

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
ROLEPLAYING GAME



QUICK-START ADVENTURE

INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

It's a lot of things, that's what. Here are a few of them...

It's fun for you and your friends. Roleplaying games are a group experience. Everyone works and plays together to have a good time. All but one of the players takes on the role of a character, a hero who sets forth on fantastic and dangerous adventures. One of the players, the Narrator, acts as referee. He comes up with the adventures and plays the roles of all the other people your heroes meet during their journeys.


It's a movie you write as you go along. The Narrator is like the 'director,' the person who sets the scene, describes the action, and speaks the dialogue for the extras and villains. The rest of you are like the actors who play the star characters! Like Viggo Mortensen playing Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings* movies, you play your character's part in the game—but unlike Viggo, you get to make up your own lines and make Aragorn do anything you can think of! How many times have you watched a movie and thought a character should have done something else—something much cooler? Well, roleplaying is your chance to do all those cool things the scriptwriters never thought of. And the rules of the game along with those numbers on your character sheet help the Narrator determine whether you succeed or fail in whatever actions you attempt.

It's 'Cops and Robbers' with rules. When you were a kid, you'd run around the backyard playing 'cops and robbers,' making pistols with your fingers and shouting 'Bang! I got you, you're dead!' Then, you'd argue over whether you were dead until you had the energy to start running around the backyard again. In *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*, the roll of the dice tells you whether you're dead, or whether the robber—Orc—dies instead. This makes the game more fun and more challenging, and cuts down on the arguments.

It's a computer game run on the best video software ever. In a roleplaying game, there's no graphics budget. All the Orcs, the walls and ramparts of a mighty stronghold such as Helm's Deep or Orthanc, all your weapons and armour and the spectacular effects of magic spells come from your imagination and from the descriptions of the Narrator. You still have Wound Points, weapons, and special abilities on your character sheet, just like the stat bar in a video game. But you can use them in any combination, not just the ones the programmer thought would be useful. And best of all, you're not restricted to a glowing computer monitor to see the Orcs explode when you chop them in half. You use your imagination to envision them in their final death throes.

The rules presented here and the accompanying adventure, 'The Road to Henneth Annûn,' give you more specifics about roleplaying, including some examples and hints to guide you through the adventure. The Narrator can use this material to help make your first roleplaying experience easier and to introduce the rules of the game in small, manageable pieces. 'The Road to Henneth Annûn' will introduce you to the rules of the game as you play it through. So by the time you solve the final encounter, you will be confident roleplayers ready to develop your own adventures in J.R.R. Tolkien's world of Middle-earth. Welcome to the grand adventure that is *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*!

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THE LORD OF THE RINGS ROLEPLAYING GAME: QUICK-START ADVENTURE

'But you have been chosen, and you must therefore use such strength and heart and wits as you have.'

— Gandalf to Frodo,
The Fellowship of the Ring

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In the year 3018 of the Third Age of Middle-earth, a darkening storm gathers over Ithilien, once the fairest province of the old Kingdom of Gondor. The Dark Lord Sauron has drawn his minions about him and thrown an army against the causeway forts just outside the ruined city of Osgiliath, which are defended by a small, but determined, garrison. And yet this is only the beginning of things. Soon, full-fledged war will break upon Middle-earth.

In these days of dark foreboding, Lord Faramir, who is the younger son of the Ruling Steward of Gondor and also the military commander in Ithilien, needs as many stout men and true as he can find to help defend this border of the realm. At this moment, the beleaguered garrison at Osgiliath needs a few intrepid messengers to get through to Faramir at the secret stronghold of Henneth Annûn and ask him to come to their aid. The fate of these brave men—perhaps even the fate of Gondor itself—hangs on successful delivery of this message. Who will accept responsibility for seeing it through?

Welcome to the Fast Play rules for The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game and its accompanying adventure module, 'The Road to Henneth Annûn.' This product is designed to introduce you to The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game regardless of whether or not you have much experience with roleplaying games.

The Fast Play rules themselves cover concepts that are important to

understanding how the game works, and they are just detailed enough to get you through the adventure module.

After the Fast Play rules you will find three pre-fabricated, beginning-level characters designed for use with 'The Road to Henneth Annûn.' Each requires a little bit of customisation before they are ready for play—just enough to give you a taste of the character creation process.

The adventure requires a Narrator and 1–3 players, with each player taking the part of one character, in order to play it. For their part, the players must guide their characters through a deed of valour upon which the fate of the Osgiliath garrison hangs, while the Narrator presents them with the challenges that come with the greatness of the deed and adjudicates the success of their efforts. Only the Narrator should read the description of the adventure before play begins, however, as it would ruin the players' fun to know in advance the exact nature of the challenges they will face.

FAST PLAY RULES

*Let those call in the wind who will;
there are fell voices on the air, and
those stones were aimed at us.*

— Boromir, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

These Fast Play Rules represent a condensed version of the game rules found in *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* core rulebook. Everything you need to know in order to play ‘The Road to Henneth Annûn’ is explained here, but the core rulebook provides more detailed rules governing every aspect of the game, as well as tools for extending your game experience into a full-fledged chronicle containing many exciting adventures.

TIME

This adventure, ‘The Road to Henneth Annûn,’ should provide you with up to an afternoon’s worth of gameplay, depending on how many player characters (or PCs) are involved. This time, the time you and your friends experience as you play, is called real time. During those few hours of real time, the PCs could spend several days adventuring. That time, the time characters experience, is called game time. Game time falls into one of two categories: action time and narrative time.

ACTION TIME

Action time passes in rounds. A round represents about six seconds of game time. All participants, whether they’re PCs, or non-player characters (or NPCs) or monsters controlled by the Narrator, get to act twice each round. Moving, attacking, and casting a spell each cost one action. Characters

may move up to 18 yards in a single move action. During action time, it is important to keep track of who goes when, what everyone is doing, and how long it takes. Life and death can hang in the balance of how long it takes to draw a weapon, for instance. Since time plays such an important role during combat, character location and movement become crucial.

NARRATIVE TIME

Narrative time isn’t measured in rounds. It’s basically the time between combats. Narrative time can pass quickly or slowly depending on what the players do. It could take you 10 minutes of real time to decide how you want your characters to respond to an encounter, even though they take their actions within a few seconds of narrative time. Likewise, if you tell the Narrator that you and the rest of the party are resting for the night, he might determine that nothing happens while you rest. So, in just a few moments of real time, you skip over an entire evening of narrative time to awaken the next morning and continue on your journey.

ACTION SEQUENCE

During a combat scenario or action sequence, all characters make initiative tests to determine who acts in what order. Each player rolls 2d6 and adds their character’s Swiftiness reaction modifier. The Narrator makes one roll for all the villains and adds the highest Swiftiness modifier belonging to a villain in the group. Once every player totals their result, characters begin acting in order, from highest to lowest initiative results. They maintain this order every round until the combat or action sequence ends.

SKILL TESTS

Most of the things that PCs, NPCs, and monsters alike can do

require particular skills, such as knowing something about the history of Gondor (a Lore/Realms skill), following a trail (Track skill), or shooting a bow (Ranged Combat skill). Look at the skills listed on your character sheet. This list represents those things your character knows, or can do well, and make up your basic options during play. The numbers behind the title are called levels and represent how skilled the character is (higher levels being better). Any time you want to use a skill, do the following:

- 1) Roll 2d6.
- 2) Add your skill level.
- 3) Tell the Narrator the total.

