that the reemergence of Sauron after his unmasking at Dol Guldur warrants taking immediate steps to fend off his ambitions of domination. One of these steps is to send a group of emissaries, representatives of realms of the Free Peoples in the West, to parley with those in the East who might bear ill will towards the iron fist of The Shadow. While there, the emissaries should also track down any leads concerning the whereabouts of the missing Blue Wizards, contacting them if possible and requesting their assistance in aiding the West.

New Frontier

The reigns of Elessar and his son, Eldarion, have passed and the population of Gondor has swelled so that many, as in the great heady days of Númenor, begin to look elsewhere to begin a new life. Some have decided upon an area of land around the inland sea of Rhûn. Orcs and trolls, though few these days, are still found in places near the old dark strongholds of The Eye, and Easterling raiders and other bandits terrorize the plains... what adventures are in store for a large caravan of settlers seeking a bit of land and peace?



FAN FLAVOUR

NEW TRAITS

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

FLAMBOYANT (EDGE)

You have a flair for the dramatic, which enhances both your performance and your personality.

Effects: You gain a +1 bonus to Perform and Persuade tests.

Improvement: Yes, 3 times. For each additional pick, you gain another +1 bonus to these skill tests.

SKIN-CHANGER (EDGE)

Legend has it that your people can change their physical form into that of an animal.

Prerequisites: Of a particular hereditary line such as that of Beorn.

Effects: You gain access to the Mastery of Shapes spell to turn into a particular type of animal as defined by your hereditary line (such as black bears for Beorn's line). You are limited to a number of transformations per day equal to your Vitality modifier, minimum 1.

Improvements: Yes. Acquiring multiple ranks in this edge will increase the number of transformations per day OR remove the spell components (in the following order) to turn the spell into an innate ability: gestures, verbal component, Weariness test.

FEARFUL (FLAW)

You are afraid of something: fire, heights, water, spiders, etc.

Restriction: None

Effect: Select something you are afraid of. If you encounter the object of your fear or someone casts a spell involving the object of your fear, make a Fear test at TN 7 TN or 7 + caster's Bearing modifier, consulting the Fear Effects table upon a failure. Succeeding does not affect you adversely, but remaining in the presence of the object of fear can cause further Fear tests or require the expenditure of Courage points if the Narrator so deems. Additionally, as a spellcaster, you receive a -3 penalty when casting spells that involve the object of your fear.

Upgrade: Yes. Every time you choose this trait, either select a new object to fear or the Fear test base TN for a particular object of fear increases -- to TN 10 for the first upgrade and TN 15 for the second. The spellcasting penalty increases by an additional -3 for each additional pick.

NEW ORDER PACKAGE

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

INSTRUMENTALIST (MINSTREL)

You are skilled in the playing of an instrument; your performances have been known to sooth the savage beast and woo the young maidens.

Skills: Any Craft +1, Debate +1, Games +1, Inspire +3, Any Language +2, Perform +3, Mimicry +2, Persuade +2

Pick 5 Bonuses: +1 to any Order skill

Pick 1 Edge: Favour of Fortune, Flamboyant, Friends, Gift of Tongues, Honey-tongued

NEW RACIAL ABILITY

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

WERE-BEAR

You are an ancestor or direct descendant of Beorn; you have the ability to change into a fearsome black bear at will.

Effects: You gain the ability to use the spell Mastery of Shapes as an innate ability, but you are limited to taking the form of a black bear.



MASS COMBAT UNITS

by GandalfOfBorg

WAR-WAGON, WAINRIDER

Wainrider cavalry isn't "cavalry" in the traditional sense; they are large war-wagons: heavily fortified rolling purveyors of death and destruction. They can hold up to ten men (including the driver) on the inside manning shortbows and a small ballista. Each is drawn by a team of barded horses. The wagon itself is made of dense wood and coated in a substance to make it resistant to fire. Though they move much slower than chariots, they can hold their own even against a more nimble opponent. If not in mass combat, the ballista requires a full round to move and target another direction and is limited to only 3 directions. For normal travel, war-wagons have a 6 for their movement.

Command: 8

Ranged: 11

Melee: 8

Toughness: 15

Support: 6

Movement: 6

Abilities: Plains-native, Fire-resistant (Fire damage must be greater than Protection to set aflame, once on fire, loses half damage from size of fire; If coated in a flammable substance like oil and set aflame, it will begin to burn after fire damage totaling double the Protection score has been dealt; Structure 30, Protection 10)

Note: I classify this as a cross between Medium Archer and Medium Cavalry and applied modifiers found in issue #25 where applicable.

Inventory

10 short bows

15 small ballistae shot

2 quivers of arrows per man

Rations and water for 10 men for 2 days

Personnel

Driver: Armed Combat: Whip (Whip) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Teamster (War-wagon) +8

Weaponsmen: Ranged Combat: Bows (Short bow) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Siegecraft (Defense, Ballista) +6, Teamster (War-wagon) +4

HEAVY CHARIOT, WAINRIDER

Two-man chariots make up the Wainrider medium cavalry unit. Pulled by a quartet of fine horses, the armored chariot carries a driver and weaponsman, wielding spears, javelins, or shortbows. The chariot itself is armed with two nasty serrated edges on either side, affixed to the axle as a means to decimate units of infantry. For normal travel, these chariots have a 12 for their movement.

Command: 8

Ranged: 11

Melee: 15

Toughness: 12

Support: 6

Movement: 14

Abilities: Plains-native, Mow 'Em Down (Leader makes a TN 12 Siegecraft test, add half (rounded down) of unit's Movement attribute modifier (full modifier on an Extraordinary Success) to Charge maneuver test)

Note: I classify this as a cross between Medium Archer and Medium Cavalry and applied modifiers found in issue #25 where applicable.

Inventory

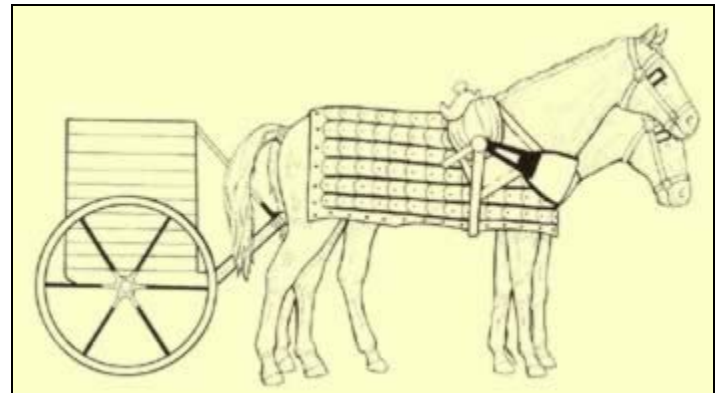
10 spears or 20 javelins or 2 shortbows with 2 quivers of arrows

Whip

Personnel

Driver: Armed Combat: Whip (Whip) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Teamster (Heavy Chariot) +8

Weaponsmen: Ranged Combat: Bows (Short bow) +6 OR Ranged Combat: Thrown (Javelin OR Spear) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Teamster (Heavy Chariot) +4



LIGHT CHARIOT, WAINRIDER

The light cavalry of the Wainriders consist of the one-man chariot, pulled by one or two horses. Lighter and more nimble than the other Wainrider units, these are used en masse following a two-man chariot charge. The drivers are armed with short spears or javelins. Like the larger version, they are also fitted with blades extending from the axles. For normal travel, these chariots have a 12 for their movement.

Command: 8

Ranged: 9

Melee: 12

Toughness: 9

Support: 6

Movement: 16

Abilities: Plains-native, Mow 'Em Down

Note: I classify this as a cross between Light Archer and Light Cavalry and applied modifiers found in issue #25 where applicable.

Inventory

10 short spears or 20 javelins
Whip

Personnel

Driver/Weaponsmen: Ranged Combat: Thrown (Javelin OR Spear) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Teamster (Heavy Chariot) +8

MEDIUM CAVALRY, KHAND

Command: 8
Ranged: 5
Melee: 15
Toughness: 12
Support: 6
Movement: 14
Ability: Plains-native

LIGHT CAVALRY, KHAND

Command: 8
Ranged: 5
Melee: 12
Toughness: 9
Support: 6
Movement: 16
Ability: Plains-native

LIGHT INFANTRY, KHAND

Command: 8
Ranged: 5
Melee: 9
Toughness: 7
Support: 6
Movement: 8
Ability: Plains-native



SHIPS

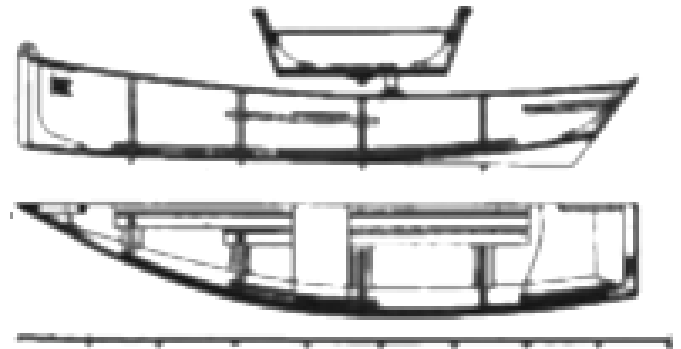
by GandalfOfBorg

BALCHOTH RIVER-RUNNER

These ships are small and quite maneuverable, even when carrying a full complement of soldiers. The Balchoth brought them over by the droves from the East to cross the Anduin and invade Gondor.

