



THE HALL OF FIRE FAN WEBZINE

Issue Forty-Five
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GREETINGS,

Salutations... HELLO ALL!

45 down and 5 to go until I step aside as the primary force behind this webzine. WHEW! It sure has been a long time. Lots of ups and downs (more downs of late it seems I guess), but we're still put-put-putting along with new info for you. We certainly hope whatever our impact on your game is, it is for the better.

Well enough of the chit-chat, onto the main course! This issue has got the reemergence of the Take Another Look segment, a new Random Encounter, Allies and Adversaries, plus a lot more!

Looking forward to #46,

Matthew A. Kearns
aka **GandalfOfBorg**
Editor

THE MIDDLE-EARTH HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

RUINS by Micah Walles

Throughout the lands of Middle-earth there are many ruined sites, both great and small. They range from small outposts abandoned by Gondor in the late Third Age to great fortresses of the Second Age built by Númenor.

Description: This encounter is comprised of the finding and exploration of a ruined site. There are many cultures and vast years during which a site could have been built and then abandoned. There is no way to tell when or by whom a site was built until it is thoroughly explored. The site may contain any number of hidden treasures and nasty villains to occupy a group of heroes.

Type: Exploration

Numbers: (Standard) A small ruin
(Advanced) A more extensive ruin; see below for more information

TN Equiv: 5

Locales: Throughout every locale in Middle-earth, a ruin can be found. While most will be found in remote locations that are seldom visited, one might be surprised at what might be found even in the midst of major population centers such as Minas Tirith.

SAMPLE RUINS

- Solitary Watch Tower
- Fortified Enclosure
- Fortress
- Ancient City
- Library
- Estate

NUMBERS

A small ruin of one small building, a standard house or outpost, and maybe a treasure or two would be a TN of 5. As the site grows so does the TN.

A large estate would have a TN of 10. Also adding three or more items or pieces of lore will increase the TN by 5.

And lastly, the addition of villains and other nasties will raise the TN for the encounter. Base the additional TN on the values provided in the *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* source book.

ENCOUNTER PROBABILITY

Roll 2d6 to determine if there is an encounter. If there is, roll a 1d6 for the encounter's difficulty.

<u>TERRAIN TYPE</u>	<u>RESULT</u>	<u>DIFFICULTY</u>
Forest	4-9	1-3 Standard, 4-6 Advanced
Plains	2-6	1-3 Standard, 4-6 Advanced
Mountains	4-10	1 Standard, 2-6 Advanced
Desert	8-12	1-5 Standard, 6 Advanced
Swamp	2-6	Always Advanced
Tundra	2, 6, 8, 12	1-5 Simple, 6 Advanced
Underground	12	Always Advanced
Sea Coast	3-10	1-2 Standard, 3-6 Advanced
At Sea*	2-6	1-4 Standard, 5-6 Advanced

* Encounters at sea will most likely be the finding of a ruin on an island, itself possibly forgotten about as well.

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS

REMNANTS OF LORE

Through out the ruins of Middle-earth many different types of lore can be found. These range from retelling of past glories to what the lord of the manor wanted for dinner that night. Some of it might be recorded, as the Dwarfs of Moria did before they died, so that any who find it will know what has transpired. Others may have been written with the thought that only the intended recipient would read them, such as a diary or a letter to a lover.

Even though these items would have been written hundreds, if not thousands, of years before the heroes find them, they may still hold value to the heroes. A loremaster might find some piece of information that allows her to craft a new spell or artifact. There may be a clue hidden in these ancient texts that might help unravel a mystery that the heroes are trying to solve. Or, possibly, a mystery will be found that lead the heroes off on some new quest.

ITEMS OF YORE

There are many items that have been created in Middle-earth that have since been lost to time and age. These may be as simple as a trinket that was carried to show who the master of a messenger was or as great as the legendary weapons of ages long past. There are also devices of less-than-honorable design that have been lost, or left, in these forgotten places of Middle-earth.

Many of the items that could be found are going to be of little use or value directly to the heroes. Only items with strong magical enchantments would survive the ages unscathed. However, these rusted coins and rotted blades may have some significance to a loremaster or artificer. They may be willing to buy these items for the heroes or at least give them information that might help them on whatever quest they are on.

There is, of course, the possibility that, for whatever reason, the ruin might have items of greater value. If the ruins once belonged to a great lord, it would not be out of the realm of possibility to find an enchanted weapon or some enchanted armor.

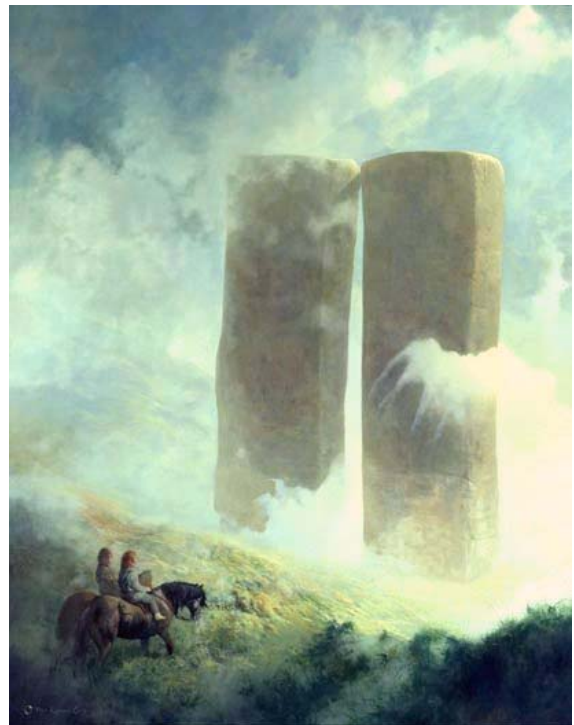
It is also possible that the location became a ruin because of the misfortune brought by some item that came into the possession of the ruin's former owner. One such item could be the Ring of Desire (Hall of Fire, Issue #36) which forces the bearer to act on their innermost desires rather than their duties. It could also be a vessel of some sort that brought a plague to the lands, leaving them bare.

OCCUPANTS

With time many things change, and just because a place has come to ruin does not mean that it is no longer occupied.

GUARDIAN SPIRIT (FRIENDLY OR NEUTRAL)

The occupation of some of these sites is by people that never truly left. If someone had been killed while trying to defend the site in life, their spirit might take it upon themselves to continue to defend it in death. As long as the heroes don't do anything that the ghost perceives to be a threat to the site, it will most likely leave the heroes alone. It might make an appearance to go on its appointed duties but it will not bother the heroes. If, however, the heroes deface the site or unearth any remains, it will defend the site.



GUARDIAN SPIRIT (EVIL)

Alternatively the ruins might contain a burial mound similar to the ones in the Barrow-Downs. In this case, by chance or design, a wight may have come to inhabit the burial mound and will attack any that come within its domain.

FELL DENIZENS

Occupied ruins do not have to be inhabited by such supernatural entities. The ruined walls be not be the ideal location for humans, elves, dwarfs, or hobbits, but animals may find it to be a suitable home. A pack of wolves or possibly even a warg may have made part of the ruin their lair. Another possible set of inhabitants could be a band of orcs, or possible even a few trolls, who have taken up residence in the ruins.



EXAMPLE RUIN

As a group of heroes travel along the Anduin, they come into the Gladden Fields. As the party crests one of many hills, the ground gives out under one of the party. The hole is about six feet wide and seven feet deep. At the bottom sits the party member who was unfortunate enough to be crossing the hill as the the ground gave away.

Looking around the bottom of the hole, it is obviously not a natural formation. There are three tunnels that form a T-intersection. The tunnels are rounded and made of earth. There are wooden ribs that follow the curve of the walls and up around ceiling. The ceilings are only about five and half feet tall.

Going down the left passage, as one is facing the bottom of the tee, there is a short passage that ends in a large room. On the left hand wall is a small hearth. Although it is obvious that no one has been in this room for many hundreds of years, it shows signs that it would have been a luxurious hall for entertaining visitors.

Down the other arm there are several rooms on both sides of the hall. On the right side there seems to be rooms set aside for storage of goods. In one of the store rooms is a three foot high cask. In the cask is a strong yet sweet amber ale that has not diminished with age. The rooms on the left hand side are mostly empty. They do have what looks to be ruin of furniture that has decayed with age.

The last room on the left hand side appears to have been a kitchen. There is a hearth on one wall along with a sink on the other. Next to the hearth is a bookshelf that was built into the wall. On the top-most shelf is a solitary book.

While covered in dust and dirt, the book is still in pristine condition. There is the slightest feeling of magical power coming off of the book. If a Loremaster or Magician were to examine it, they would find that there is a slight enchantment on the book in order to prevent any wear to it. The contents of the book contain recipes with detailed instructions on preparation and ingredients.

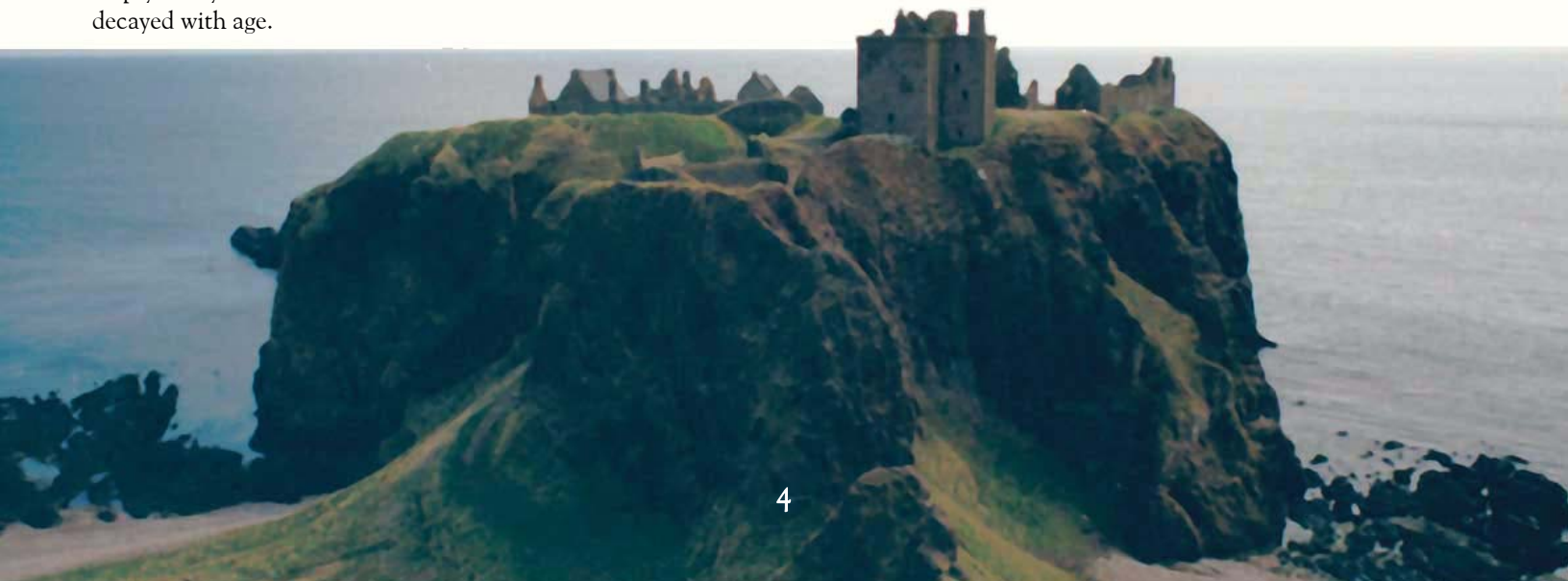
Going back down the passage to the tee intersection, and taking the passage that leads to the bottom of the tee, there is a foyer. Both sides of the foyer are lined with hooks on the wall for hats and coats to be hung on. At the end of the foyer is a round door. It is about four feet in diameter. When pushed, the door grudgingly opens a few inches outward, but will go no further.