The Narrator follows the same procedure when making skill tests for NPCs and monsters, except, of course, that he need not announce the numerical result. He simply describes the consequences (when the Orc swings its scimitar, does the blow strike home or miss?) if it’s something the players would see.

The Narrator knows the number you need to beat in order to succeed at any given skill test. That number is called the target number, or TN. Situations can modify the target number. For instance, it’s harder to track someone at night than it is during the day. These modifiers are accounted for by predetermined target numbers included in the encounter instructions. The Narrator doesn’t have to worry about them unless he decides to alter the conditions surrounding a particular test.

ATTRIBUTE TESTS

Occasionally, PCs, NPCs and monsters want to do something simple, like carrying a heavy object or remembering something that happened earlier in the adventure. There are no skills for these basic tasks. Instead, they require an attribute test, using the appropriate attribute modifier in place of skill level. If you need to

make an attribute tests, the Narrator will tell you which attribute is being tested so you know which modifier to apply to your roll. To make an attribute test, do the following:

- 1) Roll 2d6.
- 2) Add your attribute modifier.
- 3) Tell the Narrator the total.

As with skill tests, the Narrator handles attribute tests for NPCs and monsters.

Attribute modifiers tend to be lower than skill levels. This is because skill levels happen to include attribute modifiers. You don't see them because they are already factored into the character skill levels to keep things simple.

REACTION TESTS

Skills and attributes play a role when determining the outcome of actions initiated by the character. But some circumstances may force your character to react. In these situations, you make reaction tests. The Narrator will tell you whenever you need to make a reaction test. When making the test, do the following:

- 1) Roll 2d6.
- 2) Add the appropriate reaction modifier.
- 3) Tell the Narrator the result.

As with skill and attribute tests, the Narrator handles reaction tests for NPCs and monsters.

You'll know which is the right reaction modifier because the Narrator will tell you. He'll say 'make a Swiftsness reaction test,' meaning 'roll two dice and add your Swiftsness reaction modifier.'

NATURAL TWELVE

Any time you make a skill test, an attribute test, or a reaction test and roll sixes on both dice (called a natural twelve), you get to roll another die and add it to your total. If you roll another six, you get to add 6 to your total and roll again. Keep rolling and adding until you roll something other than a six, add the last number rolled, then stop. Through this open ended rolling method, you could achieve very high scores indeed!

MELEE COMBAT

Striking with a weapon during close combat involves a skill test, just like using any other skill. Check your character sheet for skills that let you use weapons. These include 'Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword)' or 'Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe).' As with any other skill test, you must roll 2d6, add your skill rating, and tell the Narrator your total. He will then tell you if you hit, based on the estab-

lished target number (your opponent's Defence rating).

RANGED COMBAT

Shooting someone with a bow requires skill just like attacking with a sword. Like all skill tests, it involves rolling 2d6 and adding the attacker's skill with a bow ('Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow)' or some similar skill). The target number for ranged attacks is the target's Defence, just as in melee combat, but range modifiers based on the distance to the target must be accounted also. As a general rule, add +2 to the roll if the target is within 5 yards, and subtract two if the target is more than 30 yards away. Each type of bow also has a maximum range, beyond which it cannot shoot. To make a ranged attack, do the following:

- 1) Roll 2d6.
- 2) Add your Ranged Weapon skill level.
- 3) Add the range modifier (penalty or bonus).
- 4) Tell the Narrator the total.

INFLECTING DAMAGE

A successful combat skill test inflicts damage in Wound Points. Damage varies by weapon type, and is





YOUR CHARACTER SHEET

Look at your character sheet. The first thing you'll notice is the picture of your character along with a bunch of terms and numbers. Here's a brief explanation of all these elements to help you understand your character and his abilities.

NAME, RACE, AND ORDER

Your character's name appears at the top of your sheet. His race and professional order are listed underneath. To use the characters included with the adventure module as an example, Galathil is a Man and Warrior. Your character's race confers certain strengths and weaknesses, just as his order makes him skilled in some areas and unskilled in others.

always expressed in terms of number of dice rolled and, in most cases, an amount added to the roll. For example, 2d6+2 means roll two six-sided dice and add 2 to the result. The double sixes rule does not apply to damage rolls, but an attacker's Strength modifier is always added to damage from melee attacks.

WOUNDS

The Wounds rating represents how much damage a character can suffer before dying. Reduce Wound points accordingly every time a character or monster suffers damage. When a character or monster's Wounds reach zero, he or it dies.

MAGIC

Characters that have the order ability Spellcasting can also cast magic spells. A character with Spellcasting must make a successful Weariness test against the TN of a spell in order to cast it. If he fails, the spell has no effect, and he loses 1 level of Weariness. Spells vary in strength and type of effect, but as a general rule the more powerful the spell, the higher its TN and the harder it is to cast successfully.

ADVANCEMENTS

As your character completes adventures he gains experience points, which you may then use to purchase advancements. The beginning-level characters that the players will run in 'The Road to Henneth Annûn' have yet to earn any experience points. But some of the foes (or potential foes) that they will encounter have gained advancements thanks to their previous exploits, and that fact is duly noted in their statistical blocks.

ATTRIBUTES

All characters are described using six basic attributes: Strength, Vitality, Nimbleness, Wits, Bearing, and Perception.

STRENGTH represents how much your character can lift or how much extra damage he does when he hits someone with a melee weapon.

VITALITY measures your character's health and endurance.

NIMBLENESS represents how fast and agile your character is.

WITS reflects how smart your character is and how fast he thinks on his feet.

BEARING describes how regal, noble, or imposing your character seems to others.

PERCEPTION measures your character's ability to notice things in the world around him.

Each of these attributes has an associated level or value and derived modifier. Some rules use the level, others use the modifier. The following chart shows attribute levels and modifiers.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

LEVEL / VALUE	MODIFIER
0-1	-3
2	-2
3	-1
4-7	0
8-9	+1
10-11	+2
12-13	+3
14-15	+4
16-17	+5
18+	+1 for every 2 levels

REACTIONS

Reactions work like attributes, determining your character's ability to react to situations or cope with certain predicaments. Reactions are usually derived from one of two attributes, then elevated through edges. There are four reactions: Stamina, Swiftiness, Willpower, and Wisdom.

STAMINA allows you to resist poison and disease as well as tolerate extreme pain or fatigue.

SWIFTNESS lets you dodge incoming attacks or falling rocks, and perform other actions requiring you to move or act quickly.

WILLPOWER lets you resist temptation, mental control, and social domination, including corruption and spells that affect your mind.

WISDOM lets you perceive deception and see things for what they are. It also enables you to realize the folly of actions you or your companions are about to take.

DEFENCE

All characters, heroes and villains, have a Defence rating. Your Defence rating serves as the target number (TN) your enemies need to beat with their attack rolls. When you roll to hit and add your bonuses, you're trying to overcome your enemy's Defence rating.

RENOWN

The Renown score measures a character's fame (or notoriety)—how likely it is that a complete stranger will recognize him by reputation. A high Renown score can prove helpful in situations that require Social skill tests. Since beginning-level characters have Renown scores of 0, it will not play much of a role in 'The Road to Henneth Annûn,' but more advanced characters will find it useful.

COURAGE

Your character is, by definition, an extraordinary individual, whether in fact or potential. To reflect this, he receives a number of Courage points that he may spend to increase a single test result. After you make a test, you can choose to improve your result by +3 for each Courage point spent. A

Courage point spent is lost to you until the end of the scene in which you spend it.

