

THE RELICS OF THE DEAD



An Adventure For
The Lord of the Rings™ Roleplaying Game

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THE RELICS OF THE DEAD

‘The Relics of the Dead’ is an adventure for three to five characters, either newly created or with one or two advancements. It could easily be adapted to handle characters of greater experience by adding advancements to the heroes’ opponents. It will be helpful if the fellowship includes one character with tracking ability and someone who speaks Dunlending, but neither is essential to the success of the adventure. The scenario takes place in north-west Rohan, near where the Riddermark meets the southernmost tip of the Misty Mountains. It is set in the year 3008 of the Third Age, ten years before the start of the War of the Ring, but could be changed to any year between the time of Saruman’s corruption and the start of the war in TA 3018.

‘The Relics of the Dead’ has been intentionally written in a loose format, without maps or an inflexible structure, so individual Narrators can customise it to suit their players and chronicles more easily. All combat statistics are found at the end of the scenario, rather than interspersed in the encounters.

SYNOPSIS

The adventure begins with a series of Dunlending raids on the homesteads of the Rohirrim of the north-west Riddermark. While raids by the Dunlendings are nothing new to most of Rohan, Hill-men have never raided the area where the adventure is set with such consistency and ferocity. In addition, the Dunlending attackers have been using unusual weapons of a make unlike those they traditionally use. The characters are brought into the adventure to discover the motive behind the raids and the source of the unusual weapons.

Their investigations lead them into the foothills and sparse forests at the tip of the Misty Mountains where they encounter a group of injured Dunlendings whose leader, Rurik, reveals that they were wounded in battle with a rival clan led by a man named Camrynn. Rurik explains that Camrynn came to the region recently and allied himself with a powerful sorcerer. Through this ally’s magic, Camrynn has managed to banish the ghost of King Beogrin, who inhabited the ruins of an ancient Dunlending stronghold dating from before the defeat of Sauron. With the ghost gone, Camrynn and his clan have taken residence in the stronghold and armed themselves with its cache of ancient weapons.

Unfortunately, the ghost was not destroyed, only banished from the stronghold, and has been taking out its murderous frustration on the surrounding Dunlending clans. Rurik had gone to Camrynn, hoping to persuade him (by force if necessary) to abandon the stronghold. Unfortunately, Camrynn’s forces were far stronger than his, and he was forced to flee. Rurik provides the fellowship with directions to the ruined stronghold.

On the way to the camp, the characters are visited by the ghost in the dead of night. It attacks any Dunlendings among them and tries to place any sword it can get its hands on in the empty scabbard on its belt.

Upon reaching the stronghold, the characters must use stealth or guile to sneak into the Dunlending camp. They must recover the sword from Camrynn’s waist and replace it in the

ghost's tomb. As soon as this is done, the ghost rushes into the camp and begins to slaughter the Dunlendings, starting with Camrynn's lackey, the hedge wizard Lod. This provides a distraction so the PCs can make their escape, but leaves them with the question of who Camrynn's sorcerous ally was, seeing as Lod was clearly unable to control the ghost with his own meagre abilities.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Camrynn's clan is one of many Saruman is gathering to his fold. It was the White Wizard who banished the ghost from the stronghold, and set the Dunlendings raiding the Rohirrim.

THE STORY OF BEOGRIN

Beogrin was a warrior king who ruled a modest kingdom at the base of the Misty Mountains before the fall of Sauron at the end of the Second Age. His people were among those who would eventually become the Dunlendings, though his subjects were more skilled at metalworking than their descendants would be. Beogrin's closest advisor was a noble named Ethrog. Over time, Ethrog grew jealous of Beogrin and overthrew him. He seized control of the court, stole Beogrin's sword of office, and—unwilling to kill his former friend outright—had Beogrin imprisoned.

