



To Journey's End and the Eagles' Eyrie
An Adventure
By
Richard Harrison
for
The One Ring
Role-playing Game

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- To Journey's END... -

INTRODUCTION

- **When:** The Company may undertake this adventure in Early Spring of 2946 before November's upcoming Gathering of Five Armies
- **Where:** Esgaroth. Travelling along the Old Road, through Mirkwood, the Vale of Anduin, and to the Eagles' Eyrie
- **What:** King Dain seeks adventurers to take a message to the Lord of the Eagles inviting him to attend the Gathering of Five Armies
- **Why:** Balin has been asked by King Dain to deliver the invitation to the Lord of the Eagles and under advice from Gandalf the Grey he also has requested that representatives of the free peoples accompany the Dwarf. The PCs fill this significant role
- **Who:** Gloin and King Dain as quest-givers, Balin is a travelling companion, and Gwaihir, the Lord of Eagles, and his brother Landroval

SO, WHY THIS ADVENTURE?

Having read through the scenario included within the Loremaster's Book, The Marsh Bell, I felt that the bigger and more interesting story was the background as to why Balin was travelling through Wilderland - ie, taking a message from King Dain to the Eagles inviting them to attend the festivities marking the victory in the Battle of Five Armies later in the year. Based upon the Cultural Background's, Traits, and so forth that my players had chosen for their characters it would be more appropriate that they were involved in such a mission.

I still wanted to test the rules though and give the players an opportunity to make mistakes without their PCs dying so I came up with the idea of them accompanying Balin on his journey along the Old Forest Road to the Eagles' Eyrie rather than attempting the Marsh Bell in isolation.

OF 'THE MARSH BELL' AND 'DON'T LEAVE THE PATH'

This scenario is very much a bespoke creation for my particular gaming group as it involves Balin's journey to the Eagles' Eyrie then it means the Marsh Bell is an adventure that never happens in my campaign and so I've used quite a bit of its content with respect to the initial part of the journey to the Old Forest Road. In addition, as my players have characters with quite 'high reputation' backgrounds and because we're running a campaign where we want the characters to begin quite well known, then the setup/conceit of Don't Leave the Path doesn't really fit in with our ideas. As this would never be used, I've used some of the encounter ideas from it within this adventure.

WARNING! As I'm using content from these scenarios there will be sections within this PDF that refer to those adventures rather than repeat them wholesale. For this reason those wishing to run this adventure will require a copy of "Tales from Wilderland".





THE FIRST ADVENTURING PHASE - THE LONG ROAD

The adventure is presented in multiple parts and contains a mini-Fellowship Phase where players can rest and recuperate.

PART ONE - MANY MEETINGS

The main aim of the first part of the adventure is to entrust the company with the mission.

PART TWO - ALONG THE RIVER RUNNING

The second part of the scenario starts when the company decides to set off with Balin.

PART THREE - INTO THE LONG MARSHES

This part of the adventure sees the company making camp at the river's edge where they encounter an injured troll and also meet an elven hunting party.

PART FOUR - BESIDE THE ROTTING RIVER

The fourth part of the adventure sees the company reach the Sunken City. Here, the Mewlips reside and this foreshadows a potential adventure later on.

PART FIVE - THE OLD FOREST ROAD

The companions begin their journey across Mirkwood, travelling the Old Forest Road.

PART SIX - DANGER ON THE ROAD

There are many creatures that call Mirkwood home and herein the company are beset by an orc scouting party.

PART SEVEN - THE OLD DWARVEN OUTPOST
Tracked across Mirkwood by a band of orcs, they make haste to an old abandoned dwarf tower.

PART EIGHT - THE HUORN AND THE HERMIT
After the battle, they rest for the night at the Dwarven Outpost, the company are attacked by an ancient Huorn.

PART NINE - A BRIEF RESPITE

The company are taken by the woodmen to Woodland Hall and may rest and recuperate for a short time before continuing their journey.

THE SECOND ADVENTURING PHASE - JOURNEY'S END

The final parts of this adventure are far less dangerous than the journey through Mirkwood and should come as pleasant relief to the company.

PART TEN - TO THE HOUSE OF BEORN

Travelling to Beorn's House across the Vale of Anduin, the company must convince Beorn as to their honest intentions and impress him with their actions requesting that one of his people journey with them to represent all the peoples of Wilderland.

PART ELEVEN - THE EAGLES' EYRIE

The final part sees the company finally arrive at the Eagles' Eyrie and the invitation of the two kings is made.





PART ONE - MANY MEETINGS

Lake-town is a free city, where adventurers hailing from different places come in search of opportunities to make their name. In addition to Northmen of all extractions, Elves and Dwarves are a common sight, as both the Woodland Realm and the Kingdom under the Mountain have interests in the city. Even Hobbits may come to Lake-town without raising too much of a commotion, as strange sights are becoming the norm, with merchants from the south and east bringing their wares into town with increasing regularity.

Much of the information found in Part One of the Marsh Bell regarding Gloin's residence, appearance, etc can be used here and is not reprinted. Additional information is included herein.

A FRIENDLY REQUEST

The player's characters are sent messages by ravens of the mountain to attend a meeting in Esgaroth on the Long Lake with Gloin regarding the King's Business.

ENCOUNTERING GLOIN

It should be noted though that Glóin is quite happy to offer the mission to the companions based on recommendation by Gandalf the Grey. This encounter therefore does not follow the standard set-up of determining Tolerance, etc.



INTERACTION

During the interaction stage, Glóin briefs the company with the additional details regarding the journey, drawing on a piece of parchment a sketch of the route that the King requires them to take.

"My cousin Balin son of Fundin has left the Lonely Mountain with two companions. He is meant to personally deliver a letter, a formal invitation from King Dáin Ironfoot to the Lord of the Eagles for the coming Gathering of Five Armies, an important meeting to be held later this year. He plans to go south along the Running River, on order of the King Dain and King Bard to investigate the conditions of the Old Forest Road and possibly traverse it, now that the threat of Goblins has been greatly reduced."

Map 1 (page 140 of the LM book) shows the route that Balin is to take, he then adds the following:

"You must have important friends, for you have been requested to accompany my cousin as envoys representing the Free Peoples. But beware, the land the you will be travelling is perilous. Not much is now known about the Men-i-Naugrim and even with the departure of the Necromancer from Dol Guldur in the south of Mirkwood many dangerous and foul creatures may still stalk these lands..."

The players can make an **Insight** roll if they wish to yield the following result:

- A successful roll (TN 14) reveals that Glóin is trying to hide his profound concern. A great or extraordinary success uncovers that the Dwarf is worried because of the unknown and inherent dangers of the journey

ADVENTURE AWAITS

As the company has already been recommended it is just a case of them accepting the task presented to them – the adventure assumes they do!

They are officially tasked to accompany Balin and represent the free peoples. He gives to them a map of the lands to the south of Esgaroth. As the journey by river is the only safe alternative to cross the Long Marshes, Glóin also provides the adventurers with papers permitting them to borrow boats from the Lake-men. He also provides any Dwarf in the party with money to purchase enough Cram for 2 weeks travel for 6 people or a non-dwarf if the companion obtained any successes during their interactions with the old dwarf.



