

A Short Cut To Adventure 4, The Hollin Horror

For characters with 6 to 8 advancements, with a mix of combat and magical ability.

1 Set-Up. TA after 2951, before 2953.

The party meet Gandalf and some ranger allies in the ruins of Ost-In-Edhil. With sauron recently announcing himself king of men this area of the misty mountains is filled with orc activity. The rangers are trying to get a measure of all this. Gandalf warns them of a new and hidden evil in the region. Unfortunately the party run straight into it, a fell creature part troll-part ent wielding a weapon forged by the Witch-King for his wars against Arnor. By defeating it they aid the magic of the land recover.

2 The Ruins of Ost-In-Edhil

Assumes party are heading North toward Eregion (Hollin), perhaps on the way to Rivendell, Moria or Angmar

www.stewardandking.net hosts a nice map of this area.

Across a decrepit but intact bridge lies the ruins of the great haven of elven smiths of old. Saurons vengeance upon these people was terrible to behold, such is the fate of many who have stood against the great enemy. Once beautiful walkways, minarettes, columns, mosaics, statues, arches, gateways, flag-poles, fountains, steps and stairs, grand houses and workshops beyond compare lie in ruin.

Few buildings remain intact at all, perhaps the odd stable here, a bakery, a meeting hall, a small square. What numbers of trolls and orcs that fell upon the city is not known, but here and there are great rents in the earth, foundations utterly destroyed by the sundering sorceries of the shadow, and the mighty mace in his fell hand...

Some semblance of hope remains as time is a great healer, even of such terrible wounds. Various trees, wild grasses and thickets grow in dense clusters. Some show flashes of the vibrant autumnal colours that must have pervaded the area some 5000 years ago. Birds fly overhead and small deer frolic amongst the shelter and safety of ruined buildings.

So it is you have crossed the southern bridge, and you see stretching East and West myriad small rivers and canals that dominate this region. That they are still intact is testament to their construction, and so the area remains mostly not flooded. Your destination is to cross through the ruined city and to the bridge at the North-west end.

City must once have been a great sight to behold, with riches adorning much. It is likely that which the enemy didn't steal before he was crushed decades after he assailed the city, has been plundered by tomb-raiders and petty rogues.

You have progressed some half way across, wary for lingering orcs that may have recently returned, the lairs of bandits or spirits of the long slain when almost from nowhere there is a shimmering silvery light some 20 yards ahead, almost a visage of a great knight upon a mighty steed bearing a great shining lance and a winged helm, all a silver-grey mithril in colour.....It speaks in a voice that digs deep into your heart and minds and you feel taken aback, nay afraid of this ancient ghost. *Intimidate (Might)* +16...

The following text was specific to my party, you'll have to adjust as you see fit....

"What business does an elf, a dwarf, a woman and a little orc have in the ruins of this once proud city....."

- Nori ...shouldn't you be at your forge, for there is a great chill approaching....
- Vint...should you not be warming peoples hearts against the coming peril with song and spirits...
- Aragil...oh noble prince, should you not be with your people, organising and leading them for coming storms....
- Priscilla Merryjugs.... I may have known you'd be where you shouldn't....involved in things you should not be. Like you, your abandoned garden is getting most over grown, to big for its boots, though those elven dainties you have seem to fit most fine.....ha, ha, ha....and suddenly the light and power fades and instead of great armour is a grey cloak, instead of a keen lance, a gnarled staff, and where there was a winged helm, is but a pointy and battered grey hat....though the riders horse is truly great to behold.....

Behind this grey rider, out of cover appear half a dozen rugged, tall men in green and brown, carrying stout yew bows and long knives.....

Gandalf speaks..."Where is your destination? Not here I hope, there is a power arisen in Eregion that is best not disturbed. I fear, with recent renewed orc numbers in the region, this evil may stalk anew.

These folk are rangers of the North and you could not be in safer company, or as is said, more dangerous.

Rangers. 2 will escort the party North, 2 more will head West with Gandalf and the other 2 will stay awhile in the city....

Boridil and Allanarn. Seem to have a fairly playful spirit within them, and perhaps some elven blood in their distant ancestry.

MONSTER BLOCK, non-Spell User		Skills		total
NAME	trainee rangers of the North	adv: 5-7		
Health	12	Boons	Combat	basic 5
Stamina	6	Elf blood	s.sword	2d6+5 12
Swift / Init	6/9	travelled	longbow	2d6+4 10
Willpower	5	Fell-hand: orcs2	Physical	basic 5
Wisdom	4	wary	percept	listen 7
Defence	13	evasion	stealth	hide 12
Armour	leath/AP 6*	woodcrafty	Academic	basic 3
Courage	6	armour heroes 2	healing	Herbal rem 7
Corruption	0	favour fortune 2	lore	Arnor 5
Renown	3	Flaws	Social	basic 3
Size	m	Oath	inquire	4
		Fealty	inspire	6

WOUNDS		penalty	-3	-6	dead
fast-play	1	hits taken,	5	10	12
	2	hits taken,	9	18	24
	3	hits taken,	14	22	36

3 Desolation of Eregion

In his search for the One ring the great shadow has sent agents back to this region, on the off chance the connection it has to some degree has drawn it, or its current wielder, to here. These agents have chanced upon the area known as the glittering ways in the last ten years and now a creature of fell might has been left here. Its essences have somewhat dulled the brightness of the ores and the earth and also left an area of withering within 500 feet of the Cave entry. It will be obvious this area is under some curse or malaise...

