



THE HALL OF FIRE

FAN WEBZINE

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GREETINGS,

Salutations... Hello All!

#39 here and what have I got to say. Well to start off with, over the past 3+ years that I've had the greatest honor and time helming and writing for this widely successful webzine covering my favorite roleplaying game, RPG engine, and settings. Throughout that period, I've spent a lot of time doing what I can to support this game and webzine distributing it to whomever wanted it and/or host it, promote demos locally, and advocate it at the game's home site, other gaming sites, and my personal site. My desire to see this game and RPG engine succeed even went so far as to develop an unofficial basic system out of the merged official games and creating a Harry Potter RPG to demonstrate it. After all that, I am afraid to say that life is now getting in the way moreso than it had in the past, thus constraining the time I have to devote to supporting all of it. So I must announce that after Issue #50, I will be stepping down as editor of The Hall of Fire. I will probably continue writing articles and support the zine. I would like to thank you all for your time and dedication to the game and supporting the webzine. Part of the reason for my announcement now is to allow time for the search for a successor; hopefully the search will be successful.

Now on to the stuff you'd rather be reading about. This month's issue includes a look at the little-known elf-haven of the south, Edhellond, the second part of the Skills of Savvy, part one of Combat Edges, and more!

Happy Gaming,

Matthew Kearns
aka GandalfOfBorg
Editor

THE MIDDLE-EARTH HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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ADVENTURING IN EDHELLOND

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

HISTORY

Long have the Eldar dwelt in Middle-earth before the loss of Beleriand or the Sundering of the Seas. One of the oldest of elven enclaves, it resides upon the enchanting shores of Belfalas at the mouth of what they call Morthond, the Blackroot River. Important in its day for sea-trade, defense against raiders, and finally, as a last stop on the road back across the sea to Valinor.

Edhellond's roots go far back into the First Age, making it probably the oldest of cities in current Middle-earth. The Sindarin founded the city, making it a place of beauty and song; the rugged coastline and flocks of sea-birds made for a backdrop that no elf worth his salt at making music could pass up. The library here would be the greatest accumulated of sea-lore and history as it was the last homage to the splendor of the First Age elves before the reign of Gil-galad commenced in Lindon.

As the Eldar began to heed the call to return to the West, Edhellond began to diminish, becoming little more than a shipyard and final waypoint for elves of the south, such as Lorien and eventually those of who chose it of Ithilien in the Fourth Age. Once the flow of pilgrims became a trickle and then nonexistent, the city fell into decay and left alone to fade into the surroundings as a sign of respect by Gondor.



In the intervening years between the start of the decline to its complete abandonment, Edhellond remained a stalwart yet often silent partner with Dol Amroth and Gondor as a whole. The city-state resided within the bounds of the Numenorean realm yet remained for the most part blissfully ignorant of the concerns of that kingdom lest they actually impose upon the Elves.

They often shared the common problem of Corsairs sending raiding parties after pilgrims west or to attempt force themselves upon the Morthond Vale to harry travelers and trade routes. Fortunately skill and a bit of superstition helped fend off most of the invaders.

The only times that peril came to them beyond their ability to control was the Year of the Sea-serpent (Earcaraxe sacked and besieged most of the coastal ports and even going so far as to attack Pelargir) and when a great Fell Turtle almost destroyed the city.

THE MORTHOND

This dark-watered river rises up from under the shadows of the White Mountains and flows approximately south through the lands of Gondor. Continuing its path to the sea, it joins the Ringló above the ancient port of Edhellond.

Surrounding the Blackroot is a wide, fertile valley in the southern White Mountains. Lying directly to the west of Lamedon, the Morthond Vale was a populous area owing allegiance to Gondor, whose lord at the end of the Third Age was Duinhir.

As rich as the vale's grasslands were, its people avoided its upper slopes, where the Morthond sprang from the Mountains near the Hill of Erech. There, the Shadow-men were said to gather, the cursed Dead that haunted the dark paths beneath the Mountains.

RINGLO

The second of the two important rivers of the southern regions of Gondor, the Ringló, or Coldflood, rose in the White Mountains above Lamedon. Flowing southwest, it lines the land, intercepting the Morthond, and meets the sea after some 200 miles. Near its mouth was the ancient Elf-haven of Edhellond, and it marked the border between Anfalas to the west and Belfalas to the east.

STONE OF ERECH

A great black stone, spherical in shape and roughly six feet in diameter. It was half-buried at the top of the Hill of Erech at the mouth of the Morthond Vale, far to the west of Minas Tirith. The Stone was a mysterious and eerie place, shunned by the people of the valley, who claimed it had fallen from the sky, and was haunted by restless spirits. In fact, the Stone had its origins in Númenor, and was brought to Erech after the Downfall by Isildur himself.



It was at the Stone of Erech that the King of the Mountains swore allegiance to Isildur's cause in the time of the Last Alliance. When war came, though, he failed to fulfil his oath, and Isildur cursed the King and his people to wander the hills until they made good their promise. After waiting through the long years of the Third Age, their chance came at last when Aragorn led them out from beneath the Dwimorberg to the Stone of Erech. There at last they fulfilled their ancient bond and marched to the aid of Gondor.

THE SHADOW-MEN

These accursed spectres are what is left of the souls of the Hill-men who broke their oath with Isildur when called to join against the dark powers of the East. Vengeance, bitterness, and wrath are what fill the little space they take up. They suffer none to enter the Paths of the Dead from either gate, lest he or she is the heir of the one who may hold them to their broken oath.



ADVENTURE HOOKS

1. Ancient Knowledge

Only in Edhellond reside any who remember the days before and during the reign of Númenor. The King of Gondor seeks advice on some matter troubling the kingdom from that perspective as this matter may come from those days.

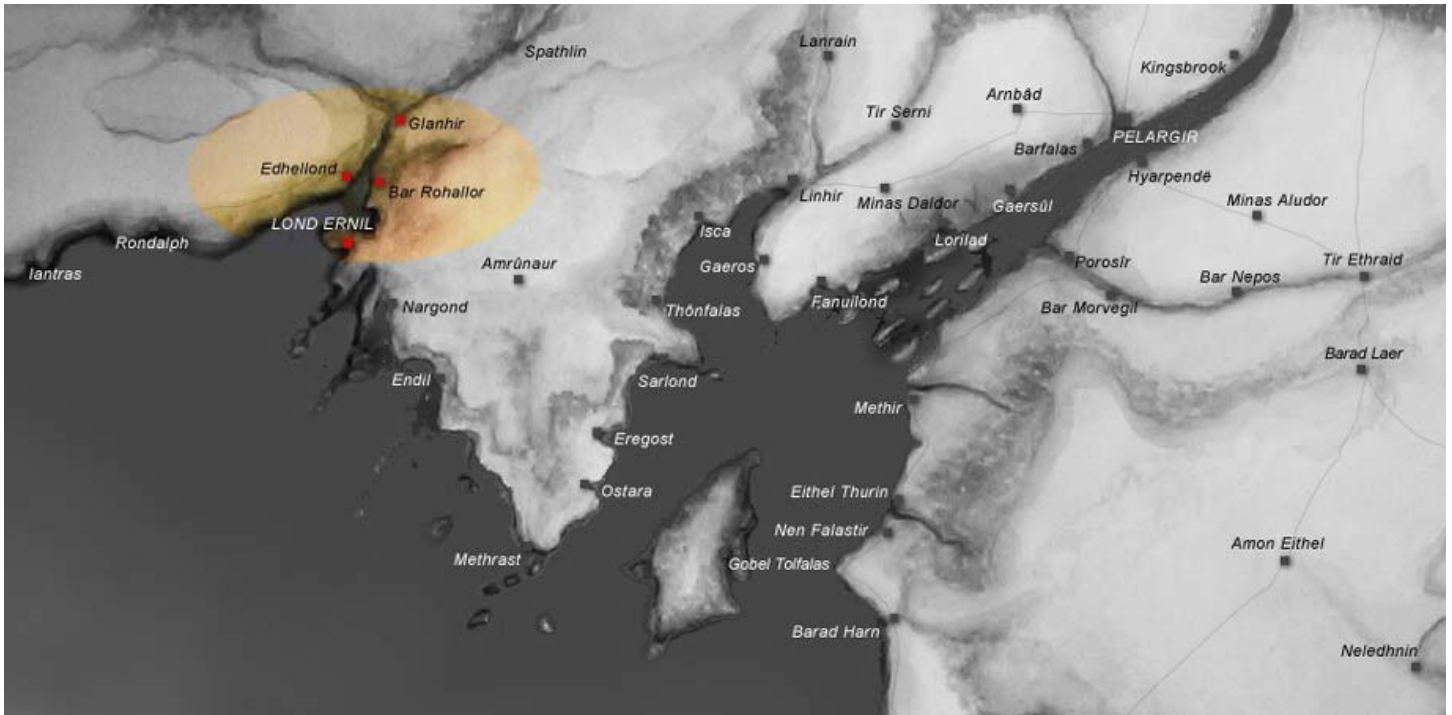
2. Seeking a Master

Few mortals in Middle-earth can boast a mastery of music, so some seek out the true masters in Edhellond, knowing full well that their time is ever shorter upon these shores.