Cram

Cram is a biscuit-like food made by the Men of Esgaroth and Dale, which they share with the Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain. It is very nutritious, and is used for sustenance on long journeys. However, it is not as flavourful as its Elvish equivalent, lembas.

Eating Cram on a journey provides a +1 bonus to all Travel checks made to avoid fatigue.

MEETING BALIN

Balin can be found within the Red Dragon Inn with his two companions, the brothers Barrak and Torrun. He's an amiable old dwarf and even cordial with elf characters – within reason!

Balin will talk at length with the characters about planning the journey and is more than happy to act as the company's guide (with a Travel of 4), with Barrak and Torrun volunteering as look-outs.

Tips for Playing Balin

An elderly Dwarf, Balin is far calmer and friendlier to non-dwarves than others of his people. He enjoys smoking his pipe as it reminds him of his good friend Bilbo Baggins.

Tips for Playing Barrak

Barrak is hot-headed and opinionated. The older brother of Torrun he longs for glory and valour in combat and is keen to prove himself.

Tips for Playing Torrun

Quick-witted and quiet, Torrun keeps himself to himself.

The Kingly Gift

This is the same as that referred to within the Marsh Bell.

PLANNING THE JOURNEY

The journey from Lake Town to the Eagles' Eyrie is a long and significant one across some of the most dangerous terrain in Wilderland. In total the distance from start to finish is approximately 420 miles, across varying terrain. Divided into the following stages:

- Lake Town to the Old Forest Road – 80 miles across Easy terrain (ie, largely by boat). During spring this should take about 4 days to travel and have a TN of 16 for the (1) travel/fatigue test

- Along the Old Forest Road from East to Western Mirkwood – 140 miles and 70 miles across Daunting and Severe terrain respectively. This should therefore take about 46 days to travel and have a TN of 16 for the (9) travel/fatigue tests (before 2947 Shadow and Dark Lands are considered just to be Wild Lands)
- From the Eaves of Western Mirkwood to Beorn's House – 40 miles across Easy terrain. This should take around 2 days of travel and have a TN of 12 for the (1) travel/fatigue test
- From Beorn's House to the Eagles' Eyrie – 90 miles across Easy terrain. This should take around 5 days of travel and have a TN of 14 for the (1) travel/fatigue test

Planning the Route

I recommend presenting the above as 4 different journeys allowing for Lore rolls at the beginning of each stage (as per the rules on page 31+ of the LM book).

PART TWO - ALONG THE RIVER RUNNING

This part of the adventure involves the companions travelling along the River Running.

The information found in Part Two of the Marsh Bell (specifically "The Journey South" and "From Esgaroth to the Stair of Girion" sections) should be used here and is therefore not re-printed. Additional information is included herein.

THE MEWLIPS

It is while the companions are resting at night with the Lake-men and if Nerulf repeats the rhyme of lore "If you go south in the marshes take heed: tread lightly and fear the gallows-weed..." that this will trigger a memory of Balin's of a poem told to him by Bilbo Baggins, entitled "The Mewlips".

*The Shadows where the Mewlips dwell
Are dark and wet as ink,
And slow and softly rings their bell,
As in the slime you sink.*

*You sink into the slime, who dare
To knock upon their door,
While down the grinning gargoyles stare
And noisome waters pour.*



*Beside the rotting river-strand
The drooping willows weep,
And gloomily the Gorcrows stand
Croaking in their sleep.*

*Over the Merlock Mountains a long and weary way,
In a mouldy valley where the trees are grey,
By a dark pool 's borders without wind or tide,
Moonless and sunless, the Mewlips hide.*

*The cellars where the Mewlips sit
Are deep and dank and cold
With single sickly candle lit;
And there they count their gold.*

*Their walls are wet, their ceilings drip;
Their feet upon the floor
Go softly with a squish-flap-flip,
As they sidle to the door.*

*They peep out slyly; through a crack
Their feeling fingers creep,
And when they 've finished, in a sack
Your bones they take to keep.*

*Beyond the Merlock Mountains,
a long and lonely road,
Through the spider-shadows,
and the marsh of Tode,
And through the wood of
hanging trees and gallows-weed,
You go to find the Mewlips
and the Mewlips feed.*

Balin will smoke and talk at length of his adventures and his old friend Bilbo to anyone who will listen, musing that he really should pay him a visit sooner rather than later.

PART THREE - INTO THE LONG MARSHES

This part of the adventure involves the companions travelling beyond the Stair of Girion and into the Long Marshes.

The information found in Part Two of the Marsh Bell (specifically "Into the Long Marshes", "Balin's Camp", and "By Orders of the Elven King" sections) should be used here and is therefore not re-printed. Additional information is included herein and it should be noted that the encounter with the elves occurs **after** the combat takes place with the troll.

THE COMPANIONS' CAMP

Once the companions have navigating the marshes and assuming they make decent progress, they will make camp at the end of the third day of their journey. The camp is a patch of dry land rising to the west of the river course, a few miles north of where a stream descends from the Mountains of Mirkwood.

The Stone Troll

The encounter with the Stone Troll follows the same structure as that found within the Marsh Bell.

BY ORDERS OF THE ELVEN KING

The encounter follows a similar structure as that found within the Marsh Bell with the obvious exception that Balin is with the party.



What the Elves Know

Galion wants to discover what the company are doing travelling through such dangerous lands.

If the encounter proceeds well, the Elves might be persuaded to lead the company further, to the start of the Old Forest Road at the most but first counselling them to turn back from such a dangerous path.



PART FOUR - BESIDE THE ROTTING RIVER

This part of the adventure begins when the adventurers finally get near the lair of the Mewlips, where the river meets the Old Forest Road (probably on the fourth day since they left Esgaroth).

The information found in Part Three of the Marsh Bell (specifically "The Journey South" and "From Esgaroth to the Stair of Girion" sections) should be used here and is therefore not re-printed. Additional information is included herein.

Loremaster Note

The task that the company has been given should mean that they merely pass through this area and don't encounter the Mewlips. Should they wish to explore the abandoned city further then you'll need to refer to the Marsh Bell adventure found within the Loremaster's book and tailor accordingly.

PART FIVE - THE OLD FOREST ROAD

The Old Forest Road (also known as Dwarf Road or Men-i-Naugrim) was in ancient times, before the coming of Smaug and the Necromancer, the main route through the great forest of Mirkwood.

Any characters succeeding in a Lore test (TN 14) or with any appropriate trait will now the following history:

The Old Forest Road originally ran from the Misty Mountains near the High Pass and through Rhovanion. Where the Road crossed the Great River, there was originally a stone bridge, but by the later years of the Third Age the bridge had been lost and the river was crossed by the Old Ford.