Ethrog's rule was despotic, and over time the people began to long for a return to Beogrin's rule. Fate intervened when Ethrog was accidentally killed while hunting. The people freed Beogrin from his prison, presented him with his sword, and reinstated him as king. But over the years of his imprisonment, Beogrin had nurtured a hatred of Ethrog, for usurping his throne, and of the people, for doing nothing to prevent it. When he returned to power, by then an old man, he undertook two grand projects. The first was to create an elaborate tomb for himself, complete with a resting place for his sword, so that after his death no other would ever take his place. The second was to spend his remaining years reigning as a bloody tyrant in expression of his hatred for his people.

His hatred did not subside even with his death. It was not long after being entombed in his sarcophagus that rumours of his vengeful apparition began to spread. Over time, all the living inhabitants abandoned Beogrin's stronghold to the malevolent phantom, and so it remained until Camrynn's coming.

GETTING THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED

A Narrator might get the PCs involved in many different ways. The most obvious would be for characters in service of the Rohirrim to be sent to investigate the raids and deal with the problem. Optionally, characters passing through the area might encounter a series of abandoned or destroyed homesteads, then come to Gramburg, learn of the raids, and be implored to investigate. A more unusual approach might involve a complete party of Dunlendings seeking to put an end to the ghost's attacks on their people.

A NOTE ON COMBAT

It is suggested that the Narrator follow the optional rule for Combat Pacing on page 270 of the core rulebook when carrying out combat in this adventure. Combat with Camrynn and Lod should be resolved as normal, but the remainder of Camrynn's Dunlendings should be treated as one or two success opponents for the sake of dramatic pacing and character survivability.

ACT I: ARRIVAL IN GRAMBURG

This scene opens with the characters' arrival in Gramburg. Alternatively, the adventure could begin with the characters' arrival at a recently raided homestead, where they get involved in a fight with some Dunlending raiders—one per PC—left behind by the main raiding group.

GRAMBURG

The hold of Gramburg is a small wooden hall surrounded by a wooden palisade with a series of small stables and an underground larder. It sits atop a small hill amongst the gently rolling stony lands at the feet of the Misty Mountains. It was first settled around TA 2690 when it was named after Gram, the eighth King of the Mark. It has been burned several times in the past, but the current structure has stood for nearly 300 years, since the reign of Folcwine, fourteenth King of the Mark.

Gramburg serves as a place of refuge for the inhabitants of the region in times of war, but has not seen use in quite some time. It is normally garrisoned by ten mounted soldiers, 30 men and women who support them, and Hild, the captain of Gramburg. Currently, however, all the homesteads of the region have been abandoned and the hold has a refugee population of over 100, living in tents both inside and outside the palisade walls. In addition, a makeshift corral has been built and divided into sections for horses, cows, and goats.

At Gramburg, the PCs meet Hild. Hild is typical of the Rohirrim, with long blond hair, a cropped beard, and chainmail armour. One distinguishing feature is his propensity to speak of Gramburg in terms of its history. For example: 'We have not known such strife since our founding in the reign of Gram himself!'

If the characters mingle amongst the refugees, they can exercise their roleplaying skills and hear tales of woe that bring them up to date on the events that have transpired.

Regardless of its source, information that can be obtained in Gramburg includes:

- The Dunlending attacks began two months ago and have continued, on average, once every three weeks.
- Four homesteads have been raided thus far, of the twelve or so in the region.
- The Dunlendings fight with weapons of higher quality than is typical, Dunlending metalworking being nowhere near as refined as that of the Rohirrim. Hild has a sword taken from a scout that one of his men killed. On a TN 10

Smithcraft or relevant Lore skill relating to the Dunlendings or Rohirrim, they can discern that the sword dates from before the fall of Sauron.

- The leader of the raiders is an immense, bearded man who wields a large sword.
- The raiders are aided by a fearsome wild sorcerer.
- Scouts have been unable to discern where the Dunlending camp is located.

After the characters have asked all the questions they wish to in Gramburg, they are provided with horses of Rohan (if they have none) and a week's provisions. If the characters ask for additional aid, Hild insists he cannot spare any of his men, lest the Dunlendings attack Gramburg.