Once all the party members that enter the hole have been freed from it, a search does turn up the door that was found. It has been overgrown with plants and caked with mud and dirt to the point that it blends in with the rest of the hill. There is at least six inches of mud and dirt that are now in front of the door preventing it from swinging open freely.

This is an example of a simple ruin that a group of heroes might have to explore. A more advanced ruin could be bigger, possibly an entire village, or one large structure, with more lore and/or items for the heroes to find. Another thing that can increase the difficulty would be to have to add some occupants to the mix.

UNIT STATS

Refer to *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* sourcebook for stats of any of the creatures that might be used.



TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

COMBAT EDGES, PART 2 by GandalfOfBorg

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.).

AMBIDEXTROUS

You have worked hard to be able to use your off-hand as well as your primary hand.

DESCRIPTION: This trait reduces the off-hand penalty for attacks made with your off hand with the first pick and removes the penalty altogether with the second.

RELATED SKILLS: Armed Combat, Unarmed Combat (maybe Ranged Combat: Thrown)

RELATED EDGES: None

RELATED FLAWS: Reckless

RELATED ABILITIES: Favoured Weapon (Warrior), Mounted Combat (Knight), Preferred Weapon (Barbarian), Protector (Ranger), Swift Strike (Warrior), Tactics (Captain), Treacherous Blow (Rogue), Warrior-born (Warrior)

RELATED SPELLS: Victory-spell

AMBIDEXTROUS EXPANDED: I would consider having the character select this trait for different weapons (skill and specialty) while skipping the effects of the first pick and going straight for the removal of the penalty.



MOBILE ARCHER

Moving in combat while attacking with a ranged weapon is less of a problem for you.

DESCRIPTION: This trait reduces the penalty for moving while performing a ranged attack.

RELATED SKILLS: Ranged Combat

RELATED EDGES: None

RELATED FLAWS: Reckless

RELATED ABILITIES: Archer abilities (minus Bowyer), Favoured Weapon (Warrior), Jugglery (Minstrel), Preferred Weapon (Barbarian), Protector (Ranger), Tactics (Captain), Treacherous Blow (Rogue), Warrior-born (Warrior)

RELATED SPELLS: Victory-spell

MOBILE ARCHER EXPANDED: I would consider adding an improvement to remove all of the movement penalty for ranged attacks and/or also consider the expanded rules discussed in Ambidextrous.

QUICK-DRAW

You are able to ready or recover yourself in combat faster than some or even most.

DESCRIPTION: This trait allows you to recover or reload a weapon as a free action. Each additional pick allows you to react faster than any other with fewer or no ranks in this trait.

RELATED SKILLS: None

RELATED EDGES: None

RELATED FLAWS: None

RELATED ABILITIES: None

RELATED SPELLS: None

QUICK-DRAW EXPANDED: I would consider allowing only up to Nimbleness modifier extra free actions from this trait instead of an endless number.



TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

You have trained extensively with the use of both hands in wielding your weapons of choice.

DESCRIPTION: You gain an free attack with your off-hand.

RELATED SKILLS: None

RELATED EDGES: None

RELATED FLAWS: None

RELATED ABILITIES: None

RELATED SPELLS: None

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING EXPANDED: I would consider allowing extra off-hand attacks with each additional pick of this trait, but limiting the number of extra free actions (including attacks) at a number equal to your Nimbleness modifier.



FAN FLAVOUR

MINOR TREASURES by David "Issachar" D

"Tom Bombadil chose for himself from the pile a brooch set with blue stones, many-shaded like flax-flowers or the wings of blue butterflies. He looked long at it, as if stirred by some memory, shaking his head, and saying at last: Here is a pretty toy for Tom and for his lady! Fair was she who long ago wore this on her shoulder. Goldberry shall wear it now, and we shall not forget her!"

– The Fellowship of the Ring

Role-play gaming in Middle-Earth usually isn't about "killing Orcs and taking their stuff." (For one thing, nobody really wants the stuff Orcs have. *Blech.*) Typically, valuable items are scarce and are never bought and sold, and few characters are wealthy.

But this does not mean that the setting discourages interest in the treasures an adventuring fellowship might find. The focus is simply directed less at the monetary value of items and more at their aesthetic qualities and their history. "Minor treasures" such as the brooch Tom Bombadil retrieves from the old barrow should excite the interest of players and their characters, and add to the beauty and depth of the game world.

But it takes time for Narrators to come up with interesting minor treasures and their individual descriptions. That's the purpose of this article: to give you an assortment of ready-made items that you can use as written or adapt to your chronicle.

BROAD LEATHER BELT

Four fingers wide, this dark brown belt is decorated with runic characters burned black into the leather. Its heavy iron buckle is dark and pitted. The runes are Elvish in origin, but are rendered in a heavier, more solid-seeming style than the graceful flowing script normally favored by the Eldar. A TN 10 Language: Sindarin test is required to read the runes, which say "They are no more who sought my life. Blood repays blood."

SCABBARD

This beautiful scabbard fits the straight, narrow blade of a typical Gondorian longsword. The scabbard is of black leather wound about with silver cords that cross each other in a diamond pattern. Inside the middle diamond is a stylized impression of a rampant boar branded into the leather. Several small green peridot gems encircle the metal throat of the scabbard.

BERYL RING

Two golden beryls, both cut square, are mounted on this thick-banded platinum ring. Of Dwarven make, the ring's band is notched with regular triangular patterns around its circumference. Gaps cut in the base of the setting allow a bit of light to pass beneath the gems, increasing their radiance in a well-lit environment.

DRINKING HORN

A smoothly polished ox horn shod in brass, with two bands of decorative patterns carved into the horn, one band near each end. The horn is predominantly an ivory color, with striations of light and dark brown along its curving length.



HISTORY OF ARNOR

A tiny leather-bound book written in fine script, whose author is a self-styled historian and poet. His skill at composing verse is soon revealed to be competent if not masterful. The work recounts the division of Arnor into the three sub-kingdoms of Arthedain, Cardolan and Rhudaur, the wars that ensued among them, the invasion of Angmar, and other events until the author's time, which was evidently around TA 1500. Although it requires careful reading, the historical information in the volume is reliable. Readers of the book receive a +2 bonus to Lore tests involving important events in Arnor from TA 850 to TA 1500.



PEARL CLASP

The base of this cloak clasp is a white scallop shell edged with gold. A gold setting in the middle of the shell holds a single pearl surrounded by tiny blue-green stones. The clasp is the handiwork of Elvish craftsmen from Lindon.

REED FLUTE

A curious and exotic instrument originating somewhere in Rhûn. The flute is a little over a foot long and is made of a single section of some thick reedy plant, golden brown in colour and unknown in the West. It has eight finger holes near one end and a blowing hole near the other. When played, the instrument produces a sound with a soft, almost voice-like quality.



FOLDING FAN

An exotic item from Harad that has made its way to northwest Middle-earth in the hands of traders and travelers. The thin slats are of polished bone bound together with cord on one end. Spreading open the fan reveals a silk semicircle dyed red and painted with stylized figures of sun-browned men and women at court in the palace of an unnamed governor, who receives his petitioners with the gesture of one upraised hand.

WOODEN BOX

Small enough to hold in one hand, this Elf-made box is carved with intricate leafy patterns on all sides. The tiny iron hinges and latch appear delicate but prove to be surprisingly sturdy, and the lid fits so snugly to the base that the box's interior remains dry even if it is exposed to heavy rain.

FEATHERED PIN

A pin suitable for wearing on the breast or affixing to a hat, with two feathers of a red-tailed hawk set in a small silver base with an oval-shaped red carnelian stone at its center.

IVORY DRAGON FIGURINES

The handiwork of the Lossoth, these sinuous dragons are carved from a pair of walrus tusks. Cold-drakes are subjects of legend among dwellers of the icy North, but these figurines are surprisingly un-stylized and anatomically precise, suggesting that the artist might have had eyewitness information.

STONE DICE

A set of eighteen dice carved from light grey, red, and black stone – six of each colour – with Dwarf-runes and other symbols engraved on their sides. A variety of Dwarven games of chance and skill can be played with this set, and of course they are also useful as a simple decision-making aid when the best course of action is unclear.



EMBROIDERED POUCH

Elaborate patterns sewn in copper and silver thread decorate this belt pouch of soft leather dyed black. The embroidery takes the form of several concentric bands that surround three swords side by side, points down. The pouch can hold a volume of contents equal to about five or six small apples.

SILVER FLASK

A small oblong flask engraved with a leaping stag and an inscription in Dunlendish: "Wanderer's friend, warm the chilled bones and calm the fearful heart." The short neck of the flask is fitted with a cap containing an oiled leather washer.

RED GARNET PENDANT

A teardrop shaped garnet as large as a man's thumb hanging from a thin gold chain, unadorned save for the gem's small setting. The tiny letters "Bnr" are graven on one side of the chain's clasp.



SMOKING-PIPE

A longish pipe made of beautifully stained and polished briar wood, with a band of scrollwork delicately traced in gold paint around the mouth of the bowl.

PEWTER LANTHORN

A hexagonal covered lantern with a pewter frame and delaminated sheets of horn on each of its six faces. Small latches allow the base to be disconnected from the lantern's top and sides. Thin vertical spikes on the base allow up to three thin candle tapers to be mounted, or a single thicker candle. The frame is decorated with etched lines of twisting scrollwork. The translucent panes of horn are quite thin, allowing a good deal of light to pass through.



GROOMING KIT

A flat, palm-sized silver box containing items for the grooming of hair and beards. The lid of the box is imprinted with decorative patterns around a central oval that is smooth and flat. Inside the box are three simple metal clasps for tying back hair, a pair of short-bladed scissors, a razor, and two wooden combs, one of them small and fine-toothed.

FINGER ARMOR RING

An ornate silver ring covering two finger segments, with a bending joint in the middle. It was originally commissioned and worn by a nobleman from Belfalas. An unarmed punch attack made while wearing the ring adds one point of damage to the result, but also slightly damages the ring and might even break the hinged joint (roll of 1 on 1d6).



LOCKET OF MAPS

A rather large rectangular locket of tin on a long chain, imprinted with a border of interlocking circles. Inside the locket are eight thin sheets of tin which have been beaten into tiny relief maps in fine detail, including important place-names and an indication of the cardinal directions. The location shown on the maps is best left to the Narrator, but it should reflect local (not world) geography, such as a map of Moria or the Gap of Rohan.

IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

NEW FLAWS by David "Issachar" D.

Feeling lucky? Not if you've taken one of these flaws, which represent misfortune that appears to befall your characters due to forces beyond their control or comprehension.

UNLUCKY

Fate and chance seem to delight in watching you fail.

EFFECT: At the start of each in-game day or each scene (whichever comes earlier or more frequently), ill luck besets you. On that day or in that scene, the first time you roll 2d6 and the same number appears on both dice, take away one die and use the other as your test result. You can spend a point of Courage to negate the effect of the flaw.

SPECIAL: If you invoke this flaw's effect by rolling a pair of sixes, you do not gain a bonus die roll. If you roll more than two dice (such as when using the Warrior's Evasion ability, which lets you take the best two dice out of three), if the numbers on any two dice match, take away one of those dice.

(Note to Narrators: Do not allow a player to make unnecessary test rolls in an attempt to expend the flaw's penalty on something trivial at the start of a day or a scene. In such a case, treat the flaw as having not yet taken effect for that day or scene. However, do not insist on applying the flaw only to high-risk tests, either: being unlucky should be an annoyance, not a death sentence.)