ORDER AND RACIAL ABILITIES

Your character's order and race may grant special powers and test bonuses during the game. For example, Rogues often have the 'Fleet-Footed' order ability, which gives them a bonus when making a Run skill test. Racial abilities, such as the 'Beast-skill' ability possessed by Elves, also confer special bonuses and abilities during specific situations in play.

TRAITS: EDGES AND FLAWS

Edges are special abilities that grant a specific bonus over the course of the game. For instance, Caranor has the 'Furtive' edge, which allows him to add +1 to his dice rolls when making Legerdemain and Stealth.

All characters begin with at least one edge. You may begin with more than one if you choose a number of flaws equal to the number of extra edges. Flaws are notable shortcomings that may hinder you in performing specific tasks or otherwise make life difficult for you. For instance, the flaw 'Weak-willed' gives you a -2 penalty to all of your Willpower tests.

SKILLS

Skills define the areas in which your character excels, including knowledge, socializing, and actions. Each skill comes with a number, or 'level.' Melephin, for instance, has the skill 'Climb +1.' He adds '+1' to his die roll whenever he needs to make a Climb skill test. Some skills also list a specialty in parentheses, such as 'Stealth (Sneak).' If a skill test calls for a specialty that the player possesses,

he may add +2 to his dice roll. If a test only calls for the skill or the skill (no specialty), he just adds his skill level normally.

HEALTH AND WEARINESS

Health and Weariness monitor your character's physical state and give you an idea of how much harder you can push him before he collapses altogether. The Health score tells you how many Wound Points he can take before he drops to the next lower Wound Level. As a general rule, characters have 5 Wound Levels ('Dazed,' 'Injured,' 'Wounded,' 'Incapacitated' and 'Near Death') in addition to Healthy. Whenever your character takes damage, check off one Wound Point box for each point of damage you sustain. When you check off the last box in your Near Death Wound Level, your character dies. Each Wound Level other than Healthy is associated with a penalty that applies to all tests your character makes. If your character drops from a Healthy state to Dazed, for example, he suffers a -1 penalty.

If your character wears armour, he can shrug off a certain amount of damage from each attack, thereby reducing the amount of damage that counts against his Wounds. The amount of damage that is reduced by armour is listed in parenthesis behind the armour type—for example, 'Ordinary chainmail (5)'. In this case, wearing ordinary chainmail allows the character to ignore up to five points of damage from each attack, subtracting only whatever damage remains from his Wounds.

Characters cannot recover Wound Points unless they rest. They may recover 1 Wound Point per day of complete rest. In addition, another character with the skill Heal may try to augment the process once each week. In this adventure, however, it is highly unlikely that characters will

have the opportunity to recover Wound Points.

Weariness measures your character's level of fatigue. Characters may lose 4 Weariness Levels ('Winded,' 'Tired,' 'Weary,' and 'Spent') without becoming completely helpless. If they drop a level from Spent and become 'Exhausted,' they may take no actions at all until they have rested enough to recover a Weariness Level. Winded characters suffer a -1 penalty to all tests. Tired characters suffer a -2 penalty. Weary characters suffer a -3 penalty. Spent characters suffer a -8 penalty. Characters may recover 1 Weariness Level by resting: 10 minutes of narrative time for a Winded character, 1 hour if Tired, 2 hours if Weary, 4 hours if Spent, and 8 hours if Exhausted.

Characters must make a TN 10 Weariness test if they have been in combat for 10 minutes (60 rounds) or travelling for 4 hours.



GRIMOIRE

You must choose in advance the spells that you know well enough to cast. You select them when you choose Spellcasting as an order ability.

GEAR

Your character owns certain equipment he takes with him on his adventures. The 'Gear' portion of your character sheet lists all of the arms, armour, and equipment he's carrying with him during the adventure.

CHARACTERS

And Aragorn is dangerous, and Legolas is dangerous. You are beset with dangers, Gimli son of Gloin; for you are dangerous yourself, in your own fashion.
— Gandalf, *The Two Towers*

Here are three characters that you can play in 'The Road to Henneth Annûn.' We present them not to restrict your options as a player, but to get you started quickly in playing The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game by skipping through most of the character creation process (to learn in detail how to create characters, see the core rulebook). For the most part, they are ready to go. The passages in italics indicate choices that you need to make before the character is finished. Just follow the instructions to round him out. If you wish to run all three characters through the adventure, but have less than three players, feel free to have one player run more than one character.

The characters represent two of the Free Peoples of Middle-Earth—Elves and Men—and three different professional orders. If you wish to play through the adventure with less than three characters, it doesn't really matter which one(s) you pick. We have designed each with skills and abilities that will prove helpful in the adventure in mind. Even if you try to play with only one character, you should be able to follow a reasonable course of action in each encounter, making use of at least one of the character's strong points.

For the most part, the names of skills are self-explanatory. Racial abilities, professional abilities, and traits are explained in parentheses as necessary. If no explanation appears, the effects of most of these character elements have simply been worked into the statistical blocks.

MELEPHIN'S GRIMOIRE

Melephin can choose five spells from the following list:

BLINDING FLASH (Weariness TN 10, inflicts -5 penalty to all tests that require sight on one foe for 1d6+1 rounds, duration halved if target makes TN 12 Swiftness test, cannot select without Create Light)

BURNING SPARKS (Weariness TN 8, cast sparks from an existing fire so that anyone within 10 feet of that fire suffers 1/2d6 damage, targets may halve damage by making a successful TN 10 Swiftness test, cannot select without Kindle Fire)

CHANGE HUE (Weariness TN 8, caster receives +5 bonus to all Stealth (Hide) tests for 100 minutes)

CREATE LIGHT (Weariness TN 8, caster creates a light centred on his hand or the point of his staff sufficient to illuminate a 20-foot radius, negates darkness-related penalties),

EVOKE AWE (Weariness TN 10, caster gains +8 bonus to Intimidate test against servant or ally of Sauron)

FIERY MISSILE (Weariness TN 7, caster can create up to 10 small flaming projectiles that he can throw up to 8 feet as a Ranged Combat attack, doing 1d6+1 damage each, cannot select without Kindle Fire)

FOG RAISING (Weariness TN 8, caster can create a fog bank up to 300 feet in radius and 500 feet away, +5 to the TN of all Combat and Observe tests within the fog bank, lasts until caster stops concentrating)

KINDLE FIRE (Weariness TN 5, any one flammable object touched by caster on fire, target with clothes afire suffers 1d6+3 damage per round unless he spends an entire round extinguishing himself and makes a successful TN 5 Swiftness test)

MELEPHIN

RACE: Elf (Silvan)

RACIAL ABILITIES: The Art, Beast-Skill, Comfort, Elven Form, Elven-sense, Farsightedness, Ghost-scorn, Lightfootedness, Swift Healing, Woodsy

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1), Strength 6 (±0), Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 12 (+3)

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

ORDER: Magician

ORDER ABILITIES: Spellcasting 1 **ADVANCEMENTS:** 0

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance) +4, Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +2, Climb +1, Debate +4, Healing +4, Insight +2, Intimidate (Majesty) +4, Language: Haradrim (Near Harad) +4, Language: Orkish +4, Language: Sindarin +9, Language: Silvan +9, Language: Westron +9, Lore/Realm: Mirkwood (Geography) +4, Lore/Group: Haradrim (Customs) +6, Lore/Race: Orcs (Tactics) +6, Observe (Spot) +5, Persuade (Charm) +8, Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Dagger) +3, Run +4, Stealth (Hide) +4, Track (Orcs) +2

Add +1 to any 5 of the above skills except Acrobatics (Balance), Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword), Climb, Language: Westron, Language: Sindarin, Language: Silvan, Persuade (Charm), Ranged Combat: Thrown Weapons (Dagger), Run, Stealth, and Track.

