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Being a fancasy role playing game by jeffrey scheccer sec in collien s middle earch

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middle earch?

Legends of Middle Earth is a role-playing game (or RPG) set in the world of the Hobbit, the Lord of the Rings, the Silmarillion, and other works of professor JRR Tolkien. Because this document does not go into detail about Middle Earth, it is a good idea to have read the books (or at the very least seen the movies) before playing a game using this rule set. Note that this is a completely unofficial work, the author is not affiliated with the Tolkien estate in any way, and the company Decipher puts out a legitimate Lord of the Rings Role-Playing Game.

If you are new to RPGs, you may be wondering what this whole role-playing thing is, or, at any rate, why one needs to read at least twenty odd pages to do it. In an RPG, a group of friends gets together and pretends that they're other people, and then commence to go off and pretend to have adventures, rolling dice or using some other method to determine their character's fates. Most of the players create characters to portray, but one, called the Game Master or simply GM, must take on the role of the entire rest of the world. It is their job to mediate conflicts and provide opportunities for fun, as they are the one that describes the world (here Middle Earth) and situation (of your own devising) to the others.

The goal of **Legends of Middle Earth** is to be as conducive to creating Tolkien-like stories as possible. Hopefully, you will find that you are easily able to create characters similar to the heroes of Tolkien's epics, who find themselves in

similar situations, and reinforce similar themes in the process of creating the story. However, all this is secondary to having fun: if you are enjoying yourself, consider your game successful.

This booklet is broken down into four parts. Part One you're in the middle of. You shouldn't need much more explanation. Part Two provieds everything that a player needs to make a character for the game. Part Three gives all the rules required for a player to participate, and Part Four includes information only needed by the Game Master.

middle earth web resources

There is a wealth of information on Middle Earth to be found on the web. You can use the following web sites as a starting point for further research:

http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm

http://www.thelordoftherings.com

http://www.lotrfanclub.com/

http://www.decipher.com/lordoftherings/

macerials

If you are going to player a game of **Legends of Middle Earth**, you will need a few materials. First
and foremost you need a group of three to five
friends, four or so hours of spare time, and a quiet,
atmospheric (or at least non-disruptive) location in
which to play. Everyone making characters will
need five or six standard six sided dice, a pencil,
and a copy of the character sheet found at the back
of this document. The Game Master will need a
few more dice (ten or so should be enough), a
notepad and pencil, and a copy of these rules.

Characters Characters

player characters

In Legends of Middle Earth, every player character (or PC for short) is created using a simple five step process: Select your Race, select your Role, spend extra points on Skills, spend points on Passions, spend extra points on all areas. With this method, you will be able to create almost any denizen of Middle Earth, from a

character creation in a nutshell

Pick your Race, noting Skill adjustments, Story Tokens, and Special Abilities. Select a Role, noting Skill adjustments, Story Tokens, and Special Abilities. Spend 3 points on Passions. Use 10 more points for more Skill and Passions increases, Story Tokens, Special Abilities, and Artifacts.

List of skills

Prowess--Acrobatics, Alertness, Archery, Athletics, Melee, Riding, Sneaking, Stamina. Bearing--Deceit, Friendship, Intimidation, Leadership, Magic (specify), Rhetoric, Truth, Willpower. Lore--Art, Beasts, Craft, Regional Lore (specify), Performance, Spells, Survival, Trade (specify).

descended Maia and mighty wizard like Gandalf or powerful warrior such as Aragorn or Gimli to a simple hobbit like Sam or Pippin.

Each character is defined by a few sets of values and statistics: Skills, Passions, Story Tokens, Special Abilities, and Artifacts.

Skills are the set of basic talents and knowledges that may be possessed by any character. They are divided into three groups: Prowess

skills, Bearing skills, and Lore skills. There are eight in each set. A full list of the Skills may be found in the sidebar to the right. The average

rating of a Skill is 8. A 6 is poor, and 4 is abysmal. 10 is practiced, 12 competent, 14 expert, 16 master, 18 grand master, and 20 the peak of human capability. Most Skills begin with a rating of 8, and any modifiers are applied to that base.

Passions define a character's strongest emotions and desires. They can be love, hate, envy, conscience, a destiny, or any other such drive, motivation, or feeling. A Passion rated at 1 is minor, 2 is major, and 3 is all-defining.

Story Tokens are a form of meta-game currency that can be spent by players to insert brief facts into the narrative or unlock their character's most potent powers.

Special Abilities are unique or rare qualities possessed by a character, and include things like the long life of the Elves and Numenorians, and the great magical powers of the Istari.

Artifacts are ancient items of power possessed by a character. Examples from the Trilogy include Bilbo's weapon Sting and his mithrill armor, the staves of Gandalf and Saruman, and the Rings of Power.

pick your pace

The first step one must take in the process of creating a character is the picking of a race. This will lay the basic foundations of your character, and define the intrinsic strengths and weaknesses possessed by all their kin. This, however, is only a starting point, and you will have much chance to

personalize your character. The races and their adjustments are described below.

Descended Maiar are angelic creatures come to Middle Earth for a specific purpose. They are powerfully magical and vastly learned (+2 Magic [Light or Dark], +2 Spells, +4 points and Bearing or Lore Skills). They have no true mortal bodies, but their guises may be destroyed as those of any other creature (*Special Ability:* Virtual Immortality). Base Story Tokens: 2.

Dwarves are powerful and short, living most of their lives in stone halls and caverns. Dwarves are natural smiths and creators (+2 Craft, +2 Art), and greatly value strength and battle (+2 Melee, +2 Stamina). However, they are not the quickest creatures upon Middle Earth and prefer their own feet to those of a steed (-1 Acrobatics, -2 Riding, -1 Beasts). While not as long lived as the Elves, the life span of a dwarf stretches far beyond that of a man (*Special Ability:* Long Life). Base Story Tokens: 3.

Elves are slender, graceful, and innately magical beings. They have a deep affinity for all things natural and artistic (+2 Performance or Art, +2 Beasts or Survival), and are steeped in the magic of their land and their race (+1 Craft, +1 Spells, +1 Magic [Elven]). Elves have amazingly keen senses (+2 Alertness) and are so light footed that they may walk on snow or mud without sinking (Special Ability: Elven Feet), and may live thousands of years if not slain (Special Ability: Virtual Immortality). Base Story Tokens: 2.

Hobbits are as short as dwarves if not shorter, seldom growing beyond three and a half feet in height. They are quick on their feet, nimble, and well suited for discretion when the time arises (+1 Athletics, +1 Acrobatics, +1 Sneaking), but their raw physical power is more than lacking (-2 Stamina). A surprisingly resilient and fun loving

folk (+1 Willpower, +2 Friendship), the halflings have nonetheless never been counted among the very wise (2 points of penalties to spread out among Lore Skills, avoiding those that default to o). Base Story tokens: 4.

Man is a varied and adaptable race, and by far the most abundant of any upon Middle Earth. Because of this versatility and diversity, Men have

LIST OF RACES

Descended Maiar (Gandalf, Saruman, Radagast), Dwarves (Gimli, Gloin, Durin), Elves (Legolas, Elrond, Arwen), Hobbits (Frodo, Sam, Bilbo), Man (Boromir, Faramir, Theoden), Numenorian (Aragorn).

