



# ADVENTURES IN MIDDLE-EARTH™

## THE ROAD GOES EVER ON™



# - CREDITS -

**Designed and Written by:** Steve Emmott, Jon Hodgson,  
TS Luikart, and Jacob Rogers

**Cover by** Sam Manley and Paul Bourne

**Art by** Andy Hepworth, Jon Hodgson, Sam Manley

**Editors:** Francesco Nepitello with Andrew Kenrick

**Graphic Design and Layout:** Paul Bourne

**Creative Direction by** Jon Hodgson

**Proofreading by** Jacob Rogers and David Rea

Based on *The One Ring Roleplaying Game* by  
Francesco Nepitello and Marco Maggi

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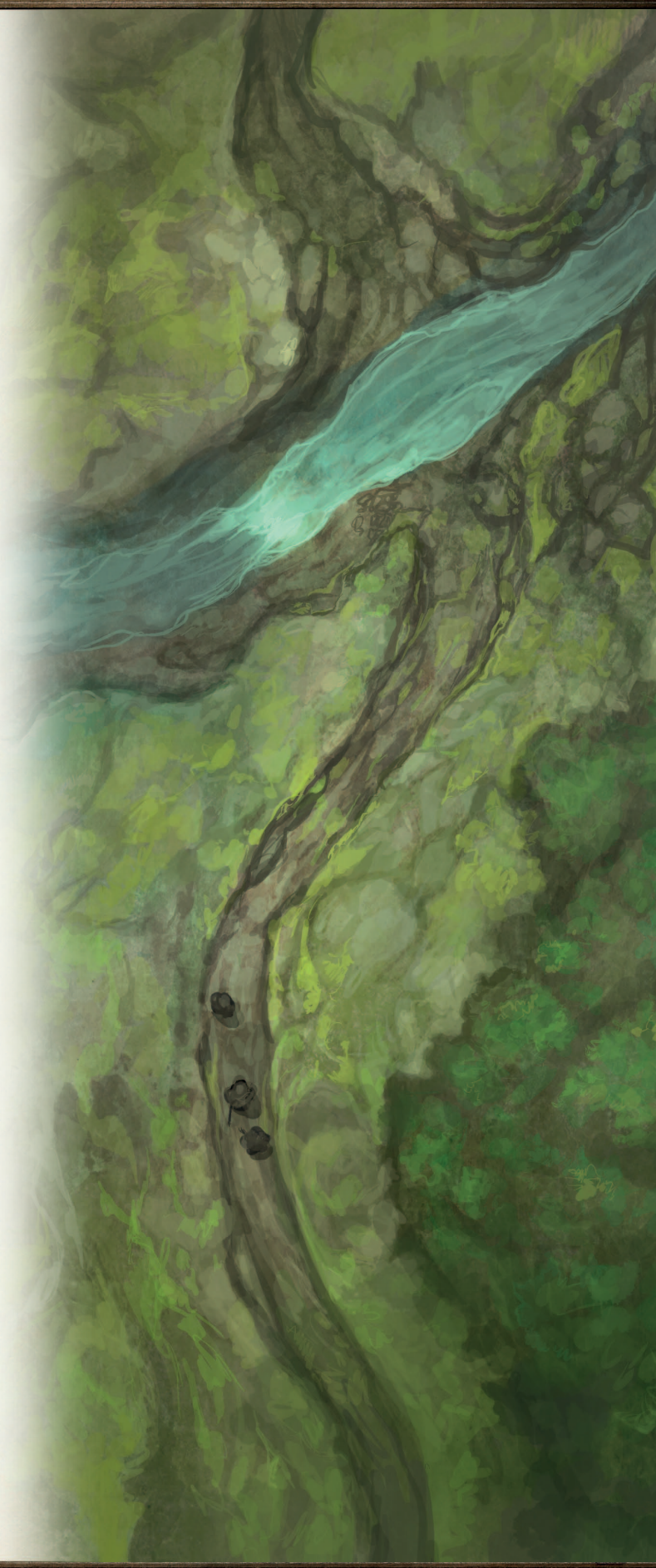
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Swindon, SN25 5AZ, UK



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# - INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS -

*“The Road goes ever on and on  
Down from the door where it began.”*

It's a dangerous business, stepping out your door, and not just because of the far-off places a traveller might end up, but also because of the dangers they'll face along the way. Just as journeys play a central role in the adventures of Bilbo and Frodo, so too are they at the heart of *Adventures in Middle-earth*. *The Road Goes Ever On* is all about the adventures and encounters that a company might have along the way.

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# - events - expanded

*"It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to."*

This section presents a series of lists of suggestions for the Loremaster, each corresponding to a Journey Event. Some of these events are detailed in separate chapters, in which case page references are given. The Loremaster should feel free to choose events or roll the appropriate die.

The Journey Event table can be found starting on page 169 of the *Adventures in Middle-earth Player's Guide*.



## 1: A CHANCE ENCOUNTER - SEE PAGE 5

## 2: OF HERBS AND STEWED RABBIT

### 1d12 (Animals)

- 1: Wild pig/boar
- 2: Goat/sheep
- 3: Wild cattle/wild oxen
- 4: Deer/roeibuck/elk/
- 5: Rabbit/hare
- 6: Pheasant/grouse/partridge
- 7: Thrush/quail/woodcock
- 8: Swan/goose/duck
- 9: Vole/squirrel/marten
- 10: Fox/bear/wolf
- 11: Fish: roach/salmon/bream/handful of minnows/trout
- 12: Wood pigeon/wild hen

### 1d12 (Plants)

- 1: Wild garlic/wild onions
- 2: Wild potatoes/turnips
- 3: Blackberries/gooseberries
- 4: Redcurrants/blackcurrants
- 5: Blueberries/strawberries
- 6: Chestnuts/hazelnuts
- 7: Wild barley/wild oats
- 8: Asparagus/mushrooms
- 9: Rosehips/haws
- 10: Elderberries/birch leaves
- 11: Dandelion roots/nettle roots
- 12: Duckweed/chickweed

For Herbs see page 154 of the  *Loremaster's Guide*.

## 3: AN OBSTACLE

### 1d12

- 1: Fallen Bridge
- 2: Chasm
- 3: Landslip
- 4: Mud slide
- 5: Burst riverbank
- 6: Crag to descend
- 7: Fallen trees
- 8: Fast-flowing river
- 9: Series of waterfalls
- 10: Peat bog
- 11: Tangled undergrowth
- 12: Very steep inclines

## 4: IN NEED OF HELP - SEE PAGE 5

## 5: AGENTS OF THE ENEMY

### 1d10

- 1: Spying Crebain
- 2: Sinister Black Squirrels
- 3: Bedraggled Wolves
- 4: Goblin scouts
- 5: Evil Men
- 6: Half-orc spies
- 7: Slavers
- 8: Orc Warband
- 9: Sinister Messenger
- 10: Disguised as innocent travellers/merchants



### 1d6 (Where seen)

- 1: In the distance
- 2: Shadowing the company
- 3: Stumbled upon, in the midst of their shady business
- 4: Fleeing back to their Master from some other encounter
- 5: Overheard from the road
- 6: Warned of by other passing travellers

## 6: WONDERS OF MIDDLE-EARTH – SEE PAGE 28

### 7: A HUNT

This event specifically covers game animals that are hunted, and of sufficient size to offer a feast.

#### 1d10

- 1: Unusually large pheasants
- 2: Well-fed grouse
- 3: Meaty wild ox
- 4: Stout wild cow
- 5: Large goat
- 6: Plump sheep
- 7: Huge boar
- 8: Well fed deer
- 9: Brawny elk
- 10: Huge salmon

## 8: FINE SPOT FOR A CAMP

#### 1d10

- 1: Sheltered clearing amongst trees
- 2: In the lee of mighty boulders or crags
- 3: A dry cave or hidden gorge

- 4: A sheltered spot amongst old walls or tumbled, ancient masonry
- 5: A comfortable riverbank, or comfortable outcrop of land in a lake or river bend
- 6: Dry spot beneath huge banks of bracken or gorse
- 7: A hidden clearing in a remote thicket/stand of birch/pine trees
- 8: A hollow tree, the lee of a fallen tree, or shelter beneath a huge pile of fallen tree limbs
- 9: A fallen-in barrow or collapsed, long abandoned tomb
- 10: Under an ancient dolmen or standing stone

## 9: LINGERING MEMORY OF TIMES LONG PAST

#### 1d12

- 1: A ruin (see page 15)
- 2: Rotted remains of ancient tree houses
- 3: Fallen statue
- 4: Moss-covered, carved masonry
- 5: Remains of an ancient mosaic or tile floor
- 6: The ancient remains of a once mighty ring fort
- 7: The footings of a once beautiful bridge, now long fallen
- 8: Elves heading West in the distance
- 9: A cache of ancient, decaying (and unusable) weapons
- 10: A corroded piece of jewelry that still shows a glimpse of brilliance
- 11: A cairn with a name carved onto a marker stone
- 12: A field of small burial mounds



## 10: PLACE TOUCHED BY THE SHADOW

### 1d12

- 1: A deep pool of foul-smelling, tainted water
- 2: A glade of twisted black thorn trees/black nettles/  
huge black thistles
- 3: An ancient battleground littered with skeletons
- 4: A ruined building or cave that shows signs of being  
used as a prison
- 5: A clearing with one or more Trolls, turned to stone
- 6: A gully filled with Orc skulls
- 7: Foundation stones of an ancient outpost of evil Men
- 8: A valley filled with carved stones that show  
disturbing scenes
- 9: An abandoned Orc-camp
- 10: A clearing where servants of the Enemy feasted on  
horses
- 11: An abandoned Spider's larder, with desiccated corpses
- 12: A gully filled with fat, black flies

## 11: THE ENEMY IS ABROAD - SEE PAGE 20

## 12: MANY MEETINGS

### 1d12 (The Great and the Good)

- 1: Gandalf
- 2: Radagast
- 3: Elrond
- 4: Saruman
- 5: Beorn
- 6: Thranduil
- 7: Elrohir/Elladan
- 8: Prince Legolas
- 9: A survivor of Thorin's Company
- 10: Bilbo Baggins
- 11: Glorfindel
- 12: King Bard

### 1d10 (Enemies)

- 1: A warband of Uruk-Hai
- 2: An overwhelmingly large group of Orcs
- 3: A horseman all in black, uncanny and terrifying
- 4: An angry Giant, or number of angry Giants
- 5: A great swarm of Spiders
- 6: Trolls having a drinking party
- 7: A great swarm of Giant Bats
- 8: A terrifying band of ghostly-seeming warriors
- 9: A warband of evil horsemen or raiders
- 10: A Dragon

# - ENCOUNTERS - ON THE ROAD

*"What fun to be off again, off on the  
Road with dwarves!"*

Some of the Journey Events suggest a meeting with a Non-Player Character, or group of NPCs. Given time, any Loremaster can come up with a good selection of encounters for the road, but there are occasions in every campaign when inspiration runs short, or there is an unexpected need for a group of credible travellers on the road. This section aims to help the Loremaster create a meaningful encounter from what might otherwise be a random happening. You may wish to construct encounters by choosing thematically or dramatically appropriate elements from these charts, choosing not to roll dice. You should also feel free to ignore or re-roll any result once inspiration strikes.

### Clichés have a purpose and pose a danger

Remember that travellers may display attributes and attitudes commonly associated with their home culture, or they may be very different than anticipated. Presenting encounters that cleave closely to established expectations can increase the feeling of inhabiting a familiar, shared idea of Middle-earth. It does also run the risk of being predictable and ultimately boring, and clearly that isn't good for your game! When to present something familiar, and when to present an unexpected twist falls to the Loremaster's ability to read what is needed at a given moment.

There are plenty of surprises to be found in the texts themselves, not everything is as well known as one might think. Hunting down Tolkien's inspirations for cultures, characters and events can let you dip into the same well, providing something which is familiar enough to promote the feel of the setting, while also adding something unexpected.



