

~ BARINGS ~

The city of Dale lay in ruins for almost two centuries, under the shadow of the Lonely Mountain. It was destroyed by the Dragon Smaug when he descended from the north to claim the vast treasure of the Dwarves of Erebor. Five years ago (TA 2941), the Dragon was killed and Men, led by Bard the Bowman, the Dragon-slayer, started to rebuild the city. Since then, Bard has been crowned King, and Dáin Ironfoot, the Dwarf-lord from the Iron Hills, is the new King Under the Mountain. Under their rule, Men and Dwarves have labored hard, collaborating as they used to before the Dragon came, and the city is approaching the glory it attained hundreds of years ago.

Bardings are descended from the same cultural group as the Beornings and the Woodmen of Rhovanion. They are rapidly becoming the most powerful group of Men in Wilderland, strategically positioned as they are between the Elven kingdom of the Woodland Realm and the Dwarven Kingdom under the Mountain.

Under the guidance of the new King, the city of Dale provides the Dwarves of Erebor with everything from food and clothes to wood and ceramics, in exchange for the many products of their skillful metalworking and stone-craft. Trading with the Elves gives access to the superior quality of their woodworking.

DESCRIPTION

The Men of Dale are Northmen of noble origins. They are often tall and strong-limbed, with fair hair, although dark or even black hair is not unknown. Their men usually shave their beards completely unless they are very old, and cut their hair shorter than the Woodmen of Rhovanion. Women let their hair grow very long, but often braid it in tight tresses. Adventurers from Dale can be easily recognized as they carry the best equipment to be found among the Men living in Rhovanion.



STANDARD OF LIVING

Thanks to their trade with Elves, Dwarves and far lands to the south, a Barding can choose any trade and be almost sure to thrive. Craftsmen from Dale include carpenters, cart-wrights, shoemakers, tailors, tanners, weavers, not to mention those apprenticed to Dwarven weapon smiths and masons. For these reasons, Bardings are considered a *Prosperous* folk, and begin the game with 12 gold. Some may be left at home, with family, or hidden in a cache somewhere, as you choose; record this in the Treasure block on the back of your character sheet.

BARDING ADVENTURERS

The figure of King Bard himself and the memory of his great deeds inspires the most loyal among the youth of Dale to suppress their adventurous side and put their swords at the service of the city. But not everyone shares this ambition, and some dream of forgotten hoards buried in distant lands, and of exotic courts under foreign skies...

Choose one of these and record it on the Calling line on the front of your character sheet; see the section, in Customizing & Completing Your Character, labeled Callings for further information.

CULTURAL BLESSING

- Stout-hearted -

"Which King?" said another with a grim voice. "As like as not it is the marauding fire of the Dragon, the only King under the Mountain we have ever known."

Living for many a year under the ever-present menace of Smaug the Dreadful has made the Bardings a courageous race. After all, there are not many creatures more fearsome than a great Dragon...

- When making a test using Valor, Barding characters can roll the Feat die twice, keeping the best result.

STARTING SKILL SCORES

Cultural/Half-Skills: Most common tasks can be completed by members of any culture, though some cannot, based on the cultural environment or limitations to learning. To make characters more viable for the game system of *The One Ring*, Players are allowed to roll 1D6 as an addition to their Feat Die (1D12), but only for cultural, aka half-skills. Normally, this extra 1D6 would represent a Success Die, or a full Rank added to the skill, where the Tengwar Rune (6 on the D6) would represent an added success; for my game, the half-skill die represents basic capability, instead, so unless the first full Rank is shaded in, the Tengwar Rune has no effect on game-play, and simply represents a roll of 6. To signify these cultural skills, shade in one-half of the first Rank block for all skills EXCEPT the following: *Awe* and *Stealth*.

SPECIALTIES

Choose two Traits from the following:

- Boating, Ancient-lore, Smith-craft, Swimming, Trading, Wood-wright.

Suggested Callings: *Scholar* or *Treasure-hunter*. As Dale regains its former glory, it has become a place of learning as well as of enterprise, and the wise sometimes strike out into the world to broaden the city's knowledge. In the meantime, the stories of Smaug's great wealth have inspired many of Bard's followers to seek their own treasures abroad.