Class:	Private/Aux	Crew:	4
Type:	Fast	Length:	6
Size:	2	Beam:	4
Space:	14	Height:	2
Structure:	5	Decks:	1
Defense:	11		
Protection:	3		

		<u>Space</u>
Cargo:	4 units	12
Auxiliary Craft:	N/A	12
Bridge:	A / +0	12
Propulsion:	A / +0	12
Sails:	None	12
Oars:	Yes	10
Max Move:	6	
Cruise:	4	
Weapons:	None	10
Ammunition:	None	10
S/S Swap:	None	10
Traits:	Armor 2	0



Maneuver Modifiers

Command:	-1/+1
Helm:	+2/+3
Weapons:	-3/+0

Damage Tracks

PROPULSION	BRIDGE
<input type="checkbox"/> A Disabled! Unable to perform Helm maneuvers, no movement	<input type="checkbox"/> A Disabled! Unable to perform Command maneuvers

DAMAGE
□□□□□

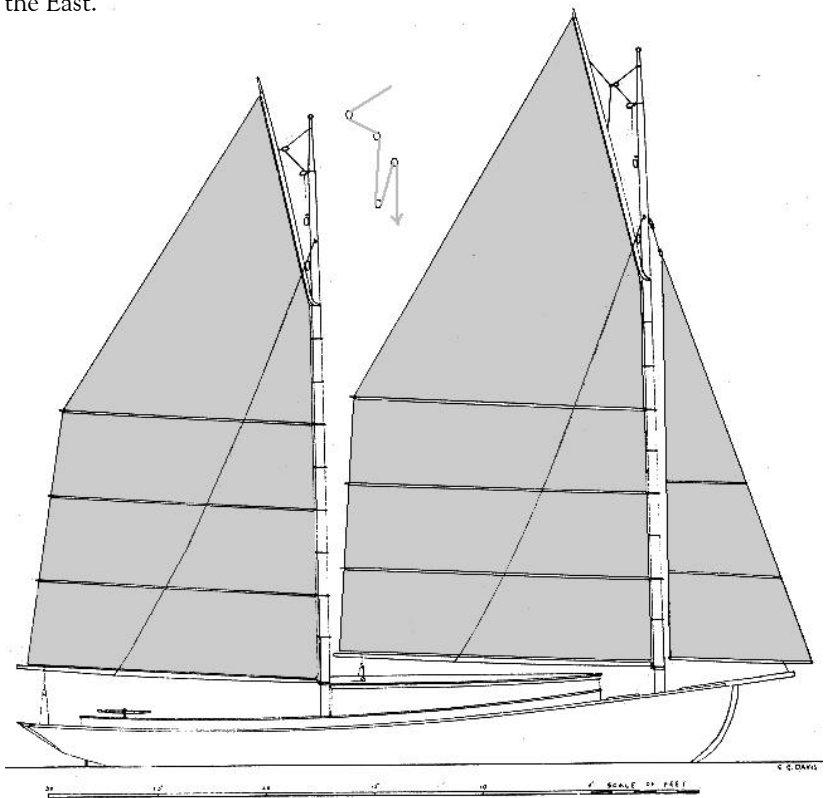


BALCHOTH RHUN SEA RAIDER

What the Corsairs are to the waters near Gondor, the Balchoth are to the whole of the sea of Rhun. It is in these ships that they have become the scourge of all who travel upon these waters in the East.

Class:	Frigate	Crew:	126
Type:	Fast	Length:	12
Size:	4	Beam:	8
Space:	32	Height:	6
Structure:	15	Decks:	3
Defense:	10		
Protection:	3		

		<u>Space</u>	
Cargo:	20 units		32
Auxiliary Craft:	2 Size 1 craft		32
Bridge:	CC / +5		26
Propulsion:	CC / +5		21
Sails:	2		15
Oars:	No		15
Max Move:	13		
Cruise:	10		
Weapons:	Catapult, Small x2		5
Ammunition:	30		-5
S/S Swap:	None		-5
Traits:	Vulnerable		0



Maneuver Modifiers

Command:	+1/+3
Helm:	+1/+2
Weapons:	+0/+3

Damage Tracks

PROPULSION

<input type="checkbox"/> C -2 Initiative
<input type="checkbox"/> B -5 Movement
<input type="checkbox"/> A Disabled!

Unable to perform
Helm maneuvers,
no movement

BRIDGE

<input type="checkbox"/> C -2 Siegecraft tests
<input type="checkbox"/> B -2 Command maneuvers
<input type="checkbox"/> A Disabled!

Unable to perform
Command maneuvers

DAMAGE
 □□□□ □□□□ □□□□



THE EFFECTIVE ARTIFICER

by GandalfOfBorg

BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice. As an Artificer, you could be a tribal totem-maker, a smithy working to craft bane-weapons for the wars against your mortal enemy, or a skilled Elven craftsman creating great works for the protection and sustainment of Middle-earth That Was. Think about where your character comes from and what his motivations are, and maybe even sketch out a few of his personal goals. This will help both you in focusing your roleplaying and your Narrator in 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.

PREREQUISITES

To become an Artificer, you must achieve the following:

- Wits 10+
- Craft: Any 8+
- Spellcasting (Loremaster or Magician) or Wizard Spellcasting

I would also consider placing a racial restriction against Hobbits, and would change the Order's Spellcasting prerequisite to include the innate abilities of Elves or others who acquired spells without entering any Order with a spellcasting ability.

SKILLS

The Artificer's skill list is representative of this powerful and reclusive Order's nature, focusing on the ability to create objects and the possession of great knowledge on many topics. What may stand out, but is quite appropriate, is Inquire, as it can be used for gathering information via research besides conversing with others.

EDGES

There are many traits that may distinguish an Artificer professionally and personally as well, such as Craftmaster, Curious, Hidden Strength, Tireless, and Wise.

FLAWS

The lure of power and pride can be too much for those of the Artificer Order, and there are a number of traits to represent their personality failings such as Arrogant, Dark Heart, Grasping, Proud, and Rival.

ABILITIES

Artificer Masterwork - If the character does not start with the Craftsman Order or hasn't acquired the Masterwork ability, then this is a great replacement as Artificers are notably more focused on the Craft skills that they are more adept with. This ability is also a boon for those wanting to create more effective potion-masters.

Craft Imitation - To be able to examine any enchanted artifact and possibly create a duplicate of it is very powerful indeed (imagine if an artificer got a hold of The One Ring or maybe a Silmariil!). How this would be used in a game beyond my imagination, but it may come in handy to help identify enchantments in similar fashion to the Antiquarian ability upon Narrator approval.

Crafting Determination - An effective ability for increasing Courage bonuses, but when weaving enchantments, the character had better have quite a store of Courage points if going this route. It is a boon for those who are using Craft Imitation and don't know the spells used in the enchanting of an item being duplicated.

Enchanting Skill - By itself, this ability may not grant a bonus sufficient enough to warrant its purchase, but every little bit helps in the process of crafting an enchanted item. Where it really shines is when it is purchased and used in conjunction with Crafting Determination and Craft Imitation.

Weaving Sorcery - This ability is not likely an ability purchased by a hero as it requires having Spell Specialty: Sorcery, but is conceivable that the character's concept is one who straddles the line between light and darkness like Saruman did before falling, or that she was under The Shadow, found the Light, and now is attempting to redeem herself.

MULTIPLE ORDERS

Barbarian - When combined with Craftsman and Loremaster or Magician, this Order can bring about powerful totem and talisman crafters, who may wield the might of ancestors for good or evil.

Craftsman - This Order is a natural precursor to becoming an Artificer when learning one's craft and improving quality.

Loremaster - Without knowledge gained by this Order, the Artificer would have a difficult time in understanding and applying the lore of crafting to their works. Spellcasting from this Order is also highly recommended, though better found in other Orders.



Magician - Not quite as steeped in lore as Loremasters, Magicians have the other component required for entering this Order: Spellcasting. Without this ability, an Artificer would have a difficult time indeed creating works beyond duplicating others.

Mariner - As Sea-craft is one of the Artificer's Order skills, being devoted the designing and crafting of sea-worthy vessels is highly likely for those who live near large bodies of water like Belegaer or the sea of Rhûn.

Minstrel - Combined with the Artificer, a tale-weaver or instrument player could benefit both from acquiring more knowledge and enhancing performances with props or specially crafted instruments.

Noble - The power (money and influence) accessible to one with a title can greatly aid one who is seeking certain information in the crafting of objects of power.

Rogue - There are other less respectable ways of gaining information or components required for completing a item and this Order can help greatly.

Warrior - Knowledge of war-craft, weapons, armor, and defenses would give an Artificer an edge in creating more effective gear for battle.

Archer - The same knowledge would be garnered from a Warrior or Rogue, but focused more in the field of Ranged Combat.

Antiquarian - This Elite Order compliments Artificer quite nicely by boosting the character's knowledge base, and the ability to identify enchantments gives him an edge when duplicating artifacts.

Captain - The goals between the Artificer and Captain vary too greatly for either to be of much use unless the Artificer's knowledge of Stonecraft or Sea-craft were able to come into play on the battlefield.

Knight - Same as Captain and Archer (moreso this one, except in the field of mounted combat).

Master of the Wild - There are ways for an Artificer mingled with this Order to be of use, but it would require imagination and good role-playing for it to come about.

Pilgrim - Wandering the countryside in much the same manner as a Minstrel or Antiquarian, the Artificer could use knowledge

gained from this Order to learn new information and broaden his knowledge base.

Ranger - The goals between the Artificer and Ranger vary too greatly for either to be of much use to the other.

Spy - Same as the Rogue, but even less useful.