List of roles

Burglar (Bilbo,), Commoner (Sam), Diplomat (Wormtongue, Leader (Frodo, Denethor), Ne'er Do Well (Merry, Pippin), Ranger (Aragorn, Faramir), Scholar (Gandalf, Saruman), Arwen), Warrior (Gimli, Eomer).

many distinct cultures (+2 to one skill appropriate to culture, such as Riding for a man of Rohan) and are prone to pick up knacks and talents not so easily learned by Dwarves, Elves, and Halflings (+2 to one skill of the player's choice). Base Story Tokens: 3.

Numenorians are Men with the blood of the ancient kings of Numenor in their veins, granting them centuries of youth (*Special Ability:* Long Life) and a heroic stature. The Numenorians are strong of mind and limb (+2 Willpower, +2 Melee, Athletics, or Stamina), and often learned in their heritage and the ways of the land (+2 to two Lore or Bearing Skills). Numenorians also have the ability to learn the Magic [Elven] Skill, up to level 10. Base Story Tokens: 2.

pick your role

Next you must pick a Role for your character. This is a summation of the part that your character will play in the story you create by

playing Legends of Middle Earth. Choose your Role from one of the ones presented below, or work with your GM to create a custom one.

Burglars are adept at going where others would rather not have them and operating with discretion. +2 Sneaking, 4 points of increases to spend on the following Skills: Athletics, Acrobatics, Alertness, Deceit, Trade (specify), Survival. +1 Story Tokens.

Commoners have very little special about them, aside from some devotion or intensity that raises them above others of their status. +2 Trade (specify), +1 to two of the following Skills: Sneaking, Willpower, Friendship, Survival, Beasts, Art, Performance. +1 to one Passion. +1 Story Tokens OR *Special Ability:* Innocent's Ward.

Diplomats are the courtiers, nobles, and merchants of the world, skilled at social graces. +2 Rhetoric, 4 points of increases to spend on other Bearing and Lore skills putting no more than 2 points in any one. *Special Ability:* Hear Me Out.

Leaders have a natural charisma and presence that makes others want to follow them. +2 Leadership, 4 points of increases to spend on other Bearing skills putting no more than 2 points in any one. *Special Ability:* Inspire Followers.

Ne'er Do Wells have little a care in the world, but are often swept off onto adventures in spite of their lackadaisical attitudes. 4 points of increases to spend on the following Skills: Sneaking, Deceit, Friendship, Regional Lore (specify), Survival, Beasts. +2 Story Tokens.

Scholars are masters of learning and knowledge. 6 points of bonuses to spend on Lore skills putting no more than 2 points in any one. +1 Story

Tokens.

Wanderers travel the world from place to place and nation to nation, driven by the desire to find some one or some thing. +2 Survival, +1 to two of the following Skills: Athletics, Riding, Beasts, Regional Lore (specify). +1 to one Passion. +1 Story Tokens.

Warriors excel most of all in combat and war, these being the arts in which they are trained. +2 Archery or Melee, 4 points of bonuses to spend on other Prowess Skills putting no more than 2 points in any one. *Special Ability:* Field of Blood.

increase skills

The third step in creating your character is to spend ten more points on increasing your character's Skills. You may not assign more than three of these ten points to any single Skill. If you wish, you may lower one skill by 2 points in order to gain an extra 1 point to spend.

CREACE PASSIONS

The fourth step of character creation involves creating two or three Passions for your character, and then dividing three points among them. It is not recommended that characters start out with only one Passion, as this creates a rather single minded and dull character. If you wish your character to have more Passions, you will be able to create them in the next step.

FINISHING TOUCHES

The fifth and final stage of creating your character involves spending 10 points on various bonuses. Increases to the Skills are bought on a one for one basis, but no Skill may be increased by more than

3 extra points. Points of Passions cost 2 points each, and no single Passion may be rated above 3. Extra Story Tokens cost 2 points each. New Special Abilities and Artefacts can cost any number of points, most typically 1 to 3.

skills in decail

In this section, each of the eight Skills in the three headings are described in through detail. Any special rules associated with the Skills, their common uses, and special meanings that they have within Middle Earth are all given here. The first set of skills are the **Prowess** skills, which have to do with feats of strength, speed, coordination, and endurance.

- :: Acrobatics is the Skill used for tumbling, maintaining balance, and sometimes leaping. It is useful for characters that will encounter physical obstacles or find themselves in high and narrow places.
- :: Alertness represents the strength of a character's senses and the focus with which they pay attention to their surroundings. It is often used for spotting hidden detail or objects at a distance, or noticing when another is attempting to sneak up on you.
- :: Archery includes skill with the bow, crossbow, and sling, and can also be used to fight with thrown weapons such as spears and hatchets.
- :: Athletics is similar in function to Acrobatics, but encompasses more heavy duty physical feats such as climbing and swimming. Either Skill may be used for leaping. Athletics is a handy talent to have for any character of the physical bent, be they Ranger, Warrior, or Burglar.
- :: Melee is, like Archery, a combative Skill. It

governs the use of all close combat weapons, such as swords, spears, and axes, and may also be used when throwing weapons if higher than Archery.

- :: *Riding* is the Skill used to skillfully control a mount, most often a horse. It can, however, be used with any beast willing to carry you, but with slightly less effect with those animals that your character is unfamiliar with. Riding is a common Skill for those who spend much of their time traveling.
- :: Sneaking is a character's ability to move without being noticed, to blend in with a crowd, to pick locks and to perform tricks of sleight of hand. This is the Skill most valued by a Burglar character, as it is key to many of the signatures of that Role.
- :: Stamina represents the hardiness of a character; their health, toughness, and endurance. It is used to resist injuries, disease, and fatigue from lack of sleep or hard labor.

The second group of Skills are the **Bearing** Skills, which have to do with strength of mind and social presence.

- :: Deceit is the Skill that lets a character lie convincingly and craft cunning disguises. It is the least noble of Skills, as its only purpose is to fool those around one, and its use often leads to evil ends.
- :: Friendship is a character's raw charisma and represents their talent at making and keeping friends. It is more telling of true, close friends than hangers-on hoping to bask in reflected popularity. This is a very useful Skill for social characters.
- :: *Intimidation* is a character's talent at scaring or threatening others into submission, so as to get

what they want by brute social force. It is a crude method not likely to garner many allies, but is often employed by the minions of the Enemy.

- :: Leadership represents a character's ability to inspire others to follow them, and is used for commanding troops and ruling nations. It is a useful Skill for characters who may find themselves in a position of political power, as it can also represent the ability to make wise executive decisions.
- :: Magic is a Skill that defaults to o if not increased. It represents real, true magic—the ability to decrease the time between conception and effect down to a vanishing point. Mortal men can not learn true magic. There are three types of magic in general: that of the Elves, the Light magic of the Maiar, and the Dark magic of Sauron. The type of Magic possessed by a character will determine what Magical effects are easier for them to accomplish.
- :: *Rhetoric* is a character's ability to debate, and to put up a convincing argument when their philosophy or ideas are called into question. It is useful for scholarly types and governors who will need to defend their decisions to their peers.
- :: Truth is the Skill that lets a character know when others are hiding, misrepresenting, only partially telling, or just plain mangling the Truth. It can also be used to convince others that you are telling the truth, but only when you actually are.
- :: Willpower represents your character's mental strength and fortitude. It is used to throw of temptations and evil enchantments, and is useful to characters who will often find themselves in positions of political and magical conflict.