The nature of an encounter can vary depending on when in the day it occurs, and the prevailing weather conditions. Roll both on the Time of Day Chart and on the Weather Chart. Two results on the weather chart can be combined to make transitional weather.

D6	TIME OF DAY
1	Daybreak as the Company set out on the road
2	Mid-morning
3	As the Company break for midday vittles
4	Mid-afternoon
5	Evening as the Company make camp
6	Night time as most of the Company rest



WEATHER	
D10	WINTER
1	Driving sleet
2	Pale silver sun
3	Thick freezing fog
4	Torrential rain
5	Intermittent rain and snow
6	Howling wind, driven snow
7	Clear sky, crisp frost on the ground
8	A sky full of snow, with snow on the ground
9	Dim sunshine failing to melt lying snow
10	Snowstorm

WEATHER	
D10	SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN
1	Misty drizzle
2	Pale golden sunshine <b>Night:</b> Scudding clouds across dimly twinkling stars
3	Dense mist, low cloud
4	Persistent heavy rain
5	Sporadic Showers
6	Gusty wind and clear skies
7	Clear sky, bright golden sun <b>Night:</b> Shining stars studding the black sky
8	Unmoving iron-grey clouds <b>Night:</b> Pitch black night, without a glimmer of light
9	Rays of sun piercing heavy cloud <b>Night:</b> A bright round moon visible through silver clouds
10	Angry black clouds and rolling thunder

Next, roll on the following Culture Chart to determine the cultural origins of the travellers encountered. Each broad region of Middle-earth, which corresponds to a map in this set, has its own sets of cultures that might be encountered. Mordor is the exception to this, and is such a unique place that travellers encountered there are beyond the scope of this supplement.

The Loremaster may wish to simply choose a culture that best fits recent events in the campaign, or reflects the region in which the Company are travelling. Note that while each of these cultures has an equal chance (or thereabouts) of being rolled, this Chart is not intended to reflect the demographics of Middle-earth. Encounters on the road are designed to be exceptional and worthy of the tale being told.

Loremasters should also feel free to prepare their own tables with an adventure-appropriate selection of cultures that match what they'd like to include. Such encounters (and possibly Audiences) can also be usefully generated in advance.



## CULTURE CHART

ERIADOR (D8)	WILDERLAND (D10)	SOUTHLANDS (D10)	CULTURE
1			Elves of the Grey Havens
2			Rangers of the North
3			Men of Bree
4			Dwarves of the Blue Mountains
5			Hobbits
6	1		Elves of Rivendell
7	2		Dwarves of Erebor
8	3		Dwarves of the Iron Hills
	4		Bardings
	5		Elves of Mirkwood or Lorien
	6		Men of the Lake
	7		Woodmen
	8		Beornings
	9	1	Men of Dunland/Isengard
	10	2	Rohirrim
		3	Men of Minas Tirith
		4	Men of Dol Amroth
		5	Rangers of Ithilien
		6	Men of Dorwinion
		7	Men of Near Harad/The South
		8	Men of Lebennin
		9	Men of Lamedon
		10	Men of Pelagir

Next, roll 1d20 on the following Motivation Chart, and look up the accompanying description.

Each description includes several choices for the Loremaster and some ideas for side-quests that might be provoked.

## D20 MOTIVATION CHART

D20	MOTIVATION CHART
1	Merchants
2	Itinerant Craftspeople on the Road for Work
3	Servants of a Patron on a Mission
4	Fallen Scion
5	Having Suffered Attack
6	Hunters
7	Herbalist
8	Visitors
9	Meeting their Fate
10	Spies for the Enemy
11	Survivors
12	Naive Travellers
13	Scholars Seeking Knowledge
14	Wardens
15	Treasure Hunters
16	In Pursuit of a Quarry
17	Minor Nobles
18	Travelling to a New Home
19	Herders
20	Common Folk

Some of the combinations that can be rolled might not make immediate sense - for example, Rangers apparently working as travelling merchants. Such results can either be rerolled if desired, or considered laterally: perhaps a group of Rangers have discovered a cache of trade goods abandoned on their patch and are looking for the owners. Or perhaps they have been gifted them by someone they helped and the Rangers are now seeking to trade them for more useful items. Perhaps the head merchant has Dúnedain heritage which she has rejected for a life of trade. Perhaps she's in disguise? These unlikely combinations





can generate a story and should be considered as just a springboard for your own creativity.

You may wish to combine more than one motivation to add further depth to your encounter. That decision depends on

the pacing of your game: if your group of players enjoys a lengthy discussion with NPCs then by all means introduce this kind of depth. Alternatively if you judge your player group just wants to get to their destination then an encounter can be merely a fleeting one in a lonely land.

## Travelling together

A Company might decide to travel along with those they encounter. If the Loremaster deems it appropriate to allow it, and the encountered group agree, then working together with their new companions the Company should gain Advantage on an appropriate future Journey Event checks while travelling together. The Player-heroes are the focus of the game, so an NPC shouldn't take checks on their behalf. But they can certainly assist, and this bonus reflects that, without making it too much the focus of a journey to find extra companions. It is entirely up to the Loremaster how long a group of NPCs will accompany Player-heroes on the road. Once they depart the bonus departs with them.

## Aspects Common to All Encounters

Many of the Encounter Motivations below share common decision points that can be used by the Loremaster to offer variety and interest. By combining the underlying answers to these questions in different combinations you can keep your encounters fresh and varied, as well as making use of them to drive the greater story of your campaign and the themes of the setting.

**Big or Small?** Is the encountered group a lone figure, or a group?

**Prosperous or Poor?** At what level of material wealth are the encountered NPCs?

**Successful or Struggling?** Are the NPCs doing well on the road, or are they suffering ill fortune?

**Givers or Takers?** Will the encounter offer the Company an opportunity to give aid or information, or receive it?

**Typical or Atypical?** Is it enough to use the title of the motivation as written, and the culture as one would expect?

**Will your players simply enjoy travelling alongside a gruff, pipe-smoking Dwarf with a big beard, or do they need something much more unexpected to make them sit up and pay attention?**

**Side quest?** Will this encounter offer the chance to spontaneously embark on a new lesser mission? To right a wrong, or follow a treasure map?

**Inspiring or Dismal?** Will this encounter provide a heartening boost to the Company's spirits, or will it remind them of the encroaching darkness and inevitable failing of all good things?

**Echo or Seed?** Will this encounter call back to something that has already happened to reinforce it in the story, or will it foreshadow something new, which will pay off later? Or is it an entirely random event that has no bearing on the past or future story?

**Thematic Opportunities?:** What will this encounter do to reinforce the themes of the setting, and what will it do for the tone of the quest?

**Game Opportunities?:** What will this encounter do for the state of the Company.

**Crossing the Path or Travelling Along It?** The Loremaster has the choice of sharing a fleeting encounter that might last just a moment, or a more sustained "encounter" that involves spending days in the Company of those encountered. Don't forget to keep this varied.



Each expanded entry offers a series of options or questions for the Loremaster to decide on and be inspired by.

## EXPANDED MOTIVATIONS

### 1. MERCHANTS

Since the death of Smaug, more and more merchants are criss-crossing Wilderland on new trade routes. In Eriador, occasional bands of merchants and hardy lone pedlars wind their way between the ancient carved stones, bringing goods and news to far flung homesteads. In Gondor, prosperous trade to and from the great sea ports has always been the glue that binds the kingdom together. Or at least that's what the merchants will tell you.

A merchant might be rich or poor. They might appear in a large caravan with armed guards, or they might be just one old woman with a small bag of goods to sell.

They will always have a destination in mind, but they might not have passed this way before and are determined to open up new trade routes. Others will stick to well-trod paths, the knowledge of which is handed down from generation to generation.

As travellers they are used to strangers, and often carry the news from settlement to settlement. Most are canny, wily fellows, but others seem to survive more on sheer luck and their good-hearted view of the world.

On lonely paths, merchants can easily fall prey to attack or misfortune. More experienced pedlars know of the dangers along their specific routes and are well-prepared for such. They might even help fellow travellers out with food or medicine (some may charge for their assistance). Other merchants might need aid themselves, having found themselves far from their usual paths.

A merchant may have set out in fine fettle, but be encountered in a terrible state. Or they might have come from a long patch of ill luck to be met just as their fortunes turn around. Perhaps the Company can help?

A merchant is someone with something to sell. This might not be their calling in life, it could be a single instance of having something to trade. Something which might lead to adventure. Something stolen, or something found. Something they know very well what it is, or something about which they have no real clue.

### 2. ITINERANT CRAFTSPEOPLE ON THE ROAD FOR WORK

Craftspeople often have need to be on the road. Perhaps they come from the itinerant Dwarven peoples who no longer have a place to call home, or are taking their specialist crafts from place to place, since no single settlement can support them forever.

Artisans have need of supplies which are often sought out in the wild, or else they might be travelling to learn





new techniques from the masters of their craft. Other craftspeople transport their goods to market themselves, and having made a batch of goods take them on the road to their customers.

Some craftspeople are incredibly skilled, others barely competent at their calling. They might be affluent from their efforts, or they might be on the point of starvation, unable to find work.

Do they have their goods, raw materials and tools with them? Or have those been lost? Are they truly craftspeople, or merely travelling in that guise? Will the Company encounter them again in the future?

An individual or group might be temporarily filling the role of craftspeople. The travellers might be seeking a new source of supplies for someone else. They might be working for a craftspeople, finding tools or raw materials on their behalf. Perhaps a group of travellers is looking for a specific craftspeople who lives somewhere in the Wild, or has gone missing? The Company might encounter other folk who are temporarily in the role of craftspeople – Dúnedain building secret fortifications, or agents of the Elves of Lorien constructing a temporary *flet* (tree-platform) for a night's stay.

### 3. SERVANTS OF A PATRON ON A MISSION

The Great and the Good (and indeed the less than Good) have need of servants who are able to travel. Such folk are tasked with taking messages or gifts to other lords, acquiring necessary goods or services, forging trade agreements or finding new opportunities, researching rumours or spying on rivals, collecting news, requesting urgent aid or have been sent out into the world to accomplish the aims of their master. Whether they are well disposed to meeting fellow travellers is very much up to the Loremaster. Whether a friendly disposition is genuine, or a mask from behind which to gather information is also in the Loremaster's hands.

A meeting with a servant might lead to a later introduction and chance to win a Patron. Conversely, if it goes poorly the Company might make a powerful enemy.

The servant of a Patron might need help with their mission, or might be able to offer help to Company if their Patrons are allied. Or the servant's aid might require that

the Company present themselves to that Patron in order to settle debts. A Patron might not be some powerful Wizard in a tower: they might simply be a village elder, or a chief among shepherds. Whether serving the high or low, an encounter with a servant is an excellent way to bring matters and individuals to the attention of the Company in order to foreshadow later use.

### 4. LOST SCION

Those denied their rightful heritage can, curiously enough, often be found on the Road or deep within the Wild. Perhaps the wilderness and lonely places of the world are suited to those denied their rightful place. A lost scion might be filled with determination and hope for the future, full of plans to prove themselves, counter the hand of fickle fortune and regain their rightful place. They may have abandoned their fate, either from dismay or stoic acceptance of the hand that they have been dealt. Such an encounter might offer the chance to cheer the dismal, or to join a cause. It might foreshadow a later encounter with the enemies of the scion, or it might be an opportunity to meet someone who later becomes great and powerful. How they are treated now might have great ramifications for the future.

A scion's rightful heritage might be a whole kingdom, or it might just be the simplest of Hobbit holes. It might be a bag of silver spoons that can be regained this afternoon. Perhaps the scion is unaware of their position, which will only be revealed later in the story. Or perhaps they are not a lost scion at all, and are merely a charlatan seeking a position to which they have no just claim. The Company may later realise they have aided a villain, and then strive to set things right.

### 5. HAVING SUFFERED ATTACK

Middle-earth is a place fraught with danger for the common folk, and heroes need a chance to shine. The Company may encounter travellers of any kind that have found ill luck on the Road, or their journeys have brought them near ordinary folk who are in desperate need of aid.