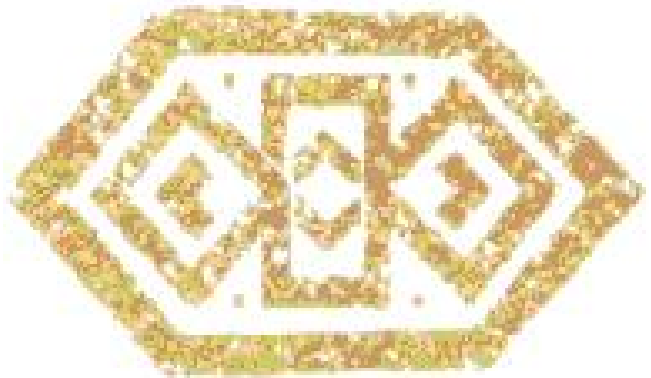
Wizard - Of all the Orders save Magician, Artificer would most greatly enhance the power and ability of the Wizard.

SPELLS

The spells listed in Table 4.1 in Paths of the Wise are those that are allowed for enchanting items, though other spells might be of use to a character even if they are not used in the pursuit of item creation.

PLAYING AN ARTIFICER

A character that creates magical items is very powerful in any RPG, but in Middle-earth, they are vastly more powerful due to nature of magic in this world. Do not fall into the trap of becoming an item factory, outfitting your party with all the latest in powerful enchantments, as this is not within the theme and vision of Tolkien's Third Age (where the game's focus is), though it might be more appropriate for First or Second Age chronicles. Other than searching for new information about artifacts or collecting components to create items, an Artificer would need some pretty strong motivation to leave his refuge to go on an adventure. Narrators and players of such characters should study well the new item creation rules in Paths of the Wise and strive to keep a balance for the sake of the game. Though not common in the Third Age (or even mentioned besides Saruman and Sauron), there are a few of the great craftsmen of earlier ages to take note of like Fëanor, Telchar, and Celebrimbor.



ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE: NOBLES

by David “Issachar”

The “Orders of Magnitude” series of articles takes a close look at each of the PC orders and offers ways to add new possibilities, flavour, and interest to roleplaying them.

One of Tolkien’s many gifts to his readers is the opportunity to recover concepts and attitudes left behind by the march of Western civilization, not least of which is an understanding of the majesty and awe that kings and other lords once inspired. Contemporary readers who can hardly imagine pledging life and service to Prince Charles nonetheless often find themselves stirred with love and devotion to characters such as Théoden and Aragorn. The noble class in *The Lord of the Rings* represents both an idea and an ideal – the idea of an authority over others that is just and right, and the ideal of rulers who wield that authority with strength and wisdom.

This authority, however, proceeds from the noble’s duty to guide, protect and represent his people. An active noble – not an indolent, effete aristocrat – will find that he or she has three basic roles to fill.

THE PROTECTOR

A noble with authority over a group of people is required to defend them from invaders, to establish peaceful relations with neighbouring peoples, and to deal with crises that arise such as plagues and famines. To succeed, a noble needs to be a strong military commander and a shrewd diplomat. The safety and well-being of one’s own people must take precedence over other goals, and this leads some rulers to hinder the cause of the greater good not through malice, but through single-minded concern for their own lands.

THE JUDGE

Kings, queens, and other lords are the arbiters and enforcers of justice in their lands. They must dispense legal judgments, mediate disputes, and punish offenders. Even in lands where a ruler’s word is law, there is usually a sense that the ruler’s edicts should conform to a higher, universal law that recognizes the inherent rights of the people. To succeed in this duty, a noble needs the wisdom and wit to make just and practical rulings.

THE SYMBOL

A noble does not merely represent the people’s interests through diplomacy and force of arms, but actually embodies their ideals and values. As prestige accrues to a ruler, the pride of the common folk increases as well. This partly accounts for the widespread expectation that while a noble should not be profligate with his money, he should display enough wealth to avoid the disdain of outsiders. A noble should also impress others with stately conduct that conveys not only personal dignity but the dignity of the entire land. To succeed as a

symbol, a noble needs to cultivate a lordly bearing and appearance.

POWER AND CORRUPTION

The pressing demands of leadership create situations in which even well-meaning nobles are sorely tempted to stray from the right path. The abuse of power presents an expedient solution to almost any problem. For this reason, the noble in your party is likely to face Corruption challenges more frequently than most other characters.

The three aforementioned categories of responsibility suggest several suitable points at which to test a noble’s resistance to Corruption:

- In the role of **Protector**, a noble might fail to enforce proper discipline in the military, allowing soldiers and their officers to oppress the common folk. The noble might also be tempted to make war in response to minor provocations, or to form alliances for purely personal ends that do not benefit the people.
- In the role of **Judge**, a noble will often be tempted to show partiality toward other nobles (and their families and associates), or to those who are wealthy enough to offer a bribe. There is also the temptation to mete out punishments for personal, not legal or ethical, reasons.
- In the role of **Symbol**, a noble might use the dignity of his station or people as a justification for excessive personal pride and arrogance, or build unnecessarily lavish homes and monuments at the public expense. Additionally, meetings between nobles may involve a complicated system of courtesies in which opportunities to give offense – intentionally or otherwise – abound. The manner in which a noble handles these situations is an indicator of character.

NAME AND RANK

Almost all members of the nobility are keenly aware of their family history. Long lineages provide colorful galleries of family heroes and villains against whom the current generation is measured. Just as Bilbo proudly named Bullroarer Took among his ancestors (though this failed to impress Thorin and company), the scions of old noble lineages should be able to recount the deeds of two or three noteworthy predecessors. This type of Noble is typically well-versed in the following Lore skills: Lore/Group: [Homeland] (Courtly Code, Customs, Laws), Lore/History: [Homeland] (Rulers), Lore/Realm: [Homeland] (Major Cities), and Lore/Other: Family Genealogy (Individual Ancestors).

A younger line of nobles is often less preoccupied with heritage and more militaristic, having won status through prowess in battle, whether by conquest or a king's grant. Nobles of this type have studied the arts of war and tend to have ranks in Lore/History: [Homeland] (Battles), Lore/Realm: [Homeland] (Strategic Locations), and Siegecraft.

Heraldry is an important part of the heritage of all nobles, from the meanest clan-chieftain to the princes of Gondor. Heraldic components may include a family symbol or coat of arms and/or special names for the family, clan or household (as Aragorn took the name Telcontar – “Strider” – for his own household upon his accession).

Although the Core Rules require all Noble PC's to take Rank as their first edge, I propose that there should be some exceptions. The majority of nobles, of course, *should* have the Rank edge, either Rank 1 (minor lord or gentry) or Rank 2 (major lord). The following types of noble characters, however, might not have a rank:

- Civil or military leaders of common lineage
- Characters granted nonhereditary titles, such as knights
- Aristocrats too young to have inherited a title
- Disinherited or exiled nobles

WEAL AND WOE

The One with the Most Toys

Although the Core Rules don't hinder any character from starting with whatever gear is deemed appropriate, it's reasonable to distinguish Noble characters from the others with a few items of extra quality. It should be assumed that the average Noble has the purchasing power to own the best armour and blade, the best clothing, and the best horse available. Unlike other characters in *Lord of the Rings*, a noble sometimes also has the option of throwing money at a problem to make it go away.

The Public Eye

A reasonable house rule might be to give Noble characters one or two free points of Renown, to represent popular recognition of their elevated station. This probably won't be seen as an unfair advantage when one considers the drawbacks of lordly renown.

A character who is known to be a noble can rarely avoid attention or be ignored – he is a lightning rod for opinions and judgments. Others may view the noble with envy, awe, fear, resentment, reverence, or cynicism, but seldom with indifference. Stewardship over others can also mean that everyone's problems are your own, and the expectations placed on you are extraordinarily high.

Although the noble may enjoy the devotion of a few faithful friends, most of the people around him are flatterers seeking their own advancement. Such insincere friends and admirers are

a weight on the heart, and the noble must also worry about ambitious rivals who would happily usurp his place. He must show strength at all times, knowing that schemers may be watching intently for any vulnerability they can exploit.

Pride and Honour

Character traits that would be unseemly in lesser persons are, for many nobles, a badge of their high position. In some circumstances, when a noble spends Courage to avoid the effects of the Proud or Stiff-Necked flaw, he may lose face in the eyes of his own people. When this happens, the noble suffers a -1 to -3 penalty on Social tests involving his own people until he punishes the offender or forces him to redress the grievance. Conversely, if the noble refrains from spending Courage on those flaws, he may receive a +1 bonus to Social tests involving his own people for a short time thereafter.

NEW ORDER ABILITIES

Art of War

Description: You have made a special study of the military arts, encompassing strategy, history, and armed combat. You receive a +2 bonus to all Siegecraft tests and a +1 bonus to Armed Combat tests for a single Armed Combat skill of your choice. You also gain a +2 bonus on any Lore test made to recall information about battles and their participants, and a +2 bonus to any Insight or Wisdom test made to discern an opponent's stratagems or tactics in battle.

Bon Vivant

Description: Your finely honed tastes are impeccable and impressive. When entertaining guests or participating in social events that feature food, drink and/or entertainment, treat your Bearing score as if it were four points higher for purposes of determining the modifier to Social skill tests or for opposed Bearing tests made to establish social superiority. You also gain a +2 bonus to Observe: Smell and Observe: Taste tests, and a +3 bonus to any Lore test made to recall information about the qualities of luxury items.

Courtly Education

Description: You have received tutelage in the traditional arts of the nobility, such as horsemanship, fencing, archery, and courtly conduct. For the following skills, all your skill tests receive a +1 bonus and are regarded as trained even if you have not purchased any ranks in them: Armed Combat: Blades, Inquire, Persuade, Ranged Combat: Bows, and Ride. You can purchase this ability up to three times.

Heroic Legacy

Description: Many nobles boast of their lineages to impress others, but you feel a more intensely personal connection to one of your own ancestors. You might share a physical trait with your ancestor, or might own a personal keepsake (but not a powerful magic item) that once belonged to him or her, or perhaps you

have simply made a special study of the ancestor's life and know of his or her deeds in intimate detail.