The third and final group of Skills are the **Lore** Skills. These Skills deal with knowledge,

learning, and the arts.

- :: Art is the Skill that lets a character create items of beauty, and also measures the refinement of their aesthetic. It covers the creation of sculpture, painting, engravings, architecture, and more elaborate and exotic arts, such as the growing of trees in pleasing shapes.
- :: Beasts represents the ability of a character to communicate with, train, and empathize with animals and creatures of all sorts. Befriending and interacting with animals on a social level is determined by Beasts, but riding is governed by the Prowess Skill of that name.
- :: Craft governs the production of wondrous effects and objects of impeccable quality by manipulating the substances of the world. One may use Craft to seemingly create fire out of nothing, or forge a blade of near magical skill, but do not be fooled--this is not true Magic, but merely a science not commonly understood. Craft defaults to o if not increased.
- :: Regional Lore is a Skill that must be specialized in. Pick a region for it to apply to, such as the Shire, or Gondor. Within that region, you know of the local terrain, political situation, tendencies, customs, language, and history. You may pick one additional region for your lore to apply to per 2 points in this Skill above 8.
- :: Performance determines your character's talent at the creation and production of music, poetry, theater, and other live arts.
- :: Spells, like Craft, is a Skill that may seem magical at times but is simply one of the more wondrous natural elements of Middle Earth. It tells of your character's knowledge of Words of Power, which may be used to unlock the power of certain Artefacts, open secret doors and read

hidden pages, and extend undue compulsions into the minds of others. Spells defaults to 0 if not increased.

:: Survival is the Skill that lets a character get along in the wilderness by hunting and foraging. It allows a character to be independent of civilization, and can be used to subsist in wild areas without the assistance of common comforts. It is especially useful to Rangers and other characters often ending up in the wilds.

:: Trade can represent any number of specialized professions, and you must specify what profession it represents for your character. The Skill is used for all things relating to that profession. For instance, a character with Trade (inn keeper) would use it to promote their business, while one with Trade (farmer) would use it to grow their crops.

special abilities

The Special Abilities available to characters are listed and described below. Some have requirements that must be fulfilled before purchase.

Ally (1 to 4 pts)

You have a great ally that is willing to come to your aid. You may summon them to a scene by spending a Story Token. This Special Ability costs I point for an Ally of approximately the same power and influence of a starting character, 2 points for one with slightly more power and influence, 3 with distinctly more, and 4 with vastly more.

Beorning (3 pts)

Requirements: Descendant of Beorn, Survival 10+, Beasts 12+

Spend a Story Token to assume the form of a bear

for up to the rest of the scene. While in bear form, you gain a +2 bonus to the Skills Alertness, Melee, and Athletics.

Elven Feet (1 pt)

Requirements: Elf, or Acrobatics 14+

You can walk on snow or mud without sinking in,

and never leave foot prints. Note that you do not have to be an Elf to take this Special Ability.

Field of Blood (2 pts) Requirements: Melee or Archery 10+ Unnamed Characters take a penalty when fighting you.

Hear me Out (I pt) Requirements:

Rhetoric 10+

Once per scene, you may force all activity around you to come to a halt while you make a speech.

Innocent's Ward (3 pts)

Requirements: Archery 8 or less, Melee 8 or less Spend a Story Token when an enemy of yours would attack you. You are somehow made safe from that attack. If you spend two tokens, this protection lasts until the end of the scene.

Inspire Followers (2 pts)

Requirements: Leadership 10+ Spend a Story Token to activate one of your followers' or companions' Passions. If the chosen Passion is already activated, it gains a temporary +1 bonus until the end of the scene.

Long Life (1 pt)

You have an extended life span, and will only die after five or more centuries of life unless you are

SPECIAL ABILITIES AND POINT COSTS

Ability Name Points
Ally 1 to 4
Beorning 3
Elven Feet 1

2 Fields of Blood Hear me Out 1 Innocent's Ward 3 2 Inspire Followers Long Life 1 3 Many Friends 2 Mighty Prowess 2 Snake's Mouth Virtual Immortality

slain.

Many Friends (3 pts)

You have many friends in many places. At any time, you may spend 2 Story Tokens to add a friend to your repertoire. Such friends are often about as powerful and influential as a starting character, and tend to fade into the background

after their initial appearance.

List of ARTEFACT POWERS

All possible powers of an Artefact are listed below. Full descriptions may be found in the Artefacts section on page 16.

Cloak of Hiding
Far Seeing
Fell Weapon
Focus of Magic
Hardened Armor
Healing Properties
Holder of Spells
Message to Far
Mighty Implement
Powers of Light
Self Serving
Signal of Warning

Mighty Prowess (2 pts)

Requirements:
Chosen Skill 12+
Choose one of your
Prowess Skills with a
rating of at least 12. At
any point during a
scene, you may spend
a Story Token to
activate Mighty
Prowess. You gain a
bonus on all checks
and contest rolls
made with the chosen
Skill for the duration
of the scene.

Snake's Mouth (2 pts)

Requirements: Spells 8+, Intimidation 10+, Deceit 12+

You may use Snake's Mouth once per scene on any given character. If they are an Unnamed NPC, it works automatically. Otherwise roll a contest of your Intimidation or Deceit against their Truth or Willpower. If you win, you may give a suggestion that the target *must* obey. You may continue giving these suggestions at a cost of I Story Token each.

Virtual Immortality (2 pt)

You will live for ever, unless slain.

ARCEFACCS

Elven blades, magic rings, wizards staffs, and armor of mithrill are just a few possible Artefacts. Not every character will possess one of these extraordinary items, but they can often add great color and extra options to the game.

Each Artefact is unique, and may possess powers that range from simple excellence of quality to the most potent of the ancient power-runes. The different Artefact Powers may cost any number of points, usually from 1 to 4. Artefacts are not restricted to having only one power, but may have many. The cost of such versatile implements is equal to the combined costs of all its powers. A list of the possible powers can be found in the sidebar to the left, and full descriptions are given in Part Three: Drama.

Note that these powers can also work against a character. Such powers make the Artefact less expensive, not more so. For instance, the One ring has the 3-point version of the Self Serving Power. Therefore, it is three points cheaper.

ELABORACION

The last thing that you must do in the creation of your character is to take a few minutes to think about their context. Spend a few moments on their history, appearance, personality, but devote most of your time to their current situation. Think of friends and enemies of your character, goals, sources on conflict, and various other reasons for them to go out and have adventures. After all, what fun would the game be if nothing ever happened? The point of a role-playing game is to have fun, so it is vital that your character is conducive to this goal.

page 10

PART THREE

SYSCEM BASICS

When a character is attempting a task to which the outcome is in doubt, dice (normal 6 sided ones) are thrown to determine the resolution. These dice are then totaled up, and compared to the character's value in the relevant Skill. If the total is equal to or under the Skill's value, the character successfully completes the task. If the total is over the value, the task is either somehow a failure or becomes more complicated and difficult. The number of dice thrown depends upon the difficulty of the task:

- :: Simple tasks use 1 die.
- :: Slightly difficult tasks use 2 dice.
- :: Distinctly difficult tasks use 3 dice.
- :: Very difficult tasks use 4 dice.
- :: Heroic tasks use 5 dice.
- :: Legendary tasks use 6 dice.