ACT II: STRANGE ENCOUNTERS

The nearest destroyed homestead is 18 miles away across rough ground. Typical of north-west homesteads, which focus on livestock rather than the crops of the southerly regions, this homestead was built around a central structure, with a large corral for livestock nearby. The Dunlendings have razed everything to the ground. Only burnt remnants of the structures remain. A search of the wreckage reveals that the livestock were slaughtered rather than carried off. Little else can be discerned from the ashes.

To pick up the raiders' trail requires a TN 15 Track test. However, the Narrator should tell the players that it is only a TN 10 Tracking test. If the PCs' Track results in less than 15, but more than 10, they have picked up a trail, but it leads them into an ambush prepared by the Dunlendings. If they succeed in rolling a 15 or higher, they see the ambush for what it is, and can choose to follow the obvious trail to the ambush, or follow the more cunningly concealed trail towards the stronghold. To follow either trail, the characters cannot move faster than a Trot, if mounted, or a Jog, if on foot.

There are two other important encounters that should occur before the PCs arrive at the ruined stronghold. The first is with the Dunlendings led by Rurik, who can identify the leader of the raiders. The second is with the ghost of Beogrin, the former lord of the stronghold.

THE AMBUSH

If the characters fail to detect that the trail is a trap, they are ambushed by seven Dunlending warriors six miles from the homestead. Spotting the hidden attackers requires a TN 15 Observe test unless the characters are actively looking for an ambush, in which case it is TN 10. If the attackers are not seen they automatically have the initiative as described on page 227 of the core rulebook. The attackers are armed with spears and swords, the latter of which match the design of the weapon Hild's men recovered.

RURIK'S BAND

About 21 miles out from Gramburg, in the direction of the stronghold, the characters come upon Rurik and his band of 15 Dunlendings, seven of whom are too injured to walk on

their own. The group are wary of the characters but do not attack them outright, unless the group is made up solely of Rohirrim.

Rurik does all the speaking for his band, as the others speak only broken Westron. He does not speak openly of the battle with Camrynn unless the characters somehow persuade him. He tells what he knows on a TN 15 Inquire, Intimidate, or Persuade test. The PCs may add +5 to the test if they perform leechcraft on his men, but must subtract 5 if a Man of Rohan attempts the test. Regardless of their level of success, Rurik tries to parley his knowledge into assistance in getting his injured men home before the ghost attacks again. He can tell the PCs the following:

- Camrynn showed up in the area three months ago.
- His clan has taken up residence in a stronghold that Rurik's clan knows to be haunted and cursed.
- Camrynn has allied himself with a powerful sorcerer, but Rurik doesn't know his identity.
- Since Camrynn's arrival, the ghost who haunts the stronghold has been killing Rurik's people.
- The ghost is an ancient lord who was betrayed by his Dunlending subjects and has since hated the Dunlendings.
- Rurik tried to persuade Camrynn to abandon the stronghold, first through words, then through arms.
- The ghost does not attack Camrynn's people.
- Camrynn carries an enormous, ancient sword.
- The stronghold is 15 miles distant, hidden in rough ground. Rurik can provide a map that will lead the PCs there.

If the characters worked leechcraft on his men, Rurik sends five of them to lead the PCs to the stronghold. As noted, these only speak broken Westron, so any instructions given to them must be very simple.

If the characters insist on attacking, treat Rurik's warriors as standard Dunlending warriors and Rurik as a three-success opponent with Armed Combat +6 and Strength 10 (+2).