PROGRESSION: If you take this flaw a second time, the flaw takes effect each time you roll a matching pair of numbers *that you have not yet rolled* during the current day or scene, whichever period is shorter. (For example, if you have already rolled two 3's once during a day or scene, then rolling two 3's again during the same day or scene will not invoke the flaw's effects.) You can spend a point of Courage to negate the effect of the flaw.

PRONE TO MISHAP

Your failures are almost always spectacular.

EFFECT: Whenever you fail to meet the TN of a physical test, your failure is treated as one category more severe for purposes of determining the resulting effects. That is, a normal Failure is treated as a Complete Failure, and a Complete Failure is treated as a Disastrous Failure.

SPECIAL: This flaw does *not* apply to physical tests that are merely observational, such as most Observe, Search, and Weather-sense tests. It also does not apply to Armed Combat, Ranged Combat, or Unarmed Combat tests made to hit a target.

PROGRESSION: The second time you take this flaw, you are even more prone to mishaps when performing physical tests.

Whenever your test result equals the test's TN (a Marginal Success), treat it as a normal Failure instead. To earn a Marginal Success, your test result must be one point higher than the test's TN.



NEW EDGE by ZehnWaters

WATERCRAFTY

You are very adept in the water and can swim or sail where few others can.

EFFECT: You receive a +1 bonus with all water-based skills – like Survival, Swim, Sea-craft, and Weather Sense – and with Stealth when used to hide in or move silently through water.

IMPROVEMENT: You may devote additional picks to this edge. Each pick increases the test result bonus by +1 (maximum of +4).



WORDS OF WISDOM

BORANDIL ON PROBLEM PLAYERS:

Whiners and sulkers. Definitely whiners and sulkers... they annoy me to no end! You can deal with the Setting Lawyer, you can outwit the Munchkin, you can fight the Rules Lawyer, but the Whiner really is a pain.

I'm dealing with one right now. My campaign is about Northmen fighting the Wainrider invasion of Rhovanion and eventually establishing the Éothéod culture. This player wants his character to be married to a Wainrider woman (no problem with me there). But he insists – no, he demands – that his character's wife be given a "life insurance" of sorts; he wants her shielded from every possible form of harm or prejudice.

I told him very earnestly that while I found the plot idea very interesting, ours is a war campaign, and tragedies do happen in war. If he played his cards right, he might be able to protect his wife, but I felt it would be unfair to all other PC's and NPC's if someone was accorded "special protection".

I have not heard from him since. I know he wants to participate, but he wants to have his way, which I really feel is inappropriate, especially considering he demanded that I did this or that. I do not think he'll be returning to my table.

YNGVAR ON NARRATOR PREPARATION:

Find a time setting you, as Narrator, are comfortable with. Is it during the War of the Ring? Is it 30 years before? Is it 100 years before? Is it even in the Third Age? This may be influenced by what you have read in Tolkein's stories or Middle-Earth histories.

For example, I have recently reread *The Hobbit* as well as watched *The Fellowship of the Ring* (extended version hehehe). Noting how a number of movies start and the heroic style of Tolkein, I decide I want to start the chronicle in an exciting way.

So the chronicle will start just before the Battle of the Five Armies and the characters are at Laketown. I imagined a build up to an exciting opportunity for the players to find their setting familiar, for them to feel comfortable (they recognise the setting and time) and to cut their teeth on spilling orc blood.

ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

CELEBRIAN by ZehnWaters

RACE: Elf (Half Noldor, Half Sindar)

RACIAL ABILS: The Art, Beast-skill, Comfort, Elven Form, Elven Sleep, Farsightedness, Ghost Scorn, Lightfoodedness, Musical Gifts

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 13 (+3)*, Nimbleness 11 (+2), Perception 10 (+2), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 12 (+3), Wits 11 (+2)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +8, Swiftmess +7*, Willpower +6, Wisdom +5

ADVNCMNTS: 48

ORDER: Noble

ORDER ABILS: Courtier, Deference, Domain (Rivendell), Noble Mien

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Sword) +4, Debate (Parley) +7, Healing (Treat Illness) +6, Inquire (Converse) +6, Inspire +7, Intimidate (Majesty) +8, Language: Quenya +7, Language: Sindarin +7, Language: Silvan +5, Language: Westron +4, Lore/Realm: Rivendell +9, Lore/Realm: Lothlorien +9, Lore/Race: Elves (History) +7, Lore/Race: Men (History) +5, Observe (Sense Power) +5, Perform: Sing +6, Persuade (Charm) +8, Ranged Combat: Bow (Shortbow) +4, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +6

EDGES: Ally (Wise and Powerful of Middle-Earth) 6, Eloquent, Hoard 5 (Rivendell), Rank 1 (Lady of Rivendell and Lothlorien), Resolute, Strong Willed

FLAWS: Enemies (Shadow and His Servants)

HEALTH: 12

RENOVN: 12

GEAR: Horse, Regal Robes, Rivendell and all its Treasures

Daughter of Galadriel and Celeborn, Celebrian wedded Elrond of Rivendell and bore him two sons, Elladan and Elrohir, and one daughter, Arwen.

While traveling through the Misty Mountains, Celebrian was attacked and captured by Orcs. She was rescued by her two sons. Not long afterward, she sailed west to the Undying Lands.

ERESTOR by ZehnWaters

RACE: Elf (Sindar)

RACIAL ABILS: The Art, Beast-skill, Comfort, Elven Form, Elven Sleep, Farsightedness, Ghost Scorn, Lightfoodedness, Musical Gifts

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 12 (+3)*, Nimbleness 9 (+1), Perception 10 (+2), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 14 (+4)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +3, Swiftmess +3, Willpower +5, Wisdom +6*

ADVNCMNTS: 55

ORDERS: Loremaster, Antiquarian

ORDER ABILS: Ancient Scripts, Expertise (Elves) 3, Scroll Hoard 3, Vala Virture (Elbereth, Mandos & Lorien), Expert Historian, Perfect Recall, Persuasive Arcana, Scholarly Reputation, Versatility

SKILLS: Appraise (Scrolls) +2, Craft: Calligraphy +8, Debate (Parley) +9, Healing (Treat Illness) +7, Insight +7, Inquire (Converse) +10, Intimidate (Majesty) +7, Language: Quenya +9, Language: Sindarin +9, Language: Silvan +8, Language: Westron +7, Lore/History: Elves (Sindar) +12, Lore/History: Men (Dunédain) +8, Lore/Realm: Eriador (Rivendell) +7, Lore/Realm: Doriath (Menegroth) +6, Lore/Other: Rings of Power +8, Observe (Spot) +9, Perform: Harp +7, Persuade (Oratory) +7, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +4, Search +10

EDGES: Ally (Elrond, Glorfindel) 2, Charmed Life, Curious, Eloquent, Favour of Fortune 2, Gift of Tongues, Healing Hands, Hoard 3, Honey-tongued 2, Wise 2, Natural Archivist, Seniority

FLAWS: Duty (Keeper of Elrond's library)

HEALTH: 10

RENOVN: 2

GEAR: Vast amounts of scrolls

Erestor was Elrond's chief counsellor. During the debate over the One Ring, he counseled that the Wise should not attempt to destroy the Ring, but to guard it from Sauron.

HARIZAN THE EASTERLING

by Doug "Tomcat" Joos

RACE: Man of Darkness

RACIAL ABILITIES: Skilled, Adaptable, Dominion of Man

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 11 (+2), Vitality 9 (+1)*, Wits 8 (+1)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +4, Swiftswiftness +4*, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Warrior (Horseman)

ORDER ABILITIES: Swift Strike, Warrior-Born

ADVANCEMENTS: 10

SKILLS: Acrobatics +3, Armed Combat: Axe (Great) +12, Armed Combat: Blade (Shortsword) +6, Armed Combat: Polearms +5, Climb +2, Healing (Treat wounds) +3, Inspire +3, Intimidate (Power) +5, Jump +3, Language: Easterling (Sagath) +6, Language (Westron) +6, Lore/Realm: Rhûn (Carnen river valley) +3, Lore/Realm: Dorwinion (Donu river valley) +3, Lore/Wilderness: Domesticated Animals (Horses) +3, Observe (Spot) +2, Ranged Combat: Bows (Short Bow) +4, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +2, Siegecraft (Unit Leadership) +1, Stealth (Hide) +1, Survival (Plains) +2, Track (Men) +1, Unarmed Combat (Brawl) +3

SPELLS: None

EDGES: Command (commands 80 men), Dodge, Hardy, Lion-hearted, Quick draw, Rank (Tribal chieftain), Strong-willed, Warwise, Weapon-mastery

FLAWS: Battle-fury 2, Hatred

HEALTH: 11 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 4 **RENOUN:** 5

DEFENCE: 12

CORRUPTION: 8

MISCELLANEOUS: +1 to power attack, sweep, and two-handed attacks

ITEMS: Scalemail, Small shield, Great Axe (Masterwork +1 to AC), Shortsword, Short bow, Spear, Horse

BACKGROUND: Harizän the Easterling is a brutal berserker that comes from the far eastern shores of the Sea of Rhûn and through fist and blood has unified a large group of Sagath wainriders. Promising to bring pain upon their enemy, the Éothraim, and to take back their stolen lands, Harizän has led them west over the Donun and Carnen Rivers. The Easterling horde has commenced attacks on the plain folk and the spoils of these raids – foods, livestock, treasures, and women – are to benefit all the raiders and each would share in the wealth.

Harizän towers over others of his folk, standing at 6' 4" and his broad muscular form is quite intimidating. The Easterling's brawn is balanced with his wits but his one undoing could be his need to always accept a challenge. Any who throw down a gauntlet to Harizän will be met in single combat. The Easterling prides himself in strength of arms and there is nothing he will not offer up when he is directly challenged. He has never lost. He slays his opponents and once done, drags them behind his wain, in front of his folk, to show all that there is none mightier than he.

Harizän has also come to the attention of the Ringwraith Khamûl not long ago, and the Nazgûl has extended the Easterling even more resources from his base in Dol Guldur. One of those resources is Koskas the Fell – a great warg inhabited by a fell-spirit who is able to walk amongst men in their shape. The werewolf is also schooled in the magic of sorcery and so helps guide Harizän in his victories.

KOSKAS THE FELL

by Doug "Tomcat" Joos

The following stats are Koskas in his Man-form:

RACE: Werewolf (Fell-spirit) / Man of Darkness

RACIAL ABILITIES: Skilled, Adaptable, Dominion of Man

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 11 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1)*, Vitality 9 (+1)*, Wits 12 (+3)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftswiftness +2*, Willpower +5, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Magician

ORDER ABILITIES: Spellcasting 3, Magician's Charm

ADVANCEMENTS: 8

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Clubs (Quarterstaff) +4, Climb +1, Healing (Treat wounds) +1, Insight +1, Intimidate (Fear) +2, Jump +1, Language: Easterling (Sagath) +6, Language (Westron) +6, Language: Northman (Éothrik) +6, Language: Elven (Sindarin) +3, Lore/Spellcraft: Sorcery +6, Lore/Realm: Rhovanion +6, Lore/Wilderness: Wild beasts +6, Lore/Culture: Sagath +5, Observe (Spot, Smell) +4, Persuade (Fast talk) +1, Ranged Combat: Bows (Short Bow) +2, Run +2, Search +2, Stealth (Hide) +1, Survival (Plains) +1, Track (Men) +1

SPELLS: Bane-spell, Blast of Sorcery, Dark Stench, Evoke Fear, Fatigue, Fire of Udûn, Slumber, Spellbinding, Waste, Wizard's Hand

EDGES: Dodge, Night-eyed 2, Resolute, Strong-willed, Tireless

FLAWS: Dark Heart, Hatred

HEALTH: 10 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 5

DEFENCE: 12

CORRUPTION: 10

ITEMS: Quarterstaff

BACKGROUND: Koskas is a tall slender, vulpine-faced elderly man that comes from the east of Rhûn. He is an awful man. Some amongst the Sagath say he has kinship with the warg for he speaks their tongue and it is whispered that he takes their shape. He is cruel and has no pity in his heart for friend or foe. He is Harizân's most trusted second-in-command. Koskas also manipulates dark powers and it is through these magics that he aids in Harizân's conquests over the Éothraim.