Throwing dice for a character checking their aptitude against a static situation is called a Test.

Example: Elthindin, and Elven Scholar with a Spells Skill of 13, is attempting to guess the word that makes a page of secret text become visible. It is a rare pass word, but not unheard of, so the GM sets the task at 3 dice. Elthindin's player rolls the dice, getting [5 3 2], total of (10). Elthindin successfully stumbles upon the word after a few minutes of guessing more common spells.

When two characters are facing off against each other, each side takes turns making rolls (as in a Test), and the first to fail loses. The initiator of the conflict chooses the number of dice that their

first roll will use. Each roll after that must use at least as many dice as the previous one. Throwing dice for two characters going up against each other in this manner is called a Contest.

Example: Elthindin and his companions are now following the directions upon the hidden page, and are crossing a high mountain pass. When they make camp, they are ambushed by a band of orc. Elthindin decides to run (he has an Athletics of 8), and an Orc (Athletics 12) gives chase. Since Elthindin made the first move, he chooses the first roll's dice, and rolls one. He succeeds with a

[5] (5). The Ore sets the next roll at 3, and just barely passes with [4 6 2] (12). Elthindin must now set another roll, and chooses 3 again, but fails by [4 4 4] (12). He is not fast enough, and the ore catches him after a three minutes of running through the brush.

EXAMPLE REASONS FOR BONUSES

The action is tactically sound or makes good use of the environment. The action is described well or in an exciting manner. The action is performed with assistance. The action is done slowly and carefully, with the character taking extra time. The action is performed using the perfect tools for the iob.

penalties

The number of dice in a roll assume a rather sterile environment that is not often going to be encountered in the game, and does not take the player (rather than character) into account.

Because of this, there are bonuses and penalties. Each bonus on a roll eliminates one die (before

rolling), and each penalty adds one die. The number of dice in a roll before bonuses and penalties are applied is called the *base dice*, and the number after the *rolled dice*.

EXAMPLE REASONS FOR PENALTIES

The action is tactically unsound or is hindered by the environment The action is described poorly or in an boring manner. The action is done hastily and as quick as possible, or while doing something else. The action is performed using poor or below par equipment.

Bonuses and penalties may be applied to both Tests and Contests. In a Contest, it is only the base dice that must increase with each successive roll-for these purposes, the rolled dice are not taken into account. Also, note that a condition could often

provide both a bonus to a character and a penalty to their opposition. In these cases, only apply either the bonus or the penalty, but not both.

Example: One of Elthindin's companions, a Man and a Burglar from Bree by the name of Luke, decides to hide from the Ore rather than running. Luke has a Stealth Skill of 14, and the Ore each an Alertness of 10. Luke gains a bonus to hide, as it is dark, and the Ore gain a bonus to spot him, as there are many of them. Luke sets his initial roll at 5 dice (4 with his bonus), and passes with a [1 4 5 3] (13). The Ore do not raise, so make their roll with 5 dice (4 after the bonus), but fail with a [4 2 3 6] (15). Luke dives into the bushes, and is missed by the Ore.

SCORY TOKENS

Each character in **Legends of Middle Earth** has a number of Story Tokens that they receive at the beginning of each game session; typically two to six. Story Tokens can be used for many purposes. They may be spent to activate certain Special

Abilities, to channel your Passions, and to work great Magics. However, those are all functions of other devices that simply utilize Story Tokens. In and of themselves, these tokens may be used for two things: rerolls and dramatic editing.

Rerolls are simple enough. Whenever you have made a roll and don't like the results, spend a Story Token to do it over. That's it.

Dramatic editing is also rather basic once you've got the gist of it. Whenever a player wishes, they may spend a Story Token to add a vague element to a scene. They may spend two tokens to change a minor element that has not yet affected the story.

Example: After Luke has been hidden in the bushes for some time, the GM tells his player that Luke can hear footsteps approaching. Luke's player then tosses a Story Token, and states that the footsteps do not belong to an Orc.

If the GM wishes, they may hand out a bonus Story Token to a player for greatly contributing to the game. Note that unused Story Tokens do not carry over from one game session to the next.

passions

Whenever a player wishes, they may spend one Story Token to activate their character's Passions. For the rest of the scene, whenever their character is making a Test or Contest for a purpose that advances or is logical by one of their Passions, they gain a number of bonuses equal to their rating in the relevant Passion.

A clever character can also use another's Passions to their own advantage. By spending a Story Token, you may take advantage of the Passions of others for the rest of a scene. Whenever you are involved in a Contest against a character that has a

Passion which could swing things in your favor, you gain a number of bonuses equal to their rating in that Passion.

Example: Another companion of Elthindin is his guardian and protector, the Elf Warrior Celebarë. He has the Passion of "Protect Elthindin" at level I. When the Orc attack, his player spends a Story Token to activate this Passion. Celebarë will be able to use it to gain a bonus on all rolls to drive off the Orc or otherwise defend his ward for the rest of the scene.

Suppose that the Orc have a leader who is overly cleaver for their kind, and notices Celebarë's tendencies. He wishes to draw the fighter away from his companions so as to make him more easy prey, and will do so by pretending that he has caught Elthindin. The GM may spend a Story Token for the Orc, and Celebarë's Passion will give him a penalty during his Contest to find the lie of the foul creature.

BACCLE

Close combats are resolved in the same manner as any other Contest, with Melee being the key Skill. Bonuses may be given out for superior arms and armor (not taking Artefact powers into account), terrain advantage, surprising the enemy, and other such tactics. If a character is doing something else while fighting—such as combating two enemies at the same time, running, or weaving Magic—they take a penalty to their rolls.

When one character fails a roll, they have been struck, disarmed, shoved, or otherwise afflicted by their opponent. The losing side must make a Test against an appropriate Skill (often Acrobatics, Athletics, or Stamina), using base dice equal to the base dice of their opponent's last roll in the Contest. If they succeed at this roll, this has

merely given the other side an advantage (they gain a bonus during the next Contest of the combat, at least), and is not decisive. If this Test is failed, then their enemy has somehow won the match.

Example: Elthindin, Celebarë, and Luke have escaped the Ork. Elthindin knows they're not safe, however, when he spots a Warg-riding scout from the top of a hill. Celebarë hangs back to deal with it.

Celebarë has a 14 in Melee. The Goblin has an 11. He gains a Bonus for being assisted by his mount, but this is canceled by a Penalty from the Elfs Fields of Blood special ability. Celebarë is sneaking up on the rider to gain the element of surprise, we'll assume that he succeeds here. This gives him a Bonus on his first roll.

The Elf initiates the combat when he surprises the goblin as it comes over a ridge. He jumps up into the Warg's saddle and tries to knock the goblin out. He sets the base dice of his first roll four, so rolls 3 because of his bonus, and succeeds with a [1 1 4] (6).

The ball is now in the goblin's court. He head buts Celebarë, trying to knock him under the wolf-beast's raging hooves. The Warg bucks to try to throw the Elf off. Deciding not to raise the bar, the Goblin rolls his four dice, and fails with a [4 6 3 2] (15).

The GM rules that the saving Skill in this case will be Riding. The goblin has a Riding of 10, and his enemy's last roll used 4 dice. He checks 4 dice and rolls a [1 2 2 4] (9), so this is only a setback. The goblin is thrown from the warg and crunches to the ground. Seeing that his foe still lives, Celebarë hits the Warg with the flat of his sword so that it gallops off into the distance and dismounts with a flying leap.