A traveller following the Road east would cross some miles of open country before plunging into the depths of the forest. The Road then ran directly east from one side of the forest to the other, covering more than two hundred miles beneath the canopy of trees before it emerged by the banks of the River Running.

The Dwarves had a tradition of road-building dating back to before the First Age, and they built the Forest Road to carry traffic between their western and eastern clans.

The old bridge over the Anduin at the Road's western end lay almost exactly halfway between the ancient Dwarvish meeting-place at Gundabad to the north, and Durin's mansions of Khazad-dûm to the south. It is thought that the western end of the road was built by the dwarves of Khazad-dûm in the Misty Mountains.

Khazad-dûm's inhabitants, the Longbeard dwarves, continued to grow in power and influence, and their trading needs meant that the road from the Iron Hills that travelled through Mirkwood to their gates became widely known.



Now, at the end of the Third Age, the Old Forest Road has become overgrown and portions of the road east of Mirkwood are almost impassable. On the eastern edge of Mirkwood, the old road is overgrown by grass, weeds, dirt and encroaching trees that rise high and curve above the road blocking out the sun.

Here begins the real test of the company's mettle, for the next 200 miles will be across some of the most arduous terrain found in the Wilderlands.

THE JOURNEY

The companions must follow the old road across the whole width of Mirkwood. While walking on the road eases the toll of the journey somewhat (the forest doesn't darken their hearts as grievously as if they were leaving the trail - see Corruption Tests below), being parted from the light of the sun and the open air for so long is going to put the company to the test.



Journeying through Mirkwood is very hard, so it will take the company many days to cross the whole forest. The journey is divided into a number of phases to account for the differing terrain:

- The road as it passes south of the Mountains of Mirkwood to the centre of the forest calls for 7 fatigue tests at TN 16
- The final leg of the journey through Mirkwood calls for 2 fatigue tests also at TN 16

Instead of rolling everything at once, the Loremaster should split these tests up between other encounters and/or every 5 days of the journey (ie, should the season be spring), Narrating and presenting the journey as an ongoing adventure, reacting to character actions/decisions as well as hazards and role-playing opportunities.

Loremaster Note

I recommend referring to my compilation of additional rules and in particular the following chapters:

- Additional Journey Rules
- Additional Hazards
- Interesting Events

These provide extra rules variations which provide more interesting opportunities within the system for players to involve themselves within a journey, etc

Corruption Tests

Certain areas along the Forest Road, particularly south of the mountains should be considered blighted areas and therefore the company should make Corruption Tests every day while travelling through them as the darkness of the forest weighs heavily on the company's spirits. The Loremaster should subject the company to such blights sparingly – used to increase tension or if the journey is proving too easy (eg, no fatigue has been gained).

In addition, the “Northern Mirkwood” section (pages 12 and 13) from the adventure “Don't Leave the Path” could also be of consideration to the Loremaster in providing further ideas.

PART SIX - DANGER ON THE ROAD

About 4 weeks into their journey the company will encounter an orc patrol heading south from the Mountains of Mirkwood. This patrol is an advanced party of a larger orc war band. They have been hiding in caves within the mountains since the Battle of Five Armies and are now journeying south to Dol Guldur.



THE ORC PATROL

Initially, the company should test their **Awareness** or **Hunting** (TN 14) skills. An overall success means the company hears the approach of the noisy orcs and if they wish they may attempt to arrange an ambush for the foul creatures (see LM p. 43). If they do not then resolve combat as standard – ie, the players will hold the initiative as they defend themselves against the orcs. The orc patrol is made up of a number of differing types:

- 1 Orc Guard (patrol leader)
- 6 Orc Soldiers
- 2 Orc Archers

At some point, when the battle is going against the orcs one of the Orc Archers will escape in order to warn the war band of the company's presence. Their escape allows the PCs logically conclude that they should expect to be pursued.



The orcs carry nothing of value (not that any self respecting character should wish to find out) but perceptive characters (ie, those succeeding at a Riddle test at TN 14) will note that these creatures are travelling lighter than they would expect. This should be clue enough that they are a scouting party for some larger force.

PURSUED!

As the company journeys upon the road it will be a number of hours, either by discovering the slaughtered orc patrol or being informed by the escaped archer, that the orc war band will pick up the scent of the companions. At some point, they will hear the sound of distant hunting horns – the hunt has begun!

Hunted by Orcs

Once the Orc Snagas pick up the scent of the dwarves then their pursuit will be relentless, filled with thoughts of murder, revenge and feasting on flesh. Knowing these lands they will make quick progress in catching up with the companions.

Anyone with an understanding of orcs (ie, a speciality) or who succeeds at a Lore action will know how Snaga's can pursue an enemy, tracking them by scent alone and also how the prodigious endurance of the orcs means they will not rest or tire in chasing the companions who would do well to find somewhere defensible.

Balin, or someone with Mirkwood Lore, recalls that there is an old dwarf watchtower close to where they are, to the north of the old road – if they set a fast pace and don't stop they should reach it sometime late evening.

In order to keep ahead of the orc war band the company will have to increase their pace. As Balin leads the company, each companion should make three **Athletics** tests at TN 14 over the course of the pursuit. Any failure results in the character gaining 1 point of fatigue.

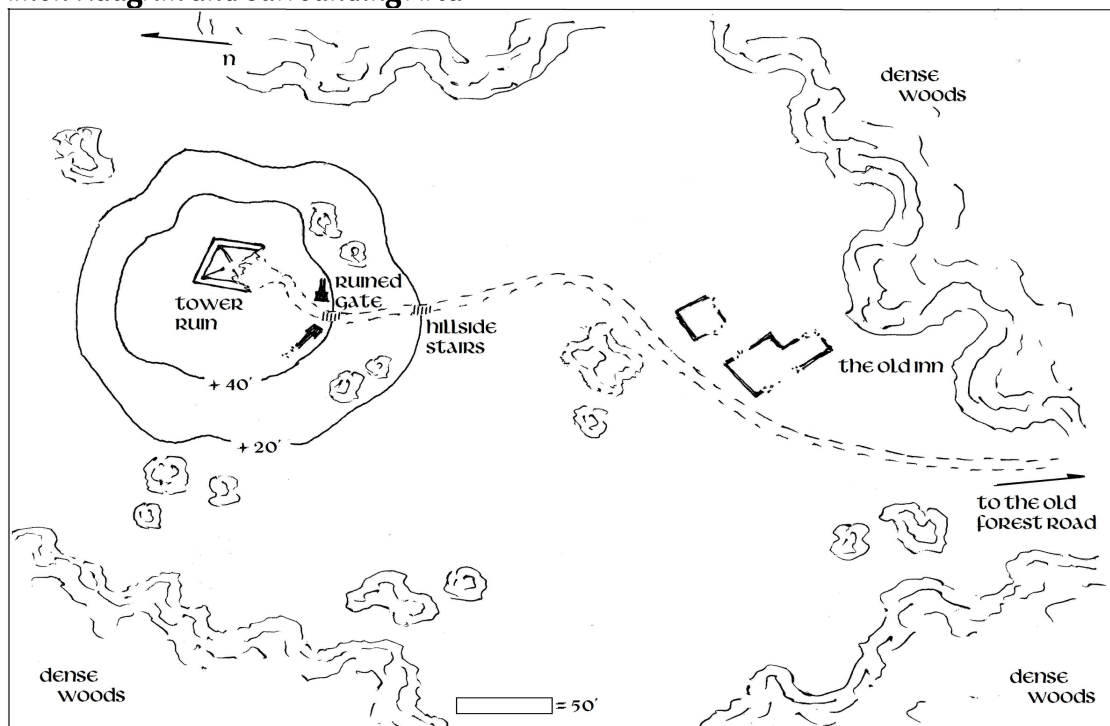
It is late evening when Balin finds the old overgrown path that leads to the ruined Dwarven outpost.