The whispers about Koskas are true; he is a fell-spirit – a werewolf.

Koskas in Alternate-form/Warg-form:

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

REACTIONS: Stamina +4, Swiftnes +4*, Willpower +2, Wisdom +1

DEFENCE: 12

MOVEMENT RATE: 12

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Fangs, Claws) +8, Intimidate (Fear) +6, Jump +6, Language: Warg-speak +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Westron +4, Observe (Smell) +7, Run +7, Stealth (Sneak) +9, Survival (Mountains) +6, Track (Scent) +5

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Alternate Form, Damage Reduction, Dissolution in Death, Warg-kin, Mighty charge, Natural Weapons, Multiple attacks, Terror

SIZE: Large (6 wound levels, 2 healthy)

HEALTH: 13

TN EQUIVALENT: 15

UNIQUE SPECIAL ABILITIES

ALTERNATE FORM

Koskas can assume a bipedal hybrid warg-man-form or that of a very large warg; in either form they gain Armed Combat: Natural Weapon (Claw, Bite) like that of a warg.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

A werewolf in animal or hybrid form has armour of 3; normal weapons only inflict half damage, but fire and masterwork/enchanted weapons inflict full damage.

DISSOLUTION IN DEATH

The body of a slain werewolf dissolves into mist.

WARG-KIN

Werewolves in man-form gain a +4 test modifier to any social skill to befriend Wargs, but suffer a -4 penalty to befriend all other animals, including attempts to ride horses or other beasts of burden.

MIGHTY CHARGE

+3 bonus to Armed Combat tests and does twice-normal damage on a success.

MULTIPLE ATTACKS (FANGS, CLAWS)

Werewolves gain an additional action per round for each type of attack they possess.

NATURAL WEAPONS

Fangs do 2d6+1, Claws do 1d6+3

TERROR

When in Alternate-form the werewolves Intimidate (Fear) skill operates continuously, opponents must make a willpower save against a test roll at 1/2 the werewolf's total rank – costs no actions.

NOTES TO NARRATORS:

- Some of the abilities listed above are re-interpreted by me, or are brought into the CODA system from D&D. I have also included abilities listed under each fell-beast in the FB&WM sourcebook that may be possessed by werewolves or by wargs.
- Also, anytime there is a variance in a skill rank, or attribute, use the score based upon Koskas' current form.
- Koskas may enact his dark sorceries while in Alternate-form.

THE ROAD GOES EVER ON...

FINDER'S RIGHTS by David "Issachar" D.

INTRODUCTION

Finder's Rights takes place early in the Fourth Age, when folk have begun to recover from years of conflict and fear under the Shadow of Mordor. In the Blue Mountains, Dwarven craftsmen and miners are once again plying their trades and exporting wares throughout Eriador.

One mining company has just made an exciting discovery: the floor of a new tunnel collapsed, revealing a stone pillar that might be part of the ancient Dwarven city of Nogrod, believed to be lost since the destruction of Beleriand at the end of the First Age.

Dwarven law grants the right of first exploration to the mining company that made the discovery. But finder's rights last only for a few days, so a team must hastily be assembled to make the descent into the ruins.

The PCs in this adventure have some existing connections to Nári Blackfoot, who owns the mine, or to his family or the people he does business with. Being chosen for this task is an honor for the PCs, for the work they are entrusted with is important not only to Nári's company but to the history of all Dwarves.

The PCs should have from 3 to 6 Advancements. They may be of any race, but should have a reason to be in or near the Blue Mountains at the time the discovery is made.

MAJOR NPCs

Nári Blackfoot – A Dwarf, the owner of the mine where the ruin was discovered. He employs the PCs to explore the site and make records of what they find.

Orr Blackfoot – A Dwarf, Nári's cousin, who manages the mining business. He helps the PCs prepare for their task and will aid them if they require his help.

Regen Ashbeard – A Dwarf, a long-time employee of the Blackfoots. He is an experienced miner who accompanies the PCs into the mine and serves as a guide when needed.

Ghost of Beli – A Dwarven spirit lingering in the world through sorcery, greed and malice. Some loremasters refer to such a creature as a *ta'fa'lish*.

Ganar – A Dwarf, the leader of three rogues who attempt to loot the ruin illegally.

FOR NARRATORS ONLY (SPOILERS!)

Finder's Rights is partly a mystery adventure. After the PCs descend into the subterranean ruins, they begin to discover clues that suggest they are not the first people to venture here since the destruction of the ancient city. The evidence builds up to show that there must be another way in to the apparently sealed ruin, and that in fact, this entrance has been used very recently!

The Dwarven dwelling in which the adventure takes place was once home to a wealthy family of the Firebeard clan. This family had many servants in their employ, one of whom proved to be a traitor. This servant, a Dwarf named Beli (bay-LEE), craved wealth and power, and in secret he studied sorcerous arts and by them became utterly corrupted and descended into madness.

Beli slew his master Bremil Firebeard the Younger and many others of the household, until he was cornered in his own quarters and slain, but not before unleashing fell fires on his assailants, scorching even the stone walls of the chamber.

Scarcely were the bodies of the victims laid in their tombs before Beli returned as a vengeful shade of a Dwarf, whom neither axe nor flame could hurt. The remaining Firebeard kinsmen swiftly fell to his wrath, and he claimed the dwelling for his own.

Though the lingering spirits of corrupted Dwarves are rare, yet it was known that they did not leave their haunts save to retrieve a treasure stolen from them and to punish the thief. Therefore those who were wise among the Dwarves counseled that the entrance to the home should be sealed to prevent others from entering and endangering themselves until the matter could be dealt with aright, for the war against Morgoth consumed all the attention of the mighty at that time.

But the matter was never dealt with, and the last years of the Age soon came. Great Nogrod was destroyed in the upheaval of the land that accompanied the sinking of Beleriand. Yet some northern portions of the city survived the destruction. The home of Bremil Firebeard remained intact, and its ghostly guardian lingered on for century after century, nursing its hatred.

That hatred was vented on the rare unfortunate person who discovered the only way into the ruin: a narrow vent leading from the mountain ridge down to the furnace of the forge. Covered by a metal grate and overgrown with grass, the entrance to this shaft was only discovered a small number of times over the ages.

The most recent person to discover the shaft was Thorin Broadbeam, named for the honored Thorin Oakenshield, but lacking the honor of his namesake. A roguish fellow, this Thorin deduced that the shaft he discovered might lead to some long-buried treasures, and hired two other Dwarves to help him loot whatever forgotten chambers lay at the bottom of the shaft.

The hirelings met their end at the hands of Beli's ghost, while Thorin himself managed to scramble back up the shaft with a few jewels in his pockets. He fled home and would not unbolt his door for any visitor. At length Thorin's father was summoned, and on his authority the door was forced open. Thorin lay dead upon the floor.

This news soon reached the ears of Nári Blackfoot, a friend of Thorin's father. He was allowed to read the last strange scrawlings of his friend's son, and guessed at their meaning, though he kept his thoughts to himself. Before long, Nári had located the shaft, and he began to lay his plans.

The main problem was the need for secrecy. Whatever riches were recovered from the ancient ruin, the king would claim them on behalf of all Dwarves as their historical heritage. If not for the ghostly guardian, the place could be looted without anyone the wiser. But assembling a group of heroes mighty enough to face such a supernatural foe could not be done with enough subtlety or secrecy to keep word of the adventure from getting out.

After much thought, Nári hit on a perfect solution, brilliant and elegant. He would "discover" the ruin publically, claiming it as an accidental find by one of his mining teams, and secure the rights of first exploration under Dwarven law. The public spectacle would provide an excuse for Nári to bring together a team of strong folk to enter the ruin.

These heroes would soon encounter the guardian spirit and draw its attention and its ire. At the same time, other hirelings would descend through the secret shaft and wait to hear the sounds of conflict between the ghost and the heroes. They would swiftly gather as many treasures as possible and return to the surface via the shaft while the brave explorers dealt with the angry spirit.

Nári, no thief he, would buy the looted treasure from his hirelings, by which he hoped to avoid the wrath of the ghost if it should survive battle with the heroes. And in any case, he would quickly and quietly sell all the treasure to collectors through his various business contacts. Nári amused himself with the thought that the old adage "let the buyer beware" would take on an entirely new meaning in those transactions.

Now the day has arrived, and the heroes are about to make the descent into a ruin of ancient Nogrod, excited about the historical importance of their adventure and unaware of their status as pawns in a larger scheme. Will they survive, unravel the mystery and foil the plot of their greedy and unscrupulous employer? Find out as you play *Finder's Rights!*

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Provide the following introduction to your players.

"If old Smaug himself was to light atop the mountain, it'd nae cause less of a stir!"

Nári Blackfoot flashes his familiar broad-toothed grin at the group. His hands describe great circles in the air as he shifts his weight from one foot to the other, unable to stand still. His excitement over the discovery made by his mining company is infectious.

Nor does the comparison to an attack by Smaug, despite Nári's penchant for overstatement, miss the mark by much. Mount Dolmed is abuzz with discussion of the find and anticipation of what long lost treasures might be recovered from what, to all appearances, is a section of ancient Nogrod. A section extending much farther north than either memory or records ever revealed.

Nári's ebullient chatter moves on to include congratulations to those chosen to carry out the initial exploration, a brief acknowledgement of each fellow's individual merits, and a cheerful review of the dangers the group might face. Producing a pitcher of fine drink, he toasts the historical importance of their quest and takes a long pull from his mug. Nári is not known to have much patience for, or comprehension of, difficult matters of business.

At the brass-tacks level of company affairs, Nári's cousin Orr handles things shrewdly and efficiently. His own meeting with the party is quiet and serious, conducted in a small room without enough chairs to go around.

"I prefer standing, anyway," Orr says in his gravelly baritone. Without further preface, he launches into a description of the political situation. Although the Dwarven tradition granting finder's rights is writ in stone – literally as well as figuratively – and is legally unassailable, Orr fears interference from some wealthy and highly-placed Dwarves, rivals of his company.

"They'll make whatever mischief they can, to keep us from making the most of the time we have under law to explore the ruin. I'll set some lads to watch the entrance once you're down. But our enemies are crafty. Your best chance of success is to guard your own backs. Check your ropes and hooks before you make the descent. Check your food and your skins of water. Trust nobody but yourselves." Orr pauses and looks at each person in turn. "It's my estimation that you lot can be trusted. I wouldn't send you were it not so. Prove your good worth – and my good judgment – and you'll be well rewarded."

That was yestereve. This morning, the hour marked by an echoing drum and no sunlight, you stand at the brink of the rockslide, preparing to climb into a hole whose darkness swallows up the torchlight as an ocean consumes a river, and is never sated.

Three burly young Dwarves accompany Orr and the PCs into the collapsed tunnel. Orr explains that he fears to drive any bolt into the rock to secure the rope, lest more of the tunnel give way. So he and his lads will hold the rope tight while the PCs make their descent one at a time. He will also remain at the mouth of the hole to guard it and to bring help to the PCs if they require it.