You receive an extra point of Courage that may be used normally. However, whenever you are performing a noteworthy deed -- not a mundane task -- that you believe is in the spirit of your ancestor's heroism, spending this point of Courage (and only this one) grants you a +6 bonus instead of a +3 bonus.

Loyal Followers

Description: Whether through fear, benevolence, or largess, you exert a powerful influence over the nearest of your followers. All such persons, including guards, officials, informants, friends, and others, receive a +2 bonus to Willpower tests to resist taking actions that would compromise their loyalty to you, and are

treated as having the Faithful edge when attempting to defend you.

You also gain your choice of a +2 bonus to all Inspire -or- Intimidate -or- Persuade tests. If you have any Edge that involves assistance from other people (such as Ally, Command, Elf-Friend, or Friends), the assistance they provide is to the very best of their ability.

You can purchase this ability up to three times. Each time you acquire the ability, you receive a +2 bonus to another skill of your choice (Inspire, Intimidate, or Persuade, but not one that you have chosen before), and your followers gain an additional +2 bonus to their Willpower tests and are treated as having an additional rank in the Faithful edge when attempting to defend you.



IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

MOOK HORDES

by Borandil and GandalfOfBorg

Last month there was an article about 'spudding' -- a different take on the mook rules -- but another issue with the expendable foe is when they come at the heroes in droves. The rules for Combat Pacing are a known bone of contention for many LOTR Gamers and Narrators. Recently on the Decipher messageboards there was a discussion of how to handle mook hordes and here is a take on how to deal with them. Some feel the Core Rules prioritize simple Success Level instead of physical might, allowing a Hobbit with a rock to do as much as a Dwarf with an axe. The following suggestions are intended to address these critiques and provide adequate drama and tension to even the simplest combat.

What is a Horde?

In the context of these rules, an Enemy Horde is any sizeable group of enemies that threaten the Heroes. You don't need to tell your players just how many foes are there in the Horde -- "very many of them" is as adequate an answer as they need to know. In qualitative terms, an Enemy Horde may be a group of marauding bandits, an orc warband, a pack of bloodthirsty wargs or any such. They may or may not have a chieftain with a complete set of stats.



Creating a Mook Horde

The mook horde is representative of the average mook in the group, so stat him up. This is important as any number of stats could come into play, not just attack, defense, and damage (Intimidation, area effects, etc.). Next modify the stats based on the Horde Size. "Same" refers to the value for the basic mook, and modifiers apply to the basic mook score to achieve the horde unit's score.

NEW ATTRIBUTE

Horde Size: This is an abstract number reflecting the relative size of the mook horde. To get an average actual size use this equation: $2^{\text{Horde Size}}$.

ATTRIBUTES

Primary Attributes: Same

Stamina: +1 per 2 Horde Size increments

Swiftiness: -1 per 2 increments

Willpower: +1 per 2 increments

Wisdom: -1 per 2 increments

Initiative: Same

Defense: Same

Armor: Same

Courage: 0

Movement: -1 Size level per 2 increments

For example, a Size 3 Medium-sized creature Horde unit is moving. Normally, a Medium-sized creature moves at 6, but due to the number of mooks in the horde unit, its actual movement is 3 since it takes awhile for all the horde members to catch up. Horde units can always be broken down into smaller units to make them move faster, too.

Health: Option 1) Number of Wound Levels = Increment, Wound Points = Increment

Option 2) Number of Wound Levels = Horde Size, Wound Points = Basic mook Health

Regardless of which Health option is used, just like with PC Wound Levels, when a horde unit loses all the Wound Points in a level, it will drop down to the next increment Horde Size and lose bonuses associated with the previous level.

SKILLS*

Armed, Ranged, Unarmed Combat: +2 per increment

Intimidate: +2 per increment

Observe (Spot): +2 per increment

Observe (Listen): -2 per increment

Search: +2 per increment

Stealth: -2 per increment

All others: Same

* - These are test result bonuses.

NEW ABILITY

Frenzied: The horde unit can sacrifice an action to increase its Armed Combat, Ranged Combat, or Unarmed Combat test by +2.

ABILITIES & TRAITS

Racial: Same

Order: Same

Edges: Same

Flaws: Same

Combat

- Mook horde units have 2 standard actions per round (modified if they have Swift Strike or Swift Shot) and may gain +1 action for attack per 2 increments. They cannot take any more actions using multiple action penalties.
- They deal weapon damage and an additional +1d6 damage for every 2 Horde Size increments.
- Damage dealt to the horde unit
- The following options are to be used in conjunction with the corresponding Health option from above.
- Option 1) Damage is based on the success of the attack done to it. Each level of success granted by an attack test equals one wound point removed.
- Option 2) Damage is dealt per the PC's weapon damage +1d6 per level of success greater than Marginal.
- If a horde unit loses a Wound Level, it must make a TN 10 Willpower test remain engaged. If it does not succeed, the horde unit will reduce its size by 1 increment per level of failure due to fleeing members, or completely disband upon a Disastrous Failure.
- A horde unit may take a full round action to break into smaller horde units; each child unit may take a single action in the same round. Smaller horde units may combine to create one larger unit as a full round action; the super unit may take a single action in the same round.



SKIN-CHANGERS

by GandalfOfBorg

Skin-changers, were-creatures... these all come from the same premise: people who can alter their form into that of an animal (wolf, bear, bat, etc.); Beorn and his line are the foremost examples of this concept. Translating this into a mechanic for the game has brought about some consternation in how to apply it. This article shall discuss a few options in using the Mastery of Shapes spell depending on how you interpret this power. It must be noted that some have no choice in this change, as it was forced upon them with the Transformation spell or some hideous curse.

How to Acquire the Spell

There are two ways to acquire a spell: by joining an Order that has a Spellcasting ability and spending the appropriate picks on the spell and its prerequisite (Change Hue), OR by spending Advancement Picks. The first is, of course, the easiest means, while the latter is a little more difficult. To purchase a spell using Advancement picks is not very straightforward in the book; your logical choices are to either use a mathematical equivalent (5 Spell Picks = 3 Advancement Picks) or, more simply (and my personally preferred option), a direct equivalent (1 Spell Pick = 1 Advancement Pick). Depending on the chosen method, use the same cost equivalency to determine the cost of removing the spell's component requirements. The issue of going this route is that there should be a good role-playing reason as to why a character who is not in a spellcasting Order gains a spell in this manner.

Cost

Before we discuss how to acquire this power, let's determine the cost of Mastery of Shapes (in spell picks). The total cost below reflects the ability to change into more than one shape at will.

Mastery of Shapes

Base Cost: 2 picks

Prerequisite: 1 pick (Change Hue)

Remove Gesture Component: 3 picks

Remove Verbal Component: 4 picks

Remove Weariness Test: 5 picks

Total: 15 picks

How to Acquire the Power

There are only a few choices as to how a character can acquire this power: Edge or Racial Ability. It doesn't make sense to make this an Order Ability because it is not representative of any Order in particular, even those that have spellcasting ability.

Edge

Edges cost 2 Advancement picks, so to apply this power as such, I would suggest applying the base spell and restrict effect to one animal form to balance out the cost. Such an edge could reflect some sort of ritual performed to turn into a chosen creature. I'd allow improvements of this edge to remove the three spell components. Being an edge, it could also be used as part of a Racial Development package if thought to be a trait of a particular group of people. At character generation, this edge would only be available to be acquired during the racial background phase and when spending the 5 free advancement picks. If not acquired during chargen, then acquiring this edge would require a good reason as role-played in the game. See Fan Flavour for the write-up on this edge.

Racial Ability

As was discussed before, Beorn's line is known for its ability to shape-change into bears at will, so it could be reflected in a racial ability in addition to the other abilities (Adaptable, Dominion of Man, and Skilled). The ability would allow normal spell effects, though restricted to one form as in black bears for the line of Beorn, and as an innate ability. See Fan Flavour for the write-up on this ability.



TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

PERSONALITY FLAWS, PART I

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

The goal of this series of articles is to expand upon the concepts for the skills and traits outlined in the CRB and elsewhere. For skills, I aim to include descriptions of new and listed (where needed) skills, define sources of affinity and other bonuses, and maybe some optional rules. For traits, I will discuss more in-depth uses, slight alterations to their effects, and give an outline to define how to create your own traits pertaining to test bonuses (skill, attribute, test type, etc.).

AFRAID OF FIRE

Though small flames such as a torch or hearth-fire give you no cause to worry, larger conflagrations give great anxiety.

Description: You suffer a penalty to cast spells of the Fire, Smoke, and Light specialties. You must also make a Willpower test vs. Fear when any spells with these specialties are cast in your presence.

Related Skills: None

Related Traits: Craven (CRB), Fearful (HOF #33), Keeper of Anor (PotW), Resolute, Strong-willed, Weak-willed (CRB)

Related Abilities: Blinding Light (Wizard, PotW), Inner Light (Noldor Elf Racial Ability, CRB), Servant of Udun (Magician, PotW)

Related Spells: All spells with the Fire, Smoke, and Light specialties, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Resist Fear, Shadow of Fear

Afraid of Fire Expanded

- Penalties should apply to any special abilities based on fire as well.
- Add penalties to Survival where fire-starting is concerned, probably a -2 cumulative penalty based on the size of the fire (see Table X.X in the CRB).
- Add a restriction from gaining (Wizard) Spell Specialty: Fire, Smoke, or Light and any abilities that pertain to the object of fear and the skills listed above.
- Allow improvements to increase all test penalties by -1 each.