EDGES: Fair, Keen-eyed, Swift Recovery (heal wounds twice as fast as normal), Wise

SPELLS: Pick 5 from *Melephin's Grimoire* (see page 6).

FLAWS: None

HEALTH: 9 **DEFENCE:** 11 **COURAGE:** 3 **RENOUN:** 0

GEAR: Longsword (2d6+5 damage), staff (2d6+2 damage) scale mail (absorbs 4 points of damage)



BACKGROUND

Melephin cuts an eccentric figure in Ithilien—a Silvan Elf of Mirkwood who wandered south in search of a broader knowledge of magical practice than he could get in his native realm. He even wandered as far as Near Harad, where he picked up some of the language and customs of the place. Recently, a Ranger patrol from Osgiliath took him into their custody. They didn't know what to make of him at first, but he won many friends among the ruined city's defenders and decided to stay with them and help defend the causeway forts as an informal and highly irregular soldier of Gondor.

HEALTH

HEALTHY (0)

DAZED (-1)

INJURED (-3)

WOUNDED (-5)

INCAPACITATED (-7)

NEAR DEATH (-9)

WEARINESS

HALE (0) WINDED (-1) TIRED (-2)

WEARY (-4) SPENT (-8) EXHAUSTED (-10)

CARANOR

RACE: Man (Middle Man)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptability, Dominion of Men, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 12 (+3), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 6 (±0), Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftiness +5, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Rogue

ORDER ABILITIES: Lurking in Shadows (+5 bonus when you spend a Courage point on a Stealth test) or Fleet-Footed (+2 bonus to Run tests)

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance) +5, Armed Combat: Blades (Dagger, Long Knife) +5, Craft: Calligraphy +4, Debate +3, Jump +2, Language: Westron +7, Legerdemain (Open Lock) +5, Lore/Realm: Gondor (Ithilien) +2, Observe (Listen) +3, Persuade (Fast Talk) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +4, Ride (Horse) +2, Run +3, Search +3, Stealth (Sneak) +7

Add +1 to any 5 of the above skills except Craft, Debate, Language: Westron, Lore/Group: Gondor (Geography), Ride, Run and Stealth. Instead of adding +1 to an existing skill, you may also add Climb +2 or Guise +2.

EDGES: Furtive

FLAWS: None

HEALTH: 7

DEFENCE: 13

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 0

GEAR: Dagger, long knife (2d6+3 damage), longbow (maximum range 200 feet), 20 arrows (2d6+2 damage), scale mail (absorbs 4 points of damage)

BACKGROUND

Caranor was born and raised in a farming village on the western bank of the Anduin, in east Anorien. When the army of Mordor issued from Minas Morgul and bore down on Osgiliath, he went there to volunteer his services in defence of Gondor, despite entreaties from his family not to risk his life. Impressed by his enthusiasm, the garrison commander Atanacar took on Caranor as a scout and messenger. He has since earned the affection of the garrison, who treat him as something of a mascot.

HEALTH

HEALTHY (0)

DAZED (-1)

INJURED (-3)

WOUNDED (-5)

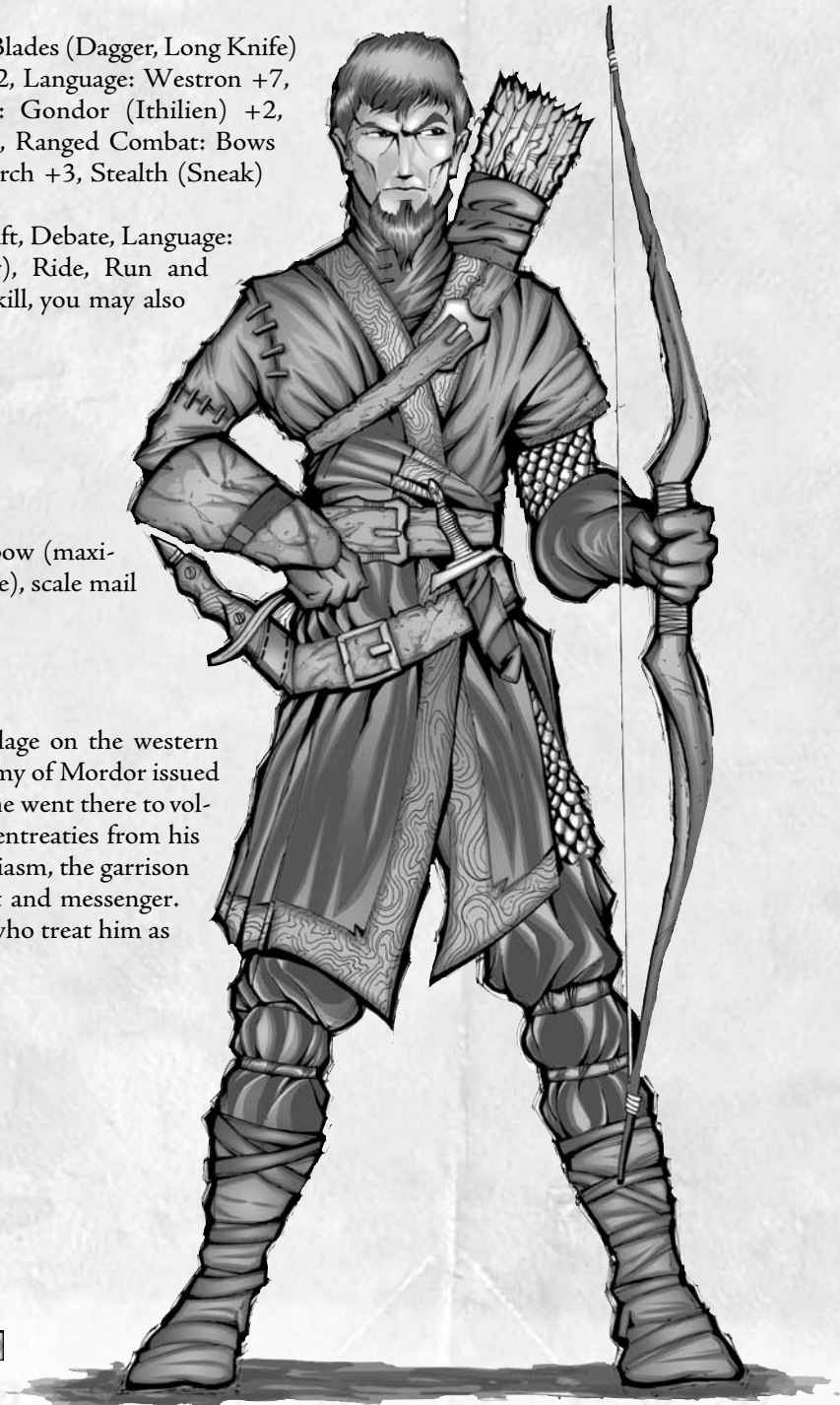
INCAPACITATED (-7)

NEAR DEATH (-9)

WEARINESS

HALE (0) WINDED (-1) TIRED (-2)

WEARY (-4) SPENT (-8) EXHAUSTED (-10)



GALATHIL

RACE: Man (Dúnedan)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptability, Dominion of Men, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 12 (+3), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 6 (±0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +5, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

ORDER: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Warrior-born (you may spend a Courage point to receive a +2 bonus to all Armed Combat and Ranged Combat tests during a single battle)

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Acrobatics (Balance) +5, Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +6, Climb +3, Healing +2, Intimidate (Power) +3, Language: Westron +6, Lore/Realms: Gondor (Geography) +3, Observe (Spot) +3, Persuade (Oratory) +2, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +6, Run +5, Stealth (Sneak) +4

Add +1 to any 5 of the above skills except Acrobatics (Balance)

Craft, Language and Lore/Realms: Gondor, Language: Westron.