Balin and the Raven

To find the outpost, Balin will call his raven Peloquin tasking him with searching out the old tower and checking that it has not become an abode of foul creatures.

Travelling the path is arduous work. The trail is overgrown in places with thorn briars and other foliage. Each companion should succeed at an **Explore** test of TN 14 or gain an additional point of fatigue as they suffer cuts and abrasions from the wild terrain.

Amon Naugrim and Surrounding Area





PART SEVEN - THE OLD DWARVEN OUTPOST

Long ago, when the Men-i-Naugrim was more commonly travelled, the dwarf outpost used to be a watchtower for Durin's folk and a safe haven for travelling merchants. Now it is nothing more than a deserted ruin atop a small hillock surrounded by the dark trees of Mirkwood, but for the company it is a beacon of hope. There was once a dwelling here to the south of the watchtower, possibly an inn, but it has long since vanished leaving only the foundations and a few ruined walls and stones as traces.

The hill and the ruins upon it will give the characters an advantage when it comes to defence. There is only one easy approach up to the hill, so the orcs will have to come up the pathway, and as long as the company defends this approach, they stand a good chance of holding against the enemy.

Terrain and Tactics

Balin's plan is simple: to hold off the attackers and defeat them or die in the attempt – companions can support this idea with a little more forethought though! The old tower rests on a hillside where there are a number of areas which the companions could focus their defense on:

- The Old Inn – once a busy establishment, feeding and entertaining the travellers and merchants that would make the way along the Forest Road and stay at the Amon Naugrim in times past. These ruins could be used by archers to attack the approaching orc war band providing cover and an excellent ambush point. The only risk would be getting caught here; an individual would need to sprint back to the hillside stairs and beyond in order to flee any pursuing orcs – no easy task
- The Slopes of the Amon Naugrim – excavated by the dwarves, these slopes have a steep gradient, rising 10' in just 2', they are therefore difficult to climb (TN 16) and those attacking someone climbing a slope (eg, with bow) gain a +2 circumstantial modifier
- Hillside Stairs – Because of the steep slopes of the hillside, the stairs also rise sharply and could be defended at a push and some ingenious individual could devise some trap of pitfall involving them

- Ruined Gate – Similar to the 'Hillside Stairs' but flanked by ruined walls, this part of the Amon Naugrim would make a strong defensible point for the defending party of companions. The slopes either side are even steeper than elsewhere (TN 18) and so any enemies attempting to flank those defending the site can be dealt with
- Tower Ruin – The tower's (only intact) upper level provides an excellent vantage point for an archer (offering a +2 circumstance bonus to any ranged attack). In addition the ground floor level has cover and points where, if outnumbered, a defender could reduce the number of those assailing him at one time to one or two opponents. There is also a cellar, but the stairs are rotten and may collapse at any time as well as it being dank and flooded in places

The Orc War Band

From their vantage point on the hill, the companions can see shapes sneaking through the dusk. A **Hunting** or **Awareness** roll (TN 14), or possession of a Trait like Keen-eyed, lets the companions track individual figures and get a rough count. Depending on the number of successes, the players will receive information representing the following with varying degrees of accuracy:

- 1 Great Orc (Azgrask)
- 1 Orc Bannerman
- 2 Snaga Trackers
- 4 Orc Archers
- 12 Orc Soldiers
- 5 Orc Guards

Azgrask

Leading the main assault, sure of his victory, Azgrask charges into the attack wielding his deadly scimitar. If he is defeated, then all the Orcs will flee in terror, their morale shattered by the death of their great leader.






BATTLE!

With a roar of vile battle-cries, battle is joined. The first wave of attackers consists of 8 orc soldiers and 2 orc guards charging up the path and over the walls. Azgrask and the rest of the soldiers, guards and snaga march up the path behind the first assault whilst the orc archers fire from range using the old inn as cover from any enemy arrows.



Allies in Battle

Each round the Loremaster should roll a feat dice and consult the table below.

	<p>Torrún is slain and the attackers swarm the Ruined Gate and the company must retreat to the Tower.</p> <p>If an  is rolled a second time then Barrack is Wounded. A third  results in Balin suffering a Wound. Further  results do not yield any additional complications.</p>
1, 2, or 3	The allies are hard-pressed to hold the enemy back. An orc slips past the front line and attacks any defender currently in a Rearward stance. If no companion is fighting in Rearward, then ignore the result.
4, 5, or 6	The allies hold their line and keep fighting. Orc blood is spilt as the Dwarves repel the enemies' assault.
7, 8, 9, or 10	The allies fight bravely, pushing the enemy back. If this result is rolled twice in a row, then the one of the Orcs is slain.
	One of the dwarves catches an orc with a savage blow, cutting the brute's head clean off!

Hope is Rekindled!

As the orcs are driven away and defeated the companions' allies give out a great shout and the companions they may fully replenish their Fellowship Hope Pool.

PART EIGHT - THE HUORN AND THE HERMIT

In the time that the Dwarven outpost has been abandoned the place has become an abode for evil, but not orcs as some would believe. An ancient Huorn has been perverted by the Shadow of the South, and it lies in wait for the unwary.

THE ANCIENT SPELL

The western reaches of Mirkwood are grim and dangerous. Some woods were inhabited by Men once, and the trees still remember the bite of the axe. The forest depths are unwelcoming and have no love for anything that walks on two legs.

The Ancient Wood

After the battle, a great storm breaks in the night sky. As the companions huddle together, a sense of sleepiness seems to creep out of the ground and up their legs and water trickling from a hundred rills sounds like a half-whispered lullaby.

A short distance to the north of the ruined tower something nameless and malignant lies in wait. The trees living in this area have been corrupted by the ancient Huorn and have struck a deal with the thing, luring any traveller who dare tread upon their roots.

When the company is in the area close to the Huorn, those companions who do not act as look-outs feel compelled to take a nap after their meal. As soon as they close their eyes, they start having vivid dreams.

Dreams and Intuitions

The trees in the area that the company rest, weave a spell to send the companions towards the Huorn lurking to the north.