3. Defend the Realm

Tired of being harried by the evil men of the south, the city's ruler decides that action must be taken so as to rid themselves of the threat. You are to join in the quest to fend off the raiders.

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~~~ AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ~~~

Durin Ironshield of the Iron Hills pays a visit to the Elven King of Mirkwood.

"Sir", says Durin, "We have decided to go to war with ye."

The elven king looks incredulous, but takes war seriously.

"We? Who is this we?" he says sternly.

"Well, that would be me, me brother Thorin, his son Durin, our cousins Olin and Golin, and our pop Thrain."

"My good Dwarf, I have 1100 elves at my command that can be ready to move on a moment's notice.", says the king.

"Oh," replies Durin. "Let me get back to ye on that." The Dwarf leaves, but returns two days later.

"Ok king, I have rounded up two more cousins and we have a few axes between us all."

"Sir Dwarf, I have 300 of the finest archers around, plus my royal guards are all spellsingers, armed with swords of sharpness."

"Oh, well, I see." The Dwarf lord thinks a bit. "Let me come back to ye." And he leaves, only to return again in two days.

"Ok king, we have rounded up a few more swords and I think we are ready."

"You should know, my good dwarf, that I have since raised the size of my elven army to 1300."

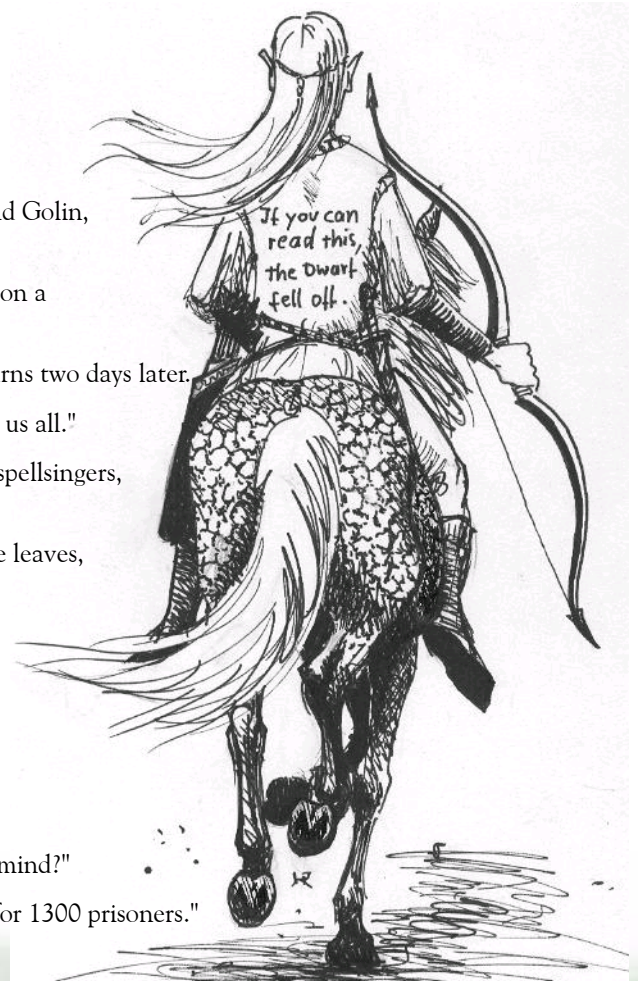
"Ah blast!", and the dwarf leaves. He comes back the next day.

"Well king, I am afraid we have to call off the war."

"I am sorry to hear that. Was it the power of my elven army that changed your mind?"

"Nah, I spoke to all my kin and we decided that we just did not have the room for 1300 prisoners."

--by Warlock



# FAN FLAVOUR

## THE REST OF THE HOBBITS

by Dee Beetem (doristheyounger@yahoo.com)

**A**ccording to J.R.R. Tolkien, 'most' Hobbits reside in the Shire. But a look at Hobbit history reveals an extensive migration period in the Third Age. In the course of the Hobbits' intrepid wanderings, they set out from the Vales of Anduin, crossed the Misty Mountains to Eriador, fled west after the War against the Witch-king, and finally wound up in the Shire. Isn't it reasonable to assume that some Hobbits would remain at every stop on their travels? Moreover, the branches of the population that tarried might wind up looking different than the Victorian villagers introduced in *The Hobbit*.

### RACIAL MODIFIERS

**DAWN-HOBBIT:** Nimbleness +1, Perception +1, Bearing -1

### RACIAL PACKAGES

These variant Hobbits also possess all the standard abilities of their race: Six Meals a Day, Small, Sure at the Mark, Tough as Old Tree Roots, etc.

#### LITTLE FOLK OF THE ANDUIN VALES (DAWN-HOBBIT)

**Craft +1, Observe +1, Survival +1, Track +1,  
Sea-craft +1, Swim +1**

#### FAIRIES OF MIRKWOOD (FALLOHIDE)

**Climb +1, Craft +1, Observe +1, Perform +1,  
Ranged Combat +1, Stealth +1**

#### BURROWERS OF HOLLIN (HARFOOT)

**Appraise +1, Observe +1, Perform +1, Ranged Combat +1,  
Stonecraft +1, Survival +1**

#### BOGGIES OF THE MIDGEWATER MARSHES (STOOR)

**Armed Combat +1, Conceal +1, Craft +1,  
Legerdemain +1, Observe +1, Stealth +1**

**HINT:** If your players use Hobbits as PCs, you may find it disquieting to find that (according to Decipher rules) Hobbits are nearly as strong as Gondorian warriors. Consider subtracting an additional point of Strength and adding one point to Willpower.

**NOTE:** For a description of the Hobbits of Bree (who actually appear in the works of Tolkien) see 'Peoples of Middle-Earth: Bree-landers' by Mathew Kearns, Hall of Fire Issue 26, January 2006.

## T THE LITTLE FOLK OF THE ANDUIN VALES

*"You used to be very much like us..."*  
—Frodo to Gollum, *The Two Towers* (movie)

### HISTORY

The race of Hobbits first rose in the Anduin Valley, and a few of them can be found there still—or rather, not found, since the Little Folk are very furtive. As the ancestors of the Rohirrim and other Men pressed into their ancestral lands, the Little Folk migrated south along the Anduin from the Gladden Fields to the comparative secrecy and safety of the Wold and the Brown Lands. Some may even have retreated into the Emyrn Muil.

### PHYSICAL INFORMATION

The Little Folk are the original Hobbits, predating the time before their kind split into three strains. Most are even smaller and browner than the Harfoots, but they are very wiry and nimble due to the exertions of their daily lives. The homes of the Little Folk are little more than holes dug into the riverbank; their wooden tools and linen clothing are simple and handmade. Without a land of their own and extremely cautious of all Big Folk, the Little Folk move their settlements whenever they suspect they might have been discovered.



## SOCIAL INFORMATION

The Little Folk are the most tradition-minded of all Hobbits. They have heard a few stories about the Hobbits of Bree but cannot imagine living so close to Men or so far from the Great River. The Little Folk revere the Great River as their father and usually place their dead in its waters. Their villages are ruled by the eldest grandmother, just as they were in the time of Sméagol.

The Little Folk can speak Westron, but for ceremonial purposes use an ancestral Hobbit-tongue unlike most Mannish languages. Although they have no written language, they can record and communicate information using an elaborate system of knotted cords.

## ECONOMICS

The Little Folk fish and hunt for small game for most of their food, but also plant flax or edible root-plants in the marshlands for later gleaning. They will sometimes exchange beads or worked leather for the metal tools of Men, but would much rather trade with itinerant peddlers than enter Mannish towns.

**FAVORED ORDERS:** Craftsman, Mariner (Boats), Warrior

**NAMES:** (m) Galabol, Kalimac (f) Elvet, Túka

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs are traveling down the Anduin when they spot a basket caught in the river reeds. Within the basket is the tiniest baby that any of them have ever seen. What will they do about it?



## THE FAIRIES OF MIRKWOOD

*"It was often said (in other families) that long ago one of the Took ancestors must have taken a fairy wife..."*

—An Unexpected Party (*The Hobbit*)

## HISTORY

When the Fallohides migrated from the Gladden Fields across the Misty Mountains, one band tarried in Mirkwood, entranced by the wonder of the Elves. Hundreds of years later, there are still a few who have sworn fealty to Thranduil and remain in the Woodland Realm.

## PHYSICAL INFORMATION

Mirkwood Fairies are even fairer and more nimble than their Fallohide cousins in the Shire. Their homes are built in caves or are dug under the roots of old hollow trees, but they are no mere nooks—they are comfortable, elegant dwellings filled with finely-carved furniture and brightly colored tapestries.