Instead of adding +1 to an existing skill, you may add Jump +3 or Track (Orcs) +1.

EDGES: Bold (spending a Courage point gives Galathil a +5 bonus when using any skill on his list except for Intimidate, Language, and Lore)

FLAWS: None

HEALTH: 10

DEFENCE: 13

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 0

GEAR: Longsword (2d6+5 damage), longbow (maximum range 200 feet), 20 arrows (2d6+2 damage), ordinary chainmail (absorbs 5 points of damage), large shield (-5 penalty to ranged attacks against)



BACKGROUND

Like many Rangers of Ithilien, Galathil was born in Minas Tirith to a family that had once lived in the Anduin vales of North Ithilien. He just completed his basic military training, and was recently sent forward with a small detachment of soldiers to bolster the garrison at Osgiliath.

HEALTH	
HEALTHY (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
DAZED (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
INJURED (-3)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
WOUNDED (-5)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
INCAPACITATED (-7)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
NEAR DEATH (-9)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

WEARINESS	
HALE (0)	<input type="checkbox"/>
WINDY (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
TIRED (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
WEARY (-4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPENT (-8)	<input type="checkbox"/>
EXHAUSTED (-10)	<input type="checkbox"/>

ADVENTURE: THE ROAD TO HENNETH ANNÛN

*‘But however that may be, my lord
Faramir is abroad, beyond the river on
some perilous errand. . . .’*
— *Beregond, The Return of the King*

As an opening move in what will become The War of the Ring, Sauron launches an army against the garrison at Osgiliath. The ancient city is now only a ruin of its former glory and useful only in that it guards a strategic crossing point along the Anduin. It is just a probing attack, meant to test Gondor’s defences and mask the Harad Road, while the Dark Lord mobilizes for a full-scale assault on the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. But for the Rangers of the South who have been posted here, the situation is serious enough.

They are a relative handful of men standing against the might of Mordor, for the rest of Lord Faramir’s Rangers are scattered throughout the province in secret bases like Henneth Annûn, from which they attempt to spy on stirrings in Minas Morgul and the Black Gate. Waves of attacking Orcs have crashed against the causeway forts east of the city proper and fallen back, but rumours abound that at least one Nazgûl will arrive soon to turn the tide. Atanacar, the captain of the garrison, realises that he needs more men to defend this important river crossing. He resolves to get a message to Faramir asking for reinforcements.

This is where your players and their characters come in. No matter which combination of pre-set characters is participating, Atanacar considers them suitable candidates for this

mission, because Caranor and Melephin are irregulars and therefore not entirely reliable in close combat, while Galathil may be spared because of his inexperience. The captain summons them into his presence and orders them to find Lord Faramir at Henneth Annûn, the Ranger sanctuary in North Ithilien, and urge him to come to Osgiliath with reinforcements. ‘Tell him that our situation is grim, and that his presence will steady the men. The fate of Gondor may rely on it, for if the Enemy takes the Anduin crossing, then nothing stands between Mordor and Minas Tirith.’

Atanacar gives them no written message, lest they fall into the hands of the Enemy, but it is simple enough to remember in any case. He does give them a small parchment with a roughly drawn map (see pg. 17) showing the way to Henneth Annûn. It entails following the Anduin north for 10 leagues, or 30 miles, then cutting northeast toward the Ephel Dúath for another 10 leagues, until they reach the main road that runs north toward the Black Gate. From there, they should cut back to the northwest for another 6 leagues until they reach a steep, rocky slope. The entry to the sanctuary will not be obvious, but they will spot the sentries—or more likely, the sentries will spot them. When they meet the sentries, they should gesture with a fist held over the centre of the chest and say, ‘In the name of Lord Cirion, we come.’ This is the standing password among the men at Henneth Annûn.

The journey should take about 4 solid days of travel, assuming that the characters spend 10 hours per day on the march. The terrain through which they are to proceed, while not especially easy, allows them to cover 2 miles per hour.

Atanacar dismisses them by once again stressing the need to make haste. He dashes off an order to allow them to draw rations and sundry items from the garrison’s stores, and orders them to depart as soon as they can.

Important Note: Only the Narrator should continue to read beyond this point, as the remainder of the text explains the challenges that the players will face, and knowing what they are ahead of time would ruin the surprise. Consider this an emphatic spoiler alert.

ENCOUNTER 1: AN ORC PATROL

*‘In the red glare Sam . . . caught a glimpse
of his evil face as it passed . . . slaver
dripped from its protruding fangs; the
mouth snarled like an animal.’*