Companions should pass a Corruption test (TN 16) or gain a Shadow point. Those who failed the Corruption test receive suggestions from the ancient and malevolent trees. The companions dream or feel that something of great importance is nearby, if only they can find it. Tie these dreams or visions into the characters' Shadow Weaknesses. A Scholar might dream that there is a book describing many secrets of the Enemy; a Treasure Hunter might glimpse gold, while a Wanderer is strangely drawn to leave the path and explore the nearby woods.



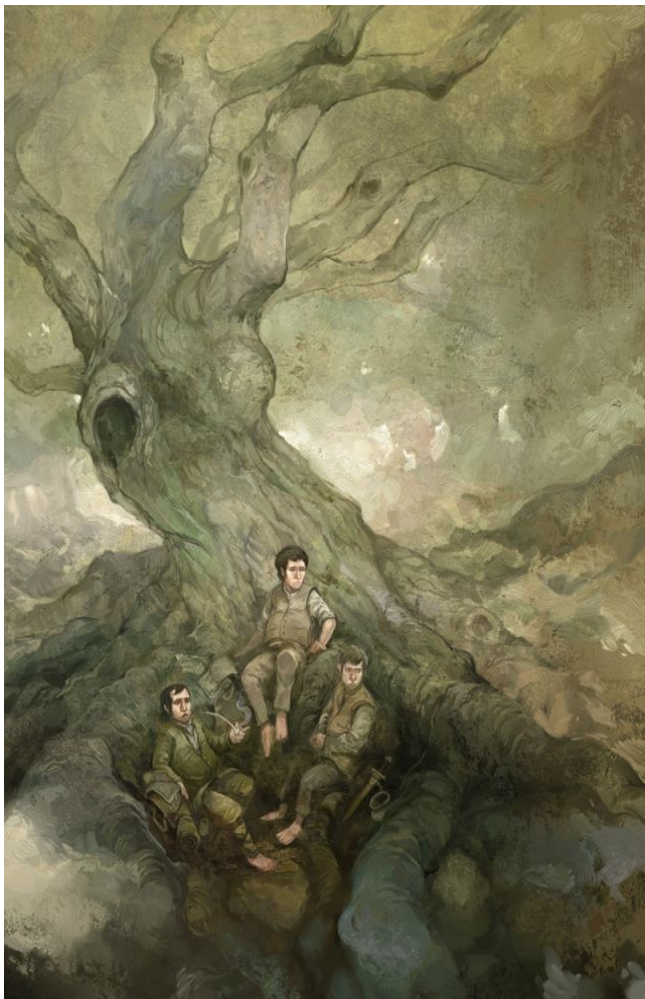
Under the Spell

If any character succumbs to a Bout of Madness while near the tree, they run towards it. If none of the characters has such a fit, then one or more of the dwarves or woodmen travelling with them succumb to the spell.

If anyone is drawn into the woods, they crash through the trees. Their companions can either try to restrain the victims, or else follow them to the tree.

THE OLD HUORN

The Huorn is an ancient twisted tree, with roughly eye-shaped crevasses in its trunks. Remaining motionless it appears to simply be a towering oak tree. Its roots are choked with ropy plant growths and among its boughs are tangled stems of creeper vines. Among its roots are many old bones, the remains of previous victims of the Huorn. The first of the companions to reach the tree throws himself towards its roots.



huorn	
ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	
4	
ENDURANCE	HATE
45	6
PARRY	ARMOUR
4	<u>3d</u>
SKILLS	
Personality, 0	Survival, 0
<u>Movement, 2</u>	Custom, 0
Perception, 3	Vocation, 1
WEAPON SKILLS	
<u>Root Lash</u> Damage 5, Edge , Injury 14, CS -	3
<u>Strangle</u> Damage 6, Edge 10, Injury 14, CS -	3
The Huorn normally attacks using its Root Lash skill. If successful, it applies its Seize Victim ability to immobilise its victims and then attack them using Strangle.	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Many Roots Every round, the creature may attack up to three different opponents attacking it in a close combat stance. OR, reduce its Hate point score by one point to attack ALL opponents fighting in close combat.	
Root Lash The thing attacks using its tentacle like roots.	
Seize Victim If the creature's main form of attack has hit, the creature may hold on to the target to reduce the mobility of the victim: a seized victim cannot change stance, and sees its Parry rating reduced to half (rounding fractions up). The seizing creature cannot attack with its main weapon as long as it is seizing the target (but can freely use a secondary attack if it possesses one).	
Strangle When the creature has taken hold of a victim, it tries to crush it tightening its coils.	
Great Size The creature is so resilient and tough that it is not knocked out or killed when reduced to zero Endurance or if wounded once. The creature keeps fighting at zero Endurance or when wounded once, until wounded twice, or reduced to zero Endurance AND wounded.	



The Huorn Attacks

When someone falls before the tree, or is at least within 20 feet from its trunk, its roots like tendrils rise up and attack. These lashing gnarled appendages are all guided by one purpose, and try to wrap around the companions to strangle and crush them.

The companions who failed the Corruption test are still under the power of the spell set upon them by the wood: they don't see the creature as a horrible monster, but as whatever dream or vision drew them here. As a consequence, they cannot attack the creature in any way, and cannot be persuaded to stay away from it. Victims are freed from their madness if the creature is wounded, or if another character helps them snap out of it.

Fighting the Creature

Characters within melee can fight only assuming a Forward stance, and are considered to be severely hindered both attacking and defending (the TN to hit the creature is raised by +4, while the TN for the creature to hit them is reduced by -4) due to the entangling roots.

Companions outside the range of the roots (20 feet from the tree's huge trunk) can fight normally. The companions harm the thing by hacking at its many roots. Every Endurance loss inflicted is normally deducted from the Endurance rating of the creature. If the creature is wounded twice, or it is reduced to zero Endurance and wounded (see Great size) its gnarled tentacles slither back into the earth, vanishing into the soil.

THE HERMIT

The information found in Part Five of "Don't Leave the Path" should be used here and is therefore not re-printed. Additional information is included herein.

Encountering the Hermit

The hermit has been watching the company for some time; their battle with the orcs and then their encounter with the Huorn. During the battle, he rushes towards the old tree, waving a branch that smokes and reeks of some pungent odour.

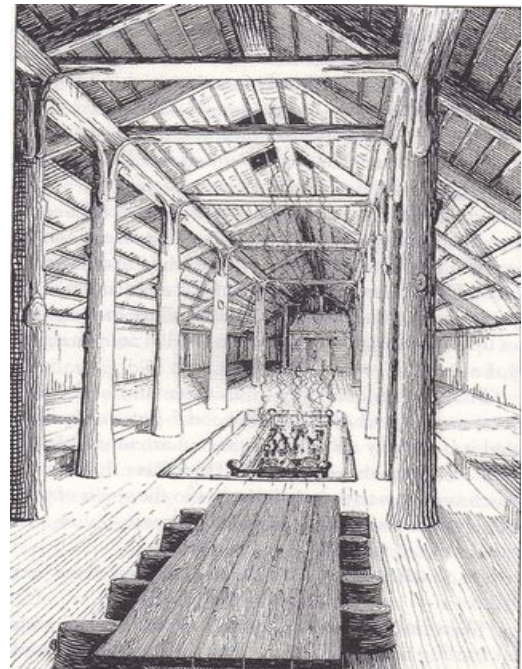
Afterwards the company will talk with the old man - an incredibly rank smell wafts from his filthy rags and rail-thin body. His wrists and ankles are scarred and he bears strange marking and pictures upon his body.