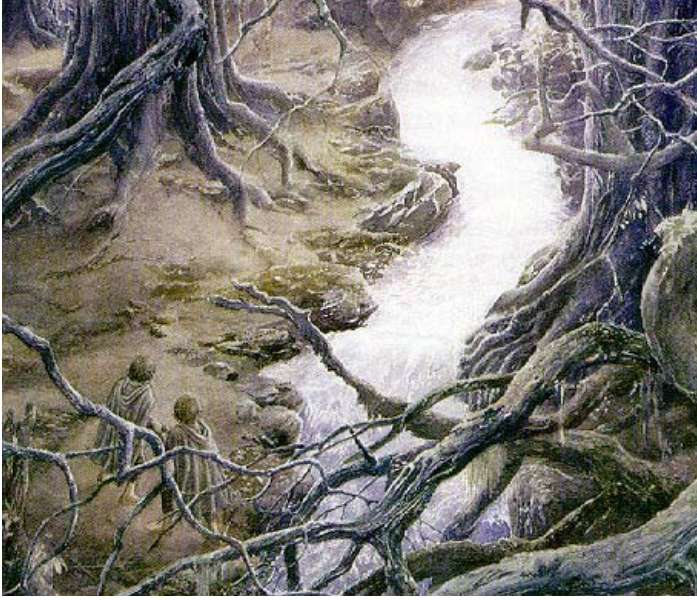


## SOCIAL INFORMATION

Although the Elves are fond of them, the Fairies usually live a little apart from their mentors, and appear at the King's Court only when summoned. They are a shy and wistful people, always aware that they are brief flowers compared to the Elves. Their language is Sindarin, and their garb and manners have been heavily influenced by the Mirkwood Elves, whose customs they mimic. Fairies love singing and dancing to the tune of a silver fairy-pipe. They worry about their dwindling numbers since Fairy families are small.

## ECONOMICS

Fairies excel at brewing, baking, and gardening, and exchange the works of their hands with the Woodland Elves for other goods. Alongside the Elves, Fairy warriors use the shortbow with deadly effect against their mutual enemies, the Spiders of Mirkwood. Sometimes Fairy loremasters are invited to study in Thranduil's library and they may learn spells from his tomes.



**FAVORED ORDERS:** Craftsman, Loremaster, Warrior ( Bowman)

**NAMES:** (m) Perry, Cerveth (f) Dúlin, Mee

## ADVENTURE HOOK

On the outskirts of Mirkwood, the PCs encounter a naïve young maiden who tells them that she has left the forest to seek a husband. She is, indeed, a most fair damsel-and skillful with the bow. But she is only three feet tall, and she has hairy feet!



## THE BURROWERS OF HOLLIN

*"The Great Plague...spreads north and west,  
and many parts of Eriador become desolate  
...the Periannath suffer great loss."*

—The Tale of Years (*Return of the King*, Appendix B)

## HISTORY

The Harfoots were the first Hobbits to enter Eriador, and in time they scattered widely within the entire region. Like many of the Free Peoples, the Hobbits were hard hit by the Great Plague of TA 1636. In Eriador, some of the Harfoot survivors were too weak or too isolated to join in the general evacuation to the Shire. Instead they remained where they were—chiefly in otherwise-deserted Eregion. But their civilization had been shattered.

## PHYSICAL INFORMATION

Even for Hobbits, Burrowers are very small. Their possessions are few—consisting of weapons, clothing, basic tools, and not much else. Burrower communities too are small. They live either in holes dug in a hillside or in the cellars of ancient towns deserted by Men. The Rangers say that they have sometimes found Hobbit footprints in the deserted city of Tharbad.

## SOCIAL INFORMATION

Burrowers are a secretive, fearful people. In unprotected Eregion, they have been ravaged many times by Orcs and worse, so success in 'hiding' is critical. They usually live in extended-family groups, although the families periodically come together in moots to trade and exchange news and marry off their youngsters. Since they have no books or paper, they are illiterate, but their bards sing their histories as sagas.



## ECONOMICS

For the most part, the Burrowers have devolved into a simple hunting and gathering society; they are, in fact, barbarians. However, most Burrowers also scavenge in the ancient ruins of Eriador for useful items that they can no longer make for themselves. They also exchange furs for metal tools made by the wandering Dwarves, who remember their own happier days in Moria and befriend them.

**FAVORED ORDERS:** Barbarian, Minstrel (Tribal Chanter), Rogue

**NAMES:** (m) Vole, Leaf (f) Ivy, Skylark

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs are asked to deliver a bequest from Thorin Oakenshield, a silver cup, to the heir of his old friend Willow. But the only direction they're given is 'in Tharbad', and Tharbad has been deserted for centuries.





## **T**HE BOGGIES OF MIDGEWATER MARSHES

*"There was a surly hobbit lounging over the low wall  
...he was grimy-faced and black-handed."  
—The Scouring of the Shire (The Return of the King)*

### HISTORY

When the Witch-King conquered Rhudaur around TA 1350, most Stoors fled the Angle, but the slow or unlucky were captured by the armies of Angmar. The most cunning and morally flexible saved their lives by serving the enemy as laborers, assassins, or spies. When the Witch-King was defeated at the Battle of Fornost, these Stoors deserted en masse and escaped to locations they judged too noisome for Big Folk to investigate. The Midgewater Marshes is now the homeland of the Boggies (hence their name) although some Boggies scurried North to settle in the Trollshaws.

### PHYSICAL INFORMATION

The Boggies' taint of Mordor and their scurrilous practices give them an ill-favored appearance. They are unusually hairy, and most adult males have beards (or at least goatees.) A Boggie village (or 'sty') consists of a group of mud-daubed huts that resemble untidy beaver lodges in the middle of the Marshes. In contrast, many Boggies in the Trollshaws have taken up housekeeping in the ancient castles of Rhudaur, which makes them feel quite grand. But since these castles are derelict and roofless, the squatters have to put up woolen tents for their actual shelter.

### SOCIAL INFORMATION

Boggies are foggily aware of their debased nature, but are quick to whine 'it's not our fault-it was the Witch-King!' They can speak Westron, but at home use an obscure creole of Westron and Dunlending left over from their days in the Angle. Boggies consider all Big Folk their natural prey, and like to attack from behind, preferably with poisoned weapons. They run to large families and are casually polygamous, but their number does not increase. This is due to the high mortality rate of young male Boggies, who seek their fortunes in typical Boggie pursuits such as highway robbery, burglary, or troll-rolling.

### ECONOMICS

When they are not thieving, Boggies like to hunt, fish, and drink beer. Most Boggie land is worthless for farming, but they do maintain kitchen gardens and fishponds, and keep pigs, dogs, or geese—all of which they use as watch animals, as well as for eating.

**FAVORED ORDERS:** Craftsman (Animal Trainer), Rogue, Warrior

**NAMES:** (m) 'Black' Jack, Froggy (f) 'Dirty' Gertie, Tater

### ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs are asked to destroy a Troll that's laying waste to the countryside, but when they track him down, he is being stalked by some nasty-looking urchins. Now what?



# THE EFFECTIVE: PILGRIM

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

## BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice. This Elite Order is simple with general concepts: you are a wanderer who accumulates knowledge of other cultures, becoming proficient in dealing with people. But to make him truly unique, 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

Besides spending the advancement picks, to become a Pilgrim, you must achieve the following:

- Bearing 8+
- Vitality 8+
- Any 3 Lore/Realm skills 6+

## SKILLS

The Pilgrim's skill list is representative of what any of this Order would require for traveling in the many lands of Middle-earth; each of equal validity in acquisition and mastery.

## EDGES

There are many traits that may distinguish a Pilgrim in her profession and personally as well, such as Bold, Curious, Hardy, Night-eyed, Tireless, Travel-sense, Woodcrafty, and Wise.

## FLAWS

Pilgrims may take on some less than desirable traits from their drive for knowledge and high opinion of one's breadth on many worldly topics, and a number of traits represent their personality failings, such as Arrogant, Dark Heart, Grasping, Proud, and Rival.



## ABILITIES

**CROSS-ORDER SKILL:** This ability is the mainstay of many of the Orders that rely more on skills than abilities.

**HARDY CONSTITUTION:** The ability to fend off Weariness due to travel and even spellcasting is potent indeed, this one being one of the most potent.

**SENSE OF PLACE:** Useful only for Lore/Realm tests, this ability would really only be useful if traveling a lot (but why else would you have taken the Pilgrim Order?).

**WAYS OF FOLK:** With this ability, you are able to better comport yourself with all cultures, even less familiar ones, even through speech.

**WIDESPREAD FAME:** By achieving the prerequisites, you gain +2 Renown... nothing here beyond what the Fame trait can give you out of the Star Trek game.