Unusual Calling: None.

Common Skills: Copy the following skill ranks onto the character sheet and underline the avored skill:

Awe	1	<u>Inspire</u>	2	Persuade	3
Athletics	½	Travel	2	Stealth	0
Awareness	½	Insight	2	Search	1
Explore	2	Healing	½	Hunting	½
Song	1	Courtesy	2	Riddle	0
Craft	1	Battle	2	Lore	½

Weapon Skills: Choose one of the following two Weapon skill sets, and record it on your character sheet:

- 1) (Swords) 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1
- 2) Great Bow 2, Spear 1, Dagger 1

BACKGROUNDS

You may choose (or roll 1d6 for) one of the following six backgrounds for your character. Those available to you are...

1 - By Hammer and Anvil

Your parents paid richly for a Dwarf-smith to take you as an apprentice in his forge, and you worked hard under his severe discipline, to prove that your craft could reach his people's high standards. In the long hours you spent hammering on the anvil under the close scrutiny of your master, you have learnt that it is possible to create amazing things, but it is only by putting your heart into your work that you can succeed in creating a masterpiece.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 7, Wits 2

Favored Skill: Craft

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Cautious, Determined, Generous, Hardy, Merciful, Proud, Stern

2 - Word-weaver

King Bard has earned his throne by accomplishing a feat deemed unthinkable by most, setting an example to generations to come. But it is another deed that caught your interest and fired your imagination: that of the witty Halfling who crossed words with Smaug the Golden in his lair. While you do not expect to ever see a living Dragon, you look forward to your chance to win renown with your cunning.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 6, Wits 4

Favored Skill: Riddle

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Clever, Eager, Fair-spoken, Lordly, Reckless, Tall, Trusty

3 - Gifted Senses

You grew up in Lake-town, the son of a merchant who traded goods with the Raft-elves from the woods. You often joined them to row on their crafts, proud of your strength as a youth. Under the shadow of the Dragon, your family's business struggled for survival and you dared not venture far, but since the death of Smaug, you and your brothers have started to journey to the Elvenking's forest stronghold. After many visits to those magical halls, your eyes and ears noticed details that escaped your attention in the past; perhaps a subtle gift from the Fair Folk.

Basic Attributes: Body 6, Heart 6, Wits 2

Favored Skill: Search

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Cautious, Cunning, Fair-spoken, Patient, Steadfast, True-hearted, Wary

4 - Healing Hands

You have long served on a trading boat from Esgaroth, first leaving the Long Lake when you were very young. Once, staying for months in a distant haven to the South, waiting for a caravan from the East to arrive, you fell victim to a foreign sickness, and were succored by a lady speaking a strange tongue. She saved your life, and taught you how to save others in time of need.

Basic Attributes: Body 4, Heart 7, Wits 3

Favored Skill: Healing

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Clever, Fair, Hardy, Lordly, Proud, Reckless, Tall

5 - Dragon-eyed

Your great-grandfather witnessed the destruction of his father's house, burnt when the Dragon razed Dale. He escaped with his life, but from that day his eyes turned the color of pale ashes. Through your grandfather and your father after him, his unrelenting gaze lives on in your ashen eyes.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 6, Wits 3

Favored Skill: Awe

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Cunning, Determined, Eager, Generous, Just, Stern, Trusty

6 - A Patient Hunter

Faithful to your ancestors' heritage, your family never embraced the ways of the Lake-men, and since you were a child, you spent long days hunting on the mainland. For many years it was a dangerous trade bearing little fruit, but now the land is again blooming with every new spring, and birds and animals alike are returning to claim their old nests and lairs. Now, you will have a chance to properly hone your skills once again.

Basic Attributes: Body 5, Heart 5, Wits 4

Favored Skill: Hunting

Distinctive Features (choose two Traits from those listed): Adventurous, Just, Fair, Merciful, Patient, Steadfast, True-hearted, Wary

BARDING NAMES

A traditional Barding name is usually composed of one or two elements (for example Dag = Day, or Lif-stan = Life Stone). Like most Northmen, Bardings often name their sons and daughters after a renowned ancestor or relative, or choose a name beginning with the same sound or sharing one element with that of the father (whose name is often given with their first name when introduced formally – for example, Lifstan son of Leiknir, or Ingrith daughter of Ingolf).