PART NINE - A BRIEF RESPITE

If the companions receive Wolfbiter from the hermit **and** recognise its importance and significance to the Woodmen of Mirkwood then it would be wise to return it to them - Balin is fully supportive of such an endeavour, in fact recommending that they make a detour to Woodland Hall and seek an audience with the Woodmen there. Any woodmen companions will escort the company from the Old Forest Road to Woodland Road and their clan leader, taking them by paths that are seldom trodden by all but the men of Mirkwood.

Loremaster Note

Loremaster's should refer to the Loremaster's Book, page 105, for information on Woodland Hall and the woodmen.



ENCOUNTERING BREGDAN THE WOODMAN

Bregdan is the chieftain of the woodmen and Woodland Hall and kinsman to any woodman companions. It will be he who the companions are met by and who they will present the remains of Wolfbiter and tell of the hermit in the woods, Bregdan's lost older brother.

Playing Bregdan

Bregdan is a strong and passionate leader of the Woodmen of Mirkwood. Fortright and plain-speaking he appreciates honesty and strength of purpose and his generous to his friends and allies but wrathful to those he counts as enemies or who betray him.



Set Tolerance

The basic Tolerance for this encounter is based on the highest Valour rating among the company. Increase the Tolerance by one if a Woodman is the spokesman for the group, and reduce the Tolerance by one if there are any Dwarves in the company. Remember to take into account the Standing rating of Woodmen heroes, if any are present.

Introduction

The company will want to present to Bregdan, the lost axehead Wolfbiter. An **Awe** or **Courtesy** test will receive will result in an automatic success, but the character presenting the item should still roll for the test as other successes will result in increased rewards.

Interaction

As previously stated the axe head is from the famous weapon called Wolfbiter, an heirloom of the folk of Woodland Hall. It was carried by the eldest son (Bargrim) of the previous clan leader, Baldred. Bregdan is Bargrim's younger brother and took his place as clan leader upon their father's death at the Battle of Five Armies.

The companions will need to be sympathetic when telling Bregdan about his lost brother (**Courtesy** TN 14) and would be wise to be sure to convince (**Persuade** TN 14) him that Bargrim is best left alone.

Next, Bregdan asks of news of the outside world. This is a chance for the companions to describe their actions, indulge in some mild boasting (**Awe**), and/or tell of **Lore** or share tales in **Song**. All TNs are 14 and add to the total amount of successes.

Bregdan will offer numerous rewards depending on how successful they were during the previous encounter with him. Compare the number of successful rolls they achieved during the episode with the entries given below.

0 - 1: Bregdan grumbles that the companions are stormcrows who bring nothing but bad news! They are allowed to sleep in the common hall for the night but are sent on their way in the morning, escorted to the Old Forest Road.

2 - 3: Bregdan offers a purse of coins as payment for returning Wolfbiter, distributing silver among them to a value of 1 Treasure for each companion. They may stay the night as above and will be expected to leave in the morning.

4 - 5: Bregdan is impressed with the companions. Apply the results of 2 - 3 above; additionally, he allows them to stay at the hall for a number of days to recover from their journey so far (no more than 3 - as Balin is eager to complete his task). This allows the companions to recover 3 travel fatigue points, all lost endurance, and replenish any supplies as they see fit.

6 - 7: Bregdan is very impressed. Apply the results of 4 - 5 above; additionally, the companions may increase their Standing with the Woodmen by 1 point.

8 or more: Bregdan is very impressed. Apply the results of 6 - 7 above; additionally, the companions may return during the Fellowship Phase and will be invited to meet the Council of Elders (increasing their Standing by a further 1 point), and from now on they can consider both Woodland Hall AND the nearby Woodmen-town as sanctuaries.

PART TEN - TO THE HOUSE OF BEORN

Leaving the eaves of Mirkwood, the company emerge into blazing sunlight and a refreshing breeze. From here on in the companions' journey will be noticeably less arduous and thwart with danger.





Upon Reaching the Old Ford

The crossings of the Old Ford are kept by Beornings. The company may pass after paying a small toll (they can afford it, unless they are all at a Frugal Standard of living). If the company wish to interact further then **Courtesy** tests (TN 14) will allow them to be introduced to one of Beorn's thanes, a tall rangy Beorning called Merovech. The companions could present Merovech with a gift but a simple discussion as to their task will result in Merovech escorting them to Beorn.

Note: Merovech is one of the Beorning's found slain at the beginning of the adventure, "Kinstrife and Dark Tidings". This is an excellent time to introduce him and therefore foreshadow his tragic death to orcs.

The hall of Beorn is a day's easy walk from the Old Ford. In the middle of the afternoon, the companions find themselves walking across vast patches of clover of different colours; the air is fragrant with the flowers' sweet scents and is droning with the sound of dozens of large bees. Several homesteads can be seen, the residences of those who have come to live under Beorn's protection.

By sunset, the company arrives in sight of an ancient belt of mighty oak trees; beyond it rises the high thorny hedge that surrounds Beorn's Hall. A tall and wide wooden gate opens in the thorn-hedge to the north, beyond which a wide track leads south towards Beorn's house and the surrounding outbuildings.

Beyond the Gate

As they push open the heavy creaking gate, the company is met along the track by dogs, who sniff them and bark excitedly lovingly greeting Merovech (if he is with the company). Reaching the courtyard outside Beorn's hall – a long, low building with several wings and outhouses, Merovech asks them to wait while he consults his master. Bees buzz sleepily as the dusk sets in, and Merovech returns to escort the company to Beorn.

Information found in Part Two of "Kinstrife and Dark Tidings" should be used here to supplement the encounter with Beorn. It is therefore not reprinted. Additional information is included herein.

ENCOUNTERING BEORN

As usual, Beorn is not comfortable around large groups of people. The companions would be wise to be as direct and forthright as possible.

If there is no player character Beorning then Balin wishes to request that Beorn agree to send a representative of his people with them.

Set Tolerance

The basic Tolerance for this encounter is based on the highest Valour rating among the company.

Increase the Tolerance by one if a Beorning or Woodman is the spokesman for the group, and reduce the Tolerance by one if there are any Elves or Dwarves in the company. The Standing rating of Beorning heroes should also be taken into account.

If the company as a whole fails a number of skill rolls in excess of the Tolerance rating, skip onto Arrangements for the Night.

Introduction

Beorn receives the company into his hall and bids them sit down on benches on either side of the long table, while he settles his massive frame into an equally massive wooden chair.

If the company spokesman makes a brief introduction of themselves, then gets onto more important matters, call for a **Courtesy** test. If everyone makes individual introductions, Beorn grows visibly impatient.