## MULTIPLE ORDERS

Pilgrim is a great catch-all Elite Order that pretty much any adventurer could pick up without difficulty in justifying it in the context of the story. Though some of the abilities seem to lend themselves better to maybe a spellcaster or fighter, they are good enough to benefit almost any other Order that Pilgrim is paired with.

## SPELLS

A few spells that might lend aid to a Pilgrim could be Animal Messenger, Beast-speech, Change Hue, Create Light, Farseeing, Farspeaking, Kindle Fire, Mist of Speed, Power of the Land, Rainward, and Wizard's Guise.

## PLAYING A PILGRIM

Lord of the Rings is full of examples of pilgrims and their wandering ways such as any of the 5 Wizards, Rangers of the North, and the Wandering Companies.



# TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

## SKILLS OF SAVVY, PART 2 by Matthew "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.).

### DEBATE

**DESCRIPTION:** Skilled in logic and formal argument, you put your power of knowledge behind your words to convince others of your path.

**RELATED EDGES:** Clear Speech, Elf-friend, Eloquent, Honey-tongued, Stern

**RELATED FLAWS:** Arrogant, Tongue-tied, Unnerving Manner

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Courtier (Noble, CRB), Deference (Noble, CRB), Natural Talent (Minstrel, CRB), Persuasive Arcana (Antiquarian, PotW)

**RELATED SPELLS:** None

#### NEW FEATURES

None.



### INQUIRE

**DESCRIPTION:** You gather information by directly questioning others or by other means.

**RELATED EDGES:** Elf-friend, Friends

**RELATED FLAWS:** None

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Noble Mien (Noble, CRB), Leadership (Captain, CRB), Imposing (Wizard, CRB)

**RELATED SPELLS:** Display of Power, Resist Fear

#### NEW FEATURES

None.



## PERSUADE

**DESCRIPTION:** You are able to influence others by putting your force of personality behind the words you speak.

**RELATED EDGES:** Clear Speech, Elf-friend, Eloquent, Fair, Honey-tongued, Seniority

**RELATED FLAWS:** Arrogant, Tiresome, Tongue-tied, Unnerving Manner

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Courtier (Noble, CRB), Deference (Noble, CRB), Natural Talent (Minstrel, CRB), Persuasive Arcana (Antiquarian, PotW)

**RELATED SPELLS:** Voice of Suasion

### NEW FEATURES

None.



## COMBAT EDGES, PART 1 by Matthew "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.).

## ACCURATE

A keen eye and steady hand allow you to target your enemies with great skill.

**DESCRIPTION:** You gain a bonus to Ranged Combat tests for a selected specialty.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Ranged Combat

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Fell-handed (CRB), Master of Heights (HD), Warwise (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Champion (Barbarian, CRB), Deadly Shot (Archer, CRB), Far Shot (Archer, CRB), Favoured Weapon (Warrior, CRB), Horse Archer (Knight, CRB), Jugglery (Minstrel, CRB), Mighty Shot (Archer, CRB), Preferred Weapon (Barbarian, CRB), Sea Legs (Mariner, CRB), Spell Specialty (Magician, CRB), Swift Shot (Archer, CRB), Tactics (Captain, CRB), Warrior-born (Warrior, CRB)

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Fire of Udun (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Steady Hand (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)



## FELL-HANDED

By virtue of constant warring with others, your ability to defeat them is increased.

**DESCRIPTION:** You gain a bonus to combat tests against a small group; additional picks increase the number of groups or a group's general description.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Armed, Ranged, and Unarmed Combat

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Hammerhand (CRB), Master of Heights (HD), Warwise (CRB), Weapon Mastery (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** All abilities that give bonuses to combat skills

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Fire of Udun (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Steady Hand (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)



## HAMMERHAND

Your fists work as well, if not better, for you than conventional weapons.

**DESCRIPTION:** Increase Strength bonus for Unarmed Combat tests.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Unarmed Combat

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Doughty (CRB), Fell-handed (CRB), Master of Heights (HD), Warwise (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Favoured Weapon (Warrior, CRB), Preferred Weapon (Barbarian, CRB), Sea Legs (Mariner, CRB), Tactics (Captain, CRB), Warrior-born (Warrior, CRB)

**Note:** Most, if not all, of the above abilities don't mention Unarmed Combat, but I would suggest making allowances for this underdeveloped skill.

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)

## MASTER OF HEIGHTS

Your skill in fighting in rocky and mountainous environs is superior to others, giving you an advantage in battle.

**DESCRIPTION:** You gain an Armed Combat bonus when in the mountains.

**Note:** This is such a narrowly focused trait that I'd suggest increasing the bonus OR expanding the effects to include all combat skills plus Siegecraft (similar to Warwise), while keeping the environ restriction.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Armed, Ranged, and Unarmed Combat, Siegecraft

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Fell-handed (CRB), Warwise (CRB), Weapon Mastery (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** All abilities that give bonuses to combat-related skills

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Fire of Udun (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Steady Hand (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)



## WARWISE

You have learned much about fighting, both hand-to-hand and in great battles.

**DESCRIPTION:** You gain a bonus to all combat skills plus Siegecraft, while additional picks increase this bonus.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Armed, Ranged, and Unarmed Combat, Siegecraft

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Fell-handed (CRB), Master of Heights (HD), Weapon Mastery (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** All abilities that give bonuses to combat-related skills

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Fire of Udun (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Steady Hand (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)



## WEAPON MASTERY

By training and real-world experience, your ability to wield a blade is superior to most.

**DESCRIPTION:** You gain a bonus to Armed Combat tests.

**RELATED SKILLS:** Armed Combat

**RELATED TRAITS:** Crippling Wound (CRB), Fell-handed (CRB), Master of Heights (HD), Warwise (CRB)

**RELATED ABILITIES:** Related Abilities: Champion (Barbarian, CRB), Favoured Weapon (Warrior, CRB), Preferred Weapon (Barbarian, CRB), Protector (Ranger, CRB), Sea Legs (Mariner, CRB), Swift Strike (Warrior, CRB), Tactics (Captain, CRB), Treacherous Blow (Rogue, CRB), Warrior-born (Warrior, CRB)

**RELATED SPELLS:** Blessing of Orome (PotW), Lame (PotW), Sap Strength (PotW), Smite (PotW), Victory-spell (CRB)



# HOSTILE HAUNTS

## OLD BLOOD EYES' LAIR by David "Issachar" D.

### SYNOPSIS

This site-based mini-adventure is suitable for an atmospheric gaming session with low-level characters. The primary foe is intended to outmatch the heroes, who must use their wits and the environment to survive and find a way to prevail over the monster, instead of achieving victory through force of arms alone.



### BACKGROUND

After the fall of Angmar, those servants of the Witch-king who were able to escape fled for their lives, dispersing across the northern parts of Eriador. One such fugitive, a disciple of the Nazgul lord who had learned no small amount of sorcery from his master, escaped to the hilly region of Rhudaur known as the Troll-fells. With a few Orcish slaves, the sorcerer sheltered in a cave in the hills. Through the use of his magics he remained undiscovered by the warriors who pursued the fleeing Angmarim, and they passed him by.

Time passed, and the sorcerer set his Orcs to work enlarging the cave and constructing a small fortified dwelling built into the side of the hill. He resumed his practice of the dark arts, seeking to increase his power through study and by sacrificing captured travelers in grisly rituals upon his Morgoth-shrine. Men grew to fear the area around his lair, and warned others to avoid it.

Years after the war, trolls once again multiplied in the hills and began to spread out, seeking territory that offered shelter from the deadly sun. It happened that two of them came upon the sorcerer's lair and attacked it, slaying some of the Orcish guards before the sorcerer himself appeared and subdued them with spells. He ordered his servants to bind the trolls with irons and drag them to the dungeons below his lair.

The sorcerer had grown bold in his search for power, and thought to create mightier servants by summoning fell spirits to possess the bodies of the trolls. Here his ambition overreached his mastery of necromancy, however, for although the malevolent spirits were forcibly bound to the trolls, they refused to serve the Man who summoned them, and broke free of their bonds in a rage.

The sorcerer escaped and locked himself in his chambers while the pair of undead trolls rampaged through the house, slaughtering its defenders. For five days they kept him trapped, while he prayed to Morgoth and searched his tomes for a way to unbind the spirits and make them bodiless once again.

At last, armed with a spell that he was certain would work, the sorcerer crept from his study and made his way silently to where he believed the trolls to be waiting. Surprising one troll, he shouted his invocation and watched with satisfaction as the evil spirit was wrenched, shrieking, from the massive body.

He turned, too late, at a sound behind him. Enormous hands closed around the man and wrung his body until the bones cracked, then dropped him lifeless on the floor.

Ever since that day, the undead troll has claimed the sorcerer's lair and the area around it as his territory. The few men who have escaped him tell of his terrible blood-red eyes that glow faintly in the night. Thus the stories of "Old Blood Eyes" have been told and retold around tables and hearths as far afield as Bree.



### GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

The PCs will probably not come to the Troll-shaws to hunt Old Blood Eyes based on tales they hear at a tavern, for no one is known to have seen the monster for a generation and his existence is doubted by many. The following hooks might help Narrators nudge their heroes in the direction of the lair.

- A fresh sighting: the appearance of a lone survivor whose traveling group was attacked by Old Blood Eyes.
- An NPC has double-crossed the party and stolen something valuable, then fled into the Troll-shaws. The heroes find the man dead, his loot gone, with heavy footprints leading away from the place.
- A minor lord whose lands border the Troll-shaws has suffered increasing numbers of raids by the monsters, and offers a bounty on Trolls to any heroes brave enough to attempt the task.
- A group of half-orc mercenaries reveal that they were recently hired to loot the house of a dead wizard. The full-blooded Uruk who led them to the place went inside with two mercenaries while the rest stood guard. Within minutes the sounds of fighting and shouting erupted inside the house, which quickly turned into screams. The remaining mercenaries fled, hearing the heavy footfalls of a monstrous pursuer behind them.





## THE MONSTER

Although he is undead, like most trolls Old Blood Eyes cannot abide the sun, whose rays will turn him into stone. He goes abroad only at night, sheltering during the day in his lair or in caves nearby. He knows the area well for two to three leagues around his lair, and can easily avoid being caught out of doors by the dawn. Nevertheless, vulnerability to sunlight is his greatest limitation and weakness.



### OLD BLOOD EYES

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 12 (+3), Nimbleness 4 (-1), Perception 6 (+0), Strength 16 (+5), Vitality 14 (+4), Wits 6 (+0)

**REACTIONS:** Stam +7, Swift +0, Will +3, Wis +3

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Undead Stamina, Vulnerability (turn to stone in sunlight), Armour 3

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat (Clubs) +8, Intimidate (Fear) +7, Observe (Hear) +4

**EDGES:** Hardy, Night-Eyed 2

**FLAWS:** None

**HEALTH:** 18 (6 Wound levels)

**DEFENCE:** 9

**SIZE:** Large

**MOVE:** 6

**GEAR:** Stone greatclub (3d6 damage)

**Undead Stamina:** The creature never needs to eat or drink, takes half damage from physical attacks, heals all injuries at five times the normal rate, does not have Weariness levels, never needs to make Stamina tests to resist weariness, and cannot be affected by poison or disease.



## EXPLORING THE LAIR

It is best to have the PCs arrive at the site during the day. Regardless of the time of their arrival, however, Old Blood Eyes is not in the lair; he is out wandering his territory (if at night) or sheltering in a cave elsewhere (during the day).

The portion of the dwelling outside the hill is built of stone blocks with wooden frames in the doors and narrow windows, and upright wooden beams at intervals providing additional support. The western face of the building features a chimney halfway down its length, in the inside corner at the junction of two walls. To the right of the chimney is a short parapet protecting a second-floor **balcony** about fifteen feet above the ground.

Climbing the wall to reach the balcony requires a TN 12 Climb test. Once on the five-foot wide balcony, the climber can look through narrow slitted windows to see a dark room whose floor is far below at ground level. At the south end of the balcony a door, heavily reinforced with iron, prevents entrance into the house. The door has no lock, but is barred from the inside.

The halls and doorways within the dwelling are five feet wide. Most of them are battered and cracked, damaged by the troll's rough efforts to squeeze through. The ceilings are ten feet high, and most rooms are fifteen feet wide and fifteen to twenty-five feet long.

The following section describes each numbered room on the map.

**1. Entryway** — The front door of the dwelling is broken in; its fragments rotted away long ago. Directly across from the entrance is a small cloakroom, its door also missing. An arched doorway on the south wall leads into the house.

**2. Sitting Room** — The fireplace in the southwest corner of this room is dark and cold. On the east wall, doorways whose doors were torn from their moorings lead into the dining room and kitchen. A single door on the south wall hangs crazily from a single hinge. It is heavily reinforced with iron bands, which have beaten into a concave shape by some unimaginable force. Beyond this door can be seen the first few feet of a hallway choked in darkness.

Flung into a corner of the room is a skeleton in the remains of what was once leather armour fitted with iron studs. A rusted short sword lies nearby. A character with knowledge of Orcs may identify this skeleton as Orcish (TN 6 Lore/Race test).

The fireplace conceals a **secret door** that leads into room 5, the study (TN 18 Search test to locate). It has been in disuse for so long, however, that the iron panel no longer turns freely, and a Strength test (TN 12) is required to force it open. Because of the narrow confines of the fireplace, only one person at a time can attempt to force open the panel.

**3. Dining Room** — The table and chairs in this room are smashed to splinters and almost completely rotted. A doorway (sans door) on the south wall leads to the kitchen.

A few tin cups and plates lie scattered around the room. One cup is made of brass, worth 2 sp (TN 8 Observe (Spot) test to notice).

**4. Kitchen** — Above the stone furnace on the south wall, a hole in the ceiling provides a vent for smoke to escape. The metal brackets along the walls must have once held wooden shelves. Fragments of tables and stools are strewn around the corners of the room, along with a few rusty iron pots, pans, and utensils — none of which are of similar design, as they all were looted from unfortunate travelers.

On the east wall, a doorway leads into room 7, an unfinished cave area. The door itself lies just inside the kitchen. Though reinforced with iron bands, it has been rent from its hinges.

Another skeleton like the one in room 2 lies near the doorway, its bones disconnected and slightly scattered.

**5. Study** — This room shows no evidence of the violence done to other rooms in the house. Its wooden desk and heavy chair, though damaged by long years and weather (the narrow windows no longer hold their thick glass panes), are still usable. The small collection of parchments and leather-bound books on low shelves around the room has not fared so well. Most of these items are damaged to the point of illegibility.

The door on the east wall leads to the bedroom. This door is closed and has no handle or other apparent means of opening it. The **latch is concealed** below a metal boss in the center of the door, which can be pressed slightly inward, twisted, and then slid aside to reveal the latch (TN 15 Observe (Spot) or Search test to discover the mechanism). Turning the latch opens the door.

The staircase on the south wall leads up to a reinforced door latched on this side with an iron bar. Drawing back the bar permits the door to be forced open on its rusty hinges with a TN 10 Strength test.

Below the staircase, in the southwest corner of the room, a sliding wooden panel conceals a **secret passage** (TN 15 Search test to detect the secret door) containing steps leading down.

The fireplace on the north wall shares a back with the fireplace in room 2. The **metal panel** in that room's description can be detected and opened from this side as well.

**6. Bedroom** — The door leading into this room from the hallway is reinforced with iron and rather battered on the outside, though it did not break. (The cramped confines of the hallway did not allow the troll enough room to pound the door as mightily as it did the other door.) A TN 20 Legerdemain (Lockpicking) test is required to unlock it without its key (which is in room 13). Once the door is unlocked, opening it requires a TN 8 Strength test because the damage to the door causes it to scrape against the floor as it opens.

The door on the west wall leads into room 5, and its latch is concealed on this side in the same manner described for room 5.

The bedroom must once have been comfortable enough, and its furnishings, though dust-heaped, are reasonably intact. On a table against the wall, among candlesticks and a copper inkwell, lie parchments and a single bound book: the **sorcerer's journal**.

### THE SORCERER'S JOURNAL

Characters who take time to read the journal carefully will learn much: the man's identity, his history of service to the Witch-king, and all that transpired between the fall of Angmar and his eventual demise at Old Blood Eyes' hands.

They will also learn details of his necromantic arts, the power of the altar in the Morgoth shrine, and the spell he developed to unbind the malevolent spirits from the trolls that held him trapped in his own dwelling.

This information may become important later on, as the party deliberates on how to defeat Old Blood Eyes.

An unlocked chest at the foot of the bed contains a few **treasures**: 11 sp, 4 SP, six bloodstones worth 3 sp each in a small pouch, and a black cloak with an ornate gold pin bearing the sign of the Eye.