The creature is a perversion of an Ent, but is not truly akin to a troll. In the shelter of the rocks and hills were it dwells, and hides, it looks akin to a somewhat petrified tree, about 25 feet tall. . Very pale grey in the leaves, with a deeper-grey to the trunk. Observe (spot) TN 20 will show it to have legs and arm limbs somewhat. In the heart of the trunk is a might enruned sword of an evil nature, and this is its focus. In the dark of caves and at night it becomes fully mobile and looks more troll / stone-like with sickly leaves and mosses attached to it. It has great limbs, one of which wields the 'Witch-Blade' with deadly accuracy and malicious intent. It has a great dislike of fire and light. Taking extra damage from fiery blows, is as a troll regard bane weapons, and light spells stun it for a round (unless it can make a Willpower save equal to the TN of the light bringing spell) be it lightning, create light, blinding flash etc

MONSTER BLOCK, Spell User		Skills		total
NAME	Fell Creature of The Glittering Way			
Health	22	Boons	Combat	basic 8
Stamina	7(12)	hardy	Witchblade	2d6+11 14
Swift / Init	3/6	night eys2	Fist	3d6+7 10
Willpower	5	wary	Physical	basic 4
Wisdom	3	fell-hand, dwa/2	track	dwarves 7
Defence	6*		athletic	run 5
Armour	Skin AP 5 (10 in static state)		Academic	basic -3
Courage	2	Flaws	black speech	2
Corruption	20		westron	2
Renown	0		Social	basic -3
Size	VL		Intimidate	might 8
Dodge:	13	Parry-fist	19	Bearing 10
WOUNDS	Need to hit by more than 21 for extra success, and then only by a baneweapon which could be to: disarm the creature; put it as further -2 due to wound to arm, leg or eye; gain initiative over it; gain +3 to next strike against it; do maximum damage.			

0	22	-1	22	-7	22
0	22	-3	22	-9	22
-1	22	-5	22	()	in static state

Spells:

- 1 Quench Fire (needs to roll weariness)
- 2 Counter Spell any spell requiring only 1 pick and no pre-requisite
Do this for free
- 3 Guarding Spell (no need to roll weariness)
- 4 Slumber (extra pick, no need to roll weariness)
- 5 Bane (needs to roll weariness)

Takes maximum damage from fire based attacks

3 actions a round. Attack once with its sword, once with its fist, once with magic...

The Witch-Blade. Forged by The Witch-king himself, in his battles in the TA in the North. Runes of the 'Undoing of the North' along the jet black blade.

Gives +4 bonus to all fear related skills, spells, etc against Men.

Bane Spell against horses.

It is other-wise a +1 to armed combat skill large two handed enchanted blade (doing 2d6+6 damage). It can be destroyed with a blow with another enchanted sword versus a TN of 31, failure by more than 10 shatters the attacking blade or a smith-craft roll in a great forge can unmake it, but taints the forge forever. Need a 21; failure by 10 or more curses the forger. Such a forge may still exist in Ost-In-Edhil, Erebor, Orthanc, Rivendell and similar.

In the hands of the witch-king it can inspire / rally orcs , create darkness and fogs, and raise wights from the dead, killed by a trauma, within barrows. With Saurons return Morgul Blades will be used by the witch-king

Vale of the Glittering Ways

Round a series of large rocks and crags until you enter a small hidden vale some 250 yards in a semi-circle, with the flat side forming into the Western end of the Hollin Ridge. Something feels very wrong and your two ranger companions immediately draw and nock arrows. What you thought would have been a pleasant hidden sanctum has decayed and declined, for the most part. The first 150 yards in looks fine, thorny bushes, scattered small trees, wild flowers grow, small insects flutter, birds skip and frolic. The rest of the distance to the mountain looks withered and petrified. The areas looks a mass of different greys, large insects seems to swarm, small pools either dry or septic looking dot the area and it looks like there is only tree struggling to survive, clinging against the mountain-side and that too looks dried and ashen.

Observe spot at TN 10-20 dependent on distance, see a small set of steps leading into a 4 yard wide by 3 yard high cave, this entry seemingly the centre of the despoilation, where the withered tree clings to the last vestiges of existence. (Sense Power 15 will detect a powerful evil influence). The insects fluttering around are about half a foot long and seems to smell quite bad. (must roll willpower TN 10 or be annoyed by them and then resist weariness TN 15 or become tired in vein rant to swat them..). Every 0 minutes spent in area requires another roll. The insects will only feed on a fully exhausted non-moving target. Relevant songs and words may drive off these scavengers...

Into the Cave

These caverns must once have been amongst some of the most spectacular in Middle-Earth. Enter one vast great cavern. The glow of your lights on the ores and gems is pleasing, but once must have been spectacular. Carved seats and benches ring the walls and myriad small pools fill the place, reflecting light and glimmer to add to the spectacle. Search / Stonecraft, see there has been minor attempt to mine this area, remnants of crude tools and goblin bodies lay around.

Rewards. 750 exp for destroying the beast. Either a point of courage or renown for valour and bravery and great deeds. After the beast is defeated weariness levels and wounds heal in the caves at twice normal rate.