Interaction

The interaction with Beorn is divided into four sections – telling the tale, the exchange of news, dinner, and arrangements for the night.

Telling the Tale

Beorn asks for one companion to describe their quest. The difficulty for this test is based on how the player role-plays; a clear, organised account gives a TN of 12 but hiding information raises the TN to 16. The spokesman can use **Persuade** to describe the events.

A Gift of Honey

This will give the characters an automatic success when interacting with Beorn. He is not flattered by ostentatious gifts but one so simple and wholesome wins his favour. Other interesting gifts that the players may think of can also be used as well.



Exchange of News

Beorn asks the company for news of the wider world, and offers his own stories in exchange. The companions give an enjoyable account if they succeed in a Courtesy or even Song roll (the default TN is reduced to 12 if they talk about fighting Orcs within Mirkwood and describe their battle at the Amon Naugrim).

Beorn relates that he has been troubled lately by news of Orcs crossing his lands from the east, coming out of Southern Mirkwood and making for the Misty Mountains. Some travellers claimed that the growing strength of the Free Peoples has driven the Orcs out of their hiding places forcing them to flee Wilderland, but Beorn does not think they are so lucky, nor so strong. Something else is behind the movements of these Orcs (This foreshadows the adventure "A Darkness in the Marshes").

Dinner

If the encounter is progressing well then Beorn will now serve dinner to his guests.

Arrangements for the Night

If the companions haven't exceeded the Tolerance rating of the encounter by now, Beorn offers them beds in his hall. Otherwise, he stalks out the door telling the companions that they can sleep in the stables.

THE NEXT DAY

Returning to Beorn's Hall and based upon the number of successes achieved within their encounter, Beorn decides on the following:

0 - 1: Without even breakfast Beorn refuses the companions request to send a representative with them to see the Eagles.

2 +: Beorn serves them a breakfast of eggs, sweet toast, strong tea, and his famed honey-cakes. It is here that he announces that Merovech will journey with the company to see the eagles as representative of the Beornings.

PART ELEVEN - THE EAGLES' EYRIE

The final leg of the journey sees the company travelling from Beorn's house to the Eagles' Eyrie to deliver Dain and Bard's invitation to Gwaihir.

THE JOURNEY

The first leg of the journey covers 40 miles south to the Old Ford, but the going is easy as the company marches through the grassy plains and gentle countryside of the Beornings with the great river Anduin to their right.

After the journey south, the company must cross the river and travel another 60 miles or so north-west through more difficult terrain.

As usual, Lore rolls can be made to remember the best route before setting out.

- Based on the journey rules, the distance between Beorn's house and the Old Ford takes 1 day and one Fatigue test from each player, both in summer or autumn
- The trek from the Old Ford to the Eagles' Eyrie takes 3 days to complete, and another Fatigue test from each player, both in summer or autumn

The first day of the journey is pleasant and easy. Late spring weather brings a series of warm days, and the path leads through the rushes and meadows of the river's flood plain. When the companions come upon the Old Forest Road, they will know it is time to turn west towards the distant grey haze of the Misty Mountains.

After crossing the river, the travel becomes harder as the company makes their way across country and the highlands leading to the mountains. The route passes through several marshy sections, and the company must follow a more winding path that navigates around muddy pools and bog land.

THE EAGLES' EYRIE

Eventually, on the early morning of the fourth day since leaving Beorn's house the company will arrive at the Eagles' Eyrie - tall, sheer columns of rock reaching up like fingers into the crisp morning air.

The eyrie of Gwaihir, the Great Shelf, lies upon a lonely pinnacle of rock extending from the eastern edge of the Misty Mountains.



An impregnable citadel of the skies, it is called by the Elves *Amon Thyryr* (Eagles' Hill), by the Northmen *Earnastede* (Place of the Eagles), and by other folk simply *Eagles' Eyrie*.

As well as Gwaihir, fifteen of his chieftains including his brother and captain Landroval dwell nearby, serving as the Lord's bodyguard and standing army. This assemblage of Eagles is most unique, for all other Great Eagles are solitary or mated pairs.



Around the foot of the eyrie's steeple are other rocks. Upon one, the largest, can be seen deep gouges within the stone – this is where an Eagle may alight to receive earthbound visitors.

ENCOUNTERING LANDROVAL

Middle-earth's most majestic hunters, the Great Eagles rule the skies above the Misty Mountains. Largest of all birds, the Eagles believe themselves directly descended from divine spirits whom Manwe, Lord of the Valar, commanded to take avian form and observe the mortal world on his behalf.

A Great Eagle's very visage is awe-inspiring; its golden brown plumage shines magnificently in the sunlight. An adult eagle has a wingspan of approximately 30 to 40 feet, whereas Gwaihir and his brother Landroval are much larger with spans in the region of at least twice that – and with their powerful hooked beaks and razor sharp talons, the Eagles of the Misty Mountain fear no foe. It is said that the Lord of the Eagles can look at the sun unblinking, and can see a rabbit moving a mile below in moonlight. Among the swiftest of all creatures, they can dive upon their prey at speeds of over 200 miles per hour.

Few have mastered the art of befriending the Eagles. These are not kindly creatures, seeming unsentimental and domineering to others. Free to fly where they wish, Eagles tend to be proud and aloof, accustomed to the respect engendered by their great size and power. Nonetheless, the Great Eagles are noble at heart and once an Eagle's gratitude is won, it is an ally for life, willing to bear the traveller long leagues on its back.

Exceptionally intelligent and rational, the Eagles are able to converse in the common tongue when they choose, but beware of antagonising them, for they can be a merciless foe, and never will they be persuaded or easily deceived into aiding an evil cause.

Playing Landroval

Brother of Gwaihir, Lord of the Eagles, Landroval is a great warrior in his own right and Captain of the *Thoronim* (Eagle Host), Landroval is proud, brave, and swift.

When interacting with the players, move your head in short, jerky motions and blink quickly. Tilt your head to regard those who speak – as if they were a tasty morsel pleading to be spared.



Set Tolerance

The basic Tolerance for this encounter is based on the highest Valour rating among the company as above all things, Landroval is a great hunter and warrior of his people.

Increase the Tolerance by one if there is an Elf in the group, and reduce the Tolerance by one if there are any Beornings or Woodmen in the group as the Eagles hunt many creatures the men of the Vale of Anduin keep – they often compete for the same spoils!

If the company as a whole fails a number of skill rolls in excess of the Tolerance rating then Landroval will dismiss them from these lands.

Evaluating the Encounter

The Loremaster can evaluate the outcome of the encounter by keeping track of how many successful rolls the player-heroes achieve during its Introduction and Interaction stages.

Every successful roll counts for one, while a great success equates to two successful rolls and an extraordinary result to three successful rolls. For Balin to gain an audience with Gwaihir, the company must accumulate at least 4 successes over the course of the encounter.



Introduction

Standing about 10 feet in front of the stone rock, Balin looks to the heavens, raising his voice:

"I Balin, son of Fundin, Friend of Gandalf the Grey and once companion of Thorin Oakenshield, call upon the Eagles of Amon Thyryr – who I beseech to hear my request!"