AFRAID OF THE SEA

Though small streams give you no cause to worry, larger bodies of water such as great rivers, lakes, and the seas give great anxiety.

Description: You suffer a penalty to cast spells of the Water specialty and those that deal with water, fog, and the like. You

must also make a Willpower test vs. Fear when any spells with these specialties are cast in your presence.

Related Skills: None

Related Traits: Craven (CRB), Fearful (HOF #33), Resolute, Strong-willed, Weak-willed (CRB)

Related Abilities: Inner Light (Noldor Elf Racial Ability, CRB)

Related Spells: All spells with the Water specialty, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Resist Fear, Shadow of Fear



Afraid of the Sea Expanded

- Penalties should apply to any special abilities based on water, fog, etc. as well.
- Add penalties to Survival (as applicable) and Sea-craft tests, maybe a -2 for rivers, -4 lakes, and -6 for seas and oceans.
- Add a restriction from gaining (Wizard) Spell Specialty: Water and any abilities that pertain to the object of fear and the skills listed above.
- Allow improvements to increase all test penalties by -2 each.

AFRAID OF THE STORM

Though a small drizzle gives you no cause to worry, torrential downpours, lightning storms, and blizzards paralyze your actions.

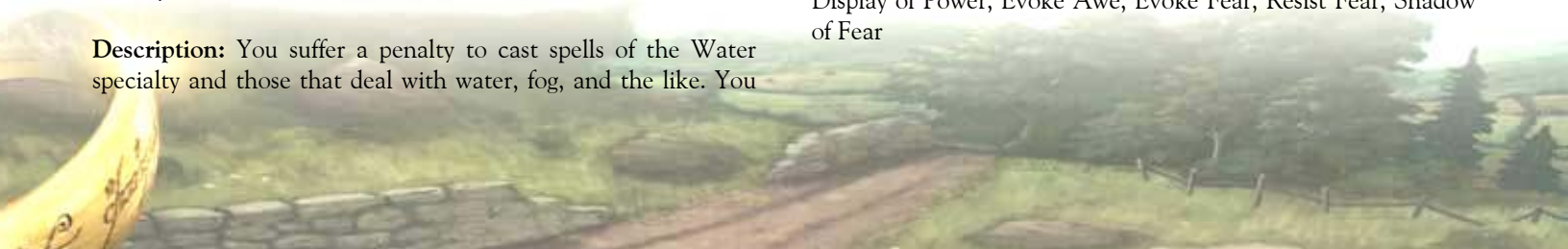
Description: You suffer a penalty to cast spells of the Air and Storm specialties and those that deal with creating tempests, whirlwinds, and the like. You must also make a Willpower test vs. Fear when any spells with these specialties are cast in your presence.

Related Skills: None

Related Traits: Craven (CRB), Fearful (HOF #33), Resolute, Strong-willed, Woodwise (PotW), Weak-willed (CRB)

Related Abilities: Inner Light (Noldor Elf Racial Ability, CRB), Nature Magic (Master of the Wild, PotW)

Related Spells: All spells with the Air and Storm specialties, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Resist Fear, Shadow of Fear



Afraid of the Storm Expanded

- Penalties should apply to any special abilities based on wind and weather-altering effects as well.
- Add penalties to Survival (as applicable) and Weather-sense tests.
- Add a restriction from gaining (Wizard) Spell Specialty: Air and Storm and any abilities that pertain to the object of fear and the skills listed above.
- Allow improvements to increase all test penalties by -2 each.

CRAVEN

Fear of bodily injury or just a coward at heart, you flee when intimidated.

Description: Unless you spend a Courage point, you flee when sufficiently threatened by combat or intimidation.

Related Skills: None

Related Traits: Fearful (HOF #33), Resolute, Strong-willed, Weak-willed (CRB)

Related Abilities: Inner Light (Noldor Elf Racial Ability, CRB), Secretive (Loremaster, CRB)

Related Spells: Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Resist Fear, Shadow of Fear

Craven Expanded

None



WEAK-WILLED

Your resolve crumbles at the slightest use of force upon you.

Description: You have a penalty to Willpower tests.

Related Skills: None

Related Traits: Afraid of Fire (PotW), Afraid of the Sea (PotW), Afraid of the Storm (PotW), Craven (CRB), Fearful (HOF #33), Keeper of Anor (PotW), Resolute, Strong-willed, Woodwise (PotW)

Related Abilities: Air of Command (Captain, CRB), Inner Light (Noldor Elf Racial Ability, Secretive (Loremaster, CRB), Nature Magic (Master of the Wild, PotW)

Related Spells: Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Mind Barrier, Mind Shield, Resist Fear, Sap Strength, Shadow of Fear

Weak-willed Expanded

None.



THE ROAD GOES EVER ON...

THE BITTER OATH by Greg Saunders

An adventure for the Lord of the Rings Roleplaying game

Setting

This adventure is set in Eriador sometime during the Third Age.

The Story

For many years Bregolas (S. 'Fierce'), a Dunadan warrior dwelling in Rivendell, held a secret love for a Noldo Elf, Meneloth (S. 'Flower of the heavens'). But as it seemed that she did not return his love, he held his silence and spoke of his feelings to no one. As time passed Meneloth wearied of the endless battles of Middle-earth and yearned to cross the sea to the west. Eventually she declared her wish to travel to Mithlond, the Grey Havens, to make her final journey. Bregolas, hearing of her imminent departure, opened his heart to her and begged her love, but she would not be swayed and mockingly rebuked him. Bitter at her refusal, Bregolas begged her for something to remind himself of her until he passed from Middle-earth. Reluctantly she capitulated and gave him a lock of her golden hair. Upon this lock Bregolas swore an oath in secret promising that he would carry it until the day he died, telling no one, not even Elrond, of his promise.

For many years Bregolas carried Meneloth's lock against his breast. But as the days passed and Bregolas became an old man, the shimmering light of the golden strands began to fade. Growing fearful of losing his one link to Meneloth, Bregolas sought some way to preserve the gift. Seeking Elrond's advice, the Elf-lord told him of Forin the Keen-eyed, a Dwarven smith whose unrivalled skills might be able to preserve the slender strands. Bregolas resolved to travel to the Dwarf's smithy to beg the craftsman's aid. As the light of the golden strands faded, Bregolas grew weak and was unable to leave Rivendell. Fearful of wasting time, he gave the lock to an Elf called Gloraglar (S. 'Brilliant light') to carry it to the Dwarf, and in doing so let the lock leave his grasp. Now, months later, Gloraglar has not returned. Bregolas has begged Elrond's aid in recovering the lock, all the while with the doom brought on by his broken oath hanging above his head. Only by reuniting Bregolas with the lock can the consequence of his actions be halted.

Scene 1 – A Request

The adventure begins with the characters enjoying the peace and tranquillity of Rivendell, perhaps resting from a previous adventure. It is winter in the outside world but the harsh winds do not reach the hidden valley and all is at peace. Sometime during their stay, Elrond himself approaches the characters with a request. He tells them that several months ago Gloraglar set

out for the Tower Hills to the home of Forin, a Dwarven smith and friend of Elrond. He carried with him a valuable and much-cherished object belonging to a resident of this house. Since that time, no word of either Gloraglar or the object has reached The Last Homely House. Elrond fears the worst for Gloraglar and believes that if the object cannot be recovered, its owner might not recover from the blow. He will not say what the object is, for Bregolas forbade him, but requests that the characters seek out Gloraglar. As reward for this service Elrond offers his friendship – a valuable prize. Assuming the characters agree to the request they must prepare to depart the next day. Elrond will furnish any reasonable requests for equipment and supplies some horses for the journey.

Scene 2 – A Winter's Journey

The smithy lies near the southern foot of the Tower Hills (S. Eryn Beriad) in the west of Eriador. The easiest route lies along the East road through the town of Bree, through the Shire and toward the Grey Havens. Travelling in the depths of winter is not easy, and the Narrator should describe the land in the full grip of the season. At the Narrator's discretion encounters could be played during the journey to add depth to the adventure.

Scene 3 – The Smithy of Forin the Keen-eyed

Although Bregolas wished only that the Dwarven smith Forin would use his skills to preserve Meneloth's lock of hair, when Forin saw the light of the golden strands he immediately began constructing a suitable container which would both preserve the hairs and enhance and complement their beauty, begging Gloraglar to tarry while he worked. Forin stated that he expected no payment for his actions but worked merely for the joy of making something of beauty. As the characters near the Blue Mountains he finished his work, producing a beautiful pendant of gold inlaid with intertwined leaves outlined in mithril that he named the Siruinmall (S. 'River of gold'). However, Bregolas's oath-breaking has brought some of his bitterness to those that touch the curls of Meneloth's hair, and Forin became fey, saying his work now required payment and refusing to release the pendant, vowing to keep the Siruinmall for himself. Gloraglar refused to give the pendant to the Dwarf, and Forin's impetuous son Fulin struggled with the Elf to seize the Siruinmall. Gloraglar fought the Dwarf off, injuring Fulin in the process, and fled the smithy into the surrounding forest. Once the Siruinmall was out of sight the Dwarves realised the error of their actions and locked themselves in the smithy in

their shame, hoping that Gloraglar will return so they could beg his pardon.

The smithy is delved into the rock of a southern foothill of the Tower Hills. A large wooden doorway set into a tall rock face surrounded by several small round windows marks the entrance to Forin's house. Before the main door is a wide pasture of short grass such that the smithy can be seen from some distance. Large stands of oak and elm trees flank the entrance, typical of the region. As the characters first see the smithy, a TN 10 Wits test alerts the characters to the absence of any smoke – very unusual for a working smithy. As they approach, there is no sign of life from within, and the wooden door and shutters are firmly shut. Within the smithy, Forin and his two sons Fulin and Ferrin sit in shame, anxiously waiting for Gloraglar - who fled a day ago - to return so that they may atone for their actions.