Villagers from a raided settlement, wanderers beset by bandits, or travellers who have fallen foul of bad weather all need help. And helping others is the perfect opening to a side quest, or later reappearance. Alternatively the Company may be mistaken for the attackers, and treated very poorly.



Who did the attacking? Orcs are the obvious choice, and there's nothing wrong with a good old Orc raid. As the years pass intrusions by the Enemy will grow in frequency. But there are other enemies in the lands of Middle-earth: Spiders driven mad by the piping of a strange girl in the forest, rival factions within the emerging culture of the Beornings, and ancient family feuds in the Bree-land. What can be drawn from past events in your adventures, and what seeds could be sown for the future?

## 6. HUNTERS

Gathering food is a necessity of life, and it falls to the common folk to hunt for their subsistence. More powerful inhabitants of Middle-earth may hunt for pleasure. A hunt might be an everyday occurrence, or it might be undertaken in preparation for a great feast. Hunters are likely to be very knowledgeable about the local area, knowing where to find game, where old ruins provide shelter, where there are Spider nests, or strange muttering trees that should be avoided. They might share the fruits of their labour with the Company, or they might ask for help in catching some specific prey. Hunters may have noticed unusual events in the local area, and be able to give precise directions to them. They might be angered by a clumsy Company of so-called adventurers, laden with clanging equipment, blundering into their hunt.

Not all hunters are wily, taciturn woodfolk possessed of ever-reliable rustic knowledge. Some are unsuccessful and desperate, and offer bad advice.

Hunting takes many forms, from catching boar with hounds, birds with hawks, jackrabbits with a sling and pebbles, or deer with a bow. The form the hunt takes will indicate something about the hunters - how affluent they are, what culture they hail from and so on.

What are the hunters seeking? Is it boar, deer and rabbits, or is it something else? Are the hunters supposed to be catching game in this place? Is this the king's hunting grounds or is the wildlife protected by a Wizard? Or can they even speak, and respond poorly to being considered dinner? Will accepting the gift of game put the Company into the local folks' debt?

## 7. HERBALISTS

Finding the special herbs that can cool a fever, or mend wounds is a skilled business, and Middle-earth is not

full of healing potions. An encounter with a wandering herbalist, or group of herbalists, might offer a Company a welcome chance to stock up on their supplies of medicinal herbs. Alternatively, the promise of future healing supplies in return for aid might be an attractive side quest. Perhaps a Troll has moved into the vicinity of certain significant plants. Or maybe the herbalist stumbled across an ancient ruin riddled with tunnels as they sought out rare plants.

The traveller may be an itinerant healer, returning home having treated someone of great significance. Or perhaps they are en route to help a village beset by ill health. Not everyone met on the road is who they appear to be: the close access afforded by the herbalist's art is the perfect cover for a spy of the Enemy. Or feeding strangers in the Wild fowl medicine may be a way to steal their gold.

A herbalist is someone who specialises in seeking out plants. But they might not be collecting them to sell. Perhaps they simply wish to be amid the quiet places of the world, and admire growing things. They might know a lot about plants without ever picking them. They may be counted among the Wise of their village and a valued member of a community. Alternatively, they may be seen as a lazy outcast, who fears people and their harsh words.

## 8. VISITORS

We know Middle-earth is a place that includes family life: there are birthday parties, feasts, weddings or other gatherings to sing old songs and tell the great stories; indeed there are coronations of kings! And so it is that travellers can be found taking to the road to attend all manner of family gatherings. This might be occurring in the next valley, or many miles distant. The visitors may be attending a joyous event or compelled to see a sad one to the end.

Whether the travellers are happy about being on the road is another matter. Whether they know where they are going, are well prepared for the road, or what they have seen along the way are all things for the Loremaster to determine in the service of their adventure.

Does someone know someone who knows someone who knows a Player-hero, or a member of their family? Is the Company invited to the event? Does the event need a special something that the Company can provide? Are the travellers going to the event to celebrate or take revenge for



past slights? What might the Company learn about nearby settlements, or future Sanctuaries? Are the travellers on their way to the event full of expectation, or returning from it full of stories?

## 9 MEETING THEIR FATE

The Company encounter one or more individuals travelling to the climax of their personal story. Perhaps they are settling an old score. Perhaps they are closing in on recovering a lost heirloom. Or perhaps they are en route to propose to the love of their life. Whichever is the case they are almost at the final scene of their tale. There may be an opportunity for the Company to become entangled in the tale...

## 10 SPIES FOR THE ENEMY

The Company encounter, unbeknownst to them, spies of the Enemy disguised as some other kind of traveller (roll again on this chart to determine how the spies present themselves). This isn't an encounter where their true nature is revealed, it is a seed that the Loremaster plants for later harvesting. The travellers will be curious to know everything about the Company. Whether they look fair and feel foul, or look foul and feel fair is up to the Loremaster.

## 11. SURVIVORS

Not all travellers choose to take to the road. Some are forced onto it by fire, flood, strife, famine or plague. Victims of such ill fortune are often in dire need of assistance, but can also inspire with their resolve or dignity. Whether to break a journey in order to help the unfortunate, in spite of other pressing needs, can test a Company's commitment to doing good. It can also be the opening to a whole chain of events as they undertake to establish, protect and nurture a new settlement.

Not all those who survive a disaster are dignified or of good character. They might well be angry and embittered by the turn their lives have taken. They might be in desperate need of things the Company possess, and be prepared to demand and then take them.

The situation might not be morally simple: In Rohan they might be Dunlendings forced from their homes by the expansion of Rohirrim pastures. Further north, has King Bard's reclamation of the Dale-lands caused problems for the folks who lived there when Smaug ruled the Lonely Mountain?

## 12. NAÏVE TRAVELLERS

Adventurers like our heroes take to the road in a state of preparedness - armed and armoured, with provisions and equipment that enable them to survive long days on the road. But not everyone who sets forth on the road is ready. Some head out ill prepared, and suffer grave misfortune. This encounter is a meeting with such naïve folk who intended to see the world, and found it a harder place than they had hoped. But not all is lost. Even the most bedraggled amateur might have seen something on the road that is of use to the Company. They might have brought something with them from home that the Company need. Or they may have evaded a threat that the Company have yet to encounter.

A naïve traveller might be full of youthful fire, or an older person taking their last chance to see the world beyond their garden gate. Perhaps they have resolved to make a new start after their efforts at farming failed, or their family suffered an unfortunate fate.

The challenges of the journey might make them dismal company, offer a foreshadowing of the inevitable decline of all things. Alternatively, the traveller's undiminished resolve to see out their travelling plans in spite of their current state might be inspiring, and the Company might make a friend who reappears at a later date, renewed and ready for new adventures.

## 13. SCHOLARS SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

Everyone knows that the Wild holds secrets. Places long abandoned hide secret wisdom, and a history long forgotten. There are those hardy souls who brave the trials of the Road to seek out ancient knowledge. Some do so for a love of learning, some seek a power that they believe the artefacts of ancient times can furnish. Others have a specific quest, a definite question to be answered by their searching of the wild places of the world. Scholars are of sundry kinds and means, but all seek something: the story of their family, the rediscovery of lost heirlooms, the answer to an ancient riddle, or the key to a forgotten language.

An unfortunate individual who appeared to harmlessly rant and rave about ancient runes in the streets of Dale is another matter to meet at midnight in an ancient ruin. On a less alarming note, meeting someone who has studied the local area for years might yield useful information to



aid a quest. Such seekers of old lore might need assistance opening up an ancient tomb, or to have their findings taken to the nearest settlement. They might trade for supplies or appreciate the assistance of those not opposed to swinging steel in the name of discovery.

Scholars might be young and keen, or old and cynical. Either extreme might fall under the spell of the Shadow, or be quietly working to further the aims of the Istari.

#### 14. WARDENS

Some places are protected: unseen boundaries are patrolled by the folk who live nearby. Other times ancient places are quietly watched.

Those protectors of lands and people are not without needs — they sometimes must seek answers, supplies, aid or must pursue enemies. What have they seen along the way? What news of the wider world do they seek? Those who have travelled far from home might be lost. Perhaps the guardians have abandoned their duty altogether, and have a sad tale to tell. The protectors of a people or place might also be encountered in need of help; if their numbers have been diminished by attack or ill fortune they may need temporary assistance.

#### 15. TREASURE HUNTERS

Knowing where ancient treasure is to be found is one thing; being able to retrieve it is quite another. The Wild is fraught with dangers, and those in possession of the

knowledge needed to find treasures might not be able to win them. Whether this encounter is a fleeting one with a group ill-equipped to succeed in their lengthy quest for a Dragon's hoard, or the start of a side quest into nearby ruins is up to the Loremaster.

Is the treasure map real? Are the ancient legends true? Whether the gold it promises is unlooted is open to exploration. Does the treasure have guardians? Whether the treasure-seekers will truly share the loot once it has been won is another consideration.

What to do with a hoard of ancient silver and gold once it's been retrieved from a Troll's cave can be a thorny issue. It's heavy and highly desirable, and perhaps it is more trouble than it is worth (especially when the Troll returns and finds its treasure missing).

#### 16. IN PURSUIT OF A QUARRY

Whether hunting fleeing criminals, raiders, Orcs or Wolves, or a kidnapped friend this encounter centres on those chasing a quarry. Is their pursuit a just one? Or a case of unfair judgement and cruel revenge?

Will this just be a story told by firelight, which may be further developed later in the adventure, or a quest the Company may briefly join right now? Is this a mounted pursuit that briefly crosses the Company's path, leaving a mysterious object fallen on the road? Or are the pursuers rueing a lost trail or obscured tracks? Will the Company gain the





favour of a potential Patron, or the enmity of a powerful adversary? Perhaps the hunters have already caught the object of their pursuit and are returning them to justice. Who is in the right? Should the Company intervene in a local matter? Are these really agents of justice, or are they kidnappers, or agents of the Enemy?

### 17. MINOR NOBLES

While meeting one of the truly great personages of Middle-earth falls under the purview of a different Journey Event, there is still the chance to meet an important person on the road. They might be travelling with a retinue in good order, or they may be travelling alone having suffered some misfortune. Perhaps the notable is travelling in disguise as a short term measure, or they seek trusty allies with whom they can drop false pretences and share a cautionary tale.

Given their resources, truly affluent nobles might offer the chance for a long rest in their company, or may offer to restock the Company's supplies in return for later service, or an immediate favour. They may have encountered some problem on the road with wandering servants, a lack of supplies, local bandits or Orcs. Perhaps the Company can offer assistance?

### 18. TRAVELLING TO A NEW HOME

These travellers might be full of hope, or be in possession of a sad tale; either way they have taken to the Road to move to a new home. This could be due to problems where they previously lived, or at the invitation of a far away friend or family member. They might have heard tales of wonderful places to live now that Smaug the Terrible is dead. Lake-town, Dale and Erebor all offer wonders and new opportunities.

West of the Misty Mountains, a simple farm-steader might give up their isolated croft for a house in Bree. Perhaps a recent letter has informed them of an inheritance they are travelling to claim. The grown children of a merchant family of Esgaroth might be sent to establish a new holding in the Vales of Anduin. A small Woodmen ring fort in the Western Eaves can only hold so many families. And the sea with its salted air and grey-sailed ships is always calling to the Elves...

A day spent in the company of these folk about to embark on a new life might result in invitations to visit, or reveal a mystery for later investigation.

### 19. HERDERS

Shepherds bringing their flocks down from the high ground before the winter, or driving them back up to mountain pastures is a common sight across Middle-earth. Herds of cattle or horses need to be moved to fresh pastures with the turn of the seasons. Herders are for the most part isolated loners, but who knows what they might see out in the wild places of the world, far from habitation.

Those who live out in the countryside are well-versed in the best places to camp, and the dangers to avoid. They will note the passing of strangers, and their usually mundane lives are strongly marked by anything unusual.

Any threat to their flocks or herds from Wolves, Wargs or hungry bandits might see them in need of help. What evil force gathers those enemies and sends them into the Wild?

### 20. COMMON FOLK

Sometimes an encounter might simply be with ordinary folk going about their business. They're not undertaking any great journey and have not suffered any great ill.

