

The Lord of Daylight

Special thanks to Greg Saunders

'The Lord of Daylight' is an adventure for *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* set in Eriador in the forests of the Trollshaws sometime during the Third Age.

THE STORY

Three weeks ago a Dunning thief called Balafren was caught stealing from the homes of his neighbours and was expelled from his clan village, fleeing into the depths of the perilous woods of the Trollshaws. That night, fearing for his life, Balafren crawled inside a narrow cave opening in the side of a small hill. A narrow tunnel twisted and turned deep underground. Eventually the passage opened onto a ledge over a large dark cavern wide enough to sleep on. Despite the unpleasant smell that permeated the air Balafren was exhausted and soon fell asleep. He was not alone.

Three Hill-trolls also made the cave their home, and returning from their hunting at dawn they set about eating the skinny deer they had caught. Balafren lay hidden on his rocky ledge above their cave listening to their harsh talk. Amidst their curses and vile words the Trolls discussed where they would go that night to find food. Suddenly, almost giddy with fear in the darkness, Balafren was overcome by a strange notion. Despite the danger, he suggested out loud where the Trolls should next attack.

Near blind with rage at the presence of an intruder, the Trolls searched the cave but could not reach the ledge. Still, in the depths of their dark minds they heard his words, and for want of a better idea they followed Balafren's advice and raided his old village, catching three fat goats in the attack. Slowly, with time, the Trolls grudgingly learned to trust the 'voice from the above,' and have profited greatly from his words. For his part, Balafren has been using the Trolls as a diversion. When the Trolls raid a village for food, Balafren raises the alarm—too late for the villagers to act, but leaving enough time for him to rob the homes of what little they have.

This scheme has been working well. However, last night, during a heavy storm, as the Trolls walked back to their cave they blundered into a group of Elves. The Elves fought the Trolls. During the fight Balafren saw an opportunity for gain and robbed the Elves. Amongst some small trinkets he stole the Kalanidri (Sindarin for 'Jewel of Daylight'), an item vital to an Elvish quest. Two of the Elves have remained behind to find others who will help them seek out the valuable jewel.

SCENE ONE : MINALANT AND CÚRONLAES

The adventure opens as the player characters travel through the Trollshaws. (The reason the characters are travelling here should be decided by the characters and Narrator.) During the journey, two figures step from the nearby woods and approach the party. They are Elves and from their bearing and power clearly Noldo. A male and female, they introduce themselves as Cúronlaes (Sindarin for ‘Moon-child’) and Minalant (‘Unique gift’), a brother and sister. Both are distressed; underneath his haughty demeanour Cúronlaes is simmering with anger.

The two have been watching the characters for some time from the shadows of the trees. Minalant has seen the good in the party and thinks they may be able to aid her. She tells the characters that the night before a number of Trolls attacked the pair and the Wandering Company they traveled with. They fought the Trolls off but discovered that in the confusion they had been robbed. Many items of little worth were stolen, but among them something of great value: the Kalanidri. Constructed in ancient times, the item is a stone which carries within it a tiny glimmer of the light of the west. They were taking the stone to Cirdan at the Grey Havens in the hope that the light of the stone might quench the yearning some Elves have to cross the sea, persuading them to tarry in Middle-earth. Minalant believes strongly that the light of the Elves is still needed to help against the growing darkness, if only for a brief time. Unfortunately, the rest of the company refused to tarry and so the pair are now alone. They do not know where the Trolls came from and are too conspicuous to interact with the local people, so they beg the characters’ help in locating the stone.

Assuming the characters agree, Cúronlaes and Minalant lead them to the location of the troll attack.

SCENE TWO: THE ATTACK ON THE WANDERING COMPANY

Cúronlaes leads the characters to a stand of trees containing a wide clearing which is almost impossible to see from the outside. The weather last night and today is foul and water drips down from the leaves and branches. There are no signs of the passage of the Elves—they do not mark even wet ground with their passing—but the wreckage left by the Trolls is plain.

A successful Track test (TN 10) shows that there were at least two trolls (neither of the Elves can confirm this). A superior success reveals the presence of another set of tracks, made by a humanoid, that lead into the clearing and then back out again. Minalant confirms that these tracks lead to the spot from which the Kalanidri was taken. The tracks are light, as if the person making them was moving very carefully.

A second Track test (TN 10) indicates that the Trolls were travelling north. An Observe test (TN 10) reveals that to the south of the clearing, some miles distant, a wisp of smoke curls into the air. This is the Dunnish village of Tyrrilth. Attempts to track the passage of the Trolls prove fruitless; the awful weather has seemingly washed away even the tracks of these large creatures. However, a final Track test (TN 20) reveals that someone has successfully hidden the Troll's tracks.