The entrance to the ruin is a rockslide that forms a narrow, steep chute. About ten feet down, the top of a thick and ancient pillar thrusts out of the rubble. The PCs must squeeze around the side of the pillar and then continue down the slope to the chamber below. Descending the slide of rock requires a Climb test at TN 7 to avoid slipping and injuring oneself on the sharp stone fragments (1d6 damage, reduced by armour).

Once all the PCs are down (including the NPC Regen Ashbeard if he is included in the party), they can begin to explore the ruined home of the Firebeards room by room. Descriptions of each numbered area on the map follow in the next section.

EXPLORING THE RUIN

1. CRYPT

A set of ancient, greying bones protrudes from the scree at the base of the slope – the arm of a Dwarf.

Scarcely a yard from the bottom of the rockslide, a thick slab of granite rises from the floor. Atop the slab is a great stone box, every inch carved with runes and intricate patterns. It is unmistakably a **Dwarven tomb**.

At each corner of the slab stands a pillar, of which one is the pillar the party had to climb around on the way down. These columns rise thirty feet to the ceiling, which is barely visible in the torchlight. Around the perimeter of the room, dimly visible in the gloom, panels of metal appear to be set in the walls. Statues are arranged at intervals between the panels. In the middle of the south wall, a massive double door stands shut.

Those versed in Dwarf-lore might know that not many Dwarven families were prosperous enough to build such magnificent burial houses for their dead. They can also guess that this crypt might be very near to the family home, possibly even adjoining the home directly. Thus did many Dwarves protect the sanctity of their dead – and the belongings laid to rest with them.

Several other stone **sarcophagi** are arranged around the central one on the granite slab. The nearest of these is broken open, its lid crushed and knocked aside by the collapsing rock. It is entirely empty.

Although the lettering on the sarcophagi is in an antiquated style, a Dwarf can read the ancient runes with no great difficulty. They show that the crypt belongs to a family of the Firebeard clan, who were numerous in the Blue Mountains in ages past. The tomb elevated upon the central slab holds the remains of the family's

patriarch, Bremil Firebeard. Three other tombs bear the names Menar, Tharzi, and another Bremil with "the Younger" added below his name.

Each of the **metal panels** on the walls is cemented in place and inscribed with Dwarven runes. One panel has been loosened from its frame by the rockslide. A dark cavity is visible behind it, though the panel is still held askew against the mouth of the hole by the piled rubble. A PC holding a torch near can make out bones in the recess. Apparently the Firebeards interred their lesser sons in the walls, in the manner of a catacomb.

The five **statues** along the unobstructed portions of wall appear at a glance to be simple and stylized representations of Dwarves standing on large stone pedestals. Closer inspection shows that the faces are rendered in much finer detail than the rest of the sculpture. One, toward the far end of the room from the doors, has no face at all. One might deduce that each statue was probably completed upon the death of the Dwarf whose memory it honors, with the face sculpted to resemble that of the departed. In fact, the boxy pedestals of the statues hold old bones entombed within them. A further detail that only a Dwarf would notice is that the finished faces are those of Dwarf women!

The great **doors**, twelve feet tall and clad in iron, do not yield when pulled. The hinges are mounted on the near side, so the doors must swing into the room. The pair of heavy pull-rings are unaccompanied by any visible bar or lock, but of course none should be required on the interior of a burial vault. Stern Dwarven figures in an iconic style are depicted in bas-relief on the central panels of the doors; geometric patterns fill most of the remaining surface. Above the doors, a screen formed from a lattice of intricate stone-work allows air and light to pass between this chamber and the room beyond.

A group of PCs can force open the doors with a **TN 50 combined Strength test**, which breaks the latch. The door pins are encased in stone moorings, which can be broken with hammer and chisel, allowing a door to be removed from the frame. The stone lattice above the doors can also be broken through by inflicting 10 points of damage on it with a blunt object (but the stone absorbs 10 points of damage per hit). A **TN 15 Climb test** is needed to reach the lattice. Any person can easily unlatch and open the doors from the other side.

As soon as the doors are unlatched or the latch is broken, a **floor trap** opens just beyond the threshold outside the crypt, dropping anyone standing at the doors into a pit that is twenty feet deep. The pit is only five feet across, but it spans the width of the ten-foot wide hallway outside the crypt. Hidden behind some decorative stonework in the wall of the corridor is a small lever (**TN 10 Search** or **TN 15 Observe (spot)** to find). Pushing the lever straight in resets the trap door, or locks it in place if it is already shut, so that the crypt doors can be opened without setting off the trap.

2. GREAT HALL

The corridor leads south from the crypt into the western end of a large hall whose farthest reaches cannot be seen. Great pillars rise to meet a ceiling whose height can only be guessed. The walls close enough to be seen by lamplight are carved in angular patterns that together give the impression of smooth motion despite their sharp geometry. The floor is a mosaic of stones whose colors are nearly invisible beneath a layer of grey dust.

The torches in the wall brackets burned away long ago. If the PCs fill some of the brackets with new torches, the additional light makes the grandeur of the dwelling more apparent. At the midpoint of the great hall, wide recesses to the north and south hold marble benches and statues of Dwarven heroes, sculpted larger than life.

At the east end of the great hall is a hallway twenty feet wide and twenty long, leading to a set of stone **double doors** even more massive than the iron-clad doors in the burial vault. So perfect is the stonework that the join between the two great doors is scarcely even visible. Metal bars at waist and head height rest in their brackets, but are not drawn across. This is the main entrance to the dwelling.

If the PCs draw open the enormous doors, they find a solid stone wall beyond, block upon massive block, from floor to ceiling. The dwelling has been sealed in from the outside!

Regen's comments upon entering the Great Hall:

Regen draws a long breath as he slowly takes in the immensity of the place. "Mistress Fortune indeed favors Nári Blackfoot," he murmurs, "even though she came in the guise of ill luck."

Noting the quizzical looks of some in the party, he continues: "What? Did you not know? Master Nári came into possession of this mine in a game of dice, scarcely forty days ago. Mind you, he did not *win* the property. It's an old, dead mine – yields just about enough iron to nail up the For Sale notices, not that any buyer would touch it." Regen grins, warming to his story.

"So the owner of the mine and a table full of guests were drinking and gambling one night, and Master Nári, having spent all the gold in his pouch, promised to buy the accursed mine as his final wager. Oh, there was laughter to shake the roof that night at the ill luck of Nári Blackfoot! And then, ha! what does he do but decide to make a go of it, see if the old mine won't cough up just a bit more, enough maybe, to recoup some of the buying price."

He looks around at the ancient hall again, his voice falling to a whisper. "And what does the old dead mine yield up? The treasures of our remote ancestors. A greater jest I have never heard. Though to the seller, doubtless it seems less funny."

3. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

This ten foot wide hallway is long, its farthest reaches disappearing into the darkness beyond the light of torch or lamp. The walls are interrupted by pairs of opposite alcoves twice along its length, and the hallway ends in a single door.

3A. When pushed, the door to this room moves a bit but remains closed. Something seems to be blocking it from within. Multiple PCs can force the door open without needing a Strength check. A grating sound is heard as they do so. When the gap is about eighteen inches wide, the door stops and will budge no more.

After entering (which might be a tight squeeze for some), the PCs find that a cabinet is wedged between the door and the wall. Apart from the bed frame, the remaining furniture in the room has been stacked against the door. Atop the oaken cabinet are piled a wooden coffer, a three-legged stool, and even the heavy mirrored plate that once hung on the wall.

In the corner opposite the door slumps a small figure in clothing that has not yet mouldered away. The body is apparently Dwarven. Its flesh has dried into wrinkled parchment that clings to the bones loosely. A short sword lies near at hand. The corpse's leather jerkin is rent with a great gash across the front, and beneath it a matching wound scores across the mummified chest. If the party has not yet encountered the ghost, the murder of this Dwarf inside a sealed room presents a mystery with no obvious explanation.

While examining the body, the PCs might find (**TN 7 Observe (spot)** test) a slender silver chain with a coin-sized pendant attached to it. A circle of small rose coloured gems embedded in the pendant surrounds a Dwarven rune for prosperity.

The wooden cabinet pushed against the door can be opened easily. Within is a jumble of items knocked around when the cabinet was pushed against the door. There is a shallow brass bowl, a small lantern with brown-tinted glass panels, a needle, a broad-bladed knife, two combs, and a few clasps of the sort Dwarves often use to hold long beards and hair in place. Several folded articles of clothing in a toppled stack occupy the left side of the cabinet, but the desiccated fibres tear and break if handled.

The coffer atop the cabinet is trapped (**TN 7 Search** or **TN 10 Observe (spot)** test to detect; **TN 10 Legerdemain** (lockpicking) test to disarm) with a spring-loaded blade that slashes from a slot just below the latch (**TN 10 Swiftness** test to avoid; 1d6 damage). Inside the coffer are several items of interest. There is a broad belt woven of metal cords, each individual cord formed of many bright wire strands twisted together. The buckle, oddly, is plain dark iron, simple and functional. Also in the chest are an old smithing hammer, its handle worn smooth with use, a heavy pair of tongs, and two more hair-clasps, though unlike the others, these are silver, with fluted patterns around their girth.

Judging by the abundance of beard-grooming implements, the Dwarf who lived here must have been rather fastidious in caring for his beard. A PC who deduces this and checks the corpse on the floor will find that the hair that has not yet fallen away from the corpse is cut short, suggesting that the murdered Dwarf is not the one to whom the room belonged.

3B. The door to this room stands slightly ajar. The room beyond is of modest size, about fifteen feet deep and twenty long.

A bed frame whose pallet rotted away long ago is snuggled into the far corner from the door. Two chests, both open, stand on opposite walls of the room. A small spread of metal objects lies on the ground near each. The miscellany of items includes several buttons, a belt buckle, a few sewing needles, a set of stone dice, a bunch of rusty tacks, and a tiny hourglass whose glass bulbs have broken. The chests contain nothing of any greater value: a small hammer and an awl, an assortment of metal clasps, the metal toes and soles of a dilapidated pair of boots, and a hinged latch that seems to have fallen off the lid of the chest itself.

Beside the bed, a bronze frame hangs on the wall. Within it is a plain sheet of metal that, although coated with dust, appears to be polished to a bright shine. On the wall nearest the door is a short row of brass pegs. A small darkened mound of fibrous debris below the pegs is all that now remains of the cloaks and other garments that once hung there.

3C. This room is substantially like the preceding ones, with basic furnishings including an empty bedframe, a wooden table and chair, and a large trunk in the corner.

Unlike the other rooms, the west wall has been extensively damaged, presumably by the collapse of the mining tunnel. Stone blocks jut from their places, turning outward at increasingly sharp angles near the ceiling. There is a gap of several inches between two blocks about seven feet up the wall. Through the gap dangle a bit of chainmail and the end of a skeletal leg.

Despite the coating of settled dust atop the objects in the wall cavity, several yellow metallic glints are visible through the gap. A PC moving closer to examine the crack and its contents will spot something fallen into the room, atop the bedframe, and partly covered with dust and small bits of rubble. It is a light steel greave, gilded around the edges with gold, too thin and decorative to be battle armour. Evidently some of the Firebeards at least were laid to rest in ceremonial armour.

A PC peering into the gap will see that the skeletal remains of the Firebeard Dwarf are somewhat contorted by the partial collapse of its resting place, but its armour has prevented the bones from scattering. A few gilded pieces are near enough to see clearly: the Dwarf's left vambrace, his breastplate, and an edge of his helmet. Unlike the plate metal pieces, the chainmail worn by the Dwarf seems battle-worthy, not ceremonial.