He closes again with the goblin, who now suffers a net penalty--he is no longer assisted by the Warg, but still suffers from Fields of Blood. Celebarë again goes for three base dice, but fails with an unexpected [6 6 5] (17). Unbalanced from his flying dismount, the Elfs assault is easily sidestepped.

The goblin may now choose how to start the next Contest of the fight. He makes a probing attack with his notched sword for two base dice so three rolled, succeeding with a $\begin{bmatrix} 5 & 2 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ (9). Celebarë ups the base dice to three, and makes it with a 5 as he easily parries the blow and ripostes. The goblin leaves base dice at three, rolls 4, and fails with a $\begin{bmatrix} 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$ (18).

The elf was going for a strait wounding attack, so, the goblin must test the three dice against his Toughness of 8. He fails with a [5 5 3] (13). Celebarë's sword bights into his shoulder, slices through his collar bone, and parts his head from his body.

Archery is even simpler. It is a standard Test, with the number of dice used determined by the distance between you and the target. Use I die for point blank range, 2 dice for close, 3 for far, and 4 for almost at the limit of the bow's range. You can take a penalty if the target has a goodly degree of cover or is using protected by a large shield, for poor visibility, for quick and erratic movement, and for high winds or rain. The attacker may also choose to take a number of extra penalties for a precise shot.

You cannot dodge an arrow. You can, however, get out of the way before the shaft is let fly. The GM should always let there be some chance that a character notices that they are being fired upon, typically using an Alertness versus Sneaking contest if the archer is ambushing their target.

When a character is struck by an arrow or crossbow bolt, they must test their Toughness against a number of dice equal to (5, minus the attacker's range dice, plus the attacker's precision penalties). If this Test is failed, the target has succumbed to the wound and is out of the fight. If it succeeds, they have simply taken an injury, which will cause a Penalty on all Prowess rolls until seen to.

Example: Luke spots the Warg fleeing from the fight between Celebarë and the goblin. He doesn't want it to get back to its masters, so readies out his shortbow (Archery 12) and takes aim. The Warg is not too far away, but definitely not close, either—this will be a 3 die test. Luke decides to take one precision penalty.

The warg spots the archer, but has nowhere to run. Luke rolls his 4 dice, and barely makes it with a [3 3 6] (12). The Warg now tests 4 dice against it's Toughness of 13, and fails with an [2 5 5 5] (17). It falls to the ground, Luke's arrow embedded in the back of it's skull.

Sometimes it will be necessary for archers and close combatants to operate in the same time frame. In these cases, an archer using a shortbow has enough time for one shot for each pair of rolls made by the hand to hand fighters. Longbowmen have one shot every two rolls, and crossbowmen one every four or five. If an archer takes a Penalty on their rolls, they may halve this time. By doubling it they may gain a Bonus.

parlor tricks

In Middle Earth, there are wondrous methods and lores that, to our modern minds, produce effects that seem almost magical. Indeed, they may seem that way, too, to the uneducated of Tolkien's world. A hobbit or common man sees not the subtle craft that makes a parlor magician seem truly powerful, and cannot understand the runes of might inscribed upon an elven blade.

This imitation-magic may be used for a variety of cheap tricks, from making small objects disappear to lighting a fire with even wet wood. Such requires a test against Craft, using anywhere from two dice for the most simple trick to four dice for a lengthy alchemical procedure up to six dice for the most enduring and bedazzling conjurations. Note, however, that Craft can never truly be used for Magic in and of itself. It is always weaker, always slower, and will always require materials of one sort or another, while true Magic simply is fed by the will of the user to diminish the temporal gap between thought and action.

TRUE MAGIC

The true magic of Middle Earth is a very part of the world itself. Those who may use it for themselves are the Valar, ancient and angelic beings, their servants the Maiar, the immortal Elves and those of their blood, and the servants of the Dark, once Valara and Maiar and other creatures but now twisted and fallen. Thus there are three forms of Magic: The Light Magic of the Valar and Maiar, the Elven Magic, and the Dark Magic. All are similar in ends, but vastly different in means. One using Light magic to do battle finishes his enemies quickly and mercifully. A servant of the Dark relishes in the pain that their sorceries cause, and draw power from it.

The Magic of the Elves has been diluted over the many years, and is now grown weak. Whenever it the use of Elven magic would require the roll of 4 or more dice, an extra Story Token must be expended. Only one token must be expended per Contest that reaches four or more dice. Those

with all of the following Skills at at least level 12 do not suffer from this constraint: Magic, Willpower, Craft, and Spells.

Light Magic is sympathetic and subtle, and is not abt to be used bluntly and excruciatingly. Whenever its use would cause intentional undue suffering, the magician suffers a penalty. Contrarily, Dark Magic is harsh and painful. It causes a penalty when put to the use of mercy and kindness.

The practical uses of Magic are many, but all are tolling. Whenever it is used, the magician must pay a Story Token. The most subtle and perhaps common use will be the enhancement of otherwise normal actions. When this is done, a character's Magic score may be substituted for any other for the purpose of one Test or Contest and appropriate special effects added.

Example: Elthindin is a powerful magician for an Elf, with a Craft and Willpower of 12, a Spells of 13 and a Magic [Elven] of 15. However, his Melee is at a poor 6. He is taking shelter from a fierce storm when a troll stumbles into the cave. Knowing he'd lose a strait-up test of brawn, Elthindin spends a Story Token to replace his Melee with Magic for the first contest of his fight with the troll, his sword glowing with light and leaving sparks where it strikes. Because of his high Skills he will not have to pay an extra Story Token even if the base dice climb above four.

Other sorcery is slightly more complicated. The first step in performing the Magic is a statment of intent, such as "close the door" or "summon a storm over Caradras." The GM will then judge how powerful this dwimmer is and set a number of base dice accordingly, from two (inconsequential) to four (major) to six (tremendous). The character then rolls these dice against their Magic score, after applying

appropriate bonuses and penalties. If they succeed the magic obeys their command, if they fail it does not work or works in a feeble or unintended fashion.

Example: Luke, Celebarë, and Elthindin have been chased to the edge of a cliff by a band of goblins. Their enemies will arrive any minute, and the overhang is much to steep to climb. Elthindin decides to cast a spell to summon a trio of the giant Eagles to fly them to safety. The Game Master gives this three difficulty dice. Elthindin's player pays the Story Token and rolls, succeeding with a [2 3 4] (9). Even as the first goblins rush up the mountainside, the elven magician looks to the skies and is plucked up in the claws of Gwaihir the Wind-Lord.

Spells, or words of power, are not themselves innately magical but are often deeply tied to acts of magic. When a magician casts a spell, they may choose to appropriate words in an ancient tounge as a method of focus. To do so, they should check the base dice of the magic against their Spells. If they succeed on that roll, they gain a bonus when they check against their Magic. Also there are many sites in Middle Earth where the appropriate words can call forth great magic. The first time a character attempts to do so for a specific location they must make a roll against their Spells, using two dice for a emmon location, four for a rare one, or six for one forgotten by time.

arcefaccs

Artefacts are items with great power in them, often relics from an earlier age. How they are made varies greatly, but takes a great amount of time and many talents working in concert. Beginning characters may be equipped with one or more Artefacts if the player pays the appropriate number of finishing touches points. The possible

Artefact powers and the number of points that each costs are given below. Note that not all Artefacts are acutally helpful. If the power would hinder the character, they instead gain the listed number of points back.