THE GHOST OF BEOGRIN

Either before or after the characters meet Rurik, night falls and they must camp. While they sleep (or rest, if there are Elves among them), the ghost of Beogrin shows himself. He appears as a misty white wraith in elaborate armour, with vacant sockets for eyes, a full beard, and long hair worn in two braids. At his waist is an empty scabbard. If there are no Dunlendings among the group, he simply seizes one or two of the characters' swords, tries to fit them into his scabbard, and tosses them away when they do not fit. If there are Dunlendings present, he attacks them without mercy. Although Beogrin is properly a wraith (see 'Ghosts' on pages 25–7 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*), use the statistics for Barrow-

wights on page 294 of the core rulebook or page 14 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*. Beogrin disappears into mist after he sees that none of the PCs' swords will fit into his scabbard and any Dunlendings present are slain. On the other hand, if the characters attack and are about to defeat Beogrin, he retreats to return the next evening and seek revenge.

ACT III: THE RUINED STRONGHOLD

Eventually, the characters reach the ruins of Beogrin's stronghold—15 miles from where they encountered Rurik, over very rough ground—and seek to defeat Camrynn's clan of raiders.

CAMRYNN'S CAMP

The stronghold of Beogrin was built atop a hill, next to a clear running stream. In the time since his death, the stream has dried up and the elements have taken their toll on the structures. All that remains of the small wall that surrounded the stronghold are fragments of broken and worn stone. Three of the stronghold's four walls still stand, but the fourth lies in rubble. The walls surrounding many of the old stone structures now lie in ruins and the entrance to the old underground armoury is now only an open hole in the ground surrounded by shattered bits of rock.

The only complete structure is Beogrin's tomb, which stands on the far north side of the hill. It is a large, elaborate stone building with a double door entrance. Inside, his sarcophagus stands in the middle of a barren room. The sarcophagus lid features a sculpted relief of Beogrin himself. It is clear that a sword ought to lie in the statue's hands, but is missing.

On the walls of the tomb, the events of Beogrin's life are carved in relief. A TN 15 Language: Dunlendish test reveals Beogrin's name, and a TN 20 test against a relevant Lore skill allows the characters to decipher his history from the relief images. Alternately, a single simple (TN 10) use of a Loremaster's Ancient Scripts order ability reveals the same information. A magician or wizard who casts *Sense Power* on the sarcophagus and makes a TN 10 Observe (Sense Power) test detects a powerful ward on it. A superior success on this test reveals that it can be broken by returning the missing item.

Camrynn's clan numbers 60 warriors. The men have only been in the area for three months and have not yet sent for their families. They live in rough huts they have built on the south side of the hill, except Camrynn, who lives on the second floor of the stronghold. Lod lives in the stronghold's old underground larder in the south of the camp, where he has set up a small shrine to his heathen gods.

At most times, the characters can find Camrynn in his quarters. He speaks with his followers often, though, so the characters should have ample opportunity to plan a confrontation in a variety of situations. He carries the sword with him wherever he goes.

The Narrator should conspire to keep Lod alive until the return of Beogrin's wraith, so the characters will have the opportunity to deduce that it is not his magic that banished the spirit from the stronghold.

If the characters return Beogrin's sword to its resting place, the sky darkens, a thick mist rises from the ground (obscuring sight beyond five feet), and Beogrin's ghost appears in the doorway of the tomb. Beogrin proceed to kill all the Dunlendings present, saving any player character Dunlendings for last—this gives them the chance to escape.

If the characters somehow manage to kill all of Camrynn's followers themselves, Beogrin's ghost continues to attack the Dunlending clans in the area. If they become suitably desperate, they may eventually be driven to seek assistance from the hated Rohirrim.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

While the main opponents in 'The Relics of the Dead' are likely to be slain in the course of the scenario, there are a number of unresolved issues that could lead to future adventures. The identity of Camrynn's sorcerous ally may concern for the characters, and future adventures might revolve around their search for more information. Poking around in Rohan after such might attract the attention of Gríma Wormtongue. If the PCs helped Rurik's band, they may wish to pursue a relationship with the Dunlendings who live in the region but have traditionally refrained from warring with the Rohirrim. In this case, they may make allies against Saruman's eventual attempts to turn all Dunlendings against the Rohirrim.