While unusual, it is not unknown for ordinary people to travel simply for pleasure: to take up their favourite walking stick and compile the sights they see into maps, to visit nearby friends, check up on neighbor's fields, take crop surpluses to market, or having been sent on an errand to buy some new pans. Common folk among the Elves might be taking the air before writing a poem or composing a song. They might be simply enjoying their natural surroundings.

Despite their grimly determined purpose even the Dúnedain appear at times as normal folk, tending to animals, or heading to Bree for the beer of *The Prancing Pony* and local gossip.

In unusual locales such as the Misty Mountains, any common folk encountered are likely to be hermits, going about their daily business of a quiet life of isolation.

Most common folk have simple needs, and a simple outlook. They can provide a Company with a practical view of the world, and information about their small hopes and fears. Common folk might serve as a reminder of hearth and home, and of how adventurers are curious



folk. This can be used to push the Fellowship Phase in more grounded and even sentimental directions.

Common folk also provide an example of the mundane goodness that heroes seek to preserve - the simple, quiet life of good things that eventually the Enemy will come to threaten. Or the petty squabbles and rivalries that the Enemy will seek to turn to a greater sourness. The Loremaster may choose to come back to the common folk encountered here in a different setting at a later time.

For the practical and simple folk of Middle-earth, weather and associated agricultural prospects have a great impact, and any conversation will invariably reference it.

## - BONES - of the earth

*“Here and there upon heights and ridges they caught glimpses of ancient walls of stone, and the ruins of towers: they had an ominous look.”*

Travellers throughout Middle-earth frequently encounter the ruins of past kingdoms along their journeys, for the builders of old shaped their works with skill now lost in the Third Age. Roads laid down by the forefathers of the Dwarves to link their underground realms were maintained by the Númenóreans and are still used by travellers between East and West. The Tower of Orthanc remains unblemished, though it was crafted thousands of years ago. The towers built in Eregion by the Elves might be no more, but the stones remember them still.

This section provides some advice and inspiration for Loremasters wishing to create their own ruins for use in their adventures, allowing for better descriptions and helping to give some ideas as to what use they have since been put to.

### CREATING A RUIN

To design or detail a ruin, the Loremaster can follow the 4-step process below, making a number of choices based on the location and needs of his adventure:

1. Who built it?
2. What was it originally?
3. What does it look like now?
4. What is it used for now?

#### 1. WHO BUILT IT?

The following paragraphs discuss the characteristics that each of the Free Folk imparted to their buildings. Choose between Elven, Dwarven or Dúnedain construction. The Loremaster might also decide that the ruin is of lesser provenance, or even created by servants of the Shadow. The decision as to who built the structure should take into account where in Middle-earth it is to be sited, and which among the Free Peoples might have dwelt in that land long ago.



**Dúnedain:** The Dúnedain once built mighty, awe-inspiring works: the Argonath, statues of kings as tall as hills; the unassailable Tower of Orthanc; and the city of Minas Tirith, carved out of the side of a mountain. But they also fought terrible battles and bitter civil wars, and much of their art was lost forever. The broken works of the Men of the West are still fair to look upon, frequently





bringing to mind old tales of noble heroes and great deeds, but so too do their remnants remind the viewer that their world is less than it was.

**Dwarves:** In the working of stone, none have ever surpassed the Dwarves, and their creations were made to endure. Dwarf-work may at times appear delicate or fragile, but in this their great craft deceives the eye, for no matter how their creations may seem, they are invariably strong. Dwarf buildings, no matter how ornate in appearance, feel solid as the roots of mountains and it is rare to find them broken by the mere passage of time; only malice or catastrophe topples the mansions of the Khazâd. Some Dwarf-works are smoothed and polished to a mirror sheen. Others are cleverly carved to resemble trees, or have unusual properties. A few are perfectly camouflaged to appear identical to the terrain about them, for the Dwarves have ever been a guarded race and many of their doors are meant to remain a secret when shut.

**Elves:** Fair are all the creations of the Elves, their buildings no less so than their crafts; there is much beauty to be found in their grace, even when they lay fallen. Elven ruins often carry a melancholic sadness about them that other folk strongly perceive, and few can bear to inhabit them for long periods. Those rare folk that can often observe that time seems to pass strangely therein; a day can slip by all but unnoticed. Many Elven works were built to accommodate natural elements, often leaving spaces for trees to grow through or even incorporating them directly into the building itself. The peerless stonemasons of the Dwarves had a hand in many an ancient 'Elven' building, which can throw off a scholar seeking to identify the oldest ruins.

**Servants of the Shadow:** Although Orcs, Trolls, and even fouler creatures rarely do their own building, preferring to defile and corrupt the abodes of Free Folk, sometimes Sauron sets his minions to work constructing towers of their own. Dark masonry, sometimes engraved with foul symbols or glowing with a baleful light, mark such places as the work of the Shadow. Even long after they have been abandoned or destroyed, these buildings remain tainted by the presence of Shadow. They are invariably Blighted Places.

## 2. WHAT WAS IT ORIGINALLY?

Next, the Loremaster should decide what purpose the structure originally served, either by rolling on or

picking from the table below. Was it once a sturdy castle or an ornate tomb? Even after being reduced to a ruin, something of the builder's original intent might remain.

D12	PURPOSE
1	Archive
2	Decorative
3	Villa
4	Fortification
5	Hall
6	Waystation
7	Observatory
8	Road
9	Tomb
10	Workshop
11	Wondrous
12	Dark Purpose

**Archive:** Many of the Free Folk are long-lived and such folk tend to accumulate a great deal of lore. Archives were buildings meant to contain such records. Some held accounts of kings and their doings, others tales of history and exile. Many such places have long been plundered or their contents removed elsewhere for safe keeping, but the archives themselves endure.

Archives were typically securely built and heavily fortified, with few windows, as they were meant to store and protect books, records held on parchment, and other easily damaged materials. Relatively intact archives may still have long rows of shelves, hinting at their original purpose. Few archives are found in out of the way places, but occasionally an archive meant to carry especially secret or dangerous lore might be found in a remote location and as such may still hold deadly secrets...

**Decorative:** Dwarves, Elves and the Dúnedain all built beautiful buildings, though their embellishments varied. Statues and monuments linger in abandoned courtyards. Beloved trees might still be surrounded by elegant benches, which their roots have long since toppled. Tunnels are carved with mosaics depicting famous stories of past triumphs that few can now remember. Even functional constructions were often carved with style: a long-since



dry fountain with stones curving into the elegant shape of the outstretched hands of a marble maiden, an intricately carved post standing forlorn that once served to hold horse leads, and a magnificent sculpture of a single vast eagle clutching the body of a fallen Elven warrior, all are the sorts of ornamental works that might still be discovered.

**Villa:** Walled manor houses and villas were common throughout the realms of the Dúnedain, but little remains of them now. The stone foundations of a single house may yet remain, but stables, barns and other outlying structures were typically made of wood and have long since turned to dust. A long, low line of stones that once marked a property's boundary or helped to mark off a pen may still be discerned, but little else will remain.

**Fortification:** The Dúnedain fought many battles in their time, not just against the Enemy, but also against themselves, and neither the Dwarves, nor the Elves, are strangers to war. The remains of watchtowers and ramparts are fairly common throughout all lands. Watchtowers were invariably built atop steep hills and made of sturdy stone, whereas ramparts were a mixture of earth and rock, depending on their importance. Watchtowers, when still standing, will often be at least three storeys tall. Fortifications built to house warriors are generally known as keeps. The largest were vast, intended to hold hundreds of fighters, whereas the smallest were meant to house only a few patrols' worth of warriors – ten to twenty at most – and mainly served to allow an alarm to be raised if necessary. Some smaller keeps were built in inaccessible but important areas, such as overlooking important mountain passes. Fallen keeps will often still retain portions of their outer defensive walls, but the inner portions may have collapsed and sometimes sunk into whatever cellars that were carved beneath them, leaving vast stony pits surrounded by piles of crumbling stone.

**Hall:** Generally a place for meetings of various types, halls were buildings for large gatherings used for everything from politics to leisure. What a given hall was originally used for may be reflected in its structure: a warrior's hall would almost always be far more heavy in construction than a library or a school and thus more likely to have survived somewhat intact. Halls built for the exhibition of music and song were designed to enhance sound – strange tonal properties may yet linger in such places.

**Waystation:** Travel between the Dúnedain kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor flourished for a time, with many folk passing along the North Road, and for many years, the Dwarves and other traders travelled between the various settlements of Durin's folk from West to East. Waystations were set along the road to meet the needs of travellers, built as much for security as comfort, for many stood in wild lands. Sturdy protecting walls may still stand, even if the structures they once guarded have long since passed into dust.

**Observatory:** Above all things, the Elves love the light of the stars and have ever been keen observers of the night sky. The Dúnedain, too, were watchers of the heavens, both to glimpse the future and to navigate, for the Men of the West were great mariners and practised readers of the stars. The Dwarves used the light of moon and stars in their works, crafting runes that only showed under the correct conditions in the night sky. Thus, all three peoples crafted buildings that helped them gaze at the heavens, and a few buildings that the unlearned would deem as merely 'watchtowers' would once have served as observatories. Some were constructed in such a way that sunlight would pass through specific windows at different times of the year, allowing for precise measurements of time. A few may yet hold the remains of instruments once used for mapping the course of the stars, or hint at the secret techniques of deciphering hidden runes by moonlight.

**Road:** Long roads once stretched across the land, connecting villages and cities. The Dwarves built several major roads to connect their far-flung mines and underground kingdoms, roads which the Dúnedain put to use in their day. Stretches of some of the old Dwarf roads are still in use at the end of the Third Age, but the ancient way markers that once showed the distances between settlements have long since toppled. Many roads have fallen into decay, with whole portions lost to weather, water and time. Others have had their stones robbed for use elsewhere.

**Tomb:** The Men of Arnor buried their dead in stone barrows below ground, with nobles often being placed alongside valuable treasures. Those of Gondor placed their kings in elaborate mausolea. The Dwarves, too, lay their dead in elaborate halls of stone, marked with runes. Many of the crypts the Men of the West built have long since been opened and ransacked. Others have 'occupants' who don't like to be disturbed...



**Workshop:** Much of the history of the Second and Third Age has been dictated by the works of smiths, and forges were common to all peoples. The sturdy buildings that once held smithies often survive, for they were made exceptionally strong to endure great heat, but the tools employed in them are likely long since removed, leaving little else to show what use the building may have once been put to.

**Wondrous:** The Loremaster should either roll again, or choose another entry from the chart. The building in question will have unusual properties that some Free Folk may perceive as strange. For example a pool like the Mirrormere that reflects images from the past; the Hill of Seeing, where a traveller seated on its stone chair might glimpse visions of far-away lands; or a tomb in the Barrow-downs that haunts any who enter it with dreams of the past.

**Dark Purpose:** The Loremaster should either roll again, or choose another entry from the chart. This building was once used for sinister ends and a trace of the Shadow may linger about it; for example, a keep once used for torturing prisoners, an archive containing vile lore that was sealed away, a secret shrine dedicated to the Great Enemy, or similar. At the Loremaster's discretion, such a building may be considered a Blighted Place (see *Adventures in Middle-earth Player's Guide*, page 181).

### 3. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE NOW?

Although the Loremaster now has an idea what the structure once was, next they should decide on what condition it is in now by rolling on or picking from the table below. It may once have been a mighty keep or glorious hall, but the passage of time eventually renders all to ruin – has it collapsed entirely or is something of the original structure still remaining?

D6	PRESENT APPEARANCE
1	Crumbling
2	Fallen
3	Overgrown
4	Partly Buried
5	Partially Collapsed
6	Sunken

**Crumbling:** Portions of the ruin are still standing, if only just. Large portions of the stonework have clearly fallen away, time and weather having worn them down. The structures that support the building look weak and dust regularly filters down from them. The whole ruin groans alarmingly with the wind, punctuated by the sounds of small stones falling from the ceiling. Anyone who fails an attribute check with a natural '1' on the die whilst exploring the ruin dislodges something, and must make a **DC 13 Dexterity** saving throw to dodge falling masonry or suffer 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage.