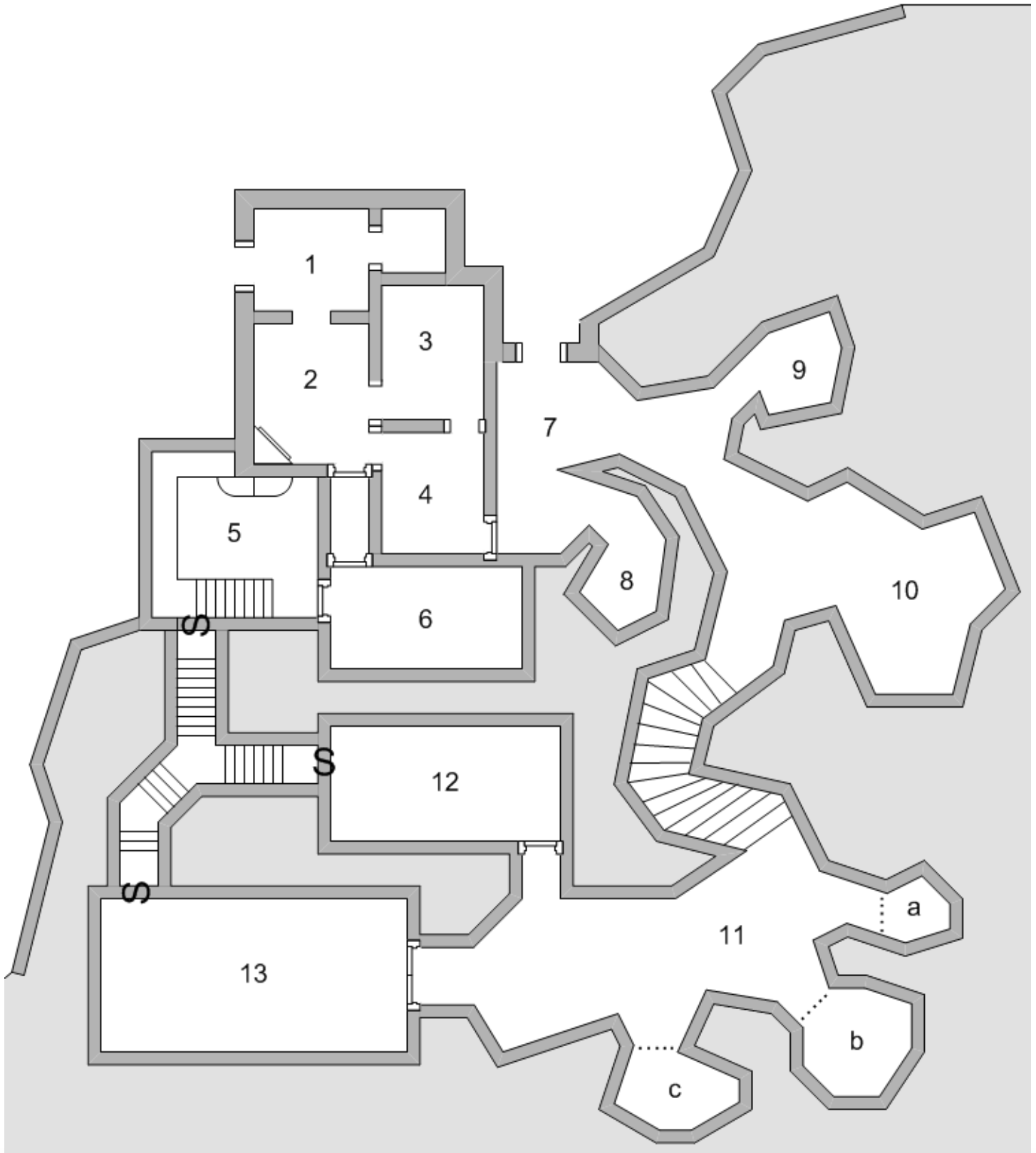
**7. Back Entrance** — Though two walls of this chamber are the same stonemasonry that comprises the main living areas of the house, the rest is raw rock, the outer chamber of a natural cave. The doorway to the north is open to the outside.

An assortment of bones, among which four skulls can be seen, litters the ground. At least two of the skulls are Orcs and one is a Man (TN 6 Lore/Race tests to identify); the fourth is crushed beyond recognition. Rusted weapons lie here and there, and one well-made **longsword** lies beneath the debris (TN 8 Observe (Spot) or TN 5 Search test to notice). The longsword is not magical, but is of superior workmanship and requires only a little cleaning and repair to be battle-worthy again (TN 8 Smithcraft test to repair the sword).

**8. Larder** — This cool recess of the cave was used to store foodstuffs and a few other supplies. Along the walls are boxes, mostly dilapidated and lidless, some on their sides or upside down. Nothing useful or of value remains here.

**9. Guard Quarters** — The sorcerer's chief guardsman once resided here in the semi-privacy of a cave nook enlarged by tunneling. The mouldering frame of his cot lies against the east wall. At its foot stands a **small iron-bound chest** that has endured the ravages of time. The chest is locked and the key is in room 11. A TN 15 Legerdemain (Lockpicking) test is required to open it without the key.

Inside the chest are 3 sp, 1 SP, and an ornate long knife with semi-precious stones set in the black leather sheath.



**10. Guard Barracks** — The sorcerer's Orcish guards slept and ate in this spacious chamber whose walls are mostly raw, natural rock, with only a bit of excavation in evidence. The high roof is lost in shadow. A shallow fire pit is dug into the floor near the center of the room. The only items remaining from the previous occupants are an iron pot, three rusted short swords, and the skeletal remains of their wielders.

In the southwest corner of the cave, a **twisting stairway** hewn into the rock leads down into darkness.

**11. Dungeon** — Three cells of various sizes (rooms a, b and c) line the southeast wall of this long room. All three are fitted with barred metal gates. The bars of cell b have been torn loose and lie scattered on the floor nearby; this was the only cell that contained prisoners unlucky enough to be still alive at the time of the trolls' initial rampage. This cell and cell c both contain the skeletons of former prisoners.

An additional skeleton, that of a Man, lies near the door to room 12. This was the chief guardsman. A **ring of keys** beneath him (TN 10 Observe (Spot) test to notice) unlocks the chest in room 9 and the gates to the cells (which can also be unlocked with a TN 15 Legerdemain (Lockpicking) test).



**12. Workroom** — A table made of a great stone slab atop four blocks of stone dominates the center of this room. Metal flasks, bowls and tools lie on the table and on the low wooden shelves that line the walls.

The door leading into this room from the dungeon is closed, but unbarred. It is reinforced with iron and appears to have taken a serious pounding from outside the room. Only the Shutting-spell that the sorcerer cast upon the door prevented the powerful trolls from breaking it down.

There is a **secret door** in the northwest corner of the room, concealing a short stairway that leads up to a three-way landing. (TN 15 Search test to detect the secret door.) The door is locked and requires the sorcerer's key in room 13 to open, or a TN 20 Legerdemain (Lockpicking) test.

**13. Shrine** — This high-ceilinged, 20' x 40' room is painted with symbols of Morgoth and runes written in the Black Speech (TN 15 Lore/Group:Servants of the Shadow or comparable test to recognize the symbols).

Two rows of pillars, four on each side, define a central aisle down the length of the shrine. Torch brackets are fixed to the pillars and to the walls at either end of the room.

Beside the doors on the east end of the room lies the **skeleton of the sorcerer** himself. Two rings, one gold and one silver, adorn his fingers; a rune-etched bronze bracer circles one wrist. Around and beneath his bones lie a silver knife, a key (which opens the secret doors in this room and in room 12), and a large chunk of crystal, which produces light in a 10' radius when a command phrase is spoken in Quenya Elvish: *Hail Melkor, illuminator*.

In the northwest corner of the room is a **secret door** concealing a short stairway that leads up to a three-way landing. (TN 15 Search test to detect the secret door.) The door is locked and requires the sorcerer's key to open, or a TN 20 Legerdemain (Lockpicking) test.

On the west wall is an **altar of black rock**, porous and volcanic in appearance. Its pitted surface is crusted over with dried blood. A character within five feet of the altar who observes it for a full round will believe he sees the blood become gleaming liquid once again, slowly dripping over the rock. A person who touches the altar will hear faint and distant cries of torment. (TN 7 Wisdom test to recognize these effects as mere impressions on the mind.)

The altar is a thing of evil, invested with the power of Morgoth. A TN 12 Observe (Sense Power) test reveals its fell nature to those who are sensitive to magical energies.

When anyone **awakens the power of the altar** (such as by triggering the illusions of blood and screams, striking it or placing anything upon it), the spirit inhabiting Old Blood Eyes is instantly aware of the presence of intruders within its lair. The monster will make its way back to the lair with all haste, as soon as the sun has set. Once it is dark outside (or if it is dark already), Old Blood Eyes will arrive at the lair within five minutes or less. (**Narrators** should time the monster's arrival for maximum fear and surprise, when the party is still in a vulnerable location within the lair.)



## CONFRONTING OLD BLOOD EYES

Low- to mid-level parties will be poorly equipped to handle Old Blood Eyes in a full-on fight. The troll's tough skin deflects three points of damage per attack, and its Undead Stamina trait halves the remaining damage. With two Healthy Wound levels and the Hardy edge, the creature can withstand a tremendous amount of damage before its combat ability is adversely affected. The best strategy for a typical party, initially, is to run and seek shelter in the areas of the house that are inaccessible to the troll.

These areas include the study and bedroom and the secret stairway passage that connects the study to the workroom and shrine. (The stairway is narrower than it appears on the map.)