Dwarves can seem an inhospitable folk at the best of times, and under the present conditions the characters will be hard pressed to persuade Forin to talk to them. He will obstinately refuse to be drawn out, telling the characters in a voice muffled by the door to go away. However, if the characters explain that they come from Elrond, Forin's shame will be so great that he will fling open the doors and beg the characters to forgive him. Once they get Forin to come out (or let them in), he will tell them what happened with the Siruinmall and implore them to seek out Gloraglar.

Scene 4 – The Outlaws of the Forest

Gloraglar fled the Dwarves and entered the woods to the north of the smithy. There he wandered for over an hour fretting about the incident with Forin. Inadvertently, he stumbled close to the camp of a group of outlaws who have made the wood their home. The outlaws are a loose band of itinerant commonmen who travel the surrounding region hunting and selling furs. Growing tired of scratching a living from the land, they have followed the suggestions of their leader, Bragir, and have taken to robbing isolated holdings to supplement their income, using the wood as their base. As Gloraglar approached their camp they ambushed him and dragged him to Bragir's tent. Seeing the captive was an Elf, Bragir was unsure of the best way to deal with him. The easiest option would be to kill him, but though a violent man Bragir is not yet a murderer, and he fears the proud Gloraglar, hiding his fear by bragging that he might ransom the Elf to his kin. The rest of the outlaws wait on his decision. Gloraglar, for his part, has hidden the Siruinmall in his boot, and the outlaws in awe of his bearing have not yet searched him. However, it is only a matter of time before the outlaws overcome their fear and search Gloraglar and the pendant is discovered. Once it is, Bragir will kill Gloraglar and claim the Siruinmall for himself.

Leaving the smithy, the characters must attempt to track Gloraglar. The Dwarves say they saw the Elf running into the dense woods to the north of the smithy. Once inside the woods, a TN 10 Track test will reveal Gloraglar's trail (a Superior

Success or better shows that the Elf was walking slowly and making no attempt to hide his passing). His trail winds this way and that through the wood for about an hour; however, at that point, the trail ends in front of an almost impenetrable wall of trees. A TN 10 Track test shows that although the Elf left no tracks (broken branches and disturbed leaf litter mark his trail), three sets of footprints have appeared (a Superior Success or better shows that the footprints first appear at the base of several trees). However, no footprints lead away from the site. If the characters search the area, a TN 10 Search (+5 TN for Observe) test will show that the trees bear marks of being climbed.

The outlaws use the trees of the forest to move about so as to leave no mark of their passage on the ground. They spotted the Elf and watched him for some time from in the trees, blending in with the bare branches in their outfits of brown and grey. Eventually they dropped down to ambush the Elf who, racked with guilt at his own actions at the smithy, had paid little heed to his surroundings. Once they had caught him, they hoisted him up to the trees and made their way to the camp using the interlocking boughs so as to leave no trail. Should the characters climb the trees, a TN 10 Track test will reveal the direction of the outlaws' passage. If the characters remain on the ground, the outlaws who patrol this region of the forest near the camp will spot them within half an hour and attempt an ambush like the one that trapped Gloraglar.

The outlaw camp is a collection of tents in a small clearing about a mile away from where Gloraglar was captured. Guards from the camp regularly patrol the perimeter from the trees and can be quite hard to spot (TN 10 Observe test or an opposed test if the outlaw is aware of the characters and is being stealthy). As the characters approach the camp the observant among them will notice a wisp of smoke rising above the forest from the campsite. Figure 1 shows the layout of the outlaws' camp and the locations are described below. There are twenty outlaws living in the camp (not including Bragir), most of who patrol in the trees more for something to do than out of any necessity.



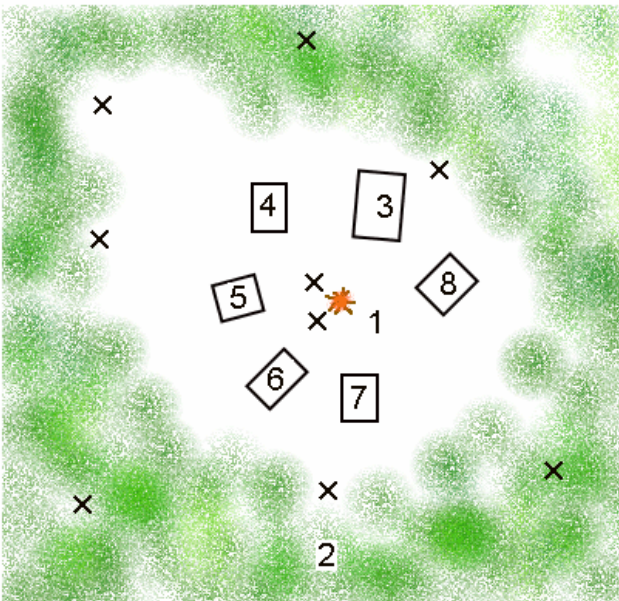


Figure 1. The outlaws' camp.

Guard posts – patrolling the perimeter of the camp are a series of guards. They tend to stay in the same position and are not attempting to remain hidden; so far no one has tried to infiltrate the camp.

1. Clearing – a small clearing roughly 50 feet across is where the outlaws have made camp. A fire occupies the centre where the outlaws roast game and keep warm from the chill bite of winter. Currently a small deer turns on the spit. There are six tents in the clearing made from canvas and roofed with animal hides.

2. Woods – around the camp the forest grows thick and dark and little light penetrates even when they are bereft of leaves. The branches of the trees interlock right up to the edge of the clearing, allowing clear passage for the outlaws. Temporary rope ladders provide access to the heights.

3. Bragir's tent – the outlaw leader claims the largest tent for himself. It is of good quality and contains a number of furs that would fetch up to 2 sp in any town. Bragir keeps the rest of his outlaws' money (summing about 20 sp in loose coins) on his person.

4. Gloraglar's tent – Bragir keeps Gloraglar in this tent, unbound but unarmed, watched carefully by two guards. The outlaws are somewhat in awe of the Elf and have yet to search him properly.

5. Store tent – here the outlaws keep their store of food, weapons and clothing, what little they have.

6, 8 – Outlaws' tents – the rest of the outlaws dwell in these tents. Most own little except their weapons and personal items but the tents are well ordered and clean, typical of outdoorsmen.

X Guard post

1. Clearing
2. Woods
3. Bragir's tent
4. Gloraglar's tent
5. Store tent
6. Outlaws' tent
7. Stable tent
8. Outlaws' tent

Rescuing Gloraglar from the outlaws requires both stealth and planning. Charging into the camp will bring all the outlaws into the fray, most of which will be content to fire arrows from the cover of the tree tops at any characters who rush into the clearing. Nightfall will provide a clear advantage to those characters with Night-eyed, as the outlaws will have to rely on the light of the campfire to see. Gloraglar is not bound, and a sharp weapon could easily cut through the fabric of the tent to free him once the guards were dealt with. Perhaps the best approach would be to have some of the characters provide a distraction to draw the guards out whilst the rest of the party free Gloraglar. If Bragir is killed or subdued by the characters, the rest of the outlaws will fade into the forest, effectively leaderless. The Narrator should ensure that Gloraglar is not killed in any combat – in

any case the outlaws are more concerned with their own skins than with killing the Elf. However, if things get desperate Bragir will attempt to hold the Elf hostage to bargain for his life.

Scene 5 – Gloraglar and Forin

Assuming that the characters rescue Gloraglar and explain their mission, he will gladly hand over the Siruinmall, saying that the pendant does not feel right, as if its beauty is marred by a terrible sadness. He is keen to return to make his peace with Forin and his sons. When they meet, the Elf and Dwarf embrace with fervour, begging forgiveness of the other. Forin's son Fulin drops to his knees before the Elf.

With the Siruinmall in hand, the characters and Gloraglar can head back toward Rivendell to deliver the pendant to its rightful owner.

Scene 6 – The Return Journey

The characters and Gloraglar begin the journey back in foul weather, which does not abate for the whole journey. The bitterness hanging over the Siruinmall by the act of Bregolas breaking his oath should weigh down on the characters. The winter days are cold and lonely under threatening skies and the empty nights are cut by a bitter wind from the north. At the narrator's discretion encounters could be played during the journey to add depth to the adventure, but they should be in keeping with the mood of gloom which hangs over the party.

Scene 7 – Returning to Rivendell

Returning to Rivendell the characters will be met by Bregolas himself, walking with the aid of Elrond. When the characters hand over the Siruinmall, his worn face will brighten as he

clutches the pendant to his heart. Slowly the dark clouds of winter will break and a soft wind of spring will breeze through the valley of Elrond. In return for their help Elrond will be true to his word, saying that the characters need only call on him for his aid. The adventure should be worth about 2,000 experience points to the characters, with the main objective securing the Siruinmall and the secondary objective destroying the outlaws as an effective force. The following day, Elrond will tell the characters that Bregolas passed away that night, holding the Siruinmall to his chest. He will explain the story of Meneloth's lock of hair, and if they wish, the characters may tarry to see Bregolas buried with the pendant resting on his heart.

Non-player Characters

Bregolas (S. 'Fierce')

Once a proud Dunadan warrior, age and his unreciprocated love for Meneloth have worn Bregolas down. Over the past few years his dark hair has whitened and his tall frame bent under the weight of his unspoken burden. For many years he has held the lock Meneloth gave him against his chest as a reminder of her radiance. Forced by circumstance to release the lock of hair, that broken promise has led Bregolas to the downward spiral in health that will eventually claim his life.