Long moments pass in the still morning air before a dark shadow drops like a stone towards the company; in the morning light the feathers are golden and bright.

Interaction

The objective of this encounter is for Balin to gain an audience with Gwaihir in order to invite him to the upcoming festivities celebrating the free peoples' victory at the Battle of Five Armies.

- In order for the companions to lead this interaction then describe how Balin becomes lost for words and eerily quiet once the great eagle descends and addresses them. It is plain that he is lost in awe and unable to present his offering and request to the great lord – the companions must step in!

Landroval will look upon the company, regarding them with keen intelligent eyes. The characters will feel like they are assessed by some deadly hunter, and will suddenly have an all too real appreciation of what a rabbit must feel like in its final moments!

In order to adequately represent Landroval's personality to the players, a number of responses to specific remarks or questions are listed below.

If any of the company refers to Landroval as Gwaihir, assuming they have been met by the Great Eagle:

"Falsely have you named me, creatures of dull wit!"

Introducing himself:

"I am Landroval the Swift. Brother to Gwaihir, the Wind Lord who is King of the Eagles of the Misty Mountains."

Referring to the Northmen who keep cattle:

"I see there are Men of the Vale among you, yet they are not losing their arrows upon me! This they have been known to do when I hunt for sheep or calf. Men seem yet to not understand that no creature can own another, and why does a sheep care who eats it in the end?"



... But do not be concerned; for the Eagles bear your folk no real enmity, apart from this delusion, you appear to be an otherwise decent folk!"

When he speaks to an elf in the company:

"Long has it been since my Lord and yours visited each other. I trust the King of the Woodland Realm is enjoying his prerogatives?"

Courtesy, **Persuade**, and **Riddle** would be best employed when dealing with Landroval, depending on what is being discussed - all have a TN of 14. Any attempts to **Awe** this noble creature will be far more difficult (TN 18) to achieve.

Landroval will parlay with the company for a short time and if asked will confirm that Orcs have been moving in the mountains, returning to the places of their ancient holds.

Outcome

How well the characters perform in their interaction with will directly impact on whether Balin is successful or not.

- 0 successes – Oh no! Balin is refused and Landroval informs the companions to return to their homes and tarry here no longer
- 1 success - Gwaihir receives Balin, but declines the invitation. Eagles do not attend such festivities!
- 2 to 3 successes - Gwaihir receives Balin, and will consider their offer. It's up to the LM as to whether he attends or not
- 4 to 5 successes - Gwaihir receives Balin, and will attend the festivities
- 6 to 7 successes - Gwaihir receives Balin, and will attend along with his brother Landroval. He is also impressed with the characters, acknowledging and talking with them during the festival (+ 1 to Standing for each PC)

Assuming the company achieve enough successes Balin is permitted an audience with Gwaihir.

"Balin, Son of Fundin, you may speak with Gwaihir and make your request. Come; take hold of my talons and do not let go!"



With that, he lifts Balin into the air and to an audience with the Lord of the Eagles. The rest of the company are free to rest and eat at the foot of the eagles' rock. After an hour has passed, Landroval returns with Balin, lowering him to the ground.

"Good health to you Balin and you all. Rest here and in safety and travel back to your lands when you see fit. I and my lord will see you again at Esgaroth, in the east, when the leaves of Mirkwood have turned golden brown and fallen from their boughs. Farewell!"

With that, the great Eagle Landroval leaps into the noon sky, flying from view – leaving the company to themselves.

EPILOGUE

THE RETURN JOURNEY

From the Eagles' Eyrie the company will look to return to Laketown and beyond, for the Lord of the Eagles will attend the festivities in November.

FELLOWSHIP PHASE

If a Fellowship Phase follows this adventure, then the company have a number of options.

- Balin, Torrun, and Barrak will return to Esgaroth by the Elf Path – a far less torturous route than the Old Forest Road but still dangerous in these times.

The company may return with Balin, at least to the Last Inn where they can pick up another quest. It is only May (Norui), so the characters have five full months before they need to return. Balin suggests that they should part for now, thus leaving them to forge their own path...



APPENDIX: SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Balin	
ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	
7	
ENDURANCE	HOPE
25	4
PARRY	ARMOUR
7	<u>4d + 1</u>
SKILLS	
<u>Personality</u> , 3	Survival, 3
<u>Movement</u> , 4	Custom, 3
<u>Perception</u> , 4	Vocation, 3
WEAPON SKILLS	
<u>Great Axe</u> Damage 11, Edge 10, Injury 20, CS Break Shield	4
<u>Throwing Axe</u> Damage 5, Edge 7, Injury 14, CS Break Shield	3
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
<p>Toughness Reduce Balin's Hope point score by one to reduce the Endurance loss caused by an enemy's attack by 7 points.</p>	
<p>Traits Keen-eyed, Energetic, Smoking</p>	

BARRACK	
ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	
5	
ENDURANCE	HOPE
23	n/a
PARRY	ARMOUR
5	<u>4d + 4</u>
SKILLS	
<u>Personality</u> , 3	Survival, 2
<u>Movement</u> , 3	Custom, 2
Perception, 2	<u>Vocation</u> , 3
WEAPON SKILLS	
<u>Axe</u> Damage 5, Edge 7, Injury 18, CS Break Shield	3
<u>Shortsword</u> Damage 5, Edge 10, Injury 14, CS Disarm	2
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
<p>Dual Wielding Wielding two, one-handed weapons with lethal grace and potent skill. One weapon must be designated the primary; the other is the secondary. The bonus of dual wielding depends on current Stance:</p> <p>Forward: Reduce Edge of the primary weapon by one. Open: Increase Injury TN of the primary weapon by two. Defensive: Add a parry value equal to the Encumbrance of your secondary weapon.</p> <p>Only a single attack roll is ever made and no more than a single target can be attacked per turn.</p>	
<p>Traits Fire-making, Fierce, Proud</p>	



torrun	
ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	
5	
ENDURANCE	HOPE
23	n/a
PARRY	ARMOUR
5	<u>4d + 4</u>
SKILLS	
Personality, 2	Survival, 2
<u>Movement, 3</u>	Custom, 3
<u>Perception, 3</u>	Vocation, 2
WEAPON SKILLS	
<u>Axe</u> Damage 5, Edge 7, Injury 18, CS Break Shield	3
<u>Shortsword</u> Damage 5, Edge 10, Injury 14, CS Disarm	2
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Dual Wielding Wielding two, one-handed weapons with lethal grace and potent skill. One weapon must be designated the primary; the other is the secondary. The bonus of dual wielding depends on current Stance: Forward: Reduce Edge of the primary weapon by one. Open: Increase Injury TN of the primary weapon by two. Defensive: Add a parry value equal to the Encumbrance of your secondary weapon. Only a single attack roll is ever made and no more than a single target can be attacked per turn.	
Traits Smithcraft, Cautious, Steadfast	