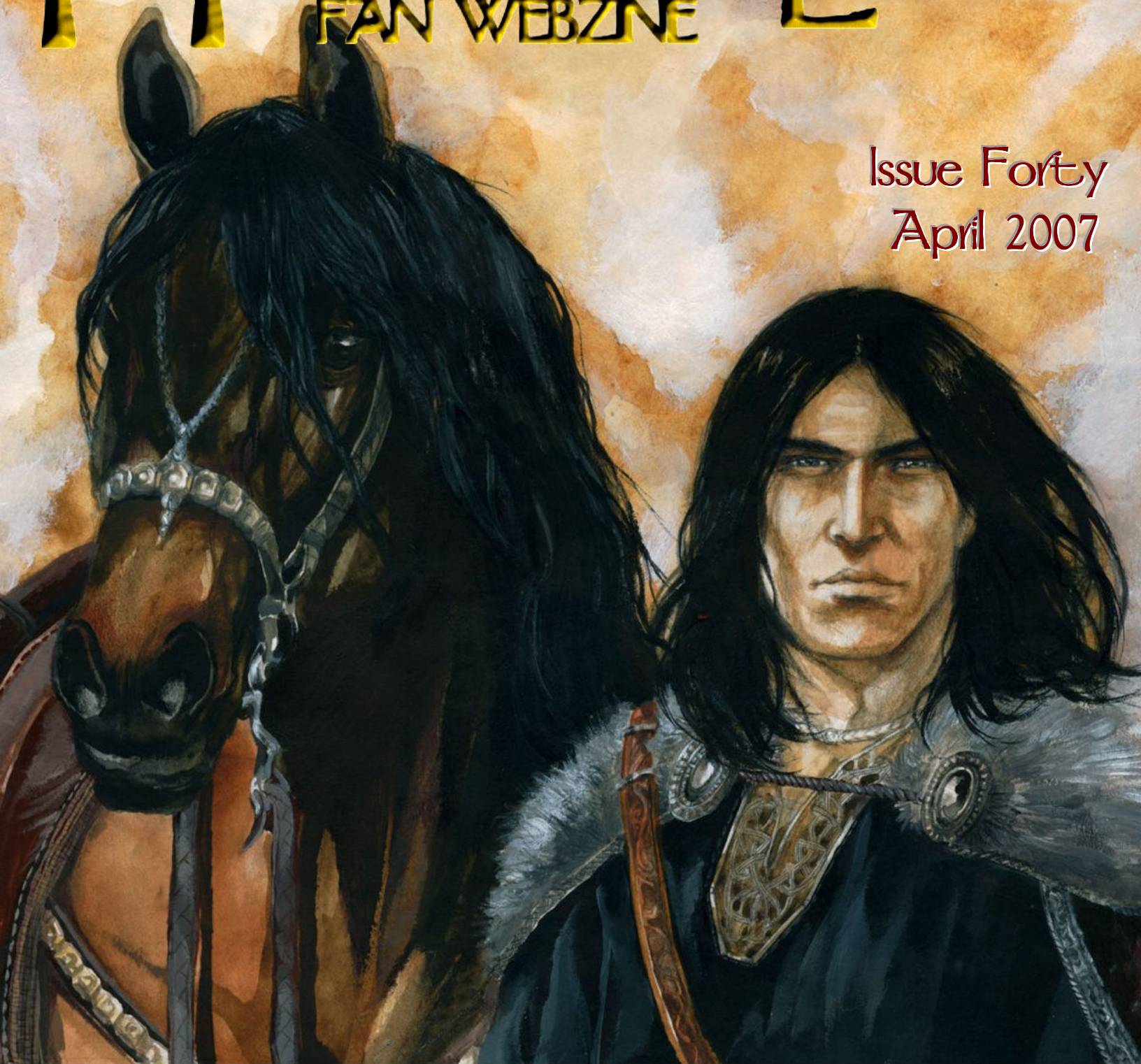


THE HALL OF FIRE

FAN WEBZINE

Issue Forty
April 2007





GREETINGS,

Salutations... Hello All!

Just when Tolkien couldn't feel more dead, his son Christopher comes through for us hard core fans. Earlier this week, *The Children of Hurin* was released. This book is based upon the lives of Hurin and his children, Turin and Nienor. From most all accounts, this book is well worth the time and money to invest. Though this announcement isn't closely gaming related, I thought its significance bears some mentioning.

Now to #40... only a few more to go, but I'm still having fun! This month we've got some things you haven't seen in awhile and some brand new things: the first in a series of A Narrator's So-Called Life about developing a chronicle, some info on the Petty-dwarves (the same sad creatures featured in *The Children of Hurin*), new racial profiles for PC's, plus a whole lot more!

Happy Gaming to all!

Matthew Kearns
aka GandalfOfBorg
Editor

THE MRKKK:R:R:R:R:R:R:R:R:R HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

IN THIS ISSUE

A NARRATOR'S SO-CALLED LIFE	2
• Developing a Chronicle	
FAN FLAVOUR	5
• Of the Noegyth Nibin	
• The Petty-Dwarves (Noegyth Nibin)	
• New Packages	
• Club of Bullroarer	
• Ents	
ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES	13
• Mordirachas (Elf of Dark Despair)	
• Gazhur	
• Maudush	
FIELD GUIDE TO CREATURES OF M-E	15
• Equines: Horses, Ponies and Mearas	
ART CREDITS	19
CALLING ALL GAMERS / CREDITS	20



CONTACT THE HALL OF FIRE AT:
CODAWEBZINE@HOTMAIL.COM

CREW

MATTHEW KEARNS (GANDALOFBORG), EDITOR, WRITER
ultimac@hotmail.com

PETER MERRYMAN, ARTIST

DAVID D. (ISSACHAR), WRITER, PROOFREADER, LAYOUT
issachar44@yahoo.com

This is an unofficial fan webzine created for players of Decipher's *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* and the world of Middle-earth created by J.R.R. Tolkien. There is no affiliation between the creators of this webzine and Decipher, Tolkien Enterprises, or any other related corporation. All material is either direct from Tolkien sources, Decipher, opinion, or has been created for the said purpose of roleplaying in the world of Middle-earth. Some images are used herein for the purpose of adding flare to the webzine, but are owned by varied sources mentioned in the Credits on the last page. THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT FOR RETAIL SALE AND INDIVIDUALS MAY PHOTOCOPY AND PRINT FOR THEIR PERSONAL USE.

A NARRATOR'S SO-CALLED LIFE: DEVELOPING A CHRONICLE

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

This is the first in a short series of articles aimed at helping a Narrator out with developing through ending a game for The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game. Suggestions and advice come from running and playing successful and unsuccessful games along with input from other gamers. To start things off with, let's get a game going.

1. You have an interest in roleplaying games. Check!
2. You have friends with an interest in roleplaying games. Check!
3. You have an interest in running a game in world of Tolkien and you're pitching the idea to your friends. Check!

So what's next?

There are a number of factors that go into creating a chronicle for a Narrator to consider. The following are most prominent in my mind, but there are probably others that I am missing that you might find more important than these.

FOCUS

First, when I create a chronicle I look what I want to be my primary focus of the chronicle. I look at Focus as kind of a sliding scale with Story at one end and Character at the other. The reason for the sliding scale as you can always add chapters that can be oriented towards developing the story, investing time to develop characters and their background, or a mixture of both.

When I create long-term games, my style lends more towards Story-centric while attempting to intertwine the characters personally into the central story or at least have background arcs focussing on the characters.

CHARACTER-CENTRIC

Using player background and traits as fodder for adventure.

STORY-CENTRIC

Using an underlying plot that the characters interact with while maybe incorporating aspects of the characters themselves into the story.

Besides what you decide, listen to what your players want to see in the game as well. If you are doing a combat-intensive game, those characters who don't show much prowess in fighting may be turned off to the game and vice versa. Do your best to cater a little bit to everyone, but don't go overboard.

CHRONICLE'S PARAMETERS

Next comes more of the crunchy bits that frame your story or character-driven drama. The parameters of the chronicle help both the Narrator determine what's in and what's out, but inform the players as to what the constraints on the game will be.

AGE OF MIDDLE-EARTH

Prior to the First Age: During this time, the world is shaped and Eldar are brought into the world. There is some opportunity for adventure such as during the migration to Valinor, but it might best serve as some story or character origin information.