Meneloth (S. 'Flower of the heavens')

Beautiful, proud and cold, Meneloth failed to recognise the love that Bregolas held for her. After the War of the Last Alliance, when many Noldor died before the gates of Mordor, Meneloth wearied of Middle-earth and sought to travel north with many of her kin to Mithlond to begin the journey west. When Bregolas declared his love to her, she was genuinely surprised. Bregolas mistook her reaction as mockery, but begged her of a lock of her hair all the same.

Forin the Keen-eyed

A sturdy Dwarf with iron-grey hair and broad shoulders, Forin is an old friend of Elrond – he was one of the few of his kind to fight Sauron in the War of the Last Alliance. After the horrors of the war, Forin took his wife and sons west, near the ancient homes of his people. A master craftsman knowledgeable in many of the secrets of his kin, his sons and his work are his life since his wife passed away seventy years ago. The doom of the broken oath awakened in Forin some of the baser feelings of his people, and he has struggled to control his greed since he began work on the Siruinmall, something he has managed somewhat better than his impulsive sons Fulin and Ferrin.

Gloraglar (S. 'Brilliant Light')

A minstrel of some skill, Gloraglar is an Elf in love with Middle-earth. Though he dwells in the House of Elrond, his songs are

not laments of past ages but expressions of his love for the forests, mountains and valleys of the land. Always keen to travel, Gloraglar was eager to accept Elrond's request for help in carrying the lock to Forin. Normally quick to laugh and slow to anger, the doom hanging over Meneloth's lock of hair has affected him strongly, dampening his natural enthusiasm. However he will not fail Elrond and Bregolas by releasing his charge.

Bragir

Use stats for 'Dunlendings' from Core Rules (page 289), but with Armed combat (sword) +5, Ranged combat (bow) +4, Intimidate (bully) +3, Track (forest) +4 and Climb +3.

Aggressive and not overly intelligent, Bragir is none the less possessed of a natural cunning which has served him well. Ruling the outlaws with fist rather than thought, Bragir believes himself to have secured his position. In truth, many of the outlaws resent his ways and are planning to depose him. Tall and gangly, Bragir is an excellent woodsman as are the rest of his men, used to hunting deer in the forests of the region. It was Bragir's suggestion to turn to robbery, seeing the isolation of many of the homesteads in this part of Middle-earth. Although prepared to defend himself and his band strongly, Bragir is not a murderer. Yet the presence of the Gloraglar and the Siruinmall hidden on his person has raised thoughts of violence in Bragir's mind. Once he discovers the pendant, he will not hesitate to kill the Elf.

Outlaws

Use stats for 'Dunlendings' from Core Rules (page 289), but with Ranged combat (bow) +4, Track (forest) +4 and Climb +3.

A mixture of Common Men, many of the outlaws have known each other for years, meeting in villages and towns to sell furs and swap tales before they turned to robbery. Their life is a hard one, especially in this bitter winter, with fierce wolves coming down to Eriador from the north. Many of these men were already used to petty crime to help line their pockets before they met Bragir, and needed little persuasion to accept his plans.

The Oath

One of the strongest characters in this adventure should be Bregolas' broken oath. Through his actions Bregolas has sullied the golden lock of Meneloth's hair with the bitterness he bears at her rejection, and this feeling pervades all who bear either the lock or the Siruinmall. It is this broken promise which drove both Gloraglar and Forin to act out of character, and it will drive the baser side of Bragir's personality to thoughts of murder. Once the lock is returned to Bregolas the doom will be lifted, but until that time the characters must travel many miles across Eriador with Bregolas' bitterness weighing upon them.



GETTING STARTED

0-ADVANCED CHARACTERS

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

GIMBOL

RACE, SUB-RACE: Man, Middle (Éothéod)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable, Dominion of Man, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 11 (+2), Nimbleness 9 (+1)*, Perception 7 (+0), Strength 9 (+1)*, Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 6 (+0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2*, Swiftess +1, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Warrior (Horseman)

ORDER ABILITIES: Favoured Weapon - AC: Blades (Longsword)

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +6, Armed Combat: Polearms (Lance) +3, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Inspire +2, Intimidate (Power) +3, Language: Westron (Éothéodic) +4, Lore/History: Éothéod (Enemies) +3, Lore/Race: Men (Éothéod) +4, Lore/Race: Orcs (Misty Mountains) +2, Lore/Realm: Anduin Vales (Lands of Éothéod) +3, Lore/Wilderness: Herbalism (Healing Herbs) +2, Observe (Spot) +5, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Spear) +3, Ride (Horse) +6, Siegecraft (Cavalry) +1

SPELLS: None

EDGES: Bold, Fell-handed (Orcs of the Misty Mountains), Honour's Insight

FLAWS: Battle-fury

HEALTH: 11 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

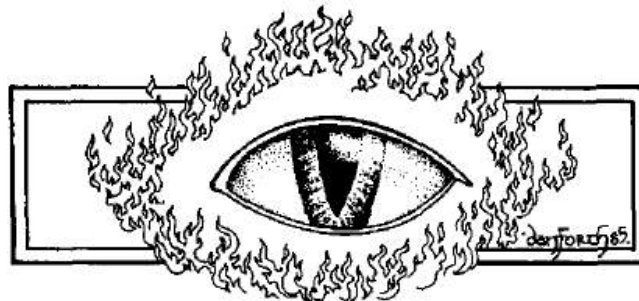
COURAGE: 3

RENOWN: 0

DEFENCE: 11

GEAR: Longsword, shield, lance, horse, saddle and tack, helm, scale mail

BACKGROUND: Gimbol is your typical horse-warrior of the Éothéod -- tall, strong, and proud. He doesn't come from a prominent family nor one of wealth, but his childhood was a good one where he was taught the value of honesty, respect, and responsibility. His position is with one of the patrols near a tributary river to Anduin the Great, keeping an eye out for bandits and marauding orcs from the forests and mountains nearby. He is a man who loves to laugh, his drink, and a well-endowed wench -- not necessarily in the same order. The only thing in the world more precious to him than his honor and duty is Azod, his horse.



YALETH

RACE, SUB-RACE: Man, Middle (Man of the Mountains)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable, Dominion of Men, Skilled

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

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftmess +1, Willpower +2, Wisdom +1*

ORDER: Loremaster (Wise-woman)

ORDER ABILITIES: Teach

SPELLS: None

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Clubs (Club) +1, Climb +1, Debate (Parley) +2, Healing (Herbal Remedies, Treat Illness, Treat Wounds) +6, Insight +5, Language: Westron (Local Dialect) +6, Lore/History: Village (Catastrophes) +5, Lore/Race: Men (Men of the Mountains) +6, Lore/Race: Orcs (Misty Mountains) +6, Lore/Realm: Misty Mountains (Village) +5, Lore/Wilderness: Herbalism (Healing Herbs) +6, Observe (Spot, Taste) +2, Persuade (Charm) +1, Stonecraft (Fortification) +1, Survival (Mountains) +2, Weather-sense +3

EDGES: Charmed Life, Hardy

FLAWS: Hatred (Orcs of the Misty Mountains)

HEALTH: 9 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 4

REOWN: 0

DEFENCE: 11

GEAR: Poultices, herbs, etc. needed for her treatments for ailments and injuries

BACKGROUND: Old Yaleth would never say she was old, though her appearance belies that fact. Last of her family and never bearing a child, Yaleth is a venerated elder of her small village on the eastern slopes of the Misty Mountains. Being eldest, she has learned much over the years of survival in these harsh climes, especially in the arts of healing and of treating wounds. Raiding orcs from deep the mountains or from the stronghold of Gundabad have taken their toll on the nearby settlements and caused many a grievous wound to man, woman, child, and the earth -- all of which she has acquired the skill to heal. It is these same foul creatures that orphaned her when she was only a small child, and her hatred for them runs deeper than the roots of the mountains.

THALEK

RACE, SUB-RACE: Man, Middle (Woodsmen)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable, Dominion of Men, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 11 (+2)*, Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1)*, Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 9 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftmess +1, Willpower +2*, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Minstrel (Instrumentalist*)

ORDER ABILITIES: Gladden

SPELLS: None

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Clubs (Club) +1, Craft: Woodcarving +2, Debate (Bargain) +2, Games: Cards +1, Inspire +6, Language: Sindarin (Mirkwood) +2, Language: Westron (Local Dialect) +6, Lore/History: Anduin Values (Battles) +6, Lore/History: Mirkwood +3, Lore/Race: Man (Woodsmen) +4, Lore/Realm: Anduin Vales (Local) +5, Lore/Realm: Mirkwood (Woodland-realm) +3, Mimicry (Animals, Voices) +4, Perform (Lute, Sing) +5, Persuade (Charm) +2, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons +1, Survival (Forests) +2, Track (Animals) +1

EDGES: Favour of Fortune, Faithful (Danna), Friends

FLAWS: Craven, Reckless

HEALTH: 9 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 4

REOWN: 0

DEFENCE: 11

GEAR: Lute, rations, walking stick, 1d6 sp

BACKGROUND: The folk of the wood near the gloomy Mirkwood have communities few and far between, yet they have a long and humble history for which they take great pride -- none moreso than Thalek and the wandering minstrels. Though raised to be a woodsman like his father, young Thalek's love of music and stories comes from his grandfather, from whom he derives some of his best works and performances. In his meager travels, he met a young maiden named Danna, daughter of the local blacksmith, and fell in love. Long has he watched from afar as he can get no closer, being declined to court her by her father. To Thalek, she represents all that he's sought though he doesn't understand it truly yet. The closest he's come to realize it can be found in his most notable ballad called Stars Over Anduin.

* See Fan Flavour



INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

THE PERSON

1. What is your name, where are you located, and what is your profession (if you have one)?

My name is Doug (Tomcat on the messageboards). I live in Ohio and I am a financial manager.