**Narrators** are encouraged to play up the fear and suspense as Old Blood Eyes seeks a way to get at the PCs where they are hiding. If they are in the bedroom, he may crawl down the short hallway and beat on the door (though he has insufficient leverage in those cramped quarters to break it down).

If they are in the study, he may come outside the building at night and climb onto the balcony, pounding on the door. This door he can actually break down, given enough time – but fortunately for the PCs, the balcony door is smaller than most others in the house, and the troll cannot fit inside (though he can give them a fright by reaching in with his long arms!).

Alternate periods when the monster can be heard raging around the premises with periods of unsettling silence. The stone floors make it possible for even a creature as large as the troll to slip about fairly quietly on unshod feet.

The following sub-sections present four viable means of dealing with the threat of Old Blood Eyes. Players, of course, might invent their own strategies.



### “Fly, You Fools!”

The party may decide that they are hopelessly outmatched by the creature, and must flee, perhaps to return another day when they are stronger or better prepared. In this case, they should wait until morning to make their escape, when the troll cannot pursue them outside the lair.

Getting to the outside is another matter. By lurking in room 7, Old Blood Eyes can guard the rear exit and still detect PCs attempting to move through the front area of the house. He has long practice in squeezing through the doorways and stands a good chance of cutting off at least a couple of party members from this escape route.

A better means of egress is by mounting the stairway in the study to the **outdoor balcony**, and then climbing down the wall. Old Blood Eyes has no means of hindering an escape by this route.

### “Dawn Take You All, and Be Stone to You!”

The party might try to contrive a way to expose Old Blood Eyes to sunlight. This is difficult, because the monster will not willingly enter a sunlit area. The heroes will have to set some sort of trap.

One possibility is to climb atop the roof of the house (from the outdoor balcony, this can be done with a TN 12 Climb test) and **rig a section of the roof** to collapse or lift away. The stone shingles can be removed easily, and the wooden beams that hold them up are weakened enough with age that they can be sabotaged without much difficulty.

With a TN 8 Craft (Carpentry) test, a TN 10 Siegecraft test, or a TN 12 Wits test, a character can sabotage a section of the roof effectively and with safety to himself. On a Failure, the trap suffers a 25% chance of failing to work when sprung (with dire consequences for the “bait”). On a Complete Failure or worse, the roof gives way and the character must make a TN 10 Swiftness test to avoid falling fifteen feet down to the floor of the house.

### “The Treasure of the Enemy...In it Lies a Great Part of His Strength of Old.”

The power of the altar in the shrine to Morgoth strengthens the fell-spirit that animates Old Blood Eyes’ body. By removing this source of power, the party can significantly weaken the monster and gain an advantage that might make it possible to defeat him more easily in battle.

The altar cannot be destroyed outright, but its function as a focal point for the malice and will of Morgoth residing in the world can be broken – at great risk to the hero who attempts it.

A TN 20 Lore/Servants of the Shadow or comparable test will give the PCs an understanding of how to dispel the unholy power residing in the altar. For characters who have read the journal of the sorcerer, the Lore test’s difficulty is reduced to TN 12, and they have the additional option of substituting an Insight or Wisdom test at TN 15 to understand the task. A character who succeeds one of these tests will know, or can guess at, all of the information about the ritual in the paragraphs that follow.

The character who attempts to cleanse the altar must spend a minute calling on the Valar (whom he might know only as the good powers of the world) for aid in dispelling the power of evil. He must then grasp the altar with both hands and rebuke the power of the Enemy that resides within it.

At once, the character is engaged in a **contest of wills** with the malevolent force bound into the altar. Both the character and the altar make opposed Willpower tests each round. Treat the altar as having an effective Willpower score of +10.

The character must win the contest of wills on **three rounds** (which need not be consecutive) to drive the power of Morgoth from the altar. Each time the character wins a round, the altar’s effective Willpower score is reduced by 2. However, on each round in which the character loses the contest, he loses a full Wound level as the fell energies drain his very life. Reduce the character’s Wound points by enough to place him at the top of the next Wound level down.

The character can disengage from the contest voluntarily at any time. However, doing so negates any rounds in which he has already won the contest of wills. The next character to attempt the cleansing ritual must begin the process all over again, with the altar back at its full +10 Willpower bonus.

Because the altar's force of will is so strong, a character who engages with it should prepare himself beforehand by using any available methods to bolster his Willpower test results, and should expect to expend most or all of his Courage points in order to achieve victory.

**Elves** are the best candidates to perform the ritual. If the character attempting the cleansing is a Noldor Elf, the altar's effective Willpower score is reduced by 2 points, or by 1 point if the cleanser is any other type of Elf.

The assistance that other party members can give is limited. An **Inspire test** at TN 15 can add a +1 bonus to the character's Willpower test for every level of success (+1 for Marginal, +2 for Complete, etc.); a separate Inspire test must be made on every round to benefit the character involved in the contest of wills.

Casting any of the following three **spells** on the altar during the ritual will reduce its effective Willpower score by 1 point for each spell cast (even the same spell in rapid succession):

- Blessing of Elbereth (PotW)
- Flame of Anor (CB)
- Sorcery Ward (PotW)

Invoking the name of **Elbereth** will also reduce the altar's effective Willpower score by 1 point, though this is a one-time effect regardless of how many characters call on Elbereth.

The act of beginning the cleansing ritual immediately makes the fell spirit within Old Blood Eyes aware of what is happening, and the troll will rush to the shrine as quickly as possible. The characters are well advised to close and brace the doors into the shrine before beginning the ritual!

It takes 50 points of damage to destroy or break down the shrine's doors, and the doors resist 10 points of damage from every hit without effect. Old Blood Eyes, making two power attacks against the door per round (a variant rule for out-of-combat attacks against an object) with his stone greatclub, will average 37 points of damage each round, 20 of which is resisted by the doors. At an average rate of 17 points of real damage to the doors per round, the monster will break into the shrine after three rounds.

By bracing the doors with poles, hafted weapons, wedges and whatever else is at their disposal, the PCs can increase the doors' damage resistance to 12 points per hit, which will likely hold off Old Blood Eyes for an additional round.

The instant that a character achieves victory in the contest of wills, the concentrated power of Morgoth in the altar is broken, and this has **immediate effects** on Old Blood Eyes. The monster suffers a -4 penalty on all its skill tests (including Armed Combat) and a -4 penalty on damage, and is limited to taking a single action each round. Taken together, these effects significantly reduce Old Blood Eyes' combat ability. Furthermore, if the tide of battle goes heavily against it, the creature will turn and flee, though it will hardly be able to outrun any pursuers. If it is daylight outside, the party can easily corner Old Blood Eyes and finish the job.



**“It is Perilous to Study Too Deeply the Arts of the Enemy, for Good or for Ill.”**

A final option, though not one that most heroes will dare to attempt, is to attempt to cast the same spell the sorcerer himself developed, and so to unbind the possessing spirit from Old Blood Eyes' body. A character who reads the sorcerer's journal and notes can understand the spell with a successful Lore/Spellcraft test at TN 15. Learning the spell takes three full days of study.

However, although this spell will be effective in defeating Old Blood Eyes, it is an evil spell of sorcery. A character who studies to learn the spell must make a TN 15 Willpower test against Corruption, and if he casts it he must make another Willpower test, this time at TN 20.