First Age: Morgoth and Ungoliant destroyed the Trees, stole the Silmarils and set in motion the strife that belabors the world unto this day. The Kin-slaying occurs at Alqualonde, the Noldor cross over to Middle-earth from Valinor, the Eldar and eventually Men make war upon Angband, and the age ends with the sinking of Beleriand and the rise of Numenor.

Second Age: The Golden Age of Men. The sea-faring kingdom explores Middle-earth far and wide and develop great amounts of deep lore, which will soon be lost in the sinking of the isle. War is made upon Sauron, former lieutenant of Morgoth and he is captured. When Numenor is sunk, he barely escapes. The end of the Age occurs at the end of The Last Alliance when Elendil and Gil-galad are lost while dueling Sauron and The One Ring is cut from the hand of the Dark Lord by Isildur.

Third Age: This Age is marked by the decline of the kingdoms of all Free Peoples: elves begin massive migrations to the coast to catch ships bound for Valinor, never to return to Middle-earth, dwarves seclude themselves in their kingdoms while battling against wyrms and orcs, and the kingdoms of Men dwindle in strength as the age-old shadow of Sauron gains strength over time. The Dark Lord appears once again towards the end of the age and the age culminates with the final destruction of Sauron and The One Ring, the crowning of the king of Reunited Kingdom, and the passing of the Ringbearers into the Uttermost West.

Fourth Age: Known lore focuses on the reigns of Elessar and Eomer and gradually into the reign of their sons. Eventually a new dark power arises, though much is unknown about it.



LANDS

Eriador: Eregion, Dunland, The Shire, Rivendell, Lindon, Arnor and its child realms Cardolan, Arthedain, and Rhudaur, Angmar, The Northern Wastes, and the sparsely inhabited lands of Minhiriath and Enedwaith.

Rhovanion: Dale, The Lonely Mountain, Iron Hills, The Woodland-realm, Anduin Values and Carrock, Rhosgobel, and Lothlorien, Mirkwood

Gondor, Rohan: Provinces of Gondor, Rohan, Fangorn Forest, Dead Marshes, White Mountains, Harondor

Numenor

Beleriand: Doriath, Gondolin, Angband, Nargothrond, Ossiriand, Belegost and Nogrod

Rhun: Khand, Dorwinion

Harad (The South)

Mordor

RACES ALLOWED

The story focus, age, and lands can determine how a Narrator chooses which races are appropriate as PC's in the game. If a story is centered around The Shire, Elf, Man, or Dwarf characters are probably not advisable to be allowed unless under extreme circumstances with the Narrator and possibly other players agreeing.

ADDITIONAL ADVANCEMENTS

A few advancements (2-3) to start off with can help characters be a little more customized and competent in some areas while quite a few (5+, and really above 7) can make characters quite powerful, so a Narrator should be quite familiar with both the rules and have a mature game focus to the game to start with otherwise issues will creep up.

SUPPLEMENTS ALLOWED

Supplements are great for fostering ideas for characters, stories, side adventures, new and corrected rules, and extra character features. A Narrator should review the supplemental material that players may be interested in before allowing anything new into the game.

RULES INCORPORATED AND HOUSE RULES

The Hall of Fire, Decipher messageboards, and even official supplements offer up ideas for supplemental and house rules that address areas in the rules that others don't think quite work for them. I would suggest running the game out of the book for awhile before implementing any changes that you've devised or read about somewhere to make sure you are comfortable with changing them.



RESEARCH

All of the suggestions given below I believe are top-notch resources for researching backgrounds, plots, and general information about people and places in Tolkien's world.

• The Encyclopedia of Arda	The best resource anywhere for quickly finding information on all sorts of topics. http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.asp
• <i>Silmarillion</i> and <i>Histories</i>	Read these for more in-depth information in preparation of the games played up through the 2nd Age.
• <i>The Children of Hurin</i>	
• <i>The Hobbit</i>	The best sources for northwestern Middle-earth during the last 100 years of the 3rd Age.
• <i>The Lord of the Rings</i>	
• Appendices (in back of <i>The Return of the King</i>)	A great source for info for the rest of the 3rd Age and for other regions of Middle-earth during the time of the War of the Ring and on into the 4th Age.
• Online Resources	Published and prior licensed games and supplemental sources: The Hall of Fire, Decipher Messageboards, MERP

KNOWLEDGE OF SETTING AND SYSTEM: NARRATOR VS. THE LAWYERS

Be clear, be consistent, be fair. Lay down ground rules that all will abide by when the Narrator invariably contradicts setting canon or a situation occurs where there is no clear rule on how to address it. Suggestions to help mitigate these occurrences are to set the game in little known periods of time and regions with sparse detail along with keeping appearances of big name characters to a minimum.

Out of all phases of a game, the initial player buy-in and chronicle outline to me are the most difficult and time consuming. Ultimately I also feel it is one of the most rewarding as I can always find interesting bits of lore I missed previously or rediscover something that captured my imagination before.



FAN FLAVOUR

OF THE NOEGYTH NIBIN¹

by Jens Peters (lofar@qmx.de)

23. Narvinyë 1852 3.Z

It was miserably cold in the dark, dank cavern deep deep down beneath the earth. But strangest above all was the fact that it was entirely still. No noise whatsoever could be heard, not even the dripping of water, which surely must be there. The young prince shivered: "Why did you take me here, makar Lofar? There can't be anything interesting down here. Any riches."

Deep silence. Then the makar's voice encompassed the whole cavern, slow, sonorous, rumbling, like the tectonic plates moving even deeper down: "No, here is nothing. Nothing but your own wisdom." A curt smile. "And mine, of course..."



Nain, twenty year old son and heir of Durin VI, King of Khazad-dûm and all the Longbeards, high overlord of all Dwarves, sixth incarnation of Durin the Deathless, let his bump fall unceremoniously upon a pile of loose stones. "Why do I still have to go through these lessons? I'm sorry old chap, but your stories don't even interest me. You never tell me anything about gold, or wars, or the glories of my forefathers."

"You have others who do that most eagerly." His old teacher sat carefully down beside him, but only after having taken up one of the stones and examining it closely. "That is one of the reasons I took you here. Learn to listen to your heart, young Nain."

"I do! And what it tells me is to get going, to take a bunch of stout warriors and craftsman, and set up my own domain. Or to take them down into the deepest mines, where no one before me has gone!"

By now an angry red glow had appeared in the otherwise jet-black eyes of Lofar. "Fool! I'm not telling you to follow each whim! Think boy, think! When you are told to obey your parents, do you listen to every stray remark they utter, maybe laden with sleep or trouble or anger? Of course not. You think about it.

And now let me give you something to think upon deeply. Another story, yes. One that will teach you – if you are to be taught. So listen. What you will now here is a tale of shame. The greatest shame of all Dwarves, even greater than the slaying of King Thingol or the closing of the doors of Khazad-dûm in our Noldorin allies' hour of need. A shame – and a guilt – that goes deeper, that penetrates our very being. It is something we never tell outsiders. One of the great secrets of our race. Have you ever heard about the Petty-dwarves?"

"Yes, vaguely. Some mythical Dwarves of corrupted heart and bent stature. Either they died out in the Elder Days, or they never lived at all. An old tale to scare children."

"So do you think. Now pay attention."



It was in the days of Durin the Deathless, only shortly after the awakening of the Dwarves. The Ancient had already met the other fathers, and had started to gather his own following. He had even found himself a wife, young and fair Már, one of the seven daughters of reclusive King Sindri. Now, Már bore Durin a son, strong and fair and like an image of his father, and the Deathless' heart was at ease.

But when his son, Ónar the Bright-eyed had reached 20 years of age – just as you have now – he grew restless. Not content with the number of people his folk counted, he went to his father and complained: "Great King and father! Why have you been idle these last years, when you should have been gathering souls to follow your lead? Our folk is too few in numbers to achieve the greatest works, hoard the largest wealth."

¹ This work is based on information gleaned from some MERP modules (Raiders of Cardolan and Arnor), The Silmarillion, and The Unfinished Tales.