**Fallen:** The building has been broken by time and lies in total ruin. Whatever it once was may no longer be discernible, for it now appears to be merely a pile of tumbled stone. Depending on where it was found, pieces may have been removed for other buildings, giving the ruin a haphazard appearance. There is no shelter to be found here.

**Overgrown:** Nature has taken the building back into its keeping. While parts of the ruin are still standing, they are all covered with plants, such as moss, lichen, or vines.



Portions of the building's interior may well be blocked off by the vegetation; however, there is likely some shelter here and the mass of plant life helps hold the ancient stones together.

**Partly Buried:** The building may be more or less intact, but a large portion of it has been buried by sand, stone, mud or even snow. The extent of the burial is such that there is no easy way to shift the material. Such buildings may provide a little shelter, but much of the interior is filled with whatever substance has buried it and there is unlikely anything much to explore.

**Partially Collapsed:** Portions of the building have fallen down, but the rest is still standing and seems sturdy. There is definitely shelter from inclement weather to be found here and possibly even an opportunity for some exploration into its interior. Such buildings may creak, or be filled with dust from the crumbling masonry, but they are otherwise sound. Such a building may allow the Company to benefit from a long rest.



**Sunken:** The ruin has settled into the earth, perhaps sinking into a bog, or it was enveloped by the slow shifting of ground. Such buildings can present a unique opportunity, but they can also be very dangerous. Much of a sunken ruin may still be intact, but swamp water or shifting earth will have filled its interior. There is no shelter to be had here, but the heroes might venture to explore into the ruin's depths...

#### 4. WHAT IS IT USED FOR NOW?

The Loremaster may wish to decide what the ruin is now used for. Does it lie empty, or has it been overrun by Goblins or inhabited by some foul creature? Either pick from the results below, or roll 1d12 to decide.

D12	PRESENT USE
1-8	Abandoned
9	Hideout/Lair
10	Infested
11	Refuge
12	Haunted

**Abandoned:** The majority of the works of past kingdoms are lonely remains, long since deserted and forsaken, though seldom entirely forgotten. Rare passing travellers occasionally spend the night in ruins for the shelter they provide, but just as many will pass them by, superstitiously avoiding the fallen buildings of past kingdoms and vanished peoples.

**Hideout/Lair:** The ruin is occupied, most likely by nefarious sorts. Gangs of brigands sometimes make use of sturdy ruins, as do Orcs and other foul creatures. Occasionally, honest folk may put a local ruin to use, perhaps as a storage place for goods. Particularly large or cavernous buildings may conceal a pack of Wargs, a swarm of vampiric bats or even a Troll seeking shelter from the sun.

**Infested:** The ruin is overrun with vermin of some sort: insects, rats, hordes of spiders (small ones, usually...), neekerbreakers and so on. The infestation is so great that remaining within will be impossible, but this may not be evident at first, causing an unsuspecting company to bed down here, only to wake to the sounds of their stores being consumed by a tide of field mice.

**Refuge:** The ruin holds a hidden sanctuary of one of the Free Folk. Dwarven shelters are often carefully concealed behind cunningly wrought edifices with exceedingly well hidden doors. The Elves will often place their shelters hidden among nearby trees, adjacent to unused ruins, but not actually within them. In Eriador, many such refuges belong to the Dúnedain. The Rangers carefully ensure that



buildings concealing one of their strongholds look just as abandoned as all of the other past works of their people. They take pains to conceal their stored goods behind false walls and mask passages with fences woven from fallen branches made to resemble natural obstructions. At the Loremaster's discretion, Companions that manage to find such a refuge may rest in them, taking a long rest, even while travelling; however, if a Company doesn't have the good will of the folk that built the refuge and are discovered there, it may go ill for them...

**Haunted:** One or more undead beings dwell in this place. They may be the sorrowful spirits of those who were cursed here long ago, or they may be of an altogether darker sort, wraiths using borrowed flesh to terrorise the living. Regardless, it is not wise to venture here without good reason. Locals who live near a haunted ruin are often aware of its dark reputation, though they are unlikely to know how it became so for a certainty.

## - DANGERS - along the way

*He had many hardships and adventures before he got back. The Wild was still the Wild, and there were many other things in it in those days beside Goblins...*

Over the course of a journey, or due to an unexpected decision by the Company, the Loremaster may find that they are suddenly in need of some foes with which to challenge their heroes. The following section provides sets of adversaries for these purposes. Each has a starting Challenge Rating and several optional Strengths and Weaknesses. If the group is defeated as a whole, then it can be considered as a single entity when it comes to determining Experience Point rewards.

If your company is stronger than the base rating of the enemy group, select (or roll) one or more of the Strengths to increase the difficulty. If you'd like them to have an easier time of it, use Weaknesses instead. Some of these changes will impact the Challenge Rating of the encounter, others do not have a significant enough impact. For a more

memorable fight, select both Strengths and Weaknesses as seasonings to spice up the encounter.

Change locations, names and abilities to best suit your game and your players. Middle-earth is yours now: fill it with foes to suit your needs.

### A Note On Names

What matters most is how the game plays at your table. Although the following examples provide some names for groups and individuals, they remain examples only. For your players, Isenfeax might be renamed 'Blackmane' or simply 'The Dark Warg'. The following groups should serve as templates... when the heroes reach a new area of Middle-earth, they might encounter other troupes with different names and compositions.



### GOBLINS AND WARGS

*The Wargs and Goblins often helped one another in wicked deeds.*

#### Blódog's Band

Blódog and his fellows are raiders from Goblin-town who ride great Wargs, striking quickly and fleeing before any organised force can assemble. They can be found both West and East of the Misty Mountains, as the Wargs live in secret dells at the feet of the mountains and use the Goblin-tunnels when necessary to traverse the mountains. They often plague the Woodmen and Beornings on one side of the mountains and any travellers that dare the mountain passes on the other side. Although Blódog commands and inspires loyalty by being unusually generous for a Goblin, it is said that Isenfeax, the pitch-black Warg that he rides, is the cunning mind behind their success. In fact, if Blódog were killed, it's likely that Isenfeax will find with little trouble another willing set of hands amidst the Goblin tribes.



Blódog is a Misty Mountain Goblin that has **Hideous Toughness**. Isenfeax is a Wild Wolf and has an **Evil Maw** and is a **Keen Mount**. All other Wargs are Wild Wolves and are **Keen Mounts**. There are as many Misty Mountain Goblins and Wargs as the heroes, plus Blódog and Isenfeax. The Band begins as a **Challenge 4** encounter and can be further modified by the following tables:

#### D6 STRENGTHS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Blódog has grown strong on the spoils of war, he now counts as <b>Big</b> . (+1 to Challenge)   |
| 2 | Isenfeax gains the <b>Terrifying Howl</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)  |
| 3 | The Wargs are hungry, all of them gain the <b>Blood Driven</b> ability. (no change)   |
| 4 | Blódog's generous division of spoils has made his fellows into a <b>Vengeful Band</b> . (+1 to Challenge)   |
| 5 | Goblins love to taunt and tease, and the gang is a <b>Foul Alliance</b> . (+1 to Challenge)   |
| 6 | Blódog and his fellow Goblins hail from a particular enclave of Goblins. They gain the <b>Hatred</b> ability (select either Dwarves or Hobbits as appropriate). (+1 to Challenge, or +2 if more than half of the heroes are affected) |

#### D6 WEAKNESSES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | One of the Wargs has been too much into the Beorning mead from the last raid. It has the <b>Clumsy</b> ability. (-1 to Challenge)   |
| 2 | Blódog for all his leadership is still a <b>Coward</b> at heart. (no change)  |
| 3 | The Wargs have no heart for true battle, they all gain the <b>Mewling</b> ability. (-1 to Challenge)  |
| 4 | The Band wasn't expecting fierce resistance and the Goblins are <b>Ill-prepared for Battle</b> . (-1 to Challenge)  |
| 5 | The Wargs are tired of dying in Goblin raids, and are now at a <b>Weak Willed Alliance</b> with the Goblins. If this ability is triggered, both Blódog and Isenfeax will attempt to rally the troupe and who is successful might affect the leadership of the Band. (-1 to Challenge) |
| 6 | The Wargs are hungry and are now <b>Starving Cannibals</b> . (-2 to Challenge)  |

## The Army of Outcasts

As the heroes set camp one night, the air is suddenly filled with a storm of howls... Wolves attack out of the darkness, retreating as soon as they are wounded. Then there are twangs of bows, and Goblin arrows rain down. Then the biggest Goblin they've ever seen on a huge Warg charges the camp, leading a group of Goblin Wolf-riders into battle. The Company has been beset by the Army of Outcasts!



Numol is the leader of the Army, and is a **Really Big** Misty Mountain Goblin. He was born big and grew even bigger (especially after eating his siblings). Eventually, he was too big for the twisting Goblin tunnels and he (and his insatiable hunger) were forced out. Now he has gathered a mighty force of other outcasts and terrorises the lone-lands.

The Army consists of a number of Wild Wolves equal to twice the number of heroes. Half of them are ridden by other Misty Mountain Goblins. There are also Goblin Archers equal to the size of the company. Numol rides Murgen, a Wolf Leader.

The encounter begins as **Challenge 10**, and can further be modified by the following:



## D6 STRENGTHS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The Goblins have been working on riding drills, the Wargs gain the <b>Keen Mounts</b> ability. (no change)   |
| 2 | Numol shouts orders as the army attacks, give him the <b>Commanding Voice</b> ability (+1 to Challenge)  |
| 3 | Numol has made a standard for his army, this gains them the <b>Grim Banner</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)  |
| 4 | The troupe will fight to the <b>Last One Standing</b> . If this is a Goblin, it gains the <b>Screamer</b> ability, if it is a Warg then it gains the Vile ability. (no change) |
| 5 | Numol and his band engage with a <b>War Cry</b> . (+1 to Challenge)  |
| 6 | The Wargs gain the <b>Evil Maw</b> ability (+1 to Challenge)   |

## D6 WEAKNESSES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | This is an army of outcasts and misfits, one of the ridden Wargs proves <b>Stupid</b> . (-1 to Challenge)             |
| 2 | The Wargs are not likely to die for Numol, each of them is <b>Weak Willed</b> . (no change)                           |
| 3 | Murgen has borne the hefty Numol for too long. The wolf leader now counts as a <b>Weakling</b> . (-2 to Challenge)    |
| 4 | The Goblin archers aren't keen on close quarters combat, they are <b>Mewling</b> instead. (-1 to Challenge)           |
| 5 | The army has no armour-worker, and all the Goblins are <b>Poorly Protected</b> . (-2 to Challenge)                    |
| 6 | The smell of the Wargs is overpowering and even the Goblins are affected by their <b>Unclean Stench</b> . (no change) |

## TROLLS

But they were Trolls. Obviously Trolls... from the great heavy faces of them, and their size, and the shape of their legs, not to mention their language which was not drawing-room fashion at all, at all.

## The Stone-troll Family

Somewhere in the Wild, there's a cave, and in that cave are three trolls, having dinner. It's shepherd pie and both

Pa-Troll and Junior are complaining that the shepherd didn't have much meat on him and what's there is tough and stringy. Troll-mum says that they ought to do a better job of hunting tonight then, and maybe she'll come along to keep them in line...

Junior almost got left outside a few years back and his left side has partially solidified, giving him a **Stony Hide**. When Troll-mum accompanies them, she'll be sure to use her **Clobbering Sweep**. If it's just Pa-Troll and Junior, this is a **Challenge 6** encounter, while the entire Stone-troll Family ranks as **Challenge 10**.