Cloak of Hiding (1, 2, or 3 points)

This either lets the artefact itself (I point) or both it and its user (3 points) become invisible. For 2 points, the user may become invisible, but only under specific circumstances.

Far Seeing (2 or 3 points)

These Artefacts allow the user to either see any location that they desire (2 points), and sometimes also forwards and back through time (3 points).

Fell Weapon (I point)

When a creature is struck with a fell weapon, they take a penalty on their Stamina roll to stay in the fight.

Focus of Magic (1 point)

A Focus of Magic is ther perfect tool for sorcery, letting the user gain a bonus on any checks against Magic made while using the Focus. However, these Artefacts are intrinsically tied to their users. If ever the magician is seperated from their Focus, they become unable to work magic in involving more than two base dice.

Hardened Armor (I point per use per session)

A variable number of times per game session, Hardened Armor may reduce the penalties for failing a Test to stay in combat by one level (out of the fight to set back, set back to unobstructed).

Healing Properties (I point per use per session)

A variable number of times per game session, an item with Healing Properties may purge all injury, poison, and disease from a single character.

Holder of Spells (1, 2, or 3 points)

Written over with runes of power, a Holder of Spells nullifies the properties of an opposing Artefact with a lesser level of Holder of Spells while they are in opposition.

Message to Far (1 or 2 points)

An Artefact with this power may be used to communicate with a specific entity (1 point) or any entity (2 points) regardless of distance.

Mighty Implement (3 points)

Tools that are Mighty Implements grant their user a bonus when set to their intended purpose (mining with a pick, for example).

Powers of Light (1, 2, or 3 points)

Artefacts with Powers of brightly illuminate a very large area (1 point). Some also prevent creatures not used to the light from coming near, forcing them to succeed at a 2-die (2 points) or 4-die (3 points) Test against Willpower to do so.

Self-Serving (gain back 2 or 3 points)

Self-Serving Artefacts are intelligent in and of themselves, and have their own purpose. When their user wishes to take some course of action that the item is against, they must succeed at a 2-die (2 points) or 4-die (3 points) check against Willpower to do so.

Signal of Warning (I or 2 points)

This type of Artefact gives some discreet signal whenever a specific type of danger (1 point) or any danger (2 points) is near.

The effort required to create an Artefact depends upon its power. It takes a successful Test against both Craft and Art using difficulty dice equal to the total point cost of the Artefact. Note that Self-Serving adds to the difficulty dice here, instead of subtracting. If the crafter wishes, they may gain a bonus by adding a Test against Spells using the same base dice. The time required to complete the Artefact is one month per base die. Turn this to weeks if the character takes a penalty and rushes, or years if they gain a bonus by working slowly. Repairing a damaged Artefact requires one tenth the normal time and the same rolls as those used to make it. However, each roll gains a bonus.

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Like people in the real world, your character is not a stagnant entity. Whenever a character takes action to defend or advance one of their Passions, they gain a number of development points equal to that Passion's rating. These points may then be spent for increases to Passions, Skills, and so forth, according to the following table.

Item	Development Points Cost
Skill	(new rating)/2, round down
Passion	(new rating)x3
Special	(final touches points)x4
Story Tokens	5 each
Artefact	(final touches points)x4

Note that with new Artefacts, they should be worked into the story as quickly as possible. For instance, it might be stated that the character's had it all along, but did not know of its properties. Characters should rarely, if ever, gain access to new Artefacts without paying the development point cost.

If a player wishes, they may *permanently* expend a Story Token to halve the cost of any single improvement. Permanently expended tokens do not return at the start of the next game session.

FOR Che CM

RUNNING Things

This part of the game is meant to be a guide for aspiring Game Masters. It includes everything you need to know to run the game, as well as advice and hints for getting used to the system for longtime role-players. As you read through this section, remember that the GM is there to have fun and to help everyone enjoy themselves—they are emphatically not the enemy of the other players.

non-player characcers

Non-Player Characters, or NPCs, include every sapient creature in Middle Earth that is not one of the Player's Characters, or PCs. The NPCs are portrayed by the GM, and can act as friend or foe; obstacle or aid. NPCs are divided into two subcategories: Those with names or significant titles, or Named, and those without, or Unnamed. Named NPCs tend to be those of

summoned Allies

Characters with the Many Friends and Ally Special Abilities may summon Named NPCs to a scene. These NPCs are built with a number of Finishing Touches points according to the Special Ability: Many Friends--5 pts. Ally level 1--10 pts. Ally level 2--15 pts. Ally level 3--20 pts. Ally level 4--25 pts.

some import-powerful or influential enemies or useful and well-grounded allies, for instance.
Unnamed are often underlings and generic mass-enemies.
For example, a band of Orc might have one Named leader and fifty Unnamed soldiers.

Named Non-Player Characters are close in power level to the PCs, and have all the same elements. However, where the PCs are built with 10 additional points in the Finishing Touches stage, Named NPCs can use any number. The only mechanical difference between Named NPCs and PCs is that the NPCs have half as many Story Tokens, and cannot use them for Dramatic Editing.

Unnamed NPCs are much weaker. They should rarely have Special Abilities that can have immediate effects on play, Passions, Story Tokens, or any Skill rated above 12. Do not feel like you need to construct them using the standard method that is used for PCs and Named NPCs. Instead, assume every Skill has a default value of 8 until they actually need to use it, at which point you may arbitrarily assign an appropriate value. A few Special Abilities and sorcerous effects work better on Unnamed NPCs because of their lack of importance to the overall plot.

other races

The following races are available to Named NPCs only, but can also be used as a baseline for Unnamed NPCs. As they are mostly for purely evil creatures, and monsters, they are most likely unfit for the players under normal circumstances. Remember to halve an NPC's Plot Points after all modifications.

Dragons are lizard-like creatures that come from the Withered Heath in the North. They are large,

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powerful, and sometimes winged beasts (+6 Athletics, +6 Melee, +8 Stamina), but their bulk makes them unapt for for coordinated movement (-4 Acrobatics, -8 Riding, -8 Archery). They are fearsome and cunning (+6 Intimidation, +2 Deceit), highly aware even while sleeping (+4 Alertness), and keep vast treasure hoards that they know thoroughly. They will quickly notice if ever an item is stolen. Dragons can live for an enormous number of years, while only growing stronger (*Special Ability:* Virtual Immortality). *Base Story Tokens:* o.

Ents were created many ages ago by Elves wise in the ways of magic and spells. They are as powerful as the most ancient of trees, but slow with the weight of years and bark (+4 Athletics, +5 Melee, +7 Stamina, -4 Acrobatics, -4 Archery, -8 Riding). Ents are the shepherds of the trees, and know their forests and their forest's ways deeply well (+2 Leadership, +2 Beasts, +4 Regional Lore [home forest]). Base Story Tokens: 2.

Giant Eagles are of the few original beasts originally created for Middle Earth that still wander its lands. Similar to eagles of normal stature (-8 Archery, -8 Riding) but able to carry several men upon their backs or in their talons, the Eagles have eyes sharper than the elves, powerful muscles, and deft wings (+4 Alertness, +2 Stamina, +2 Acrobatics). The Eagles naturally have a way with other animals and nature, and are well versed in the ways of the land (+2 Beasts, +2 Regional Lore [specify], +2 Survival). Base Story Tokens: 3.