With a **TN 7 Observe (spot)** test, a PC notices that what might be mistaken for a piece of jutting rock is actually the head of an axe, viewed from the top as it leans across the far side of the body. This, like the chainmail, is not gilded and was probably a personal weapon of the deceased Firebeard.

Although some portion of the body must be pinned, most of the Dwarf's remains seem to rest in a pocket of space spared from the crushing weight of the fallen rock. However, removing any item from the crevice is hazardous. A **TN 10 Legerdemain** test is required to remove any individual item from the gap without causing the collapsed rocks to fall in on the PC's arm (**TN 12 Swiftess** test to evade; 3d6 damage otherwise).

A PC who opens the lid of the trunk will find a grey cloth covering everything within. The cloth is actually a hooded cloak that has miraculously retained its suppleness over the long centuries. Beneath the cloak are a few other garments that fared less well. With them are an intact hourglass, an inkwell and a slender brass stylus, a wooden pipe, a small flat metal box containing the powdered remains of an ancient type of pipe-weed, and several leaves of vellum in a stack.

3D. Another room evidently used as living quarters. There is a table with a thick stub of candle on a metal plate, a bedframe in the far corner from the door, and three low shelves resting on brackets fixed to the east wall. The shelves hold the remains of old clothes and boots, a plain leather cap, a tin cup and bowl, and a set of thin metal bars bent into unusual shapes with strange twists and loops.

The metal objects are of varying shapes and serve no obvious purpose. The loops are incomplete, the ends overlapping each other without touching, like a single segment of a spring or a corkscrew. Other pieces have dog-leg kinks and twists and are capped with small metal knobs on one or both ends. A **TN 8 Wits** test or a **TN 7 Games (puzzles)** test lets a PC recognize the bits of metal as a Dwarven puzzle requiring the player to figure out how to turn the pieces so that they slide together.

Embedded in the bottom of the candle stub (**TN 15 Search** test to find) is a small key. This key unlocks an iron box tucked into the corner of the room beneath the bed frame and the mouldered debris within the frame (**TN 10 Search** test to find the box). If the PCs open the box (**TN 15 Legerdemain (lockpicking)** test to unlock without the key), they find 13 silver coins within. Their weight in silver makes them equivalent to about 4 SP in Gondorian coinage, but of course their historical value is far greater.

4. BELI'S CHAMBER

The door to this room, unlocked and unbarred, opens quietly. Beyond is a spacious bedroom thirty feet wide and twenty deep, its single door in the middle of the south wall. The corners of the room are barely within the radius of light shed by torch or lamp.

The place is in complete disarray. The wooden furniture lies in fragments on the ground. A sturdy table is broken in two and the pieces scattered far apart. A great part of the stone wall to the east is blackened as from fire. Metal objects such as urns, platters, knives, and cups are strewn everywhere. Two small iron chandeliers, empty of candles, hang from chains in the middle of the room.

Dimly visible in the northeast corner of the room is a small heap of bones. The bones are the disjointed remains of a single Dwarf whose skin, hair and clothes disintegrated long ago. The skull perches atop the dusty heap, angled upright in the corner, its disquieting grin directed outward at everyone in the room. Two plain gold rings and a gold amulet set with a large black stone lie beneath the piled bones.

These are the **remains of Beli** the traitor, who made his last stand in this room and revealed the full power of the dark arts he had been studying in secret. Whether or not the PCs have already encountered Beli's ghost elsewhere in the ruin, it will definitely appear now and try to prevent them from disturbing his belongings and remains.

Beli's entrance:

A spectral figure rises through the stone floor as though climbing unseen stairs. Short and burly, with a wicked-looking axe in its hand, the figure stomps silently towards the PC nearest the bones in the corner. Its translucent face is a mask of rage, and it mouths something unheard as it advances.

Four strides bring the thing within striking distance of its target, and as it raises its axe, it seems to acquire a sudden solidity. In that moment its hateful voice, speaking Khuzdul, becomes audible: *-sturb my bones!!!*

Beneath the bones is a loose floor stone (TN 10 Search or TN 15 Observe (spot) test to discover) covering a secret niche. Within the space, about one foot square and eight inches deep, is a sheaf of vellum pages covered with writing, alternately in Sindarin and Khuzdul. A TN 12 Language test is required to understand the gist of the writings, or a TN 15 Language test to understand them fully. They detail Beli's studies in the sorcerous arts, which he came to master in some limited ways before his death. The topmost page begins with a short inscription hailing Melkor as the rightful lord of Arda. If the nature of these pages becomes known, the Dwarven king will insist on their immediate destruction.

5. FORGE

This short corridor from the Great Hall runs south for twenty feet before ending in a heavy wooden door that stands ajar.

5A. This **anteroom** to the forge is forty feet long and fifteen deep, lined with sturdy tables, benches and racks along the walls. These bear a variety of iron implements: such tools of the forge as hammers, tongs, moulds, bellows, and smaller items.

Three corpses lie sprawled on the floor in this room, and the room bears signs of their struggles: the tables and benches around its perimeter are slightly dislodged from their original positions flush against the walls; one table is even broken.

Of the three dead bodies, two are Men and the third is a Dwarf. The greater surprise is that not all the bodies are old. The Man toward the east end of the room cannot have been dead for more than a six-month. A stench still lingers around his mouldering body, and he is almost entirely free of dust. The Dwarf, though longer dead, is not as thickly layered with dust as most of the surfaces the group has seen so far.

Whatever these fallen folk were fighting is impossible to determine from the disturbance of the objects in the room, although the bite of a stray blade can be found here and there in the edge of a table or a rack.

5B. In the light of lamp and torch, this large room is revealed to be a sizeable **forge and workshop**. Most of the walls are lined with tables and racks. In the center is a large horseshoe-shaped table with a stone top. A worker standing in the middle of the "U" shape would have almost anything he needed close at hand. The great furnace itself looms cold and dark on the west wall. Before it is a large anvil, set low for a Man, but the right height for a Dwarven smith.

Still more corpses lie here. Two Mannish bodies are near the southeast corner, one entirely skeletal and the other dessicated, its parchment skin pitted and flaking. Between the anvil and the furnace mouth lies the still-rotting body of another Dwarf slain in the recent past – no more than a few months ago.

The Dwarf near the furnace, one of Thorin's hirelings, is covered with something dark and powdery. Horribly, his legs have been hewn from his body. In the thick ash of the furnace itself is a golden torc (TN 8 Observe (spot) to notice) whose central plate is decorated with complicated geometric patterns.

The PCs might guess that this Dwarf was attempting to escape by climbing up through the vent at the top of the furnace when he was attacked and slain, dropping the treasure he carried into the soot of the furnace which still covers his remains. If a PC attempts to ascend the narrow shaft, a TN 10 Climb test is required every round for ten rounds, after which the vertical vent becomes a slope leading up for about a quarter mile to the surface.

The other bodies in the room bear the tokens of Men who hailed from different cultures, possibly even different eras. The older and more skeletal wears a hard leather cuirass branded with the emblem of a serpent; the other has a shirt of light mail and a pair of iron bracers that are scratched and dented from much use. Each apparently bore a sword, for two blades of widely different design lie some distance apart from the bodies.

The dust on the floor has been brushed in a wide swath ending beneath the two corpses, as though they were pushed or kicked aside. Scuffs and prints on the floor in that area suggest that there was a large amount of recent foot traffic in the corner near the bodies.

There is a secret door on the wall near the two bodies, triggered by a stone low on the wall between two tables, with a tiny gap between its edges and the blocks surrounding it (**TN 10 Search** or **TN 15 Observe (spot)** to notice; give +3 to the test roll if the PC suspects the secret door's existence). When the stone is pushed inward, the muted *clank* of iron on stone is heard, and what appeared to be the face of a decorative square column set into the wall swings open, revealing a narrow gap behind it. The space is about three feet wide and it goes back five feet – the thickness of the wall – before opening into another dark room.

5C. Even in the dim light of torch or lantern, a hundred glints of metal twinkle back from the dark recesses of this secret room. Here is the greatest treasure to be found in the ruin: the work of a Dwarfven master smith of the First Age.

Just inside the door lies the body of a recently slain Dwarf, the other thief hired by Thorin to help him loot the ruin. Nothing of value is on his person, but close by him lies a masterfully wrought battle axe (one of the items described below).

Iron racks line the walls on both sides, bearing weapons and armour wrought with finely detailed individual designs. Yet these are not ceremonial arms, but fully functional implements of war. Although none of the pieces is enchanted with magic, the superior craftsmanship gives each weapon a +1 bonus to hit, while each suit of armor blocks an additional 1 point of damage beyond the normal value for its type.

The racks hold the following items:

- 2 suits of chainmail with plate and hauberk, Dwarf-sized
- 4 suits of chainmail with hauberk, Dwarf-sized
- 2 large shields
- 3 small shields
- 2 great axes
- 3 battle axes (in addition to the one lying near the dead Dwarf)
- 3 throwing axes
- 2 short swords

At the west end of the room, a table topped with two shelves displays a panoply of jewels:

- A necklace of striking blue lapis lazuli stones set in platinum, and another with a single large emerald in a gold setting
- A matched pair of rings, one with a white stone in a gold setting and the other with a black stone in a silver setting
- Four gold clasps in the shape of Dwarf-runes set with carnelians
- A *mithril* tiara with a single diamond surrounded by tiny rubies

A large ring-shaped area on the lower shelf is strangely free of dust. This is where the golden torc (room 5b) lay until it was recently stolen by the hapless Dwarfven thief who now lies dead at the mouth of the forge furnace.

Beli's ghost is very protective of this place; he attacked Thorin and his fellows soon after they entered this room. He is very likely to attack the PCs here, moving through the floor or walls to surprise them if he can.