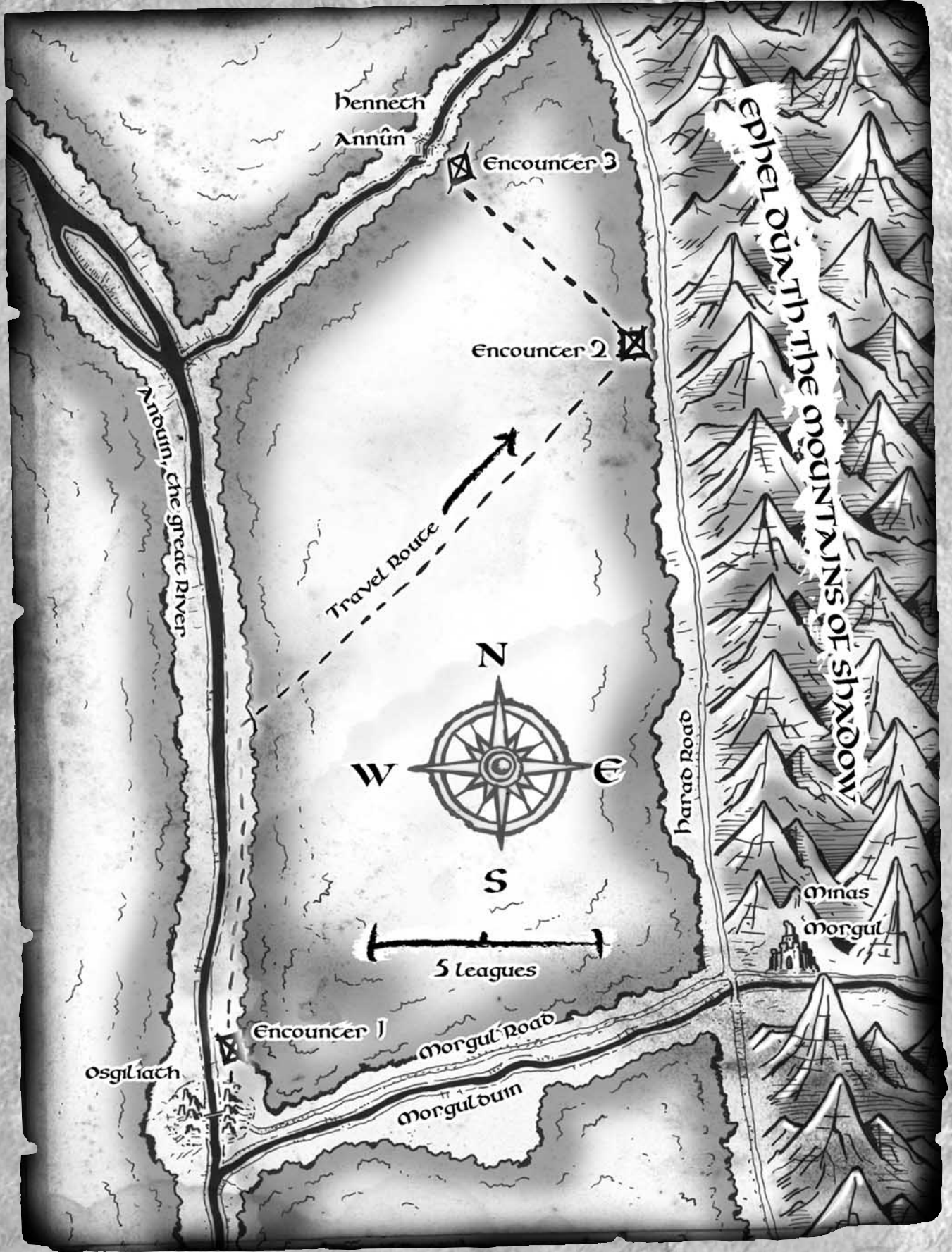
— *The Return of the King*

Your players face their first challenge shortly after their characters set out from Osgiliath. They slip away from the causeway forts by cutting through the heavy brush right on the banks of the Anduin, and soon they are behind the Enemy’s lines.

But the besieging host of Mordor regularly sends out patrols to find out what is happening beyond the main area of battle. These almost always take place at night, since Orcs do not function well in daylight. Sometime on the first night of their journey, the characters stumble across such a patrol (or such a patrol will stumble upon them, however you want to look at it). It consists of two Orcs per character, plus an Orc leader of more advanced abilities (see page 12 for statistics).

This encounter centres about a small clearing in the heavy brush 50 feet in diameter. First, inform your players that the day is ending. If they decide to stop for the night to recover Weariness Levels, they come upon this clearing before they can find a suitable place to shed their packs and sit down. If they decide to keep moving through the night, just ensure they

NARRATOR MAP



make Weariness tests (TN 10) every 4 hours and spring this encounter on them at a time of your choosing.

When they reach the edge of the clearing—but before you announce that they're about to run into trouble—each of them must make an Observe test. The TN for the test is 20 if they choose to use the Observe (Spot) specialty because of the darkness and the relatively impenetrable terrain. If they use any other type of Observe specialty, the TN is 10. At the same time, make a single, collective Observe (Smell) test (TN 10) for the Orcs. If at least one of your players succeeds, his character sees, hears, or smells something just on the opposite side of the clearing. If the Orcs also fail their Observe (Smell) test, the players surprise them and have one free action round to do whatever they wish before the Orcs may react.

If the Orcs succeed in their test but all of the players fail theirs, then the Orcs achieve surprise and they get the drop. They then split their force and squeeze the characters on both flanks, skirting the edge of the clearing. The leader hangs back, hoping to pick off targets that pop into the clearing, then charges with his longsword if none do so. Make a Stealth (Sneak) test (TN 15) for all of the Orcs. If they succeed, make an Armed Combat test against each character before they get to react (that is, one Orc per character gets in a free shot before combat begins). If the Orcs fail their Stealth test, then begin the combat with the Orcs halfway around the clearing.

If both the Orcs and the players make successful Observe tests against each other, they spot each other simultaneously, and they begin the combat facing each other directly across the clearing.

Because of the nature of the terrain, all Ranged Combat tests against targets that are not in the clearing suffer a -6 penalty.

If the Orc leader is slain, all remaining Orcs flee. If the characters choose to pursue them instead of

either getting necessary rest or forging on to Henneth Annûn (thereby disobeying their orders), the fugitives lead them into a trap. The characters then find themselves surrounded on three sides by a force of Orcs equal to ten times their number, plus the survivors from the original encounter. It is unlikely that they will survive such a confrontation, but let your players consider it a lesson from the Narrator in the consequences of straying from the orders of Lord Faramir!

The Orcs carry no possessions of note other than their arms and armour, except for the patrol leader, who wears a silver medallion worth 2 silver pennies for the weight of its metal. A successful Lore/Realms: Gondor test reveals that it bears the likeness of one of the early Ruling Stewards, Cirion, and was likely looted off of a dead Gondorian soldier.

ORCS

RACE: Orc

RACIAL ABILITIES: Curse of Daylight (-4 penalty to all tests in sunlight), Tough Skin

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 6 (±0), Nimbleness 7 (±0), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 5 (±0)

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

ORDER: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion (roll 3d6 and keep the highest 2 when performing a Swiftiness test)

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Scimitar) +4, Intimidate (Fear) +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Orkish +6, Language: Westron +2, Lore/Realm: Mordor (Geography) +4, Observe (Smell) +6, Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow) +2, Ride (Wolf) +3, Run +3, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Track (Scent) +3

EDGES: Keen-nosed, Night-eyed 2 (penalties for seeing in the dark reduced by 7)

FLAWS: Craven (must flee or cave in to the threat if a character achieves an Intimidate test result against them of 10 or higher)

HEALTH: 9

DEFENCE: 10

COURAGE: 0

RENOUN: 0

GEAR: Scimitar (2d6+4 damage), leather armour (absorbs 2 points of damage)

ORC PATROL LEADER

RACE: Orc

RACIAL ABILITIES: Curse of Daylight (-4 penalty to all tests in sunlight), Tough Skin

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 6 (±0), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 5 (±0)

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

ORDER: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion (roll 3d6 and keep the highest 2 when performing a Swiftiness test)

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +5, Intimidate (Fear) +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Language: Orkish +6, Language: Westron +2, Lore/Realm: Mordor (Geography) +4, Observe (Smell) +6, Ranged Combat: Bow (Shortbow) +6, Ride (Wolf) +3, Run +4, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Track (Scent) +3

EDGES: Keen-nosed, Night-eyed 2 (penalties for seeing in the dark reduced by 7)

FLAWS: Craven (must flee or cave in to the threat if a character achieves an Intimidate test result against them of 10 or higher)

HEALTH: 9

DEFENSE: 11

COURAGE: 0

RENOUN: 0

GEAR: Orc longsword (2d6+5 damage), shortbow (-2 penalty to Ranged Combat tests beyond 25 yards), 20 arrows (2d6+2 damage),

scale mail (absorbs 4 points of damage)

If the characters decide to make a run for it instead of squaring off against the Orcs, you may treat their efforts in summary fashion by having each player make a Run test (TN 10). A successful test means that that character can get away from the Orcs scot-free, and they will not pursue him effectively.