## EPILOGUE

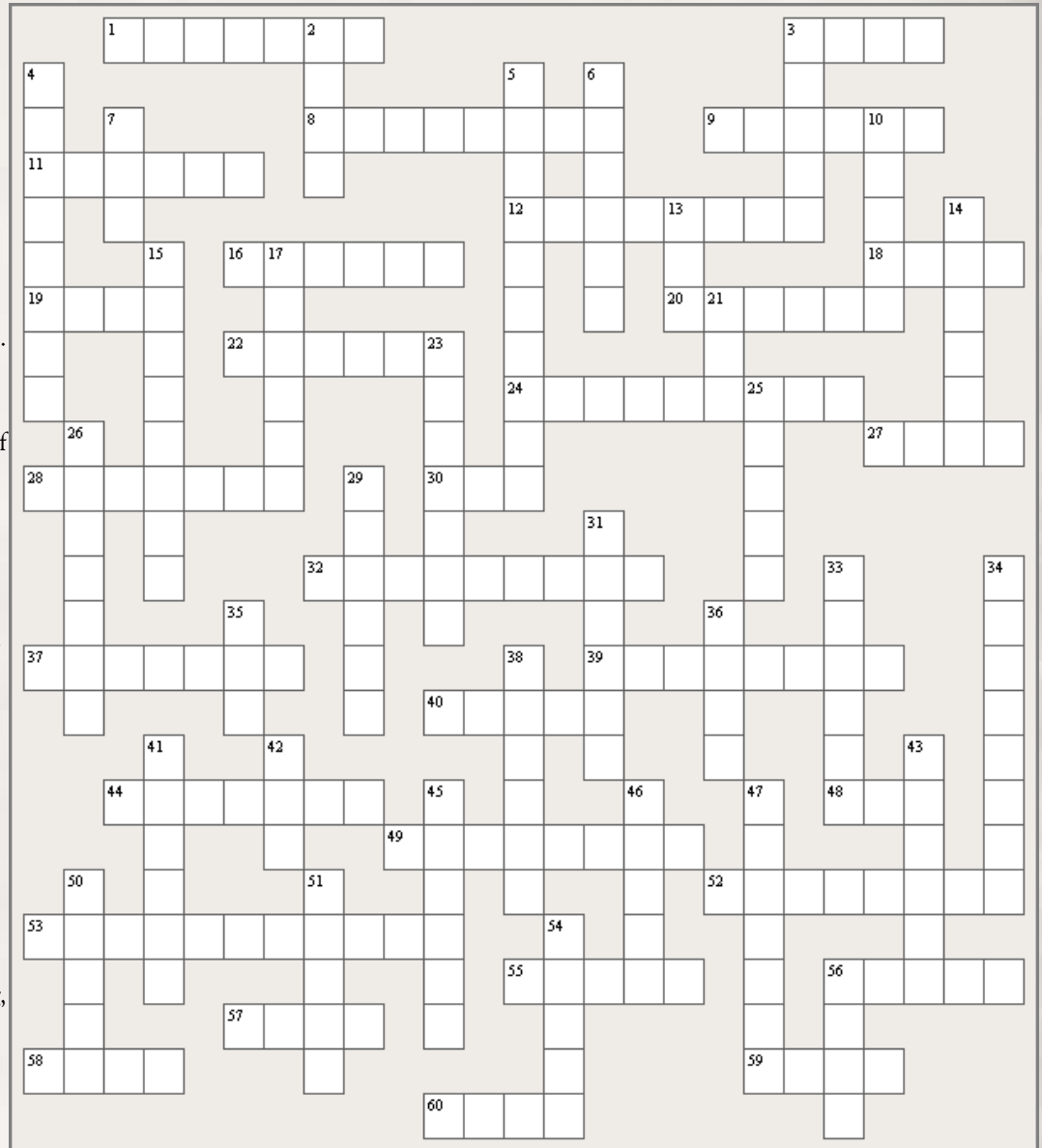
The defeat of Old Blood Eyes should earn the PCs a point or two of renown, and the gratitude of all who reside near the Trollshaws. If the heroes cleansed the altar of its evil power, important persons such as Elrond might sense it or learn of it.

# CROSSWORD

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

## ACROSS

1. River border of Rivendell
3. Sam's faithful steed
8. Hobbit' home
9. Old \_\_\_\_\_
11. Blade that was broken
12. Great sea
16. Orc name for Glamdring
18. First king of Rohan
19. Troll that waylaid Thorin & co.
20. Fat dwarf
22. Half of the Reunited Kingdom
24. Title given to those in favor of the Eldar
27. Intelligence
28. Prominent Hobbit family
30. Only female dwarf named
32. Capitol of the North-kingdom
37. All that is gold does not glitter
39. The Brown
40. Ringbearer
44. Frodo, Merry, Bilbo, etc.
48. Second-born
49. Region of Gondor
52. Blue Mountains
53. Evil twin
55. Meriadoc Brandybuck
56. The North-kingdom
57. Realm destroyed by Smaug, rebuilt
58. One of thirteen
59. Cousin of Thorin
60. The East

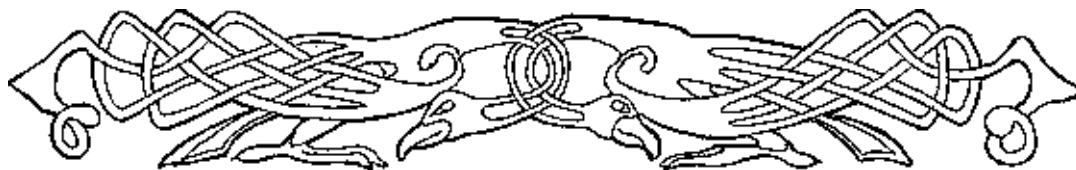


## DOWN

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Tree-herders</li> <li>3. One of thirteen</li> <li>4. Orc-fortress in the North</li> <li>5. Dexterity</li> <li>6. Spear of Gil-galad</li> <li>7. Twisted creation of Morgoth to mock Elves</li> <li>10. Nephew of Thingol, heir to throne of Rohan</li> <li>13. GandalfOfBorg abbrev.</li> <li>14. Near Bree</li> <li>15. Physical power</li> <li>17. Golden hall of Rohan</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. One of thirteen</li> <li>23. Child realm of Arnor</li> <li>25. First-born</li> <li>26. Suit of mail</li> <li>29. Dominant elf-realm during Second Age</li> <li>31. Demon of fire</li> <li>33. Ability to see through guile</li> <li>34. Sin. Woses</li> <li>35. The One</li> <li>36. Lord of the Iron Hills, became King Under the Mountain</li> <li>38. Prominent Hobbit family</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41. Layout artist and author</li> <li>42. One of thirteen</li> <li>43. Great river of western Middle-Earth</li> <li>45. Vitality + Strength modifier</li> <li>46. Orc name for Orcrist</li> <li>47. Great stone near Beorn's home</li> <li>50. Burglar</li> <li>51. Evil creation of Morgoth, twisted to mock Ents</li> <li>54. Skin-changer</li> <li>56. Craftsman of the Valar</li> </ol> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

# ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD #3 (HOF ISSUE 38)

| ACROSS       |                   |              | DOWN         |             |              |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 4. Adunnaic  | 23. Decipher      | 45. Dale     | 1. Armor     | 20. Eorl    | 39. Bill     |
| 6. Barad Dur | 24. Men           | 48. Belegaer | 2. Half Orc  | 21. Sam     | 41. Mallorn  |
| 8. Fili      | 29. J R R Tolkien | 51. GOB      | 3. Barrow    | 22. Dis     | 42. Bombadil |
| 9. Ents      | 32. Smial         | 53. Rhudaur  | 5. Istari    | 25. Pippin  | 44. Beater   |
| 10. Ring     | 33. Tomcat        | 55. Bifur    | 7. Andrast   | 26. Biter   | 46. Angband  |
| 11. Bard     | 34. Orc           | 56. Archet   | 9. Ered Luin | 27. Bilbo   | 47. Edoras   |
| 12. Bofur    | 35. Oin           | 57. Lorien   | 13. Bag End  | 28. Elves   | 49. HOF      |
| 14. Ori      | 38. Erebor        | 58. Legolas  | 15. Bree     | 30. Rhun    | 50. Aule     |
| 15. Balin    | 40. Amon Sul      | 59. Dori     | 16. Numenor  | 31. Troll   | 52. Bert     |
| 19. Health   | 41. Manwe         |              | 17. Khamul   | 36. Nazgul  | 54. Kili     |
| 21. Staddle  | 43. Eru           |              | 18. Dain     | 37. Elessar |              |



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# WHAT'S OUT THERE

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

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME<br/> <a href="http://lotrrpg.fanhq.com">http://lotrrpg.fanhq.com</a><br/>           DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD<br/> <a href="http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164">http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164</a><br/>           THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE<br/> <a href="http://halloffire.org">http://halloffire.org</a><br/>           FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH<br/> <a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules</a><br/>           THE MAD IRISHMAN<br/> <a href="http://www.mad-irishman.net">http://www.mad-irishman.net</a><br/>           STARBASE CODA<br/> <a href="http://www.starbase-coda.com">http://www.starbase-coda.com</a><br/>           ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA<br/> <a href="http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm">http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm</a><br/>           SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL<br/> <a href="http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/">http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/</a><br/>           CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH<br/> <a href="http://roleplay.avioc.org/index.htm">http://roleplay.avioc.org/index.htm</a></p> | <p>THE LAST ALLIANCE<br/> <a href="http://thelastalliance.com">http://thelastalliance.com</a><br/>           RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES<br/> <a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/</a><br/>           THE STEWARD AND THE KING<br/> <a href="http://www.stewardandking.net">http://www.stewardandking.net</a><br/>           THE TOWER HILLS<br/> <a href="http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills">http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills</a><br/>           TREK-RPG.NET<br/> <a href="http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php">http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php</a><br/>           CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY<br/> <a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine</a><br/>           THE ONE RING.COM<br/> <a href="http://www.theonering.com/">http://www.theonering.com/</a><br/>           THE ONE RING.NET<br/> <a href="http://www.theonering.net/">http://www.theonering.net/</a><br/>           VALINOR<br/> <a href="http://sauron.misled.us">http://sauron.misled.us</a></p> |
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*Interested in submitting...*

- A mini or side adventure?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- Racial / Order packages?
- NPC's?
- Weapons / equipment / magical items?
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If so, write to us for details on submission at: [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto: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.

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