## D4 STRENGTHS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The Stone-troll Family becomes <b>Aggressive</b> . (no change)   |
| 2 | Both Pa-Troll and Junior gain the <b>Berserk</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)                                |
| 3 | Each member of the Family gains the <b>Thick Hide</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)                           |
| 4 | Troll-mum gains both the <b>Seize Victim</b> and In the <b>Sack with You!</b> abilities. (+1 to Challenge) |

## D4 WEAKNESSES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Junior has never had a head for the family business. He gains both the <b>Clumsy</b> and <b>Stupid</b> abilities. (-1 to Challenge) |
| 2 | The Family care more for each other than for their victims. They are <b>Ill-prepared for Battle</b> . (-1 to Challenge)             |
| 3 | Junior has brought his <b>Fierce Bees</b> collection with him. (no change)  |
| 4 | The Family has seen better days, each of them count as <b>Poorly Armed</b> . (-1 to Challenge)                                      |

## Tarl's Team

Tarl is a Hill-Troll with ambition. He's not a chieftain yet, but he has a few buddies that follow him. They've wandered the Wild, and have found that intimidating yells and shows of force will often get guards and other folk to flee before them, giving them a chance to pick over whatever is left behind. A couple of times, they've even been bribed by food and beer to unleash their violence upon others.



Tarl is a Hill-Troll but he has a **Commanding Voice** instead of a **Fearsome Bellow**. There is one additional regular Hill-Troll for every hero. The troupe is a **Foul Alliance**. They are a **Challenge 8** encounter, which can be further modified as below:

#### D6 STRENGTHS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The Team wears <b>War Paint</b> , great crimson swatches on their faces and limbs. (No change)   |
| 2 | Tarl and his fellows are not used to those who fight back, but become <b>Desperate</b> when challenged. (+1 to Challenge)                  |
| 3 | These Hill-Trolls have <b>Long Arms</b> and use them to their advantage. This ability applies only to their Slam attack. (+1 to Challenge) |
| 4 | The mercenary Team has learnt the advantage of being <b>Shield Smashers</b> . (no change)  |
| 5 | The troupe is a <b>Bloodthirsty</b> one. (+1 to Challenge)   |
| 6 | Tarl always keeps a few of his fellows back, in case of surprises. He gains the <b>Call for Aid</b> ability. (+2 to Challenge)             |

#### D6 WEAKNESSES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | More used to threats than blades, the Team have become <b>Cowards</b> . (-2 to Challenge)   |
| 2 | These Hill-Trolls have weak natural armour and are <b>Poorly Protected</b> . (-1 to Challenge)  |
| 3 | The troupe worries that the <b>The Strong Die First</b> (the ability triggers when half the trolls are defeated). (-1 to Challenge)       |
| 4 | Tarl boasts the loudest, but is <b>Mewling</b> at his core. (no change)   |
| 5 | Hill-Trolls are never quick, and these are especially <b>Weak in Limb</b> . (-1 to Challenge)   |
| 6 | The troupe gains the <b>Last One Standing</b> ability, but the sole survivor will perform a <b>Vile</b> act in order to flee. (no change) |

### ORC WARBANDS

Apparently the members of two or three quite different tribes were present, and they could not understand one another's Orc-speech. There was an angry debate concerning what they were to do now...

When the great Enemy needs work done, he is most likely to send his most numerous servants, the Orcs. But they

often bring their own quarrels with them and easily fall to infighting if they have no strong leader or other immediate threat. As they march, they despoil the land and leave wanton destruction in their wake. They prefer to move and to battle under the cover of darkness, but the large fighting Uruks of Mordor do not fear the light.



### Morgul Vale Warband

Ufthak is a Black Uruk and commander of the warband, 'assisted' (to his unending consternation) by Dushkû, the overly clever Messenger of Lugbûrz. They've brought as many Snaga Trackers with them as there are heroes, and gathered up twice as many Orc Soldiers from the local Orc tribes. Their mission might have nothing to do with the Company, or perhaps they chase the heroes on orders from Up Above. The Warband counts as **Challenge 7**, and can be modified by the tables below:

#### D6 STRENGTHS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | It seems to the heroes that Dushkû is <b>Deeply Sinister</b> . (no change)  |
| 2 | Ufthak has a heavy whip, and he gains the <b>Cruel Lash</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)                                |
| 3 | The warband will beat their <b>Drums</b> before engaging their enemies. (+1 to Challenge)                             |
| 4 | Dushkû has a container of <b>Foul Liquour</b> . (no change)   |
| 5 | The Orc warband has orders and counts as a <b>Vile Gang</b> . (+1 to Challenge)                                       |
| 6 | Dushkû never trusted Ufthak. He gains the <b>Call for Aid</b> ability, summoning more Orc Soldiers. (+1 to Challenge) |





D6	WEAKNESSES
1	Both Ufthak and Dushkû are <b>Mewling</b> . (-1 to Challenge)
2	Some (1d3+1) of the Orc Soldiers are <b>Weaklings</b> . (-1 to Challenge)
3	The troupe is a <b>Weak Willed Alliance</b> (Ufthak will attempt to rally them). (-1 to Challenge)
4	The warband has the <b>Last One Standing</b> ability, but the sole survivor will prove a <b>Coward</b> . (no change)
5	The Snagas are unused to the Wild and count as <b>Clumsy</b> . (-1 to Challenge)
6	All of the warband are <b>Poorly Protected</b> . (-2 to Challenge)

## SPIDER COLONIES

As he drew nearer, he saw that it was made by spider-webs one behind and over and tangled with another. Suddenly he saw, too, that there were spiders huge and horrible sitting in the branches above him...

Though the most numerous Spider colonies are found in Mirkwood, no corner of the Wild is entirely free from the presence of this ancient race. Heroes wandering in any forest, or amidst caves or other dark places might stumble upon a Spider colony, to their regret (if they survive the encounter).

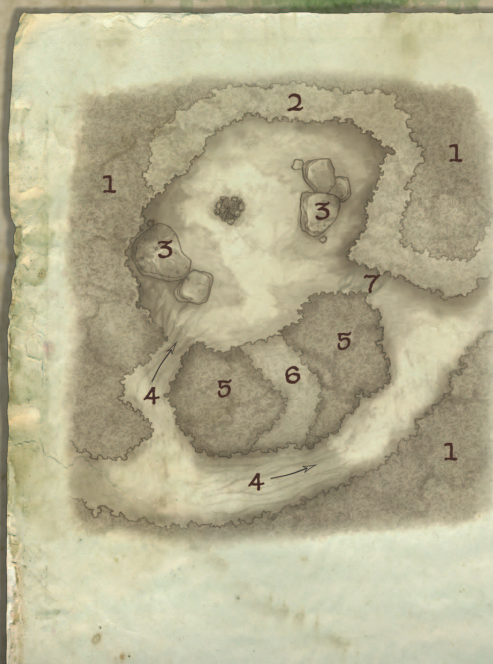


## Nightweaver's Colony

This colony consists of Nightweaver, a Great Spider, and as many Attercops as there are heroes. Since the heroes have stumbled into the territory of the Spiders, it's likely that the terrain favours the Spiders. There might be hedges of tree limbs, low boughs and webs all about (see pages 92 and 93 of the  *Loremaster's Guide*). The colony begins ranked as **Challenge 8** and can be modified below.

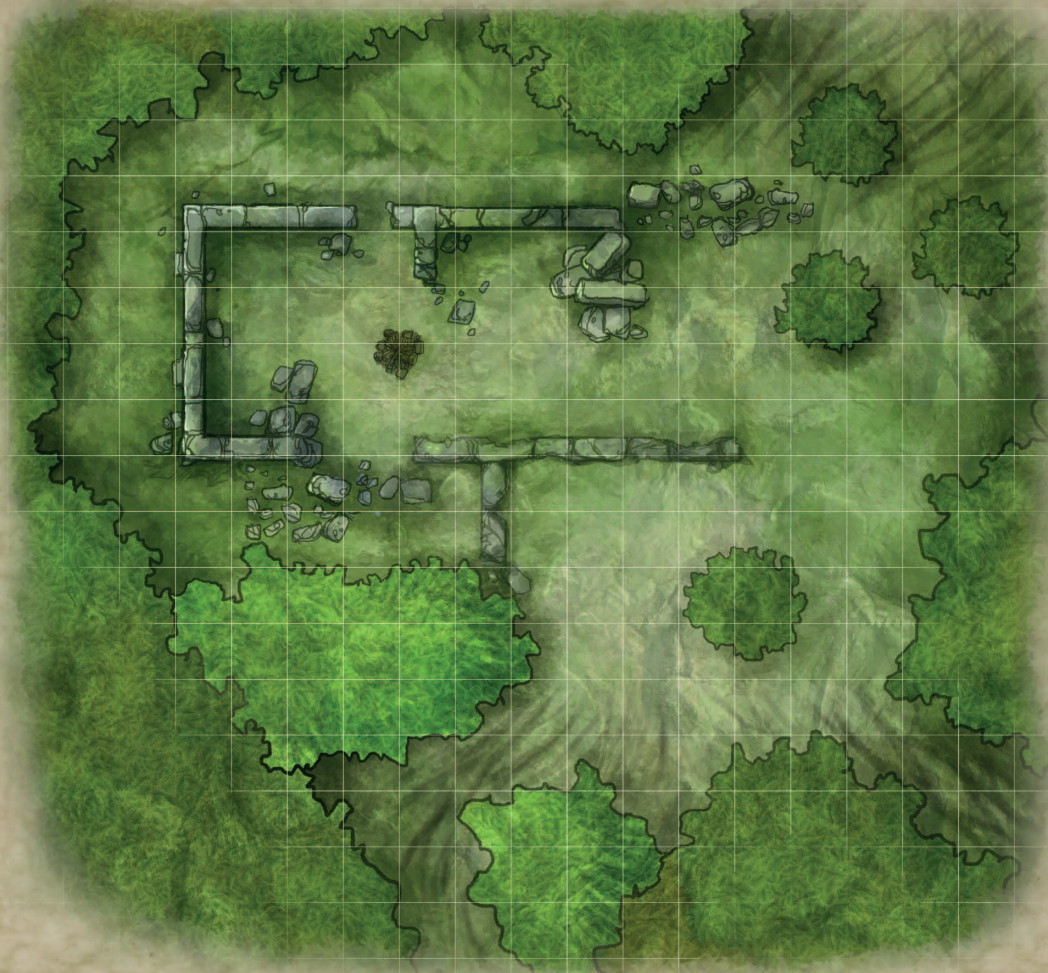
D6	STRENGTHS
1	Nightweaver has eaten well, and is <b>Really Big</b> , having 105 (10d12+40) hit points and her sting is +7 to hit and does 9 (2d4+4) poison damage. (+1 to Challenge)
2	All of the Attercops gain the <b>Dying Frenzy</b> ability. (+2 to Challenge)
3	Nightweaver has mastered the <b>Eightfold Gaze</b> . (no change)
4	The spiders prove to be <b>Bloodthirsty</b> . (+1 to Challenge)
5	Nightweaver gains the <b>Vicious Hiss</b> ability. (+1 to Challenge)
6	All of the Attercops are <b>Aggressive</b> . (+1 to Challenge)

D6	WEAKNESSES
1	The Spider colony is not expecting visitors and are <b>Ill-prepared for Battle</b> . (-2 to Challenge)
2	The group is <b>Terrifying in Aspect</b> . (no change)
3	Nightweaver is old, fat, and slow. She is <b>Weak in Limb</b> . (-1 to Challenge)
4	The Attercops are young and they are yet <b>Poorly Protected</b> . (-1 to Challenge)
5	Nightweaver is resting from just having spun her <b>Web</b> . She must roll to recharge, even on the first round. (no change)
6	Nightweaver is well-fed and has grown <b>Clumsy</b> . (-1 to Challenge)



### Roadside Camp

- 1: Impenetrable hedge of tree limbs**  
Impassable
- 2: Bracken**  
Difficult terrain - half movement
- 3: Boulders**  
Three quarter cover, can be used to hide
- 4: Slope (arrow points up)**  
Those uphill have Advantage on attack rolls
- 5: Thicket**  
Half movement, ranged at Disadvantage
- 6: Passable hedge of tree limbs**  
Half movement, half cover, can be used to hide
- 7: Roots**  
DC 10 Dexterity check or be rendered Prone



### Ruins Camp

- 1: Impenetrable hedge of tree limbs**  
Impassable
- 2: Nettle bank**  
Difficult terrain - half movement
- 3: Slope (arrow points up)**  
Those uphill have Advantage on attack rolls
- 4: Old Walls**  
Total cover, climbable, +2 to shove
- 5: Foundations**  
Half movement
- 6: Rubble**  
Half movement
- 7: Unstable Wall**  
Can be shoved onto opponents
- 8: Thicket**  
Half movement, ranged at Disadvantage



## - AVOIDING BATTLE -

Not every encounter with enemies in the Wild need result in battle being joined. In Middle-earth healing is rare, and rests are few and far between on the road. A Company on a secretive quest might especially desire to avoid revealing themselves.