Orcs, also called Goblins in some instances (especially to denote those that infest the Misty Mountains), are wiry and lean, small vicious creatures that fear the sun. They move with the speed and silkiness of spiders (+2 Acrobatics, +2 Sneaking), and are commonly feared by Men (+2

Intimidation). While perceptive (+2 Alertness), they are also crude and uneducated (6 points of penalties to spread among Bearing and Lore skills, worsening none to below 6). Base Story Tokens: 4.

Trolls were once of Entish stock, but have been bread into hulking, monstrous, stupid grunts (+4 Athletics, +2 Melee, +6 Stamina, +6 Intimidation, 12 points of penalties to spread among Bearing and Lore Skills worsening none to below 4). Vaguely humanoid in stature, they have long, gangly arms, tend to live in caves, and turn to stone at the touch of daylight. *Base Story Tokens*: 2.

Uruk-Hai are the high Orcs, more mighty than their lowly cousins (+2 Athletics, +2 Melee, +2 Stamina). They are even more fearsome to look at, and yet not so simple-minded (+4 Intimidation, 4 points of penalties to spend among Lore Skills, worsening none to below 8). While not as numerous as their lesser kin, they are the soldiers of choice of the Dark Lord. Uruk-Hai do not possess their kin's aversion to light. *Base Story Tokens:* 3.

adjudicating the dice

It may be frustrating when a player says that they do one thing and the dice does not support this. Because this, the GM is encouraged to enforce a standard of *state intent*, *then roll*, *then describe outcome*. This means, for example, that you wouldn't say "I hit him with my sword," as if the dice fall the wrong way, you'd end up with a continuity problem. Instead, the player would say, "I swing my sword at him," or "I attack with my sword," or some other open ended statement. Also, narrating the outcome of a roll is not solely

the GM's responsibility. Everyone else should feel free to pitch in ideas, even though the GM has final say.

Problems can also occur when simply calling for a roll would give a player information that their character would not have without success, such as those against Alertness and Truth. For Tests, the GM can always make the roll without telling the players what it is for (although this is not recommended), but Contests require the player to make a thinking decision with each toss of the dice. The suggested solution is to not only call for rolls yourself, but also encourage the players to call for them. If they succeed, consider giving them what they want. For instance, if you had planned for a Named NPC to be forthright and honest but have them acting shadily at some point, and a player calls for contest of Deceit against Truth, you could invent a lie for the NPC to be telling if the player wins the roll.

If you have trouble setting the base dice for Tests, you may want to try using subjective difficulty instead of objective difficulty as a reference. To do this, ask yourself, "Who should be able to pull this off with no problem?" Then cross-reference your answer with the below table.

Who Can Do It?	Dice
Anyone	I
A dabbler	2
An expert	3
A master	4
A myth	5

PROCACONIZE!

One fatal flaw that can shut any game down cold is a lack of protagonization. This happens when the player's characters are made to look like incompetent fools or otherwise be degraded. As

the GM, it is very important that you avoid deprotagonization at all costs, as it can quickly ruin the fun of the game for everyone involved. The following three techniques are a good place to start.

:: Don't Call for Rolls: When a character's relevant Skill is six times the rolled dice of a Test or Contest, you don't even need to roll to determine the outcome: it's an automatic success. However, consider not calling for rolls at other times, as well. An implementation of this is overpowering: when a player's character is in a Contest with an Unnamed NPC, and player's character's Skill is at least double the NPC's, no roll is needed. Also avoid calling for rolls when one outcome is unacceptable—simply narrate it yourself, or let a player do it if they spend a Story Token.

:: Interpret Rolls Favorably: Failing a test or contest isn't the end of the world. It isn't even necessarily the character's fault, in the case of an expert or master—the GM should feel free to narrate that some sudden distraction or unforeseen circumstance caused the problem. And as nothing's over 'till it's over, there's almost always the possibility of trying again.

:: These Are the Heroes: The product of a game of Legends of Middle Earth should be an at least fairly coherent story about the player's characters. They are the stars of the show, and should be treated as such. In other words, the GM shouldn't put the focus of the game on powerful Named Non-Player Characters. It's a good idea to never roll for interaction between NPCs unless it will directly affect a player's character in an immediate fashion or the players say that they want the roll made. Rolling for NPCs takes up a good deal of valuable time that could have been spent with the players. If you want to put your characters in the spotlight, be a player or write a book.

advencures in middle earch

When preparing for a game in Middle Earth, a Game Master must make one decision before all others: The Hobbit, or Lord of the Rings? Basically, the feel of which book would you like to emulate? Both are completely valid choices, but also altogether completely different. Games modeled after The Hobbit are likely to be more lighthearted, silly, and clichéd. Those emulating the trilogy will be more melodramatic and grim, focusing upon the interplay of character's Passions. And perhaps most importantly, servants of dark forces in Hobbit style games have names like Tom, Bert, and William. In Trilogy like games, they're more likely to be like Grishnak, and mean something in some dark language or another.

After you have this established, decide how long the game will last. Will it be simply one four hour session or so? Three or four sessions? A veritable chronicle of sessions built around an ongoing story line? Some groups prefer longer games with great amounts of character exploration and development, others short and more pithy scenarios.

Now think up a theme for your game, possibly a few central events that it will be based around. Don't think that Tolkien has already told every tale worth telling—there are thousands more possible to match or even surpass those already existing. And do not think that everything that Tolkien wrote has to happen in *your* Middle Earth—if you set your game a year before the Hobbit, and you find Gandalf engaged in the affairs of your players, he does not need to rush off to Bilbo Baggins' doorstep.

All of the above three steps should be done using the suggestions of the other players in your group. Once the basics are established, the group should meet to make sure that everything laid down so far is acceptable, and to make characters. It is important that you make characters together. This way, you can have Passions that interact with each other organically, not tread on each other's toes in terms of niche protection, and smoothen over any miscommunications and misunderstandings as quickly as possible. Also note that you should start discussing some possibilities for important Named NPCs at this time. Don't shy away from creating Passions that tie your character to the other dramatis personae of Middle Earth--in fact, try to make passions that tie them in as interestingly as possible!

A few example game ideas are given below:

:: Flight of Dragons: Some powerful new evil from the far North has come into the Withered Heath and is driving the dragons southward. Some set up their new lairs as far south as the Gap of Rohan, and clash with the elves of Mirkwood, the ents of Fangorn, Sarumon, men of the Rhovanion, the Rohirrim and others along the way. The players should make characters whose lives have been upset by the dragons in some way, and a long journey northwards collecting friends and enemies along the way make up the first half of the game. Best set some time before the events of The Hobbit, and playable as both a Hobbit and Trilogy style game.

:: Pirates of Gilguloth: After the defeat of the dark lord Sauron, his minions flee south into the Haradwaith. The balrog Gilguloth musters the remaining forces from the City of Corsairs and prepares for an assault on Anfalas where a powerful and artefact lies, long forgotten by Men. If the Artefact is retrieved Gilguloth will become a new Power in Middle Earth, as dark and terrible as Sauron before him. Best run as a Trilogy style game.