"Learn to wait, son and heir", the King answered, "for ever the growth of our people has been slow. You and I, we will live long, long enough to see our dreams come true, if we are patient. But your restlessness casts a shadow on my mind. Talk never again about these things, I tell you, or evil will befall you!"

Ónar went away, filled with anger both at the shackles of his ambition and at his humiliation, for they had conversed openly before the other Dwarves present, and those had laughed at his impetuosity. So he left the halls of his father at Gundazbad and started wandering under the stars. After six long days where he went heedless of perils and direction, he met upon a stranger. It was another Dwarf, as it seemed, with hair and beard like fire, glowing in the dark. Ónar stopped in astonishment. "Who are you?"

The stranger answered in a pleasant and musky voice: "Call me Fangli, the Fire-hearted. I've come to help you, for I know of your plight and your desires. And what you are longing for is only your due, after all, isn't it? I can help you to achieve it."

Immediately, Ónar was enthralled. "You speak rightly. Why shouldn't I do what I believe as best, as prince of the highest house of all Dwarves? Show me the way!"

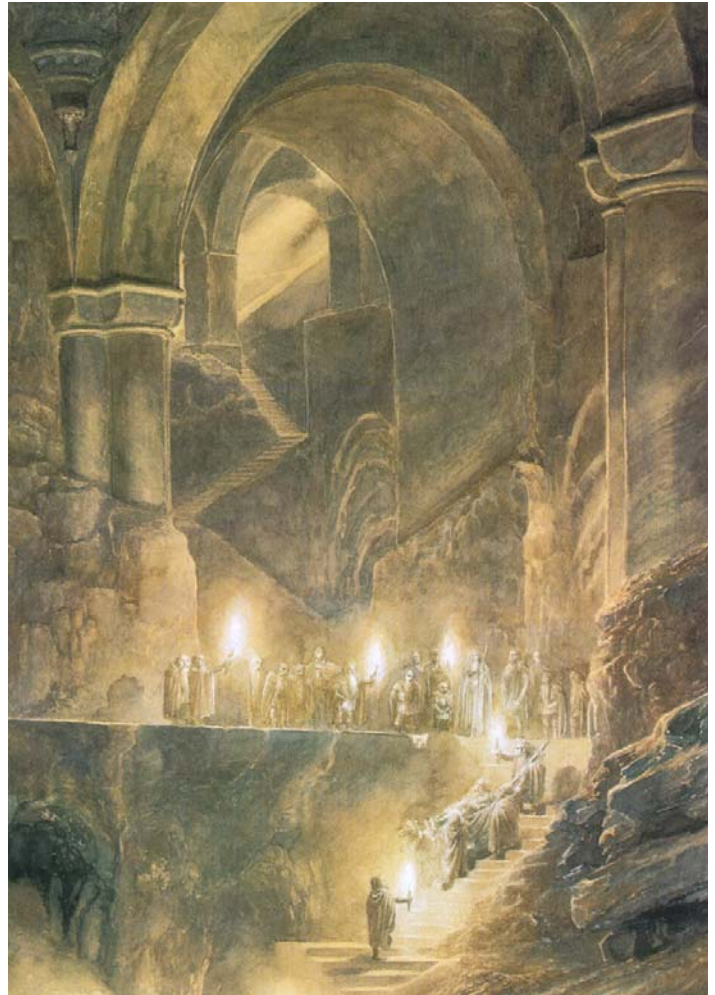
Fangli smiled, and Ónar's heart grew warm: "Just take me to the next gathering of the Kindreds. Until then, I will teach you many things that are hidden, the lore of fire and rock, and you and your chosen ones shall profit from my knowledge. Than will be the promise that will create you a community of the eager and valiant, for you to rule as you wish."

At this, Ónar was glad, and he took Fangli to a newly discovered cavern under a twisted hill, and there they made their abode, and Ónar learned willingly until it was time to meet the Kindreds.



Now as it was customary in these ancient times, all seven tribes of the Dwarves had assembled in the halls of mount Gundazbad, trading, mingling and marrying freely. When Ónar arrived, his father was glad, but his new friend troubled him – he did not trust that Fangli, when went about with a smile a bit too warm, a voice a bit too kindling.

So, when Fangli offered his knowledge to Durin and the other Dwarf-kings, "for surely you will not reject your son's dearest friend when he is offering wisdom beyond all measure", the Deathless replied: "None of us knows everything, except Mahal, and that is good. For the soul of a true Dwarf delights in toils well completed, and it is his striving for knowledge that gives him life and purpose. I rather trust the little wisdom and skill I have won with my own hands and mind, than empty promises offered by a stranger, who doesn't even seem to belong to any of the Great Houses!" And the other Dwarf-lords nodded in reply, for none of them recognised Fangli as their kin.



But Ónar's anger at this was fiery-red and he shouted: "If you do not accept my friend as kin, and reject his knowledge freely given, I shall be no son of yours anymore. I will found my own tribe, and Fangli will be its first member."

Then the two of them left the royal halls; but they did not leave Gundazbad entirely. For they went about in disguise, whispering in the ears of many a Dwarf, and thus gathered a following from all the tribes. When King Durin found this out, he sent his wife Már: "Talk you to your son, since he has stopped his ears against the advice of his lord and father."

And Már found her son, in the midst of his new supporters, with the ever-smiling Fangli at his side. "Ónar-khâz, why do you bring misery upon my life in this way? I suffer under the split between you and your father. Amend what has been broken, and I am sure, Durin, the just, will give you a recompense beyond count." When he heard this, Ónar began to waver, since any Dwarf listens most closely to the advice of his mother.

But Fangli whispered in his ear: "See now, even your own mother has been bent and broken by your father, she who has been proud and independent. Let not the same happen to you!"

And Ónar hardened himself and whispered: "As I have denied my father, so shall I deny you – I have been orphaned in a day, and am now Ónar the Fatherless, and a King in my own right."

"This is blasphemy", his mother gasped, "you know that. Only the Oldest are fatherless, made by Mahal himself. Surely, you cannot claim the same!"

"I do not need Mahal to make me, since I will be greater than even him soon enough." Ónar now exclaimed proudly. "And now: get out of my way."

With that, he pushed his mother aside with such force and malice that, she fell, hitting her head against a rock, and died. Many of the Dwarves who had witnessed the incident were aghast, and turned against Ónar, naming him "mother-slayer" and "faithless". But some stood beside him, and, incited by Fangli, they soon started to attack their opponents. They slew many, and made their way to the gates of the mountain.



Thus befell the first killing of Dwarves by Dwarves, a most terrible deed, which left our fate changed. But the murderers did not escape unpunished, for Durin the Deathless and his guard came after them out of the gate and brought them to a halt.

Then the King spoke. "I will not kill you, worm, for you have not deserved to gain access to the Halls of Mahal, whom you have denied, nor shall you, Ónar, be reunited with your mother, whom I must lack. And any other Dwarf who will kill one of you shall be thrice damned! Instead, I curse thee, and all who have furthered your course: Yes, you shall be King, and you shall have your own people. But Dwarves shall ye be no more! You will diminish in stature, and lose all the skills you have, so that you will not be able to live again in a great mansion under the mountain, but will wander the wilds and lurk in caves! And you especially, Ónar the Faithless, shall get what you deserve. Since you claimed to surpass even me, deathless like me you shall become. But whereas I shall live long and die content and be reborn in a strong son, your existence shall drag on until the end of time, until the years feel like mountains on your shoulders. Than you shall see the power of Mahal the Maker!"

All the Dwarves of Ónar's following were afraid now. For the first time, they realised the doom they had laden on themselves, and they cursed their adversaries, but above all themselves and the whisperings of Fangli. To this one Durin turned at last: "But you, Fangli, I cannot outcast of Dwarven-kind, since you never belonged to it in the first place! Show your real face now, demon." And he struck him with his mighty axe, causing him a great wound.

But Fangli did not die. Rather the wound burst into flames, which consumed his Dwarven appearance, and out of the burning corpse burst a shape much greater and terrible beyond reckoning. It was wreathed in flames, and had shadowy wings, and laughter mad with triumph.

"You old fool! You have fallen into the traps of Melkor the Great, Lord of Arda, to whom I will return now. But do not think that I will forget your rejection, nor the wound you have dealt me. I will return to you, and when your line falls prey to the greed and fraction I have sown, I will repay you a thousand times. Then call me as I have already proven myself to be: Durin's Bane!"