6. DINING HALL, KITCHEN, LARDER

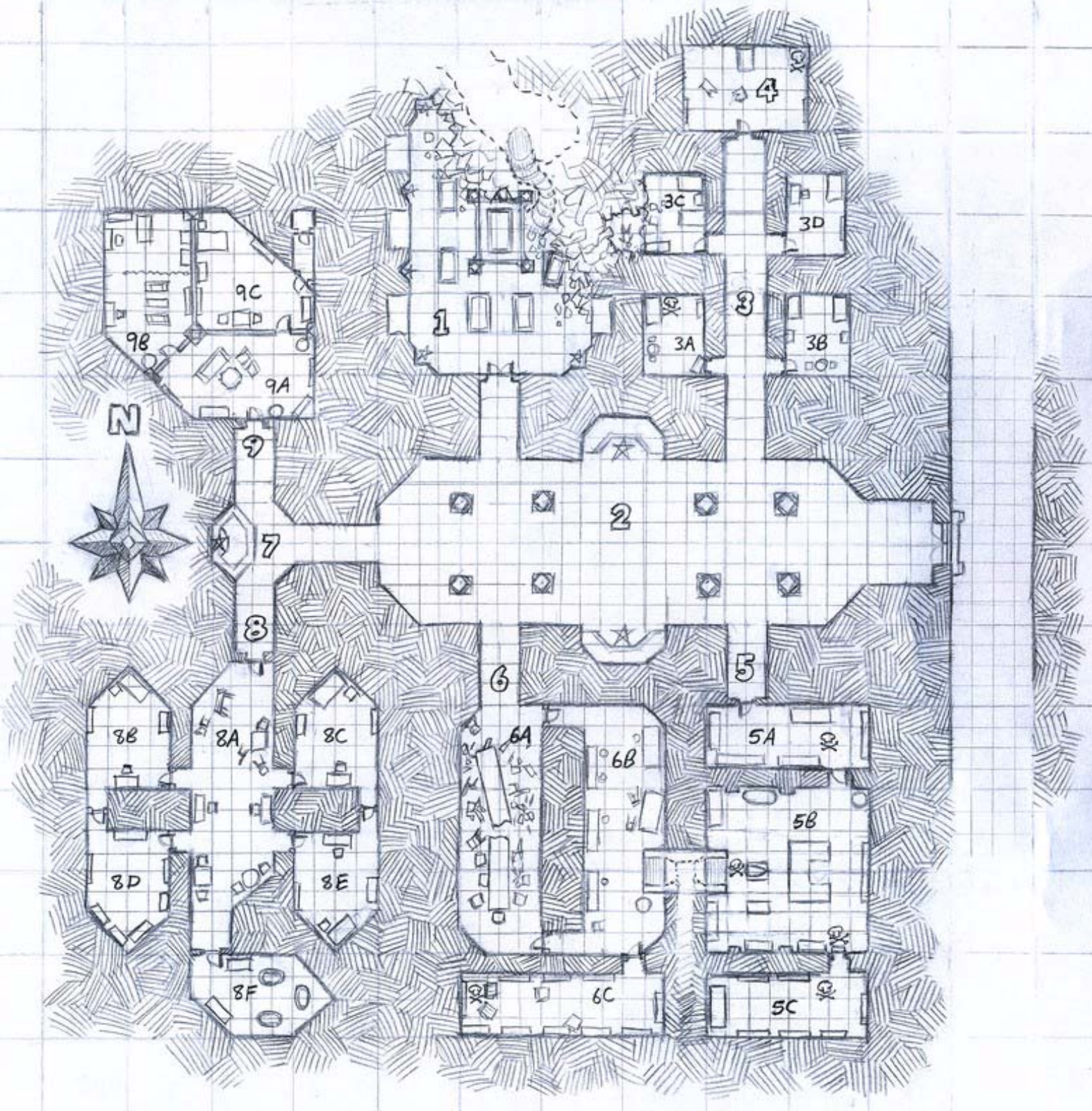
The short corridor leading from the Great Hall leads directly through an open doorway into a long dining hall.

6A. The long stone-slab table in this hall has cracked in the middle. One half is still propped at a slant upon its short stone table legs at the far end of the room; the nearer half lies askew on the floor, the table legs having fallen. Broken pieces of wooden chairs surround the ruined table. The ceiling of the room arches far overhead, barely visible in the dim light. The walls bristle with empty torch brackets; above them the stone is blackened with the soot-shadows of ancient fires.

6B. This enormous kitchen must once have bustled with cooks and serving-men stationed at the many tables here. Everywhere brass and iron implements still hang from their wall-mounted hooks: ladles, pots, forks, tongs, spoons, cups, racks, and skewers, as well as knives in every size and shape imaginable. The table surfaces are covered with a miscellany of bowls, platters, and pans. Almost all these items are rust-coated. The large open oven gapes menacingly, its interior as black as night. The floor before it is dusted with soot, in which an observant PC can find smudged footprints (**TN 7 Observe (spot)**).

This oven shares a vent with the furnace of the forge in room 5b. A **TN 10 Climb** test on each of ten rounds is needed to ascend the vent until it becomes a slanted shaft leading about a quarter mile up to the surface.

6C. The large bones of animals are all that remain of great dried hams and sides of meat that were once stored here; the meat mouldered away long ago, as did the sacks full of roots and herbs. Several crates, mostly smashed or dilapidated with age, lie near the back of the room.



NOTES ON THE MAP:

Each square is five feet. A tiny skull and crossbones marks the locations where dead bodies are found in the ruin, other than those interred in the family tomb. The approximate arrangement of tables, chairs, stools, bedframes, and other items of furniture is drawn in each room, but Narrators should feel free to alter those details. In the tomb (room 1), a dotted line shows the chute leading down a slide of rock from the mining tunnel above the ruin. Likewise, a dotted line in the space between rooms 5b and 6b shows the vent leading up to the surface, accessible through either the furnace in the forge or the oven in the kitchen. The wide passage on the east edge of the map leads to other parts of the lost city of Nogrod (though it is blocked by a stone wall erected against the entrance to the home).

Most of the wooden shelves lining the walls have broken and fallen from the slow pressure of the heavy foodstuffs they bore. Those shelves that remain intact are bowed under the weight of metal tins and wooden boxes, all of whose contents have decayed to powder.

Behind two crates in the corner is a set of strangely small bones (TN 8 **Observe (spot)** test to notice). A TN 10 **Lore/Race: Dwarves** or equivalent test lets a PC identify these as the bones of a young Dwarf-child. A doll carved of ivory with miniature leather clothing lies beneath the bones. This was the only member of the Firebeard household – Beli’s original victims – whose body was not found and buried before the murderer returned as a vengeful ghost.

7. FOUNTAIN

A large fountain, long dry, occupies the west portion of this octagonal juncture of hallways. On a pedestal behind the fountain’s basin stands a larger-than-life marble statue of the Firebeards’ ancestral progenitor – indeed, one of the seven Fathers of all Dwarf-kind. Before him is a massive stone anvil, and in his hands he hefts a mighty hammer.

Torch brackets are placed at intervals along the fountain wall and in front of the statue. When the fountain was filled with water, the firelight flickering from these torches and reflecting from the surface of the water created an awe-inspiring effect, as though the viewer were a creation of the ancient smith, gazing up at him from within the fires of his forge.

8. FAMILY QUARTERS

A cluster of personal chambers surrounding a large family room.

8A. Many tables of various sizes stand throughout this large room, providing places to play games, drink, converse, read, and write. A profusion of candle stubs dots the surface of most of these tables. Although some of the chairs and stools are broken, most are intact. One table in the northwest corner is overturned and missing a leg; other tables and chairs are pushed aside or scattered.

On the tables is an assortment of items:

- Stone dice inscribed with Dwarven runes
- A Dwarven game similar to Go; the board is jostled and the pieces are scattered nearby
- Several glazed clay drinking mugs
- A small unfinished marble figurine and a few chiseling tools
- Two Dwarf-toys with wind-up clockwork parts that can “walk” awkwardly across level surfaces

8B. The suite of bedroom furniture here has remained intact over the long centuries, except for the bed pallet, which rotted away long ago.

A desk-table holds two leather-bound books. The larger book contains numerous sketches of decorative stonework designs. The other book, smaller and thicker, is a personal journal containing terse accounts of local events occurring over a period of about six years (TN 10 **Language: Khuzdul** test to understand in its entirety).

A large trunk pushed against the east wall stands with its lid open. It contains the tattered remains of several suits of clothing. Mixed in among the ruined fabric are eight silver buttons and a belt with a silver buckle, all badly tarnished.

The door from this room leading into the adjoining bedroom to the south is missing, and the hinges are broken, hanging loosely from their moorings or rent from the wall altogether.

8C. The Dwarf who once lived here seems to have had an affinity for military matters. A variety of swords and axes are mounted on the walls, of functional rather than ornamental design. The weapons have succumbed to rust, though they might be restored by a craftsman of sufficient talent. One bracket among the display of axes is notably empty of the weapon it once held.

In the corner, a thick wooden stand holds a full suit of chainmail and a sturdy helmet. These are in much better condition than the weapons in the room, needing only a few hours’ cleaning and polishing, and could be worn into battle by a Dwarf today.

On the desk lies a large sheet of leather on which a map of the Blue Mountains and most of Beleriand has been drawn in dark brown ink. Notations on the map seem to indicate places where battles were fought by Dwarves late in the First Age (although of course, it was not known as such at that time).

The rest of the room is spartan, containing only a few items of personal grooming and the expected heap of fibres that were once garments stored on a small shelf.

8D. The three bed frames in this room are smaller than those elsewhere in the ruin, and indeed this was the room shared by the young children of the Firebeard household. Their dolls and toys are still heaped in a small chest and atop the table by the door. A set of shelves holds the remains of their small articles of clothing.

Most of the furniture in this room is in a state of disarray and upheaval. This was the last room defended by Beli’s victims as he made his way through the house killing his Firebeard masters. Though the grown sons fought bravely to protect their young siblings, they could not stand against Beli’s sorcery combined with his skill at arms. Several dark stains upon the floor in the south corner still bear testimony to the horrible slaughter that took place here.

8E. A hundred sparkles reflect back the light of the party's torches and lamps as they enter this room. The shelves and tabletops are littered with glinting pieces of jewelry – at least a couple of dozen items. On closer inspection, however, the jewelry proves to be relatively valueless, made of brass or pewter and set with lesser stones such as agate, lapis lazuli, and amethyst. A few pieces lie on the floor, rejected by some ancient thief who had room in his pockets only for the best treasures.

These pieces of jewelry are apprentice work, the early efforts of a jewel-smith in training. They are not, however, without beauty despite the less valuable materials. Only a practiced smith's eye (**TN 15 Appraise**) will find the small flaws in the workmanship of these jewels; undoubtedly this craftsman was ready to begin working in gold and silver, if he had not begun already.

There are about a dozen rings here and an assortment of pendants, brooches and miscellaneous items including a delicate tiara and a dagger with a jeweled hilt.

Some of the combs and other personal items on the bedside table have been embellished with interesting metalwork, as have the buckles on the dilapidated leather belt and boots on the floor beside the bedframe.

8F. Three large oblong copper bathing tubs stand in the east end of this room, which also has two polished metal mirrors hung over tables bearing hair combs and clasps. A circular mosaic of blue stones in various shades is in the center of the floor. Nothing else of note is in the room.

9. MASTER SUITE

These rooms accommodated the patriarch and matriarch of the family. The suite includes a separate bedroom for each as well as a receiving room for intimate guests.

9A. The wooden furniture in this sitting room, delicate when new, has not well endured the passage of long ages. Many of the seats and tables have collapsed, one or two thin legs having eventually given way beneath the weight they bore – especially the stone-topped tables. Various ornaments lie along the base of the walls, having fallen from their toppled pedestals: bronze urns, alabaster figurines, small bound books with gilded lettering on their covers, and fragments of bowls made of colored blue glass.

The entire perimeter of the stone walls is carved with bas-relief scenes depicting Dwarven cultural and military achievements, rendered in a surprisingly realistic and representational style.

The pelt of a large mountain bear is spread upon the floor, its brittle hairs lying flatly atop it, their roots no longer anchored in the dried parchment skin. Beneath the pelt (**TN 12 Search** to find) are two silver keys with many teeth of different shapes and lengths.

9B. The door to this room is latched and locked, requiring one of the two keys hidden beneath the bear pelt in room 9a to open (**TN 15 Legerdemain (lockpicking)** test otherwise).

The feature first noticed upon entering is a brocaded curtain that divides the south half of the room from the north. The curtain is black, but sewn with many colors that form a pattern of interweaving bands, overlapping one another again and again in an intricate design. It hangs from loops along a brass rod traversing the width of the room. It is in surprisingly good condition.

In the southern end of the room are several seats and tables in a dilapidated state, similar to the furniture in the sitting room to the south. One table of sturdier design than the others still bears an ornate water-clock, a Dwarven invention of fantastic complexity. When the receptacle at the top is filled with water, the clock slowly rotates a disk painted in gold with Dwarven runes representing the hours of the day. The clock does not work at present, and a **TN 15 Craft (locksmith)** or comparable test is required to repair the delicate mechanisms and restore the clock to functionality.

In the northern portion of the room are a bedframe, two tables, a chair, and many shelves. Several items of value lie atop one table, above which is hung a large polished metal mirror. One item is a slender silver chain with a coin-sized pendant attached to it. A circle of small rose coloured gems embedded in the pendant surrounds a Dwarven rune for prosperity. There is also a small silver box with gold edges. It contains a ring fashioned of gold and silver strands cunningly woven together, made for a more slender finger than that of most Dwarves, and a gold pin with a large oval bloodstone in its center.