:: The Easterlings March: After the demise of their ally Sauron the Easterlings retreated back to their homeland. There they mustered their forces and plotted revenge. Now, nearly a century later, they mount a colossal march on Middle Earth, using Gorgoroth as their base of operations. The players would portray those seeking to unite the peoples of Middle Earth for the first great battle of the Fourth Age. Best run as a Trilogy style game.

INCRODUCING THE

Legends of Middle Earth is an ideal game with which to introduce someone to the hobby of role-playing. It uses no charts, requires only six sided dice, has relatively simple rules, is freely available, and is based upon well known popular subject matter. However, it may be a bit of a system shock to experienced role-players who grew up on Dungeons and Dragons, Traveler, and Vampire: The Masquerade, as it grants an unusual amount of control to players, and does away with various common role-playing tropes such as attributes, detailed combat and magic systems, and extensive focus on equipment and gear.

If you are planning on introducing this game to an established group of longtime players, you should probably make sure that everyone wants such a change. Springing it on players who are perfectly happy with traditional systems won't "enlighten" anyone--it'll just stop them from having a good time. Also make sure that everyone is ready to contribute and be pro-active before the start of the game, as things will stagnate if nobody follows

their Passions and all the players neglect to use their Story Tokens to drive the plot in the way that they want it to go.

Lastly, be sure that you are comfortable with the system before the game starts. You need to be able to pitch it to everyone else, and to explain the rules to them. If you can't go over these points, you probably need another read-through before you run a game:

- :: Character Creation: Select Race. Select Role. Spend 10 points on Skills. Spend 3 points on Passions. Spend 10 points on finishing touches.
- :: Basic Resolution: For Tests, roll a number of 6-sided dice based on the difficulty of the task and add them up. If the total is equal to or under the relevant Skill, the action is a success. For Contests, one character makes an opening roll. If they succeed, their enemy answers with another roll using at least as many base dice. Continue until one character fails. Each bonus subtracts one from the tolled dice, each penalty adds one.
- :: Story Tokens: Spend one Story Token to reroll a Test or Contest, halve the cost of an advancement, use magic, activate some Special Abilities, and or a minor element to a scene. Spend two points to change an established minor element that hasn't yet affected anything and to use some Special Abilities. Using Elvish magic may require extra tokens.
- :: Passions: Spend a Story Token to activate your Passions for a scene. Whenever one applies, gain a number of Bonuses equal to its rating. Whenever you do something to further a Passion, you gain that many development points.

You should also have a feel for combat, but memorizing it isn't necessary. E-mail questions and comments to: Jeph88@mindspring.com.

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F A Ansuz

R Raidho

⟨ K Kenaz

X G Gebo

P W Wungo

SECOND DECC

H Hagalaz	1 H	Hagal	az
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↑ N Naudhiz

l I Isa

♦ J Jera

↓ Ï Eihwas

C P Perthro

Y Z Elhaz

≶ S Sowillo

chirg yecc

↑ T Tiwaz

B Berkano

M E Ehwas

M Mannaz

r L Laguz

Ng Ingwaz

D Dagaz

♦ O Othala

a chige to old enclish

RUNES

Tolkien was a professor in Old English, the language of Beowulf and myriad other tales (and the Rohirrim, in Middle Earth). When inscribed into wood, metal, or stone, writers of Old English did not use the standard alphabet. Instead, they used one more utilitarian and angular, created specifically for carving: Futhark, the runic alphabet. (The name is derived by stringing together the first six runes of the runic alphabet.) The runes were organized into three Aetts, or letter groupings of eight, which may be found at the left along with the letter value and name of each rune.

You can find examples of Futhark throughout many of Tolkien's works, most notably the map that coincides with The Hobbit and the borders of the covers of many editions of his works. However, Furthark is not to be confused with the runic script of Middle Earth. Cirth, an alphabet of Tolkien's own invention, shares many inentional similarities with Futhark, but only in appearance and function. One form may denote two completely different letter values in Futhark and Cirth, and each has many forms that simply don't appear in the other language.

The internet contains a wealth of information on Futhark, including descriptions of the runes, their symbolism and history, and many runic fonts. A good place to start is www.futhark.com, a site that tells all about the alphabet.

Test your Futhark skills by deciphering this passage:

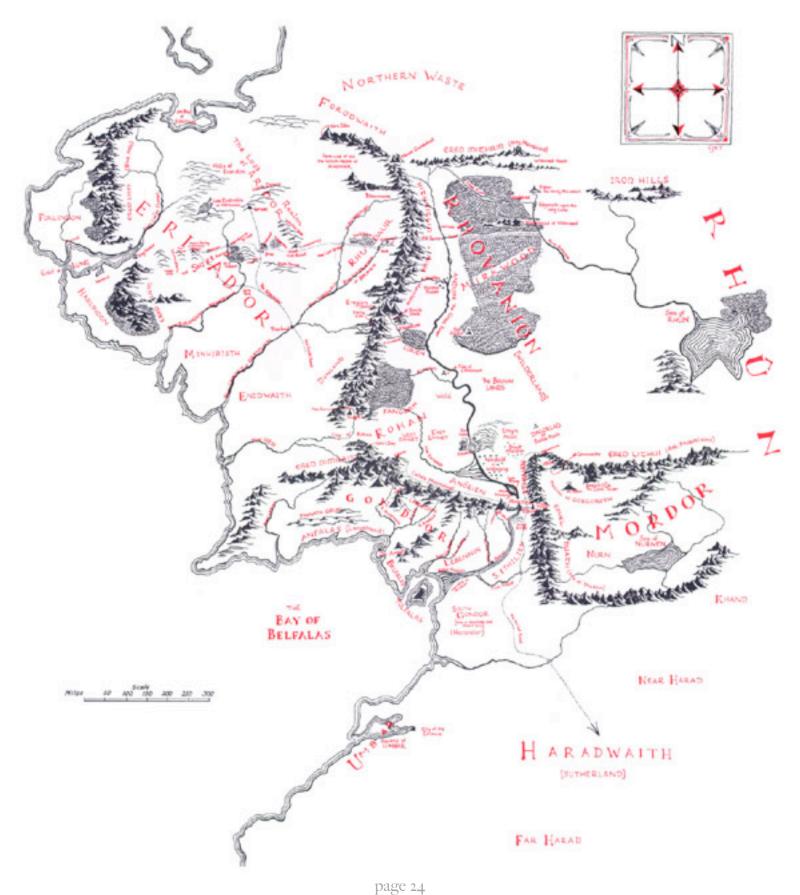
<u>THIS..PRITITX..MXMS..TXT..IT..PE4T..XTTELT</u>

<u>ITPXRMETIXT..THET..XI..HELM..E..RMESXT</u>

<u>TX..PISH..TX..4XP..BL.T..MIXHT..BM..PL.T..TX</u>

<u>MM ICHMR..RMXERMCMSS..XF..THET..PE4T</u>

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and Challes and adapted and Ad

THXMINI FY MINNTM MERTH LECENOS OF COLONIA CO

PREX UMT IT MINNEM MERTH

NAME AND CI	cles	
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	000	TOKENS
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TRAZZATI II TIII II					
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Acrobatics Alertness Archery Athletics Melee Riding Sneaking Stamina		Deceit Friendship Intimidation Leadership Magic		Art Beasts Craft Regional Performance Spells Survival Trade	
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