THE EXPERIENCE

2. How long have you been into gaming?

I have been RPG'ing now for over 25 years.

3. What games are you into (besides Lord of the Rings, of course)?

My own; it is a concoction that I spun off of the Chaosium Stormbringer 4th Edition. I took the best of that system and added what I liked from D&D and we have played like that for over 15 years.

When I found the Lord of the Rings game, I put my game system aside and I have yet to go back to it.

THE GAME YOU PLAY

4. Are you running/playing in a game right now? If so, what is its format (tabletop, Play-by-Post, etc.). Tell us about it and your character.

I am currently running a Play-by-Post chronicle that has been going strong now for three years (<http://roleplay.avioc.org>). I have been fortunate enough to still have most of the same players that rode out of Tharbad in September 2003. It started as a chronicle called the Triumph of the Witch-king, which I have published in this webzine, but I have changed the title to Chronicles of the North since we have moved past the interactions with Angmar.

The chronicle is set in T.A. 1637 and we have told the tale of the plague sweeping across the north and a few heroes who sought a cure for the sickness. In doing so, they faced many threats and challenges sent by the Witch-king and other servants of the shadow. Along the way, they have had help from some familiar faces – Gandalf and Elrond.

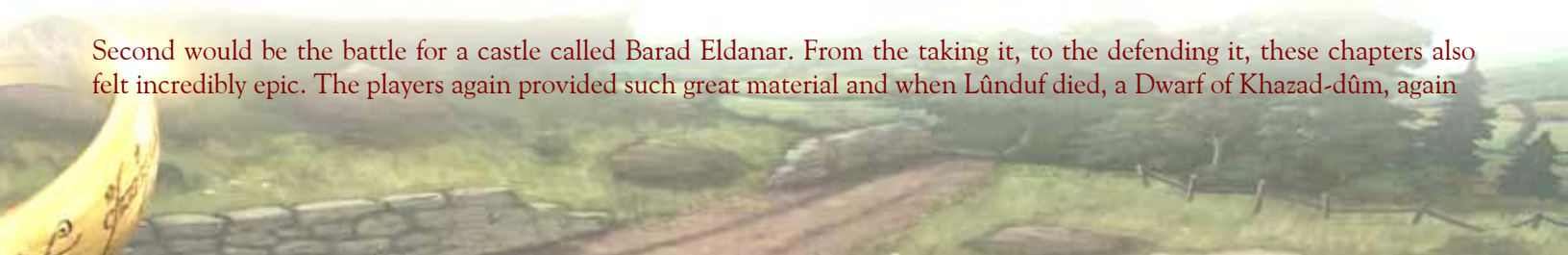
Now they have turned east to cross the Misty Mountains so that one of the characters may return home. We'll see what happens.

4a. What are some of the most memorable scenes from your chronicle?

There have been a few that I would truly call epic scenes from our game and I owe it all to my players. They really do a wonderful job at playing in Middle-earth and keeping the feeling of heroism and nobility.

The first would be the fall of a character named Angbor. He was a Dúnadan loremaster/healer charged by his father to try and find some cure to save their people. In the end, guilt and fear stole his hopes and he became fey and fell to a sword of the enemy. The scene was really cool – the characters have taken on their own lives and fit so well into Tolkien's world that I really felt the loss.

Second would be the battle for a castle called Barad Eldanar. From the taking it, to the defending it, these chapters also felt incredibly epic. The players again provided such great material and when Lúnduf died, a Dwarf of Khazad-dûm, again



it really created a hole in the party. It was cool to see from the player's comments that they too felt the loss. I have only a few memories of that kind of feeling happening in any games I've played or narrated in the past.

Finally, the scene where the Company took a short period of rest in Rivendell – this really was cool. Not to sound like a broken record (which I am!) but again my players made this one come to life. I have never played a game by using a forum to post, but I must say it is really an awesome way to go; players can be so much more in character!

THE GAME ITSELF

5. How were you attracted to the game? Are/have you been involved with the creation or playtesting of the line?

Always been a huge fan of Tolkien and Middle-earth and when I heard the game combat functioned in the same manner as the D100 system I was playing, I bought the book. I always hated D&D's AC and the roll of 1 die to get a result. I liked the idea of a roll to hit and then a roll to defend... to me this adds a mental image of the fluidity of combat with each roll of the dice.

Anyway, the game is great. Never had any part in the playtesting of it though.

6. Out of what is available officially from Decipher, what do you own? What is your favorite? Least favorite?

I own everything but the adventure sets, the maps, and the Hero Journal.

The books I have are good, but I think Decipher would have served us better by just combining these things. I know it's about making money, but some of these books, for their price, were unnecessary – the entire *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* could have been included in the Core Rule book, IMO.

But my favorites are Moria and Paths of the Wise. My least favorites would be the sourcebooks – I really do not need a novel by novel illustration of the Fellowship's advancements... this could also have been put into one book!

7. What do you think is done the best? Worst?

It is all good to me except what I mentioned above.

8. If there were to be only one more supplement released, what would you like it to be?

I would like the Rogues and Minstrel sourcebook to give these Orders a bit more.

9. If there were to be a second edition for CODA, what would you scrap, change, and/or add?

I have a list of house rules on my site for the changes to the rules in our game, but it mostly enhances or reduces a given mechanic... doesn't really change anything. I can't think of any one thing that I would scrap or re-tool – I like the game pretty much as written.

10. If you don't like using the CODA system, what system do you use?

N/A

THE HALL OF FIRE

11. How long have you read the webzine (if you read it at all)? How did you hear about it?

I am part of the Hall of Fire staff. There was no submitted interview this month, so I thought I'd interview myself! 😊

12. What do you think of it? What are your favorite sections?

Three years and we are still going strong! I like the Hostile Haunts and adventures the most. Like I stated above, I like the rules pretty much as written so the articles with new rules, or rule re-writes makes the water a little too muddy for me. Still there is some good stuff that has been created over the last three years of the webzine; but I don't remember it all. But good adventures, or hostile haunts... those things are always nice gems!

13. Besides The Hall of Fire, where else do you find information and inspiration for your gaming in this system?

The books (all of them): movies (including Bakshi's), ICE/MERP (I think the stuff that was written in these old game books is great! *Canonites* might say it is breaking the rules, but I say someone has to give us new stuff since the professor is gone. I am not talking about the game mechanics at all, nor some of the silly magic and magic items, but they wrote some great backgrounds and really detailed the realms of Middle-earth); and finally the internet – Encyclopedia of Arda is a one-click aid.



THE SOURCE

14. What got you interested in Tolkien's writings?

D&D actually. A friend introduced me to the game back when it came in boxes – Beginners and Expert. He actually had a couple of paperback books that were the first incarnation of the game - I can't remember what it was originally called. Anyway, I heard about this trilogy about Elves and Hobbits and magic rings... read them and have loved the books ever since. I still will pick my leather bound version up on occasion and read a couple of chapters. I mostly like to re-read the Silmarillion – it is a very sad book to me.

15. What did you think of the movies?

I think, like most people I have talked too, that they were good. There are some liberties taken by PJ that I would love to ask, "What were you thinking?" (i.e. how Aragorn was depicted! Gimli getting drunk in Edoras... did we need this type of comic relief? And why the hell did Faramir have to bring Frodo to Osgiliath?)

Still, it is a visual of Middle-earth that was done well and I can look past the 'changes' that were made and immerse myself for a couple hours. As long as I look at the movies in this way, I can really enjoy them.

WORDS OF WISDOM

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM YOUR FELLOW GAMERS

Erelgal on Creating Characters Based on Background:

"When making a character, I always think of a look, style, personality, and try to combine that all into a persona, and I try to make it different every time, as I know in the past I would have a tendency to play the same character over and over. Finally, I wrap it up with some important events in the character's history.

Looks

I like to start with a basic concept of how the character looks physically. I might sketch them out, or think of hair..especially in terms of elves heh. But also men, do they wear beads in their hair, is it long, short, well kept, shaggy... you get the idea.

Style

After look I try for a style, are they nobility..then I might go for extravagance, are they roguish, rugged, go for more earthy clothing...are they poor, or rich...find a style that compliments the state of affairs for the character.

Personality

Personality, this is where a lot of my characters became flat in the past...as they would tend to adopt my personality. Now I try to play a part as much as possible...and do what 'they' would do and not what I would do. Are they happy go lucky? Serious? Jovial? Do they tend toward the dramatic or do they like to keep it simple and just get by.

History

Try to feel out the character, take all of the above and think about their history, how they lived as a child, what their culture was like, how they were raised and so on. Knowing the character's history, even making up a lineage is a good way to look forward to the possible paths they might take, and how they would live in the campaign, heck it makes for good character dilemma in places, too. Life altering things happen all the time, don't be afraid to allow your character to have a massive paradigm shift -- all the things he might have believed in could be shattered -- it makes for interesting play, but don't make a habit of things like that or that will also get stale hehe.

Apply Character Info to Stats

Make your skill sets as fluid as you can with your background and character type. These will change most likely over the course of the campaign as you are bound to find that characters will begin to learn all types of things when they begin adventuring."



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://lotrrpg.fanhq.com>
 DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD
<http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164>
 THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE
<http://halloffire.org>
 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.org/index.htm>
 THE LAST ALLIANCE
<http://thelastalliance.com>

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>
 TREK-RPG.NET
<http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php>
 CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine
 THE ONE RING
<http://www.theonering.com/>
 TALES OF MIDDLE-EARTH
http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales_of_mid_dle_earth/
 VALINOR
<http://sauron.misled.us>

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'

CREDITS AND CONTACTS

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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.