SCENE THREE: TYRRILTH VILLAGE

Tyrrilth is a typical Dunnish village surrounded by a ditch and earth wall. The people here survive by hunting through the winter and gathering roots and berries during the rest of the year. The soil is too poor to support many crops but they do keep goats for making cheese.

The Trolls attacked Tyrrilth last night, climbing the walls, breaking into the pens, and grabbing four goats. Balafren, hooded and keeping out of the light, raised the alarm. During the confusion he broke into the Headman's house searching for valuables. However, before he could find anything of real worth he was disturbed by the Headman's daughter, Finnel, and forced to retreat to the woods. He was shadowing the Trolls back to the cave when they stumbled on the Elves.

The villagers are extremely upset about the raid even though no lives were lost, and this has made them even more hostile to strangers than normal. Any of the characters who enter the village are subject to hard stares and a stony silence. Eventually, if the characters hold their ground, the Headman, Curotal, appears. Though he speaks Westron he is only willing to talk to the characters in Dunael, the Dunnish language, which the characters are unlikely to understand. If they do appear to understand him, he reverts to answering only in grunts. The more the characters attempt to get information from the Headman, the angrier he becomes. Eventually the villagers effectively drive the characters out of the village because of their unwillingness to cooperate.

SCENE FOUR: FINNEL

When the characters leave the village a successful Observe test (TN 10, or 5 if they are being wary) indicates that someone is following them, trying to keep out of sight. Only snatches of a moving figure are seen.

It is Finnel, the Headman's daughter, who is following the characters. Like her father she speaks Westron, and she wants the characters to help her because the 'thief' she discovered in her house stole a broach her late mother gave to her. Her father

believes she imagined the intruder and has lost the broach, but she is adamant it was stolen. She is too shy and scared to approach the characters directly, but assuming they don't terrify her when they catch her, she asks the characters to help her find it.

If the characters take the child back to the village, the near-frantic Headman rushes out to hug her. If the characters have been kind to her, the Headman helps them, grudgingly telling them that he has heard of Trolls attacking villages to the north of this area for many weeks. However, as last night was the first time the Trolls have come to this area, the village was unprepared. He says that last night one of his hunters followed the Trolls to a small wood to the northeast of the village but was afraid to enter. On a successful Persuade test (TN 10), he directs the hunter to lead the characters to the wood.

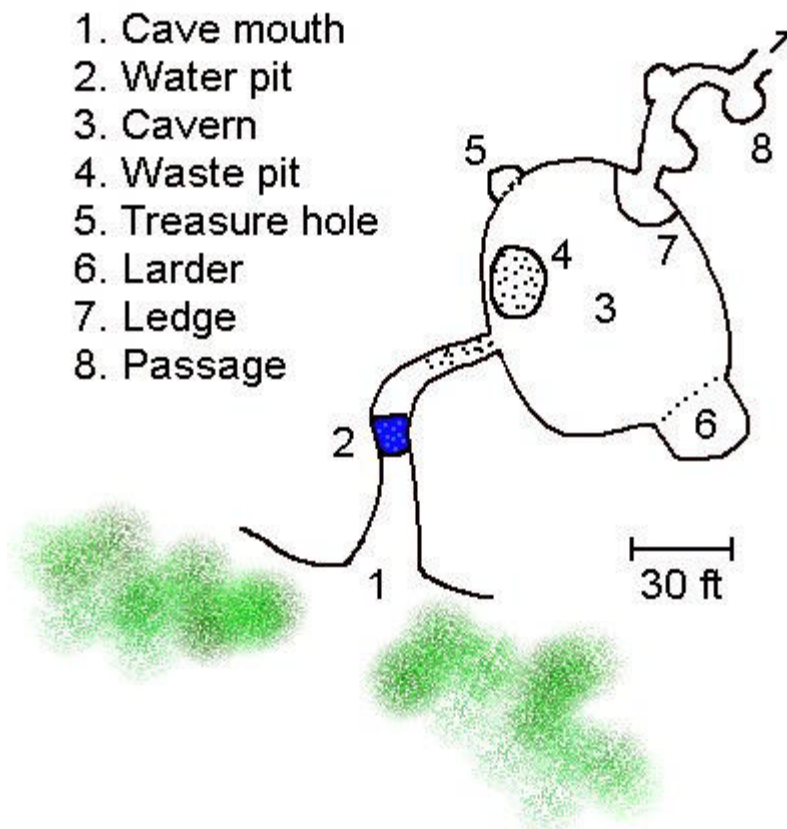
SCENE FIVE: THE DARK WOOD

As the hunter leads the heroes along the hidden paths of the Trollshaws, a Track test (TN 20) reveals that the Trolls passed this way. A superior success shows that someone has attempted to hide the tracks.