But what does this mean for a Company of adventurers who require Experience Points to develop their abilities? Will the satisfaction of purely narrative rewards diminish over time? Happily, Experience is typically awarded for defeating adversaries, which need not mean at the point of a sword.

When confronted by the forces of the Shadow, a Company might prefer to avoid revealing themselves and jeopardizing their quest. The more ambitious may wish to eavesdrop upon their foes, simply because that's what really first class and legendary adventurers do, at least in the tales.

These optional rules comprise a series of skill checks to spot the enemy, elude detection and, if necessary, flee from pursuit while on a Journey. Failing to hide is not without cost, and running and being caught can be deadly! When DCs are unspecified, use the current Journey Event DC.

### STEP 1: INSTIGATE THE ENCOUNTER

Whether scripted or random, there are enemies in the Wild and the Company must act!

### STEP 2: SPOT THE ENEMY EARLY

As the enemy approaches, the Lookout is prompted to make a **Wisdom (Perception)** check. Especially stealthy enemies may apply Disadvantage to this check. A success affords the Company extra time to prepare.

### STEP 3: COMPANY REACTION

The heroes must decide whether to stand and fight, find a suitable observation point, or to flee from the enemy while there is time to do so unnoticed.

- If the Company elects to stand and fight (or set an ambush), the encounter is resolved using the combat and XP rules.

- If the heroes elect to seek a place to hide and let the enemy pass, then the Scout must make an **Intelligence (Investigation)** check to find a suitable hiding place, and the Hunter must make a **Wisdom (Survival)** check to conceal the Company's tracks. If the Lookout succeeded in *Step 2*, these checks are made with Advantage. If they are unsuccessful and the Company wishes to run for it they will be spotted, but will at least have a head start: skip to *Step 5: Fight or Flight* and grant the heroes Advantage. Otherwise go on to *Step 4: The Enemy Draws Near*.
- If the Company elects to flee, they are automatically successful. Go to *Step 6: Rewards and Consequences*.

### STEP 4: THE ENEMY DRAWS NEAR

If the Company has elected to spy on the enemy, each hero must make a **Dexterity (Stealth)** or **Wisdom (Survival)** check against the highest passive Perception of the enemy to avoid detection. If both the Scout and the Hunter were successful then the companions have Advantage on these checks. If both failed the heroes have Disadvantage. Relevant abilities (such as a Hobbit's elusiveness or a Wanderer's ability to hide in plain sight) may also be applied.

The Loremaster may wish to keep the DC secret, and only reveal the result after some tense and atmospheric description. If the heroes are successful, go to *Step 6: Rewards and Consequences*.

If one or more characters fail the check, something betrays the presence of the Player-heroes and the enemy is alerted. The Company is on the cusp of a critical decision, go to *Step 5: Fight or Flight*.

The Loremaster may wish, for narrative reasons, to have the foes linger, or even camp, perilously close to the Company's hiding place. If so, the enemies should make periodic **Wisdom (Perception)** checks to notice their "guests".

### STEP 5: FIGHT OR FLIGHT

If spotted, the Company may choose to abandon stealth and fight. It is time to roll initiative!

The compromised Company might make a last desperate attempt to escape; instead of stealthy withdrawal it is



now headlong pursuit. Each hero must make a **Strength (Athletics)** check against a DC set by a single **Strength (Athletics)** roll made by the enemy with the highest bonus. Players might invoke Distinctive Qualities, Specialities, Hopes, and Despairs to earn (and spend) Inspiration.

If all of the Company succeed, the Company escapes. See *Step 6: Rewards and Consequences*.

If any of the Company fail then the Company has been caught and must fight. Roll initiative! Heroes that succeeded at Athletics must double back and will suffer Disadvantage on Initiative.

### STEP 6: REWARDS AND CONSEQUENCES

- A Company that spies on an enemy and remains undiscovered receives half of the XP they would have earned by defeating their enemies in combat. Additionally, if it fits with the Loremaster's plans, they may have gleaned some useful information.
- A Company that flees receives no reward. Additionally, their flight has complicated their journey. The Guide must make a **Wisdom** check to plan a new route; on a failure apply a -1 modifier to any remaining Journey Event rolls.
- A Company that fights (at any step) receives XP rewards as normal.

If the Company's mission depends on subtlety the Loremaster might award increased XP, even up to the full amount. The risks of combat are a serious commitment which should remain something that is rewarded in most other instances.



## - WONDERS - of middle-earth

*They were at the end of their journey, but as far as ever, it seemed, from the end of their quest.*

This chapter offers inspiration for the Wonders of Middle-earth Journey Event, as well as ideas for things seen along the way outside of events.

Loremasters can simply incorporate some of the elements presented in this chapter into their description during a journey, build an encounter around one of the places or people, or even use them as the setting for an adventure.

### VISTAS

The scenery around the Company can inspire or cause despair. Be it rolling hills with mist burning off in the rising Summer sun, the endless tree-tops of Mirkwood, the peaks of the Misty Mountains or the winding passage of the Great River, there are any number of exceptional views to be seen in Middle-earth

### UNUSUAL THICKETS

A thicket is a dense group of trees or interwoven bushes, frequently all of the same species of plant. While many thickets grow naturally, there are some that look odd to even a discerning eye.

Some thickets may subtly form a pattern, or appear to be wrapped about a specific place or meadow, protecting it from prying eyes.

Other thickets seem to form shapes within them, appearing to hold deer, wolves or other natural creatures that 'vanish' as one draws closer to investigate. A particularly dense thicket might even protect a Stone-troll from the sun.

### HOLLOW TREES

Living trees sometimes have cavities inside their trunks, sometimes large ones. The tree hollow can serve as a refuge against the elements, which all sorts of creatures might take as a lair. A particularly large tree, such as an ancient oak, might have been used as a building, with inhabitants making additions to the tree, turning it into anything from



a dwelling to a fort; others may have camouflaged the opening, resulting in a hard-to-find secret hollow.

## WATERFALLS

Crashing down from great mountain heights or gently gurgling over smaller cascades, waterfalls vary greatly in size and shape. Tiered waterfalls appear to leap between 'steps' and might be scalable, if a company is prepared to get very wet.

A few waterfalls are so massive that their rumble and roar can be heard for miles about. Such waterfalls are often at the end of powerful rapids, long stretches of treacherous torrents that can easily kill the unwary with their deceptive strength and speed. Many waterfalls, even some seemingly small ones, can be deafeningly loud, rendering conversation impossible, and obscuring all other sounds. Wary scouts are ever mindful of ambushes in their vicinity. See *Roar of Water* on page 96 of the *Adventures in Middle-earth Loremaster's Guide* for more information.

Both the Dúnedain and the Elves have built hidden sanctuaries in caves hidden behind the plumes and curtains caused by waterfalls. Unfortunately, over the long centuries, Orcs have discovered some of these sanctuaries and have claimed a few for their own uses...

## FALLEN GIANTS

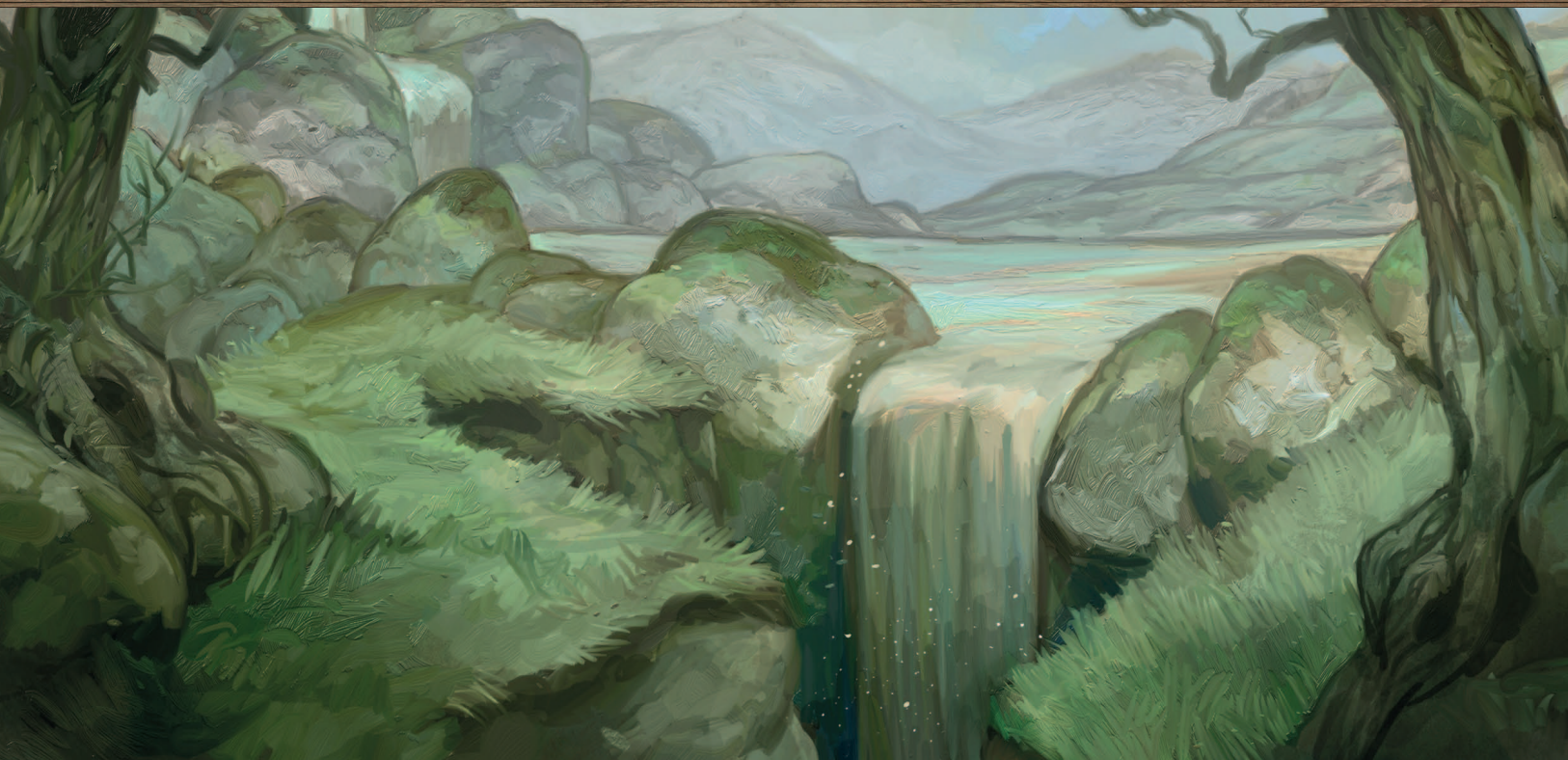
A tree so massive that its fall broke the earth all about it lies collapsed upon the forest floor, daunting travellers with its sheer size and ancient age. Perhaps lichen and moss cover its recumbent form, or maybe large portions have been cut away and used for building elsewhere.

A tree that fell across a trail may well have had a tunnel bored through it, where passing travellers made their marks long ago. Birds may live within the wood of the tree, startling when a company draws near, drawing unwelcome attention with their caws.

## CAVES

No wanderer looks at a cave without at least a little trepidation, for many of them have hostile occupants as Goblins and other creatures of the Shadow favour them. But caves can also offer weary travellers refuge from a storm and are frequently highly defensible, as narrow entrances and winding passages can be used to force assailants to attack in limited numbers.