STATISTICS

CAMRYNN

RACE: Man (Middle Man: Dunlending)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable (+2 to Swiftness), Dominion of Man, Skilled

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 9 (+1), Nimbleness 9 (+1), Perception 5 (+0), Strength 13 (+3)*,
Vitality 8 (+1)*, Wits 6 (+0)

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

DEFENCE: 11

ORDERS: Warrior

ORDER ABILITIES: Evasion, Warrior-born

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Blades (Greatsword) +10, Healing (Treat Wounds) +2, Inspire +7,
Language: Westron +4, Language: Dunlendish +6, Lore/Realm: Dunland
(Strongholds) +6, Lore/Realm: Rohan (Strongholds) +2, Observe (Spot) +6, Ranged
Combat: Spears (Spear) +6, Survival (Forest, Mountain) +4, Track +4, Weather-sense
+2

EDGES: Ally, Command, Rank, Weapon Mastery (Greatsword)

FLAWS: Hatred (Rohirrim)

HEALTH: 11

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 3

GEAR: Greatsword, spear, leather armour

Camrynn is a stocky, powerful man of average height with a wind-burnt complexion due to his rough outdoor life. He has a full beard, long black hair, and carries his enormous greatsword (3d6+2 damage, +1 parry bonus; see *Fields of Battle: The Guide to Barbarians and Warriors*). He is affable amongst his people, and popular with his followers. Camrynn is not an evil man, but does hold an undying hatred of the Rohirrim, and will go to any length to strike at them. He is a canny opponent and seeks to use his surroundings and his men against his opponents. His one weakness is his hatred of the Rohirrim. If faced with one Rohirrim opponent among others, he focuses solely on the Man of Rohan, ignoring the others until his opponent falls.

LOD THE DARK

RACE: Man (Middle Man: Dunlending)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Adaptable (+2 to Stamina), Dominion of Man, Skilled

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

REACTIONS: Stamina +5, Swiftmess +0, Willpower +3*, Wisdom +3

DEFENCE: 10

ORDERS: Magician

ORDER ABILITIES: Spellcasting, Dwimmer-crafty (+2 to Intimidate tests with *Evoke Awe*)

ADVANCEMENTS: 2

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Polearms (Staff) +3, Healing (Treat Illness) +3, Inspire +5, Intimidate (Fear) +7, Language: Dunlendish +6, Language: Westron +6, Language: Late Adûnaic (Rohirric) +4, Language: Orkish (Isengard-dialect) +4, Lore/History: Dunland (Superstitions) +6, Lore/Race: Man (Hill-man) +3, Lore/Realm: Dunland (Head-men) +4, Lore/Realm: Rohan (Superstitions) +3, Observe (Sense Power) +6, Persuade (Oratory) +5, Run +2, Stealth (Hide) +2, Weather-sense +1

EDGES: Ally, Armour of Heroes, Honey-tongued, Resolute, Tireless, Wary

FLAWS: Hatred (Rohirrim)

SPELLS: *Beast Speech, Enslave Beast, Evoke Fear, Fog-raising, Sense Power*

HEALTH: 10

COURAGE: 4

RENOWN: 2

CORRUPTION: Corrupt

GEAR: Staff, assorted totemic items, filthy fur robe

Lod is a small man with a patchy beard and shoulder length, greasy black hair. His tiny black eyes dart back and forth nervously, and he whispers prayers to heathen gods when nervous. Camrynn keeps Lod around because of his utility and because he feels Lod makes a better ally than enemy. The other members of Camrynn's clan view him with a mixture of fear and reverence. Lod has already slipped into the grasp of the dark power and becomes more corrupt every day.

Lod keeps a trio of enslaved wolves with him at all times; see page 297 of the core rulebook for their statistics. In combat, Lod sends these to attack and uses *Evoke Fear* on his foes.

DUNLENDING WARRIORS

Use the statistics on pages 289–90 of the core rulebook for all of the unnamed Dunlending warriors described in this adventure. Assume all are warriors (rather than barbarians) and have *Evasion* rather than *Favoured Weapon* as their order ability.