The wood lies roughly ten miles from the village. Dark and foreboding, the trees are old and the undergrowth thick. A wide passage has been beaten through the brush and the signs of Trolls are much clearer here. In the centre of the wood is a small, low hill. The Trolls dwell in a cave in the side of the hill. Scattered on either side of the path as it winds into the wood are the bones of large animals the Trolls have dropped. Many wolves dwell in the woods and they can be seen slinking through the trees. Although they only attack if provoked, they add to the tension in the darkness of the wood.

SCENE SIX: THE LORD OF DAYLIGHT

The characters find that the path leads to a wide cave opening with many bones scattered around the mouth. Inside (providing it is daylight), the three Hill-trolls rest. Balafren also rests on his customary ledge above the Trolls' den. A map of the cave, with descriptions of each of the locations depicted, follows.



1. Cave Mouth: Bones litter the entrance to the cave. The tunnel itself is ten feet wide and 15 feet high, a squeeze for the trolls. A breeze coming from the cave carries with it the stench of the Trolls and their decaying food.

2. Water Pit: The Trolls have dug out a pit here and filled it with water to stop animals from wandering into the cave. The pit itself is 15 feet wide, but since the Trolls have taken to filling the pit themselves, the stench itself is enough to keep most living things at bay. Should anyone fall in they are in for a very unpleasant time. Further down the passage the tunnel is littered with the skulls of animals, and passing over this area without making a noise requires a Stealth test (TN 15).

3. Cavern: Wide and with the roof on average 30 feet high, the Trolls have made this their home. Scattered around the cavern are the remains of the Trolls' food, in various states of decay. During the day two of the Trolls sleep noisily in the cavern whilst the third toys with their 'treasures' (see below).

4. Waste Pit: The Trolls tend to fling most of the bones of their food into here. A group of large rats have also made the decaying waste their home.

5. Treasure Hole: Here, behind a pile of rubble, the Trolls keep their 'hoard.' Mostly rubbish, amongst the trash are ten silver and two gold coins and a short sword

of high quality, made for a Hillman chief. Such is the quality of the sword that it grants a +1 attack bonus. The sword, however, is very distinctive and clearly of Hillman origin; it could cause problems should the characters encounter any Hillmen, who would likely want to know why outsiders have one of their masterworks. During the day one of the Trolls will be found here, fingering the dross.

6. Larder: Here the trolls store their food. Currently the larder holds three dead goats and the remains of a Hillman hunter the Trolls came across. (He was the original owner of the sword in location 5, a family heirloom).

7. Ledge: This stone ledge is difficult to spot (Observe test at TN 10, or 15 in poor light for those without night vision). It is 25 feet above the cavern floor, just out of the Trolls' reach. Climbing up to the ledge is difficult (TN 15, modified by poor light if applicable). Balafren sleeps and addresses the Trolls from this ledge. A breeze enters the cavern from here, disguising much of the Trolls' stench to those on the ledge.

8. Passage: A narrow passage winds away into the hill, eventually opening near the hilltop. (The entrance requires an Observe TN 15 test to spot from the outside, should the characters search for it). Balafren can be found here during the day. The passage is over 200 feet long and splits many times, forming a maze. On average three to four feet wide and five feet high, Balafren can quickly hide himself here, though there is only one exit. If the characters try to penetrate the maze, the Narrator should describe a sufficiently confusing selection of passages. In the small cave next to the ledge Balafren keeps his loot, a collection of jewellery and money summing up to about five gold pieces, and including Finnel's broach. In the small cave around the corner from the ledge Balafren spends his time gazing into the Kalanidri.

Killing the Trolls in the cave during the day is difficult. One is awake at all times and silently approaching the cavern, past the water pit and animal skulls, is not easy. Furthermore, the Trolls fight with some intelligence, trying (for example) to restrict the number of characters that can get into the cave. By night the cave is empty of both Trolls and Balafren, and could be used as an ambush site.

Dealing with Balafren is no easy task. If the characters engage the Trolls in combat his obvious course of action would be to flee, but since he found the Kalanidri he has not been thinking clearly. He considers himself the lord of this place and is loath to leave it. Instead he is likely to hide in his passages and wait for the characters to leave. Should they climb up to the ledge he tries hiding in the maze of passages. If cornered he defends the Kalanidri to the death.