A failed test means that the Orcs continue to pursue that character. They split into two groups, with half and the leader staying directly behind and the other half moving to the character's flank to keep him pinned against the Anduin as he flees. Characters suffering this fate can only shake the Orcs by following a path that leads them along a high cliff overlooking the mighty river. The Orcs will not follow at this point, choosing not to brave the precipice. The characters must then make a successful Acrobatics (Balance) test (TN 10), or else they fall into the Anduin and drown. If this happens to your players, you might want to remind them before they accept this doom that they can spend Courage points to improve their test results.

ENCOUNTER 2: MEN OF HARAD

Hard fighting and long labour they had still; for the Southrons were bold men and grim. . . ?
— *The Return of the King*

Assuming that your players keep to their orders, they head northeast after their encounter with the Orc patrol, through the vales of North Ithilien. This country is still lush and green despite its proximity to the foulness of Mordor. After covering 10 leagues in this direction, the charac-

ters come to a ridge overlooking a wide, well-travelled road. This is a fork of the old Harad Road, which the Kingdom of Gondor built in its days of glory to serve as the main overland conduit between the South of Middle-earth and Gondor and Arnor. At the moment, however, with the fortresses at Osgiliath masked by one of his armies, it functions as Sauron's main avenue of communication with his Haradrim allies.

At this point, the players should turn north, as per their orders. Before they can do so, however, each must make an Observe test (TN 10 in daylight, TN 15 if using the Spot specialty at night). Characters that succeed notice a small group of swarthy men in scale mail and conical helmets picking their way up the slope towards them. One of them also carries a longbow and a small shield. They appear to be fanning out from the road, and they move swiftly and low to the ground, stopping from time to time to look around them. From where the characters are standing, the Haradrim then disappear from view behind an outcropping of rock, then reappear to their front, at a range of only 100 feet.

HARADRIM WARRIOR

RACE: Man (Man of Darkness)
RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable, Skilled
ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 6 (± 0), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 7 (± 0), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 6 (± 0)
REACTIONS: Stamina +1, Swiftiness +3, Willpower ± 0 , Wisdom ± 0
ORDER: Warrior
ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion (roll 3d6 and keep the highest 2 when performing a Swiftiness test)
ADVANCEMENTS: 0
SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Scimitar) +6, Healing +1, Language: Haradric (Near Harad) +6, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +3, Run +2, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Track (Men) +2

EDGES: Warrior's Heart (+4 bonus to all Weariness tests related to battle)
FLAWS: None
HEALTH: 9
DEFENCE: 11
COURAGE: 0
RENEWN: 0
GEAR: Scimitar (2d6+4 damage), scale mail (absorbs 4 points of damage)

HARADRIM LEADER

RACE: Man (Man of Darkness)
RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable, Skilled
ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 7 (± 0), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 8 (+1), Wits 6 (± 0)
REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +3, Willpower +1, Wisdom ± 0
ORDER: Warrior
ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion (roll 3d6 and keep the highest 2 when performing a Swiftiness test)
ADVANCEMENTS: 3
SKILLS: Armed Combat +6: Blades (Scimitar), Healing +1, Inspire +2, Language: Haradric (Near Harad) +6, Observe (Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Bow (Longbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +3, Run +2, Stealth (Sneak) +4, Track (Men) +2
EDGES: Resolute, Warrior's Heart (+4 bonus to all Weariness tests related to battle)
FLAWS: None
HEALTH: 9
DEFENCE: 11
COURAGE: 0
RENEWN: 0
GEAR: Scimitar (2d6+4 damage), longbow (maximum range 200 feet), 20 arrows (2d6+2 damage), scale mail (absorbs 4 points of damage)

The Haradrim Leader is an experienced warrior who also has the skill Inspire, which allows him to encourage those under his command to greater efforts through the sheer force of his presence. If he makes a successful Inspire test (TN 10), the Haradrim warriors under his command gain a +1 bonus to their Armed Combat tests

during the next round. Attempting to Inspire requires 1 action.

These strange-looking men are the outriders from a column of warriors from Near Harad marching north to the Black Gate. Their task is to screen the column from Gondorian spies, and so they are out beating the bushes well in advance of the main body.

Basically, your players have three options here: fight, avoid them, or bluff so that the Haradrim will let them pass without incident. If they choose to fight, the Haradrim rank and file close and attack with their scimitars, while their leader hangs back slightly and looks for appropriate targets for his longbow. He also uses his Inspire skill (see sidebar) liberally to make their attacks more effective.

If the characters decide to run away, they must each make a successful Run test (TN 10), or else the Haradrim catch up to them. If they decide to conceal themselves, they must each make a successful Stealth (Hide) test (TN 10). Since Stealth is a skill that may be used untrained, a character may use it even though he doesn't have any levels in it. He simply adds his Nimbleness modifier to the result. The Haradrim fail to detect any characters that succeed, and pass by them without incident.

Lastly, the characters may try to bluff their way past these Haradrim—although, realistically, only Melephin may attempt this, since he is the only character who can speak their language. In order to communicate with them, he must make a successful Language: Haradric (Near Harad) test (TN 10). If he does so, he must then convince them that they are not, in fact, agents of Gondor. The player running Melephin should make up a cover story for the characters and tell you what it is. Then he should make a Persuade (Charm) test (TN 15 or 20, depending on your judgement of how good it is). If he succeeds in persuading them, the Haradrim go on their way, allowing the characters to go on theirs.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE WINDOW ON THE SUNSET

'They named themselves Mablung and Damrod, soldiers of Gondor, and they were Rangers of Ithilien. . . .'
— *The Two Towers*

If the characters continue inland through the vales of northern Ithilien, the woodlands begin to thin out and they see before them a rocky slope with a roaring waterfall cascading down it. Trees and other vegetation obscure much of the base of the slope from view. Their orders tell them that Henneth Annûn should be somewhere around here.

As they approach the base of the slope, they see two large boulders on either side of a dimly traced path that seems to disappear into a sheer rock face. As they approach the boulders, two tall men in mottled green and brown cloaks worn over chainmail spring out to bar the way. One carries a sword and positions himself forward, while the other draws his longbow and stands back. He also carries a hunting horn around his neck.

They are Halond and Ilthimir, Rangers of Ithilien standing sentry at one of the sanctuary's entrances. When they challenge the characters, they appear aggressive and hostile. This is not a good time for Faramir's men. An Orc prisoner recently planted in their minds the suggestion that the location of Henneth Annûn and all of the sentries' signs and countersigns have been betrayed to the Enemy. Furthermore, the prisoner also has the Rangers thinking that Sauron will send spies against them disguised as Gondorian soldiers. Halond and Ilthimir are therefore in a jumpy mood. When the player characters attempt to give the password they were taught at Osgiliath, the sentries' eyes narrow, and they treat the

characters with deep suspicion. The passwords were changed recently, and those that Atanacar gave to the PCs are now incorrect.

Quarrelling with the sentries is not a particularly good option for your players. These men are veterans, and individually they are more powerful than beginning-level characters. Besides, at the first sign of hostile action against them, the sentry with the bow looses a shot, then blows his horn. This alarm brings 20 more of Faramir's men, with the first 10 arriving within 10 rounds and the remainder 10 rounds after that. Most importantly, it's just not something that a loyal servant of Gondor would do, no matter how stressful the situation.

It would be much more sensible for your players to use their characters' Social skills to persuade the sentries that they are friends, not spies of the Enemy. If they seem stuck for a course of action, you might suggest that they choose one character to serve as spokesman for the party. That character may then make a Social skill test of his choice (TN 10 if Debate or Persuade, TN 20 if Intimidate) to try to convince the sentries to let them pass. You need not act out this encounter with your player (although you should feel free to do so, if you wish). The skill test represents an abstraction of what the character involved would say and do to get the sentries to see things his way.