Then the demon spread his wings and flew away, northwards. And Ónar and his people fled in terror before the evil they had brought amongst their race, and went westwards into Beleriand, where they became known as the Noegyth Nibin, the Petty-Dwarves, because Durin's Curse took effect indeed, and soon they had all lost their ability to work metal or stone, and their craftsmanship declined, and they were hunted like animals by the Elves until the coming of the Dwarves. But after this event, Durin took another wife from his own tribe, and to prevent a further split of the Kindreds, the Bonds of Blood were sworn in Mount Gundazbad – the sacred oath that holds all our people together even today."





he silence in the cave was now nearly palpable: thick as a fungus that slowly but steadily presses on your body until it becomes unbearable. Prince Nain tried to smile. "I know why you told me this, makar. Don't take me for a fool. It is a parable, a tale cautioning me against rash behaviour. I think you have achieved your trick – for now. But tell me, what do you make of the Petty-dwarves fate after they came to Beleriand? I think I heard that they died out."

Lofar looked deeply into the young lad's eyes, and what he saw made him uncomfortable: a faint glow, but not friendly; more like a ravishing fire buried deeply somewhere, with a shadow cast over it. He cast aside these thoughts, laughing about himself. "Been caught by my own story, it seems," he thought, and turned to the Prince.



ou have probably heard the story of Mîm, who claimed to be the last of the Petty-dwarves after he was separated from his son Ibun when being captured by Orcs. But, as so often, that old miserable creature was wrong. Ibun managed to escape, and followed the tracks of his father to the halls of Nulukhizdîn, or Nargothrond as the Elves called it. But he found only his corpse, since Hurin's father had slain him, avenging the treachery Mîm had perpetrated at Turin.

Therefore, Ibun gathered as much of the treasure as he could carry, and travelled to the halls of his mother. Together with her folk, she lived in the south of Beleriand, far away from the old habitation of her folk in the higher lands between Sirion and Narog. After they had been hunted by the Elves in that region, most Noegyth Nibin found it wise to abandon their halls at Nulukhizdîn and Sharbhund, and went south. Only Mîm and his sons, and some other few Petty-dwarves stayed, and they died out soon, except one.

Ibun found his mother's kin, and – being in the possession of truly royal riches, he persuaded more than half of them to go back east into the lands from whence they originally came. And they followed Ibun and came to dwell in the deep woods of Eryn Vorn. They only entered into the histories of the West once again, when they hired mercenaries to abduct Dwarven women for them. For their number was dwindling by then, and they wanted to reinvigorate their blood. But the ruffians instead took some female Halflings captive, thinking them to be an easier prey. However, Marcho, one of the Hobbit leaders, was able to rescue these women. Some claim that this has been the source of the strange allusions to jungle and moor in the poetry of the Hobbits.



The rest of the surviving Petty-dwarves remained in the South of Beleriand until the land sank. Then they went back into Eriador, but took refuge in the halls where their master had first received instruction, a place that is now called Cameth Brin. Whether any of these are still alive I do not know. But it has been said that Durin's Curse did take full effect, and left the Petty-dwarves susceptible to the state of undead, whether naturally or through the vile sorceries of Necromancy.

I have heard as well that his son never died. Not having the eternal youth of the Elves either, he withered constantly, until he was nothing more than a shadow and a corpse. Probably he was taken to Cameth Brin, but it is doubtful if he is still there. But no matter where Ónar is, it has been prophesied that one day he will repent, and lead what has been left of his kindred back. And the Dwarves will have learned as well, learned to forgive and forget. And when that time has come, Ónar will regain his strength, take up his heritage as Durin's son, and rule as Durin VII and Last."



ofar said no more. Nain had become pensive. "I will think about your little story, makar. That, I promise you. But tell me: is it really true?"

"That is for you to decide." Lofar grinned maliciously. "Maybe it is just a parable, showing us that all Dwarves who show such petty behaviour as cruelty, pride, and overreaching will be punished one way or another. Or maybe it teaches us that wishes might become true in fashions unlooked for. But every myth has a grain of truth hidden in it."

THE PETTY-DWARVES (NOEGYTH NIBIN) by Jens Peters (lofar@qmx.de)

The Petty-dwarves are a stunted people; being smaller than their Dwarven kin, they only measure about four foot on average, sporting a large, unsightly head as well as heavily bowed shoulders upon a weak and withered frame. They have lost most of the secrets of smithcraft for which their brethren are renowned, and are also less strong, but their careful hands can still do great things with stone, if given the proper time. Their long life in the wild has taught them more about nature than any 'normal' Dwarf would know. They are wise in the lore of plants, and have retained the ability to see with but little light. Having been hunted like animals, they are also very stealthy. They speak a bastardized form of Khuzdûl, which they don't hide any more than any other part of their lives – a further reason why the proper Dwarves look down on them.

Noegyth Nibin have a diminished life-span. They are considered adults at the age of 30 (a remnant of their days as real Dwarves), but only live about 100 years in total.



NATURE

The Petty-dwarves are very proud and unsociable, rarely communicating outside their own kind. Dwarves they both shun and admire, since they are a constant reminder of what they have been. But the Elves have acquired their special hatred. Most of the Noegyth pursue evil ways, like their ancestors, but since they remain part of the Free People, it is their own choice whether to lead good or bad lives. Some Noegyth Nibin have been known to repent, and to work for a better future for their kin. Like dwarves, they do not forget easily, and especially remember the wrongs done unto them.

LANDS AND LORE

Petty-dwarves still prefer the underground dwelling their race was made for. But rarely do their halls display such splendour as a dwarvish mansion. Nonetheless, their habitations are cunningly hidden before intrusive eyes, and their interior is serviceable. The two remaining settlements in Western Middle-earth are in the Eryn Vorn and in the area around Cameth Brin. The jungles of the Rast Vorn have effectively hidden the Noegyth Nibin from the attention of other races. Lead their by Ibun himself, they have delved a mansion they called Bar-en-Ibun. Soon after their arrival, the Petty-dwarves enslaved some of the local population to work on their fields, while they themselves dedicated their lives to the honing of their meagre skills, and to the treasure they brought from plundered Nulukhizdîn. In handling the jewels from Valinor, they acquired capacities that rivalled that of the Earth-readers of Sindri's tribe. Their number is dwindling however, and so they are obsessed with death and with the preservation of their bodies. The Ibunites also lack the spiritual possibilities possessed by the guardians of Ónar – they are a more barbaric people. They have lost contact to the other Petty-dwarves, and thus one of their main goals is to find again what remains of Ónar, their chief.

After the split at the end of the Second Age, the smaller group of Petty-dwarves decided not to go with Ibun. Instead, they listened to the whispering of Ónar, whose appointed guardians they became, and went back to Cameth Brin, that place where Ónar studied under Fangli. Under the Twisted Hill, they founded a kingdom and studied deeply the lores of alchemy and necromancy, until most of them had fallen under the shadow. With the arrival of the Dunedain, they were forced to leave their tunnel-mazes. But the Noegyth Nibin did not disappear. Instead, they remained nearby, in small caves and abandoned forts, ever waiting for a return to their holy place. For one thing the Dunedain never discovered: in the depth of Cameth Brin, there still lay Ónar the Undying and Tormented, alone, but trying to gather his people by sending them dreams and omens. In contrast to the Ibunites the Guardians of Ónar are not so woodcrafty, but have preserved the greater lore and wisdom.

Any tribe still existent is ruled by one of the few females, who were able, due to their integrity for the races survival and their skill with herbs and beasts to acquire a uniquely central role. Most of these matriarchs lay claim to some famous ancestor, such as Ibun or even Ónar himself. They live in utter seclusion, only interacting with other races of necessary. Depending on their ways, some tribes hold human slaves to work their fields, while others live in small self-supportive family units scattered far from each other.

SPEECH

Most Noegyth speak a bastardized form of Khuzdul they name Khôsd. Their open use of this language is a further reason for 'proper' dwarves to abhor them. In order to communicate with other people, most have learned at least one mannish language, be it the language of the Hillman or of the wild Beffraen. Only a few speak Westron.

NAMES

Most of them adhere to Dwarvish tradition, though some of the names use a debased form.