9C. The door to this room is latched and locked, requiring one of the two keys hidden beneath the bear pelt in room 9a to open (**TN 15 Legerdemain (lockpicking)** test otherwise).

This is the room of a Dwarf who, though wealthy, did not love ostentation or hours spent at leisure. The thick, sturdy wooden furniture is functional and still stands intact. A small city of burnt-down candle stubs litters the back edge of the work desk, piled on one side with a small sheaf of parchments. These mostly record (**TN 10 Language: Khuzdul** to read) matters of business and household finance. A large inkwell, knife, and two quills – one already pared too short to continue using – complete the evidence of a serious-minded head of household.

Though simple, the room's other furnishings offer ample comfort. There is a brass washbasin in the corner, a well-cushioned couch (although the cushions are dessicated and broken open), and a bed larger than any Dwarf ever required. Over the dressing cabinet is a round polished metal mirror, an assortment of combs and hair clasps is arranged neatly atop the cabinet, and within it are many clothes whose design was both elegant and comfortable.

In the northeast wall is a hidden panel that swings open when a slightly protruding stone in the wall (**TN 7 Search** test or **TN 10 Observe (spot)** test to notice) is pushed in. Beyond the door is a short hall with a shelf along the back (north) wall.

The floor of this hall is trapped. If a small lever (**TN 10 Search** or **TN 15 Observe (spot)** test to notice) near the ground just inside the door is not pulled down, a person taking more than a single step into the hallway will cause the floor to tip down toward the far end, tilting into a slide. The pit is not deep, and a person who tumbles down and strikes the bottom takes only 1d6+1 damage (**TN 10 Swift** test to reduce damage by half). It is difficult to climb back out, however (**TN 15 Climb** test). This device is intended to trap thieves rather than to kill them.

The shelf holds two small boxes. One of these is filled with gold coins, one hundred thirty-four in all. The other box holds an assortment of cut gemstones. These treasures, however, are not genuine. The gold coins are actually copper painted with a gold finish, and when inspected in a good light the gems prove to be semiprecious stones.

The real treasure is hidden even more carefully. Just below the shelf is a small slit in the wall (**TN 10 Search** or **TN 15 Observe (spot)** test to notice). Within the slit is a pressure button that can be pushed in with a dagger or any similar narrow object. This releases a latch and allows the entire back wall to swing forward on hinges, revealing a small extension to the hallway.

The small chest in this secret niche is filled with real coins of both gold and silver, as well as a leather pouch containing several diamonds, emeralds, and other precious stones. The wealth represented here is considerable but certainly far short of even the fourteenth portion of Smaug's hoard that Bilbo Baggins brought home with him to the Shire. Most of the Firebeard family's wealth lay in their ownership of mines and other business ventures.

EVENTS

As the party explores the ruin, they will eventually encounter two groups of foes. The first foe is the ghost of Beli, who is most likely to watch the intruders for awhile before making a first appearance in room 4, 5c, or 9c (areas that contain valuable items which he guards jealously).

Beli does not heed pleas for mercy or efforts to parlay rationally. He screams at the intruders that they are thieves, and repeats this accusation often, with tremendous fury. However, he is not an unintelligent, single-minded opponent. Beli was a soldier before he came to work in the employ of the Firebeards, and wields his ghostly axe with great skill. He has also learned to put to good advantage his ability to become incorporeal.

In combat, Beli remains intangible until the last possible moment before his axe strikes a foe, and only then takes physical form for a

moment before returning to an incorporeal state. This makes it quite difficult to land a blow on him. In addition to the normal attack roll, a PC attacking Beli must succeed a **TN 10 Swift** test to time the attack so that it catches Beli in the moment of corporeality.

If Beli loses a full Wound level or finds the party better prepared to deal with him than he expected, he will retreat, normally by dropping through the floor or stepping through a wall. He will observe the progress of the intruders and watch for a time when he can attack them in a tight spot where he might find a greater advantage.

If the PCs are having serious difficulty fighting Beli, place an enchanted weapon in the ruin – a sword or axe specially crafted for the war against Morgoth, for example. A PC wielding such a weapon can strike Beli even while he is incorporeal (obviating the need for the Swift test), and also deals full damage instead of half (as an undead creature, Beli normally takes half damage from all weapons). You might place such a weapon in the central sarcophagus of the Dwarven crypt, in the hidden armory (5c), or in the master bedroom (9c).

The second group of foes are the Dwarven rogue Ganar and his two cohorts. These three were hired by Nári Blackfoot to loot the ruin while its ghostly guardian is distracted by the PCs. They are already crawling down the vent from the surface as the PCs enter the ruin, and wait to hear evidence that the PCs have encountered Beli before descending into the forge or the kitchen, whichever sounds safer.

Use Ganar and the other rogues to complicate things for Beli and the PCs. You might have Beli flee a battle with the PCs only to find other thieves elsewhere in "his" home, and fall to attacking the new intruders. You can also use the rogues to create additional hints about the location of the second entrance into the ruin, by having the PCs catch them in the act of entering or exiting the furnace/oven vent.

Ganar and his helpers are not looking for a fight, but once caught, they try to kill the PCs so that there will be no witnesses to report on their illegal attempt to loot the ruin. If encountered alone and outnumbered, one of them will attempt to flee and regroup with the others, as they have a better chance of surviving a fight together. None of them is willing to die just to keep Nári Blackfoot's plan a secret, however, and if questioned at swordpoint they will tell all that they know in exchange for their lives.

CONCLUSION

The adventure ends when the PCs leave the ruin to report what they have discovered, either to Nári Blackfoot or to the Dwarven authorities, depending on what they think the truth is. You might want to run a short scene depicting the trial of Nári Blackfoot, if appropriate.

As a reward for their service in dealing with Beli's ghost, and possibly exposing Nári, the Dwarven king pays the PCs a tidy sum of gold. He is disinclined to permit them to retain any of the items recovered from the ruin. With a **TN 20 Persuade** test, he might change his mind in the case of a relatively minor item, but in that case the PC will receive no gold.

If Nári's plot was exposed, the king might also offer the PCs the chance to continue their service by leading the exploration of other parts of Nogrod, after the stone wall blocking the entrance to the Firebeard home is removed. In any case, reward each PC with 500 experience points, plus any additional XP bonuses they have earned through good roleplaying.

NPCs

BELI, LESSER TA-FA-LISCH

RACE: Undead spirit

RACIAL ABILITIES: Skilled, Adaptable, Dominion of Man

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

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

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Shadow Axe) +7, Intimidate (Fear) +6, Language (Khuzdul) +7, Observe (Spot) +6, Stealth (Hide) +8

EDGES: Resolute, Hoard **FLAWS:** Grasping

DEFENCE: 10 **HEALTH:** 12 (6 wound lvls) **COURAGE:** 3

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Intangible, Shadow Weapon (2d6 plus Strength bonus), Stout (see CRB p. 62), Undead Stamina

Intangible: A ta'falisch usually is an incorporeal shadow. It can pass through solid matter unhindered, but cannot manipulate physical objects unless it assumes tangible form. It is immune to heat, cold, fire, falling, and poison. The ta'falisch must assume tangible form for a few moments when it wishes to attack a victim, and during that brief time weapons can harm it.

Undead Stamina: Ta'falisch need never eat or drink, take half damage from physical attacks, heal all injuries at five times the normal rate, do not have Weariness levels, need never make Stamina tests to resist weariness, and cannot be affected by poison or disease.

GANAR AND COHORTS (2)

RACE: Dwarf

RACIAL ABILITIES: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy, Stout

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 7, Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1)*, Strength 10 (+2)*, Vitality 11 (+2), Wits 7

REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +1, Willpower +0, Wisdom +1

ORDER: Rogue **ADVANCEMENTS:** 3

ORDER ABILITIES: Lurking in Shadows, Dirty Fighting (see HOF 35, pg 11)

SKILLS: Acrobatics +2, Armed Combat: Blades (Shortsword) +5, Climb +4, Craft (underwater basket weaving) +2, Intimidate (Power) +2, Jump +2, Language: Khuzdul +7, Language (Westron) +5, Legerdemain (pick pocket) +2, Lore/Group: Rogues +2, Lore/Race: Dwarves +4, Lore/Realm: Blue Mountains +3, Observe (Spot) +4, Run +3, Search +4, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Survival (Mountains) +2, Unarmed Combat (Brawl) +3

EDGES: Night-eyed, Keen-eared, Dodge, Wary

FLAWS: Grasping

DEFENCE: 11 **HEALTH:** 13 (6 wound lvls) **COURAGE:** 3

GEAR: Short sword, dagger, rope, backpack

DESCRIPTION: Ganar and his two roguish associates are uncommon among Dwarves, scoundrels who have made a living through banditry, theft and extortion. They are experienced fighters and do not go out of their way to avoid a violent resolution to conflicts.

REGEN ASHBEARD

RACE: Dwarf

RACIAL ABILITIES: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy, Stout

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 10 (+2)*, Strength 11 (+2)*, Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 9 (+1)

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

ORDERS: Craftsman, Miner **ADVANCEMENTS:** 8

ORDER ABILITIES: Speedy Work, Underground Sense, Hidden Minerals, Mastery of Stone

SKILLS: Appraise (Stonework) +5, Armed Combat: Polearms (Mattock) +5, Climb +4, Craft: Stonecarving +4, debate (Bargain) +4, Healing (Treat wounds) +2, Language: Khuzdul +7, Language (Westron) +5, Lore/History: Blue Mtns +3, Lore/History: Dwarves +5, Lore/Race: Dwarves +3, Lore/Realm: Blue Mountains +4, Observe (Hear) +6, Persuade (Charm) +1, Search +2, Smithcraft (Blacksmith) +7, Stonecraft (Mining) +8, Survival (U nderground) +6

EDGES: Craftmaster, Doughty, Stern, Strong-willed, Tireless

FLAWS: Crippling Wound: lost eye

GEAR: Mattock, Leather armor, backpack, rope, torches, flint and tinder

DESCRIPTION: Regen has worked for Nári Blackfoot and his cousin Orr for many years and has earned their trust and regard many times over. He is innocent of the plot to loot the ruin and would feel honor-bound to turn in his employer if he learned the truth. Regen's long grey beard shows that he will soon enter old age, but he is still hale and strong. He lost his right eye in a cave-in accident in his youth, and wears a black patch over it. Some of the younger miners are a little afraid of the gruff Regen, but those who have been acquainted with him longer know of his subtle sense of humor and his natural respect for others.



ART CREDITS

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WHAT'S OUT THERE

This is a list of Web sites along with Decipher's official Web sites. 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</p> <p>DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164</p> <p>THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE http://halloffire.org</p> <p>ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm</p> <p>FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules</p> <p>SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/</p> <p>CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH http://roleplay.avioc.org/index.htm</p> <p>MERPCOM http://www.merp.com</p> <p>OTHER MINDS MAGAZINE http://www.othermindsmagazine.com</p>	<p>THE MAD IRISHMAN http://www.mad-irishman.net</p> <p>THE LAST ALLIANCE http://thelastalliance.com</p> <p>RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/</p> <p>THE STEWARD AND THE KING http://www.stewardandking.net</p> <p>THE TOWER HILLS http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills</p> <p>TREK-RPG.NET http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php</p> <p>CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine</p> <p>THE ONE RING.COM http://www.theonering.com/</p> <p>THE ONE RING.NET http://www.theonering.net/</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?
- 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'.