If he makes a successful test, Halond and Ilthimir look at each other doubtfully. Then Ilthimir motions for the characters to follow him, with Halond falling in line behind, his blade still drawn. If the test succeeds by more than 5, then their attitude toward the characters changes noticeably. They apologise for their wariness (the times being what they are, one can never be entirely certain whether strangers be friends or no, even if they are clad as friends), and treat them as friends hereafter.

In either case, the sentries lead the characters through the brush to a

cleared spot at the base of the slope. Ilthimir places a ring on his right hand against a spot in the rock. This ring is permanently enchanted with the spell Ithildin-fire, and it reveals the glowing outline of a door carved into the rock. He then cups his hand to his mouth and appears to whisper something to the door—a command word, no doubt. The door in the rock then eases open, and the sentries lead the characters into the maze of caves and warrens that is Henneth Annûn, the Window on the Sunset.

HALOND AND ILTHIMIR

RACE: Man (Dûnedan)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptability, Dominion of Men, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 7 (±0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2, Swiftiness +4, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

ORDER: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion (roll 3d6 and keep the highest 2 when performing a Swiftiness test)

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword) +7, Climb +3, Healing +1, Jump +3, Language: Sindarin +6, Language: Westron +6, Lore/Realm: Gondor (Ithilien) +3, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +6, Ride (Horse) +4, Run +3, Stealth (Hide) +6, Survival (Woods) +5, Track (Orcs) +6

EDGES: Warrior's Heart (+4 bonus to all Weariness tests related to battle)

FLAWS: None

HEALTH: 11

DEFENCE: 12

COURAGE: 4

RENOVN: 0

GEAR: Longsword (2d6+5 damage), ordinary chainmail (absorbs 5 points of damage). Ilthimir also has a longbow (maximum range 200 feet), 20 arrows (2d6+2 damage), a hunting horn, and a ring permanently enchanted with the spell Ithildin-fire

Halond and Ilthimir are more formidable than the Orcs or Haradrim that the characters faced in the earlier encounters. They really qualify as non-player characters, or NPCs—characters run by the Narrator and

which are usually placed in an adventure to help facilitate the flow of the story. If you wish to use Halond and Ilthimir in an ongoing chronicle, note that they are designed to place them on track to qualify for the Ranger elite order before very long (see the core rulebook for more about character advancement and elite orders).

BEYOND THIS ADVENTURE: IN THE SERVICE OF GONDOR

'So it must be, for you are appointed to the White Company, the Guard of Faramir, Prince of Ithilien. . . .'

— Aragorn (King Elessar),
The Return of the King

Once the characters convince the sentries that they are friends, they take them to Lord Faramir, who is enjoying a rare moment of ease deep in the heart of the sanctuary. He receives the news with great concern and resolves to set off for Osgiliath

with 100 picked men as soon as they are ready. First, however, he thanks the characters for their service and rewards each of them with one of the following heroic arms or armour from the magazine:

DÛNEDAN BLADE, enchanted weapon: A longsword forged centuries ago by the Men of Westemnesse. It contains a minor bane enchantment that grants a +2 bonus to Armed Combat tests against servants or allies of Sauron and a +3 bonus against Nazgûl or other supernatural foes.

STAR OF OSGILIATH, heroic shield: A large shield with an enormous star embossed on it. The Princes of Ithilien wielded it during the glory days of the Kingdom of Gondor. It provides an additional +3 parry bonus against Orcs (see core rulebook for rules regarding parrying) and an additional -3 penalty to ranged attacks by Orcs against the wielder.

MORDOR-BANE BOW, enchanted weapon: A longbow crafted in Rivendell for the Kings of Arthedain, and subsequently given to Gondor as a gift. It contains a minor bane enchantment that grants a +2 bonus to Ranged Combat tests against servants or allies of Sauron.

At this point, the adventure comes to its formal conclusion: The characters have successfully navigated the road to Henneth Annûn. They have dealt with the foes they met along the way, and they have completed their mission and received their just reward for it.

But the chronicle of their deeds need not end there. Faramir may ask them to remain with his Rangers in the Window on the Sunset to serve as scouts or messengers, for he never has enough men to serve with him, and even fewer as brave and resourceful as our heroes. Or he may send them south to spy on the Southron peoples who have allied themselves with Sauron, for full-fledged war obviously draws nigh, and Gondor needs to know what is going on in these lands that will soon throw their might against it. If the Haradrim send more

men north to Mordor, Faramir's Rangers ought to know when they set out and in what strength so they can plan ambushes. As Narrator, you may design further adventures set in Ithilien or Harad and Khand that will take your players up to and through the tumult of The War of the Ring.

If you wish, you can also work Halond and Ilthimir, the sentries from Encounter 3, into the chronicle as friendly non-player characters. One or both of them might go with the characters as guides or guards, being more experienced warriors and knowledgeable in the lay of Ithilien. Or perhaps they simply befriend the characters, giving them helpful advice and providing a little flavour to the chronicle between adventures. After all, it's not that uncommon in Tolkien's Middle-earth for characters who meet under difficult circumstances to become friends. Recall that Aragorn and Éomer meet for the first time staring each other down blade-to-spearpoint. Yet, only a short time later, Aragorn vowed that they would draw their weapons together in battle as inseparable allies.

If you choose to extend 'The Road to Henneth Annûn' into a chronicle, just remember to consult the rules regarding experience points and character advancement in the core rulebook before you go any further. Then go back through what your players did in the adventure and reward them experience points accordingly. Afterward, they'll be well on their way to adding to their characters in ways that will prepare them for greater challenges to come.

If the characters serve Faramir faithfully and well in whatever capacity he chooses to employ them, their adventures need not end with the conclusion of The War of the Ring, either. Surely Faramir, now the Steward of Gondor and Arnor under King Elessar, would recommend our heroes to the King, asking that they be rewarded for their valour during the war. And King Elessar might well commission them as ambassadors to

the tribes of Harad or Khand, knowing that while the Free Peoples had defeated Sauron utterly, many of Sauron's allies still lived, and might still cause trouble in the future. By this point, it is obvious that our heroes know Southron folk better than most Gondorians (especially if they spent the war spying on them). The King would consider them ideal candidates to negotiate treaties with the various tribes of the South, by which they would swear fealty and pay tribute to the revived Kingdom of Gondor. At the very least, our heroes would make suitable spies to monitor the states of affairs among the tribes of Harad and Khand, and judge the extent to which they may present an ongoing threat to Gondor.

Or it may be that they choose to leave Gondor and the South altogether and head for the North-lands of Middle-earth, or that you wish to lure them there with the prospect of new and greater adventures. That's perfectly acceptable, too. The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game core rulebook provides you and your players with a more detailed treatment of the rules (including rules that allow characters to improve their attributes, abilities, and skills through gaining experience as adventurers), descriptions of the races and geography of Middle-earth, and advice for running an entire chronicle. Rules supplements such as The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook and Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic provide even more options for enriching your chronicle with elements from the fabulous world of Middle-earth, including statistical blocks for important figures from the novels and movies. If you want to work Gandalf or Elrond, Saruman or Lurtz into your chronicle, these books give you the tools to do so! Taken all together, The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game allows you to explore the richness and wonder of J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth by making up your own adventures as you go along.

PLAYER MAP