PETTY-DWARVES OF RENOWN

Ónar is undoubtedly infamous among the Dwarves, and either revered or hated by his own people. He must be still alive, but where his dwelling is, none can say. Only Mím and his sons Khim and Ibun have entered the histories of the West, and their names are held high by the Petty-dwarves themselves. Especially Ibun is seen as a sort of founding father, rescuing the remaining Noegyth and leading them to a new life. Another Petty-dwarf whose name has been rumoured is Miffli, last lord of Armoq-al-Wanu, the Twisted Hill, now supposedly undead.

FAVOURED ORDERS/ADVENTURES

Barbarian, craftsman, rogue. Even though they lack the skill of their kinsmen, Petty-dwarves still seek to distinguish themselves as smiths. However, they show real proficiency as miners and builders. Nonetheless, they show most aptitude in the survival in wilderness. Some matriarchs may be loremasters, even with magic-like abilities.



PETTY-DWARF CHARACTERS

ADJUSTMENTS: +1 Nimbleness, +1 Vitality, -1 Bearing

SKILLS AND TRAITS: For a Petty-dwarf character, make six picks from the following skills and traits lists to begin the game. The character must also fulfil any requisites or limitations listed here. You can choose an additional trait by selecting one of the listed flaws too.

Skills: Appraise, Climb, Conceal, Craft, Guise, Lore, Mimicry, Observe, Ranged Combat, Search, Stealth, Stonecraft, Survival, Track, Weather Sense

Requisites: All Petty-dwarves must have at least one level in any Craft skill, and one level in one wilderness-based skill. These come from your picks normally. They are not free.

Edges: Charmed Life (side-effect of Durin's Curse), Curious, Dodge, Furtive, Hardy, Indomitable, Keen-eyed, Wary, Woodcrafty

Flaws: Arrogant, Craven, Dull-eared, Dull-eyed, Enemy (Dwarves), Grasping, Hatred (Elves), Proud, Slow Recovery, Stiff-necked, Weak-willed, Cultural Conflict (Dwarves, but malus is -6), Dark Heart, Fearful, Outcast, Wide of Girth

ABILITIES: Noegyth Nibin have the following abilities:

Durin's Curse: Even though every real Dwarf abhors the sight of a Noegyth, they are banned by the decree of their highest king from killing them. Another effect of the Curse is a higher susceptibility to becoming undead.

Whispering Ancestors: Since the soul of every Petty-dwarf remains within Arda, their descendants have learned how to communicate with them. It is a complicated ritual, needing both a moonless night as well as the right paraphernalia. Before the summoning, one has to specify which ancestor one desires to call; the right choice can be made via a TN 12 check on Lore/History: Petty-dwarves. Like a spell, the summoning is draining: make a Willpower roll against TN 15 to avoid losing Weariness levels. However, once successful, the results are powerful indeed. The ancestor can tell much about the past (Lore/History: appropriate skill +5) and can even teach some of his skills to his descendant (only theoretical aspects: refer to Teaching rules in POTW).

Memory of the Wronged: When trying to remember a fact related to suffered injury, either to themselves or your people, they receive +3.

Stunted People: Petty-dwarves are ugly and badly proportioned, thus receiving a -4 to Persuade (Charm) when talking to other races.

Small Folk: Lacking dwarven stoutness, Noegyth are considered Small. They only have four Wound Levels.

Hunted like Animals: From hard experience, Petty-dwarves have learned how to avoid being seen. They receive a +2 bonus on Hide and Stealth.

Secretive: Petty-dwarves may add their Wits modifier to all Willpower tests related to keeping their secrets. Moreover, they gain +2 to Conceal. You may chose the Loremaster order ability in addition to this.

Lore of the Brown Earth: What dwarves know about stone, Petty-dwarves know about earth. They know where to find nourishing roots and useful herbs. If looking for food, they gain a +4 to Survival (except on water).

Night-eyed: All Noegyth Nibin have the edge Night-eyed 1.

NEW PACKAGES

by Jens Peters (lofar@qmx.de)

PETTY-DWARF RACIAL PACKAGES

Ibunite (Petty-dwarf of the Eryn Vorn): Mimicry +1, Observe+1, Ranged Combat+1, Stealth+1, Survival (Woods and Jungle) +1; Woodcrafty, Hatred (Drueidain)

Guardians of Ónar (Rhudaurean Petty-dwarf): Appraise +1, Lore +1, Stealth +1, Stonecraft +1, Survival (Hills) +1, Curious

PETTY-DWARF ORDER PACKAGES

BARBARIAN PACKAGE

NOEGYTH NIBIN HUNTER

Order Skills: Craft (Woodcarving) +1, Mimicry +1, Observe +2, Ranged Combat +2, Run +2, Stealth +3, Survival +2, Track +2

Pick 5 Bonuses: +1 to any order skill

Pick 1 Edge: Hardy, Keen-eyed, Swift Recovery, Tireless, Woodcrafty

CRAFTSMAN PACKAGE

NOEGYTH NIBIN STONE-CARVER

Order Skills: Appraise +3, Conceal +2, any appropriate Craft +2, Lore/Wilderness: Prospector +2, Lore/Materials: Stones +2, Smithcraft +1, Stonecraft +3

Pick 5 Bonuses: +1 to any skill

Pick 1 Edge: Craftmaster (but without the +2 bonus for Smithcraft), Doughty, Hardy, Hoard

LOREMASTER PACKAGE

NOEGYTH NIBIN WISEWOMAN

Order Skills: Appraise +1, Craft +1, Healing +1, Lore/History: Petty Dwarves +3, Lore/History: Treasures +3, Lore/Race: Dwarves +2, Observe +2, Weather-sense +2

Pick 5 Bonuses: +1 to any skill

Pick 1 Edge: Curious, Healing Hands, Keen-eyed, Strong-willed, Wise

CLUB OF BULLROARER by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

This is the favored weapon of the largest Hobbit in history, one known to easily ride upon a full-grown pony. It's an heirloom that has been passed down generation after generation, but it has never been wielded again for no Hobbit since has been able to do so. It is now on display at the Mathom House in Michel Delving.

GOBLIN-BANE: This club grants a +5 bonus to attack versus or-kind. This bonus is only usable if wielded by a Hobbit.

MIGHTY: The club may only be wielded by a Hobbit with Strength 11 or greater.

RENOWN: 5; this club that was used to knock the head of a great goblin from its shoulders and send it sailing into a rabbit-hole many yards away.



ENTS

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

ORIGINS AND NATURE: See Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic.

LANDS: Fangorn Forest, formerly all the forests of Middle-earth

SPEECH: Entish, Quenya, Sindarin, Westron

NAMES: Names given in Entish are too long and difficult to pronounce, but when translated into a 'hasty' language they are similar to the last names of Hobbits and rustic men, taking after the type of tree they most closely represent or some personal trait with a plant-like twist: Treebeard, Quickbeam.

FAVOURERD ORDERS: Loremaster

RESTRICTIONS: Ents are limited to the following Orders: Barbarian, Loremaster, Minstrel, Noble, Warrior, Antiquarian, Captain, Master of the Wild, and Ranger

ADJUSTMENTS: +8 Strength, +6 Vitality

MOVEMENT RATE: 48



SKILLS AND TRAITS

SKILLS: Armed Combat, Craft, Debate, Healing, Insight, Intimidate, Language, Lore, Mimicry, Observe, Ranged Combat, Run, Stealth, Survival, Weather-sense

EDGES: Doughty, Fell-handed, Gift of Tongues, Hammerhand, Hardy, Indomitable, Night-eyed, Stern, Tireless, Travel-sense, Wakefulness, Wise, Woodcrafty, Woodwise

FLAWS: Duty, Forgetful, Hatred, Proud, Rustic, Stiff-necked, Tiresome, Unnerving Manner

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Armour (8), Natural Weapons (branches, 2d6), Root and Stone, Shroud, Trample (3d6), Vulnerability (fire), Vulnerability (axes)

RACIAL PACKAGES

There are no racial packages for Ents. Since it is stretching it to make Ents a racial template, it would be nigh impossible to do so for a Huorn as they are animated trees and are for the most part immobile.

ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

MORDIRACHAS (ELF OF DARK DESPAIR) by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

RACE, SUB-RACE: Elf, Noldor (Lothlorien)

RACIAL ABILITIES: The Art, Beast-skill, Comfort, Elven Form, Elven-sense, Elven-sleep, Farsightedness, Ghost-scorn, Lightfootedness, Swift Healing, Inner Light, Noldorin Lore

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 12 (+3)*, Perception 11 (+2)*, Nimbleness 11 (+2), Strength 7 (+1), Vitality 6 (+0), Wits 10 (+2)

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

ORDER: Magician (Student of the Secret Arts), Wizard, Loremaster, Artificer

ORDER ABILITIES: Ancient Scripts, Charm of Power (Defense), Enchanting Skill, Expertise (Spellcraft), Magician's Charm, Quick Caster, Sanctum, Sanctum Power, Spellcasting 4, Spell Specialty (Sorcery), Student of the Shadow, Weaving Sorcery, Wizard Spellcasting 4, Wizardly Power

ADVANCEMENTS: 41

SPELLS: Blast of Sorcery, Bladeshattering, Blinding Flash (40 ft), Call Fell Beasts, Cloak of Shadow, Command, Crafting-spell, Create Light, Display of Power, Enslave Beast, Evoke Fear, Holding-spell, Sense Power (ability), Shatter. Sheath of Ice, Spawn Wight, Spellbinding, Sundering, Veil, Voice of Command, Voice of Suasion, Vulnerability to Sorcery, Waste, Word of Command

SKILLS: Craft: Jewels +9, Debate (Parley) +6, Insight +6, Intimidate (Fear) +7, Language: Black Speech +6, Language: Quenya +6, Language: Sindarin +6, Language: Westron +6, Lore/Group: Nazgul (Rings of the Nine) +2, Lore/History: Elves (Craftsmen) +6, Lore/Race: Elves +6, Lore/Realm: Dol Guldur +3, Lore/Realm: Eregion (Ost-in-Edhil) +6, Lore/Realm: Lothlorien (East-realm) +6, Lore/Realm: Mordor (Barad-dur) +4, Lore/Realm: Umbar (Umbar city) +2, Lore/Spellcraft: Sorcery +12, Observe (Sense Power, Spot) +7, Persuade (Charm) +6

EDGES: Curious, Fair, Hardy, Honey-tongued, Swift Recovery, Tireless 2, Wise 2

FLAWS: Arrogant, Proud, Stiff-necked

HEALTH: 7 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 3

RENOWN: 15

DEFENCE: 12

GEAR: Palantir of Barad-dur, Duathmir

BACKGROUND

The Three Rings and their keepers have passed on beyond the bounds of Middle-earth and the beauty of the land, once stoic and unchanging in the care of the Eldar is evolving into something unknown to its long-lived caretakers. Middle-earth is now in the hands of Men as the few remaining Eldar seek out the swan-ships bound for Valinor. But one does not, he cannot for his pride and arrogance have caught him up in a vain attempt to re-establish the power and dominance of the Firstborn. He despairs both at leaving the lands he's known for millenia and the fate of the Eldar if they remain, the fading of both form and power. This defiance has caused him to seek out the dark arts of Man, learned from the ancient Dark Lords. Part of his defiance has led him to hinder the expansion of Man, both of friendly Dunedain and barbarians of the East. These acts he has taken have barred him from returning to Valinor in any shape or form, making his plight all the more sad. Those Eldar who do remain shun his existence and, if they can, set themselves to thwart his machinations with the time they have left.



GAZHUR

by David "Issachar" D.

RACE: Orc

RACIAL ABILITIES: Armour 1 (tough skin), Natural Weapons (claws, dmg 1), Curse of Daylight (-4 to physical tests in sunlight)

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 6 (+0), Nimbleness 10 (+2)*, Perception 8 (+1)*, Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 6 (+0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftnes s +2*, Willpower +0, Wisdo m +1

ORDERS: Rogue

ORDER ABILITIES: Breadth of Skill (acrobatics, climb, jump, legerdemain, run), Lurking in Shadows, Night's Ally, Vagabond (forest, swamp)

Note: See *Hall of Fire* issue 35 for descriptions of Rogue Order abilities not listed in the Core Book.

ADVANCEMENTS: 7

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Tumble) +3, Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword) +8, Climb +3, Conceal (Treasure) +1, Intimidate (Torture) +1, Jump +3, Language: Orkish +5, Language: Westron +4, Legerdemain (Open Lock) +3, Lore/Race: Orc (Orcs of Gundabad) +3, Lore/Race: Men (Men of Darkness) +2, Lore/Wilderness: Survival (Hunting) +4, Observe (Hear, Spot) +5, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Dagger) +5, Run +3, Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +5, Survival (Forest, Mountains, Swamp) +3, Track (Men) +1

EDGES: Dodge, Furtive, Night-Eyed 2, Quick-draw

FLAWS: Hatred (Elves)

HEALTH: 9 **DEFENCE:** 12 **COURAGE:** 1

GEAR: Leather armour, short sword, daggers (3), lockpicking tool, black cloak

BACKGROUND

Gazhur grew up wild in a time when the great powers of darkness were quiescent, and content to let Orcs and other would-be minions roam freely. He survived by stealth and cunning, and can often infiltrate settlements of the Free Peoples unnoticed.

He met Maudush in the wilderness and formed a partnership with the warrior Orc, whose strength Gazhur respects and uses. Together the pair has conducted skillful raids on Mannish towns throughout Wilderland, sometimes leading small bands of lesser Orcs and other times acting alone.

MAUDUSH

by David "Issachar" D.

RACE: Orc

RACIAL ABILITIES: Armour 1 (tough skin), Natural Weapons (claws, dmg 1), Curse of Daylight (-4 to physical tests in sunlight)

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 5 (+0), Nimbleness 9 (+1)*, Perception 6 (+0), Strength 10 (+2)*, Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 6 (+0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftnes s +2*, Willpower +0, Wisdo m +0

ORDERS: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion, Improved Combat Edges (Dodge, Warwise, Weapon Mastery), Swift Strike, Trained Foe-slayer

Note: See *Hall of Fire* issue 35 for descriptions of Warrior Order abilities not listed in the Core Book.

ADVANCEMENTS: 7

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Axes (Greataxe) +9, Climb +2, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Intimidate (Power) +4, Jump +2, Language: Orkish +5, Language: Westron +3, Language: Black Speech +3, Lore/Race: Orc (Orcs of Mordor) +2, Lore/Race: Men (Men of Darkness) +1, Lore/Wilderness: Survival (Hunting) +2, Observe (Spot) +3, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +6, Run +4, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +3, Survival (Mountains) +2, Track (Men) +2

EDGES: Dodge, Fell-handed 2 (all Men), Night-Eyed 2, Warwise, Weapon Mastery (Greataxe)

FLAWS: Hatred (Elves)

HEALTH: 11 **DEFENCE:** 11 **COURAGE:** 1

GEAR: Orcish chainmail, greataxe, battleaxe, shortbow, 20 arrows, black cloak

BACKGROUND

Maudush was the sole survivor of a warband of Orcs sent by the servants of Sauron to attack a group of traders, who turned out to be well-protected by mercenaries. Maudush never returned to his military service in Mordor, instead striking out on his own.

He met Gazhur in the wilds of Rhovanion and was impressed with the other's tales of a free life. Maudush has learned greater survival skills from his partner, but prefers to live by raiding traders and towns.

His prowess with the greataxe is fearsome, and he enjoys the challenge of single combat with a foe of obvious skill.

A FIELD GUIDE

TO THE CREATURES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

EQUINES: HORSES, PONIES AND MEARAS

by David "Issachar" D.

A note from Iss: It's been awhile (issue 18!) since the last *Field Guide* article. All the previous articles in the series were written by Josh "ReptileJK" Kapfer and are highly recommended reading. Josh's articles are some of the most complete and carefully researched work published in *The Hall of Fire* to date. He's set the bar high, and I don't expect to match his level of excellence. But hopefully you'll find this series on horses useful for the equestrian characters in your game.