Some caves hold great beauty; unusual rock formations, crystalline pillars and the slow drip of water into shimmering pools echoing in the depths of such hollows.





## MINE

From the outside, a mine entrance resembles a cave, and an abandoned mine might well be used in the manner described above. A Dwarf can tell at a glance whether or not a given delve is the work of his people. If the mineral wealth of a deserted mine hasn't been entirely removed, there will be other reasons as to why it was forsaken: flooding in the lower shafts, treacherous shifting earth, poisonous gases or intruding foes that drove away the miners. A mine makes for a dangerous lair, but an easily sealed off one; that is, if a hero is certain there are no other exits...

## QUARRY

All of the Free Folk have, at one time or another, made use of various types of stone in their works, but the Númenóreans and the Dwarves are the most noted for carving marble, slate, granite and other useful materials from the earth. The distinctly chiselled rock of the great quarries of the Westnesse can still be found in the wilds of Eriador, close to their settlements of old. Most such quarries are long abandoned now; large, open air mines where sound echoes strangely off long walls of partially carved bare stone, or even flooded to become lakes of unusual depth (see also Sinkhole Lake, below).

## CHASM

Long crevasses in the earth, a particularly large chasm can be just as difficult to pass as a wide river, especially when the shifting ground has caused one to appear unexpectedly. The interior walls of a chasm may be beautiful, showing off glorious colours or even hinting at valuable minerals contained within. Some gorges will have waterfalls and rivers flowing through them, filling the air with mist.

Older chasms, especially on well-trod paths, will likely have a bridge across them. Some bridges will merely be fallen trees, whilst others may be made of woven rope, sturdy wood or carefully worked stone; a bridge's construction can say much about the folk that made it, perhaps giving a hint as to who may live nearby.

## SINKHOLE LAKE

The ground here has collapsed, revealing a glistening blue lake beneath the surface. The water is cool and amazingly clear, revealing a tantalising glimpse of a few intact buildings at the bottom of the lake. Brave heroes may wish

to test their swimming skills to discover what lies within the watery ruins. (See the chapter **Bones of the Earth** for more ideas as to what these ruins might be.)

# - LODGINGS - along the road

## LODGINGS

After long weeks of bedding down on soggy ground, even the hardest traveller can appreciate the charms of a warm bed and a decent meal. The following entries detail the most common places a company might find to rest out on the road, far away from the more conventional lodgings offered by towns and villages. Such lodgings can be optionally used by the Loremaster to offer a long rest on a journey.

## POOR FARMSTEAD

Most farmsteads found in the Wild are poor, offering barely more than sustenance to the owners and perhaps a servant or two. They will often be situated far away from well-travelled roads, the better to go unnoticed. Most poor farms will have at least a simple main hall with several adjoining rooms, a barn, a small stable, and a workshop holding worn tools and a crude forge. A raised platform on the roof of the main hall will often have someone stationed in it to keep an eye out for travellers and trouble. Poorer farmers usually have little to fear from bandits: they generally have nothing worth stealing unless a band of brigands is truly desperate. Goblins and other creatures of the Shadow, though, will attack a farm out of sheer malice.

A farm's buildings will have been constructed as sturdily as the farmers could manage, but the majority will be crafted from wood, with the main hall having reinforced walls to take refuge behind if the farm is overrun by Orcs. If they have any stones, such as those pulled from fields, they will have been put to use in building defensive walls of some kind.

Strangers will be looked at with a touch of suspicion, mixed with a genuine desire for news from abroad or a brief diversion from their otherwise mundane lives.



An unknown company will have to talk their way into an invitation to stay, or offer up some other incentive. While money is welcome, as it can help with travelling merchants, immediate practical aid may be even more desirable. A Dwarf offering to work the forge for a bit is beyond even the wildest dreams of many farmers, for example.

What lodgings a poor farmer can offer will invariably be simple ones. A farmer is more likely to be able to have room in their barn or a place in their stable than a spare bed. If they have any food to share, it will likely consist of simple stews and rough bread.

### RICH FARMSTEAD

The more well-to-do farmsteads to be found in the Wild will be placed closer to one of the regularly travelled roads, or near a major trading river, such as the mighty Anduin or the Running River, the better to move their goods to market. The farm will consist of a main hall with several floors including an adjoining kitchen, extra lodgings for hired help, one or more barns, a large stable, a general workshop, and a smithy. A watchtower will be attached to one of the buildings, with a lookout posted regularly. The buildings will all be well-made and regularly repaired. The main hall and several of the outbuildings will be enclosed by a sturdy stone wall with a gate.

The farmer's family live comfortable lives and they will have several domestic servants, along with multiple hired hands for farm work, including a blacksmith. Rich farmsteads will raise sheep, goats or cattle to bring to market, along with various small crops. The farm may keep bees or employ someone skilled at carpentry or glassblowing, allowing them to produce simple goods to trade for extra coin.

Such farms regularly welcome travellers, eager for news from abroad, though they may keep a close eye on strangers, depending greatly on where the farm is situated and what sort of trouble the farmers have had to deal with in the past. The farmer will likely know several travelling merchants and if a Company has any local fame, may well have heard of them too.

The farmer will not expect any recompense for a hot meal and warm beds for a night, other than news and company, though the offer of an evening's entertainment, such as songs or a story well-told, will not be turned down.

### ROADSIDE INN

Travellers' inns are invariably situated along trade routes and other well-travelled roads, where they can more readily cater to their patrons. Once a mainstay of long-distance travel, such inns are nowadays somewhat rare due to the many dangers of keeping such an establishment running; with the resurgence of the Kingdom of Dale, however, several new inns are being founded throughout Wilderland. If they become successful, such inns might serve as the heart of a new village.



A big inn will consist of a single large building with several floors, though a few may have one or two small outbuildings, regularly used for storage, but occasionally as workshops. Long ago, inns in dangerous areas would have had a sturdy outer wall of well-laid stone with an armoured gate; at present, such inns are all but gone, save perhaps in parts of Gondor. Most inns now reside behind stockades and – if at all possible – have arrangements for protection from dangers such as marauding Orcs with Warriors or Town Guards dwelling near the inn. The inn





will mostly likely be made of solid wood, though older inns or those built with stone scavenged from nearby ruins may have some good stonework as well. It will have a large common room with a bar and a lot of sturdy furniture, a huge kitchen, multiple rooms for guests, a study, several storage rooms, servants' quarters, a work room, a cellar and a stable. An innkeeper and their family, along with a few servants, will run the inn, tending to guests as necessary. Common room bars see a lot of business from locals as well as travellers.

The Easterly Inn is a good example of a small roadside inn (see *Of Leaves and Stewed Hobbit* in *Wilderland Adventures*).

## - sights none - yet seen

*"Is that The Mountain?" asked Bilbo in a solemn voice, looking at it with round eyes. He had never seen a thing that looked so big before.*

As Companions travel they will witness many marvels of Middle-earth, and have many obstacles placed in their way in the form of Journey Events. While each hill must be climbed and each stream forded, not every event along the way is worthy of Experience Points. Indeed, in the core rules, none are awarded outside battle.

Most Journey Events are self-contained. They offer a penalty or a reward for that Journey, depending on how successfully they are resolved. This is an intentional feature which means that the Journey rules can be optionally removed from a game without unduly impacting character progression. However a Loremaster, or indeed their Players, may actively wish to reward exploits undertaken on the road as part of Journey Events. This section offers some guidance on implementing such awards.

You can use the following guidelines to determine when to award XP, and how much to give. Depending on your game, you might optionally use these Experience Awards as 'tickboxes' towards a whole level if enough are checked off.

During a journey, only Events that prompt an immediate danger or unusual experience for the heroes may optionally result in Experience Awards. For example, the first time the Company travel across the Misty Mountains and look down upon the wilderness of Eriador spread before them, the Loremaster may wish to take that opportunity to award some Experience, rather than simple Inspiration. The first time a Company work together to cross a broken bridge above a river in full flood, this might qualify for an award of Experience.

To gauge how much Experience to award a Company on the Road, consider the whole Journey as an adversary of an appropriate Challenge Rating to the company. This will give you a Company Rating, which is equal to the Challenge Rating that is most appropriate for your Company. Larger or smaller companies may need to adjust their Company Rating accordingly.

COMPANION AND CHALLENGE RATING  
EXPERIENCE AWARD TABLE

Challenge	XP	Challenge	XP
0	0 or 10	14	11,500
1/8	25	15	13,000
1/4	50	16	15,000
1/2	100	17	18,000
1	200	18	20,000
2	450	19	22,000
3	700	20	25,000
4	1,100	21	33,000
5	1,800	22	41,000
6	2,300	23	50,000
7	2,900	24	62,000
8	3,900	25	75,000
9	5,000	26	90,000
10	5,900	27	105,000
11	7,200	28	120,000
12	8,400	29	135,000
13	10,000	30	155,000

For example, a company of four level 1 Player-heroes are suited to a Challenge Rating of 1, giving them the identical Company Rating of 1. A journey for them would offer a maximum of 200 XP. A company of four level 6 Player-



heroes would qualify to face a Challenge Rating of 6, giving them a Company Rating of 6, and so their journey would offer a maximum of 2,300 XP. Some degree of estimation is needed for larger groups, or those of mixed level.

The amount of Experience available for each Journey can be calculated by the Loremaster beforehand, and then divided into several smaller awards reserved for each Event, any remainder being awarded on arrival. Alternatively the whole award might be reserved for one particularly significant event, especially if it ties into the larger plot or themes of the adventure at hand.

Journey Events that cause the company to encounter foes don't usually need an additional reward of XP above the award received for defeating the threat. Other events could be more suited for individual awards; or a Loremaster might consider that the whole company is in danger despite one hero being called forth and award group XP instead.

Eventually the difficulty of the journey will also limit what the heroes will find remarkable. The struggles of their first foray into the Wild will be as nothing to the veterans that they might become: if the Peril Rating of the journey is below the hero's Proficiency Bonus they should not earn XP from Journey Events outside of battle.

### DOOMS OF DEPARTURE AND OATHS OF RETURN

While wonders abound in Middle-earth, certain splendours might personally move a hero to new ambitions. Or despair might move a hero to abandon a place that they once loved. In such circumstances, a player can petition the Loremaster for a special individual Experience Award, called either either a Doom of Departure or an Oath of Return. Once a hero is awarded either a Doom or an Oath, they are not eligible for another such reward until they improve their Proficiency Bonus.

#### Dooms of Departure

*"...he left the hill of Cerin Amroth and came there never again as a living man."*

A Player-hero may be so moved by dolorous events to declare that they will never again return to a place from which they embark onto the road. Only a Sanctuary or a Player-hero's home is significant enough a place of embarkation to qualify for a Doom of Departure. Biding farewell to such a place counts as a hero's undertaking.

The award for a Doom of Departure should correspond to a Company Rating Experience Award one lower than the hero's Proficiency Bonus, and is awarded immediately. If a Hero should ever return to a place they have foresworn, the shame of betraying their own resolution means that they immediately receive a number of Shadow Points equal to one more than their Proficiency Bonus.

A Player Hero should take great care when declaring such a Doom – to never return home or to a given Sanctuary might have serious repercussions when they need to re-equip themselves, or gain rest and healing.

#### Oaths of Return

*Then Legolas repaid his promise to Gimli and went with him to the Glittering Caves...*

An Oath of Return is a promise to another Player-hero to come back to, or visit for the first time, a place encountered or distantly seen from the road. A hero might promise her companion that she will look into the still waters of Kheled-zâram on Durin's Day, if he will but lead the way. Merely visiting the place again in passing is not sufficient to honour the oath: Experience Points awarded for an Oath of Return are delayed until the Oath is fulfilled as an Undertaking during a Fellowship Phase. Both the maker of the Oath, and the Hero who witnessed it must undertake the journey, and both receive the Experience Award.

The award for fulfilling an Oath of Return should correspond to a Company Rating Experience Award one greater than the hero's Proficiency Bonus.



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