The Kalanidri

The Jewel of daylight holds within it a glimmer of the light of the west. The Noldor smiths made it as their might and craft were waxing. However, the doom of the Noldor has affected the light the stone carries. To the pure of heart the light of the stone has a clear golden hue, but greedy men can become unwittingly ensnared by the stone. Those with the Grasping flaw must make a Willpower test (TN 15) to resist its pull. Those who fail are enchanted and trapped, unable to look away, and will not suffer anyone else to gaze upon the stone. As this malady grows the bearer will even fight friends to keep hold of the Jewel. In such cases the light of the stone is a reflection of the heart of the holder—in Minalant's hand the light is pure, in Balafren's the light is tainted red by his bitterness.

AFTERMATH

Retrieving the Kalanidri and returning it to Minalant wins her gratitude and blessing. She tells the characters that if they ever need the help of the Elves of Lórien they need but mention her name. The adventure should be worth about 2,000 experience points to the characters, the main objective being to secure the Kalanidri, the secondary objective being to destroy the Trolls, and a lesser objective being to return Finnel's brooch to her.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Statistics are not presented for most of the following characters, as they should not be needed in the course of play. Narrators who discover the need for particular unsupplied statistics in the course of play should assign them on a case-by-base basis.

Minalant

Beautiful, tall, and graceful, with long dark hair and shining blue eyes, Minalant is truly an imposing Elf. One of the Noldo, she was born in across the sea and the light of the west can be seen in her eyes. Her gift is her wisdom, and her wise words have aided many, both great lords and simple men. An Elf of Lórien, she believes the Elves still have a part to play in Middle-earth and seeks to persuade her kindred not to desert Middle-earth too soon. With her Lady's permission, she is travelling to Lindon to present Cirdan with the Kalanidri in the hope that the flickering spark of light in the depth of the jewel will quench some her peoples' desire to cross the sea.

Cúronlaes

Cúronlaes is a tall, dark haired Noldo lord. Impetuous and haughty, Cúronlaes suffers from the vanity that has afflicted many of his people. He is quick to anger and the only person who can cool his passion and keep him in check is his sister Minalant. Over the years she has persuaded him of the need for keeping the First born in Middle-earth and now he fights for this cause with all his being. To Men his demeanour can seem seems strange and fey, for the passions of Elves are hard to decipher and can run deep for many ages.

Curotal

Typical of his people, Curotal is mistrustful of strangers and rather xenophobic. The Troll attack was a bitter blow, but he is determined that the villagers will deal with it in their own way—by ignoring it and carrying on as normal. The only thing he loves more than his village is his daughter Finnel, especially since his wife, Lavel, died five years ago.

Finnel

Short and skinny, this tomboy daughter of the Dunnish Headman is very inquisitive. She felt no apprehension in challenging Balafren in the Headman's house, despite the danger. She follows the characters after hearing them talk of the Trolls to try to get them to retrieve her broach—left to her by her dead mother it is her most prized possession and she would do anything to get it back.

The Hill-trolls

Marginally more intelligent than their brethren, the Hill-trolls understand Westron and can speak. They have been occupying the cave in the Trollshaws for several years, mainly eating wild things from the woods. Under the influence of Balafren the fat goats of the surrounding villages have proved a welcome change in diet. Normally, they would not dare to attack the camps of men, but Balafren reconnoitres the villages for them and selects villages that are relatively undefended.

Statistics for the Trolls are provided on page 292 of *The Lord of the Ring Roleplaying Game* core rulebook. Each is armed with a club.

Balafren

Tall and wiry, with close-cropped red hair and a lean face, Balafren is a hard and uncompromising man always looking to get ahead. He thinks of no others bar himself.

Recently, however, the Kalanidri has affected him strongly. The stone has twisted his Grasping flaw. He now fancies himself the 'Lord of Daylight', claims the stone as his own possession, and spends most of his waking hours gazing into its light. He dreams of become a lord over men and imagines the caves in which he resides as a mighty fortress.

Use the statistics for Dunlendings on page 289 of *The Lord of the Ring Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, with the following substitutions:

Attributes: Nimbleness 11 (+2), Wits 10 (+2)

Reactions: Swiftiness +2, Willpower +2

Orders: Rogue

Edges: Keen-eyed, Wary, Grasping

Skills: As per 'Dunlending' but also Acrobatics +2, Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword) +4, Climb +3, Observe +2, Stealth +5, and Track +5.