OVERVIEW

Strong, noble and swift, horses and their kin have ever been friends to the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. Over the course of a chronicle, your characters are likely to ride, drive, and care for these animals many times. Some may come to be important and beloved members of your party, as Bill the Pony was to the Fellowship. This two-part article seeks to provide information on equine physiology and behavior that you can use in your game.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Horses are large quadrupeds, standing taller than most Men and Elves and typically weighing well over a thousand pounds. Their sleek, rounded bodies are carried on narrow but powerful legs. Their heads are elongated, with large eyes and nostrils, and ears located atop the crown. There is great variability of height, weight, coat color and other physical characteristics among different horse breeds.



Equine breeds are broadly classified as either horses or ponies. The overall size of the animal is most commonly used to draw this distinction (though there are also other factors). A horse's height is measured at the withers, the highest point on the horse's back, between its shoulder blades. Equines that measure five feet or taller at the withers are generally termed horses, while shorter equines are usually regarded as ponies.









Other characteristics of ponies that distinguish them from horses include thicker manes, tails, and overall coat, legs that are shorter in proportion to the animal's height, thicker bodies and necks, and shorter heads.

Mearas is an Old English word (the singular is *meath*) that Tolkien chose to designate a particular race of wild horses of exceptional strength, grace, longevity and intelligence. Though the source materials do not provide details on the physical size of the Mearas, one could reasonably assume that they stood a fair bit taller than the average horse. The Mearas are sometimes said to be the progenitors of domesticated horses.

Last of all the equines discussed in this article, the mule is a crossbreed, the result of mating a horse with a donkey. Large and strong, mules share the overall size and build of their horse parents. Their donkey heritage is visible in a shorter, thicker head, long ears, and short mane, as well as in the mule's patience, endurance and sure-footedness.

COAT COLOR

Horses' coats exhibit a variety of colors and patterns. The table below describes the most commonly occurring colors, and a few others.

Bays	From light reddish brown to dark brown with black mane, tail and lower legs.	
Dark bay	Very dark red or brown hair; sometimes called "black bay".	
Blood bay	Bright red hair; sometimes called simply "bay".	
Light bay	Lighter than a blood bay, but hairs still more red than gold.	
Chestnuts	Reddish body color with no black; mane and tail are the same shade or a lighter color than the body coat.	
Liver chestnut	Dark or very dark brown coat, sometimes simply called "brown".	
Sorrel	Reddish-tan to red coat; the most common shade of chestnut.	
Light chestnut	Lighter tan coat with a pale mane and tail, but not quite light enough to be considered a dun coat.	
Greys	Black skin under white or mixed dark & white hairs. Most "white" horses are greys with a fully white coat.	
Dapple grey	Dark coat with scattered rings of lighter, greying hairs called dapples.	
Fleabitten grey	White-haired coat with red hairs flecked throughout.	
Rose grey	Grey coat with a red or pink tinge.	
Other colors	The following colors occur less frequently than bay, chestnut or grey.	
Black	Most black coats will fade to a brownish color if the horse is exposed to sunlight on a regular basis. Other black coats are a blue-black shade that does not fade with exposure to sunlight.	
Brindle	Brown with faint yellowish markings in a somewhat striped or streaked pattern.	
Buckskin	A bay horse with yellow, cream or gold coat hairs but retaining a black mane, tail and lower legs.	
Cremello	A chestnut base coat that is washed out to a pale creme or light tan color.	
Dun	Yellowish or tan coat with a darker mane and tail, a stripe along the back, and sometimes faint horizontal striping on the upper legs. A "blue dun" is a black horse with a grey or silver coat and black or dark grey dun markings. A "red dun" is a chestnut horse with a pale yellow or tan coat, a red mane and tail, and dun striping.	
Leopard	A spotted or mottled coat that may be either dark spots on a white body or white spots on a dark body.	
Palomino	A chestnut horse with a gold, yellow or tan coat and a flaxen or white mane and tail.	
Pinto	A multi-colored horse with large areas of dark and white hairs, usually brown and white or black and white.	
Roan	White hairs evenly intermixed with the base coat color. Unlike grey coats, which gradually lighten with age, a roan coat does not change color over the horse's lifetime. A "red roan" is a chestnut horse with white hairs whose mane and tail are the same red as the body. A "bay roan" is a bay horse with white hairs whose mane and tail are black. A "blue roan" is a black horse with white hairs and typically a darker colored head.	
White	A true white horse has white hair over pink skin; this is a rare color.	

Beneath its coat, a horse's skin is black or dark brown, with areas of pink skin occurring on some animals. Some white-coated horses, though not all, have entirely pink skin. More commonly, a horse whose skin is predominantly dark may have patches of pink skin that underlie light-coloured markings on its coat. These often appear as white blazes along the front of the horse's face, white "socks" on the lower legs, and other irregular spots along the belly or flank.

As a foal (a horse below 2 or 3 years of age) matures into an adult, it sheds out its juvenile coat. The foal's coat color may be quite different than the coat that grows in to replace it, though more often it is only a lighter shade than the adult coat.

The coats of the Mearas may be any of the colors described in the table above, but colors that are rare in ordinary horses occur more commonly in the Mearas. In particular, true white horses (as opposed to greys with white coats) are common among Mearas.

Mules occur in all the same colors that horses do, but the majority of mules are bay, chestnut, grey and black.

OVERALL SIZE

The overall size parameters of different horses can be described in general terms.



Light horses are sleek and lithe, fast runners, especially when sprinting over short distances. They are prized as riding horses, and the larger horses in this group can also serve as steeds in battle, either bearing riders or drawing chariots and wagons.



Heavy horses are tall, thick-limbed and broad of girth. They are normally used as draft animals to pull wagons or ploughs. Some heavy horses are also trained for war, where they can bear fully armored knights in the thick of battle.



Ponies are not as long-limbed or fast as horses, and are normally used as pack animals. Small ponies can serve Hobbits as riding animals, as larger ponies sometimes serve Men, though a pony is better for slow, long distance travel than for running.



Mules can attain the same height and weight as all but the largest horses. Although their legs are strong and longer than those of ponies, mules are not useful for riding. Their placid, sometimes stubborn temperament makes them better suited as work animals.

Mearas resemble light horses in overall build, but attain heights and weights normally associated with heavy horses. They are the swiftest of all equines, with long, powerful and graceful strides. No mearas will consent to work as a draft or pack animal; few indeed will even bear a rider.

The following table provides typical heights and weights for different categories of equines. (As previously noted, the height of a horse is measured at the withers, the highest point on the animal's back, at the base of its neck between its shoulder blades.)

Equine Type	Typical Height	Typical Weight
Light horses	5 - 5.5 feet	900 - 1500 lbs
Heavy horses	5.5 - 6 feet	1500 - 2250 lbs
Ponies	4.25 - 5 feet	400 - 750 lbs
Mules	5 - 5.75 feet	1000 - 2000 lbs
Mearas	5.5 - 6.5 feet	1500 - 2000 lbs

GENERAL ANATOMY

The diagram at the bottom of this page provides labels for the parts of a horse that are visible externally. The following sections discuss selected organs in greater detail.

SENSORY ORGANS

A horse's senses are more acute than those of a Man, especially its vision and hearing, upon which the horse primarily depends.

The horse's large eyes capture enough light to allow the horse to see well by day or night, and their position on the sides of the head permit a very wide field of vision.

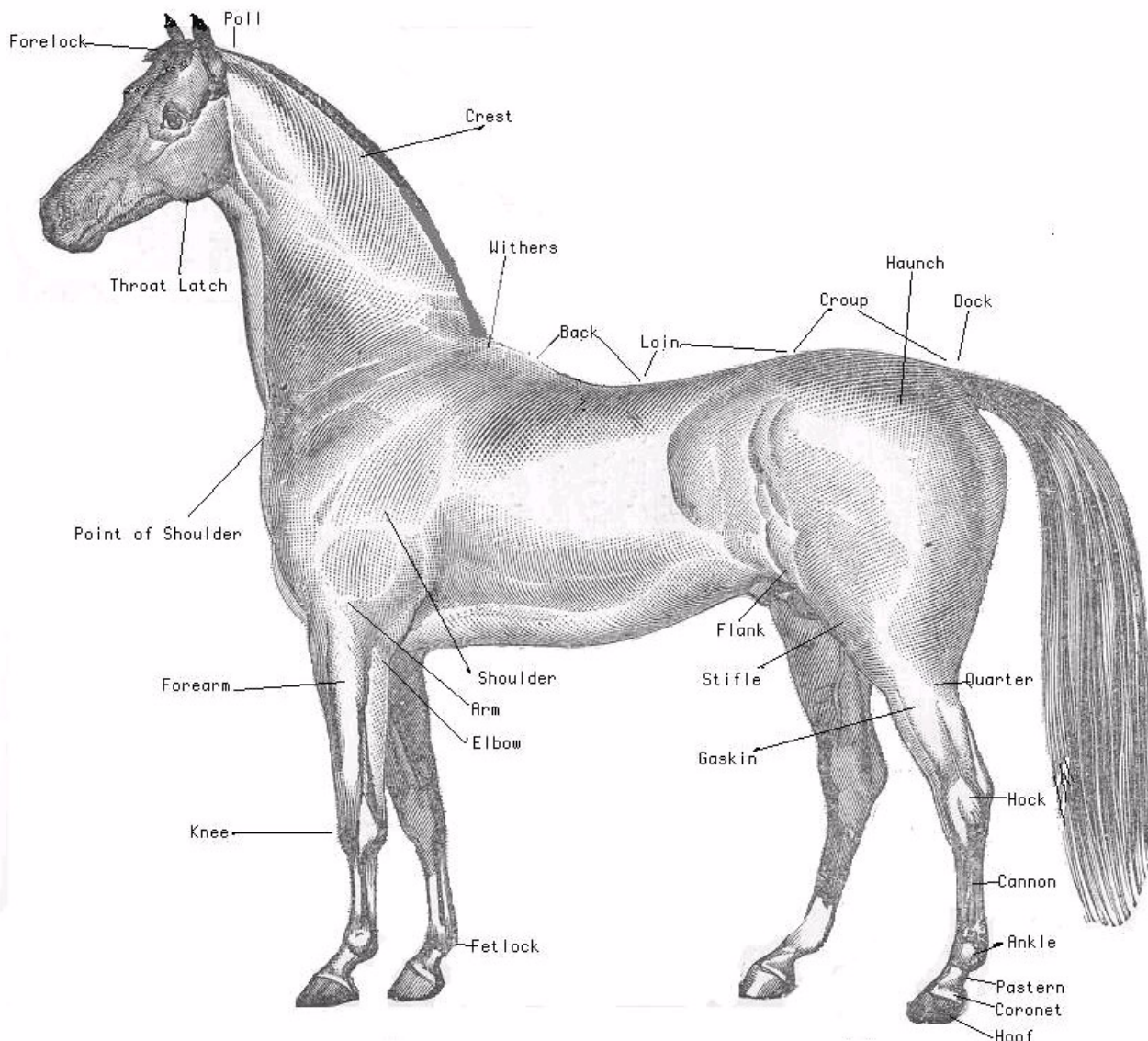
A horse's ears can rotate in any direction and tend to prick up at even faint noises. It can pick up scents that Men cannot, and the horse's skin can detect even a small insect landing on it.

HOOVES

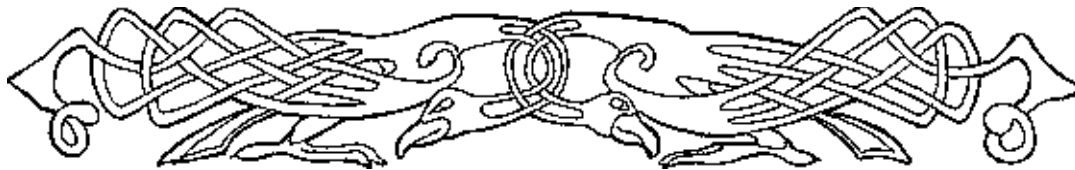
A horse's hooves bear its entire weight on a comparatively tiny area and therefore must be very strong. The hoof's hard outer wall protects soft interior tissues and bone. On the bottom of the hoof are structures termed the "frog" (at the back) and the "sole" (between the frog and the front wall); the frog is tough and rubbery, acting as a shock absorber and grip, while the sole has a hard smooth surface with softer, waxier deep layers. In shod or stabled horses, the frog and sole become more tender.

The hoof is a surprisingly elastic structure. When a horse runs, its hooves spread slightly as they impact the ground. This action aids circulation both inside the hoof and through the entire horse.

The exterior parts of the hoof grow constantly and are kept worn down by contact with the ground. Domesticated horses are often shod because a limited diet weakens their hooves, and burdens borne by working horses create additional stress on the hooves.

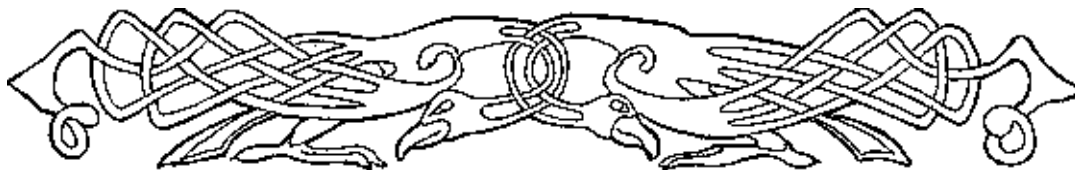


Start dusting off those Riders of Rohan characters and fill in details on their horses, because in the next issue, we'll give you a heap of information about how to understand and care for your noble steed, including equine history, habitat, behavior, life cycle, and more. Come back next month for the next installment!



ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD #4 (HOF ISSUE 39)

ACROSS			DOWN		
1. Bruinen	24. Elf-friend	52. Ered Luin	2. Ents	21. Ori	41. Tomcat
3. Bill	27. Wits	53. Minas Morgul	3. Bifur -or- Bofur	23. Rhudaur	42. Oin
8. The Shire	28. Baggins	55. Merry	4. Gundabad	25. Eldar -or- Elves	43. Anduin
9. Forest	30. Dis	56. Arnor	5. Nimbleness	26. Hauberk	45. Health
11. Narsil	32. Annuminas	57. Dale	6. Aeglos	29. Lindon	46. Biter
12. Belegaer	37. Aragorn	58. Dori -or- Nori	7. Orc	31. Balrog	47. Carrock
16. Beater	39. Radagast	59. Kili	10. Eomer	33. Wisdom	50. Bilbo
18. Eorl	40. Frodo	60. Rhun	13. GOB	34. Druedain	51. Troll
19. Bert	44. Hobbits		14. Archet	35. Eru	54. Beorn
20. Bombur	48. Men		15. Strength	36. Dain	56. Aule
22. Gondor	49. Lebennin		17. Edoras	38. Bolger	



ART CREDITS

Cover: "Boromir - Simply the Best" by Catherine Karina Chmiel

p 1 (background): "Fellowship at Caradhras" by unknown

p 1 (top corner): "Gandalf and the Witch-king" by unknown

p 2: Gandalf by New Line Cinema

p 3 (top): "Middle-earth Map" by Leila Tyliri Wood

p 3 (bottom): LotR RPG Rulebooks by Decipher

p 4: "Bilbo and the Ring" by Henning Janssen

p 5: Untitled (Dwarf) by Alan Lee

p 6: "The Burial of Thorin" by Alan Lee

p 7: "The Balrog of Moria" by Rob Alexander

p 8: Untitled (Dwarves outside Smaug's lair) by Alan Lee

p 9: Untitled (Dwarves in Thorin's party) by Alan Lee

p 10: Untitled (Dwarves in Thorin's party) by Alan Lee

p 11: Cudgel by unknown

p 12: Ents by New Line Cinema

p 13: "Feanor" by Catherine Karina Chmiel

p 15: "Shadowfax" by Catherine Karina Chmiel

p 16: Various images of horses, photographers unknown

p 17: Various images of horses, photographers unknown

p 18: Engraving of "Gold Dust" from Manning's Illustrated Horse Book

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 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</p>	<p>THE LAST ALLIANCE http://thelastalliance.com RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/ 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.COM http://www.theonering.com/ THE ONE RING.NET http://www.theonering.net/ VALINOR http://sauron.misled.us</p>
--	---

CALLING ALL GAMERS!

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?
- 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 must be less than 100 words and any graphic to go with it must be no more than 1' x 1'.

CREDITS AND CONTACTS

All pictures and graphics were obtained from Decipher and New Line Cinema or from sources on the Internet. No claim of ownership is made through their use here. These images are used with no permission.

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.