Male Names: Aegir, Agmund, Agnarr, Alfrim, Alfwald, Arn, Arnulf, Bain, Balki, Bard, Bern, Bragi, Brand, Brandulf, Dag, Domarr, Drengi, Egil, Einar, Eirik, Erland, Erling, Farald, Farmann, Farulf, Fastarr, Finn, Finnulf, Folki, Folkmarr, Galmann, Galti, Gautarr, Geirmund, Gismund, Gorm, Grimarr, Guthorm, Hafgrim, Haki, Hakon, Halfdan, Hamarr, Hedinn, Helgi, Hergrim, Hildir, Holgeir, Holti, Holvidur, Hord, Ingi, Ingolf, Ioli, Isolf, Jarl, Jarmarr, Joalf, Joar, Jofur, Jokell, Karl, Ketill, Ketilmund, Kol, Kolbeinn, Kori, Leiknir, Lifstan, Lodin, Lomund, Magni, Mord, Munan, Nari, Nefstan, Nerulf, Odd,

Oddmarr, Odvarr, Olaf, Olvard, Omund, Ornof, Ottarr, Ragnarr, Randur, Reinald, Runolf, Sandarr, Saxulf, Sigdan, Sigfast, Sigmarr, Sigvald, Sigward, Sigmund, Skarf, Skefill, Smidur, Steinarr, Thorald, Thorfast, Torwald, Ulfarr, Ulfied, Unnarr, Valbrand, Valdimarr, Vali, Vandil, Varinn, Varr.

Female Names: Aldis, Aldrif, Asfrid, Asny, Astrith, Bera, Bergdis, Brinhild, Dagmar, Dagny, Dalla, Edda, Eilif, Erna, Eydis, Estrild, Frida, Geira, Gerda, Grimhild, Gudrun, Gundrid, Gunnhild, Halla, Halldis, Halldora, Helga, Hild, Holma, Inga, Ingirun, Ingrith, Lif, Linhild, Kelda, Ragna, Runa, Saldis, Sigga, Signy, Sigrid, Sigrun, Solveig, Thora, Thordis, Thorhild, Thorleif, Ulfhild, Ulfrun, Una, Valdis, Vigdis, Walda.

Adventuring Age: 16-30

Bardings don't usually become adventurers before their 16th year of age, and rarely continue beyond their forties, when they retire to serve their family and folk.

Customizing & Completing Your Character

Once you've chosen your characters' culture, background and Distinctive Features, and copied the relevant information to your character sheet, you can further customize your hero's characteristics and abilities.

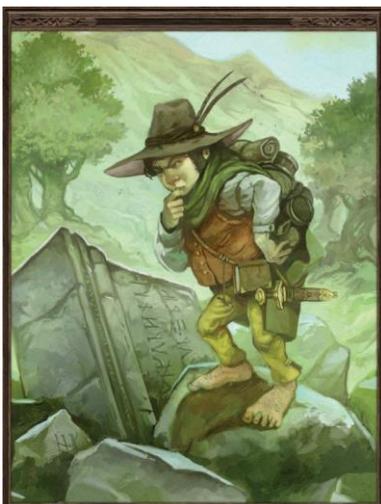
CALLINGS

While choosing your character's Calling, use this section as a reference for each normal and/or possible unusual Calling; here, you will find descriptions and relevant information concerning the Calling's available to your character's culture, out of which no member is typically able to stray. Note that these Callings are subject to change. The following descriptions do not represent your character's profession or trade, but the ambitions and aspirations that eventually set them on the road. While a Calling can be used to summarize your character's drive as they start out, these should be viewed only as the most common origins for your character's culture; your character will become more during the course of game-play.

From a gaming perspective, the choice of a Calling offers you a way to customize your character and add details about who they begin their adventuring career as.

For your *Favored Skill Group*, select either one skill from each group or two skills from one of the two groups; these skills become Favored, meaning you underline them and are able to add your Favored governing attribute score when spending a point of Hope for the extra bonus. Record the *Trait* and *Shadow-weakness* gained by taking your chosen Calling onto your Distinctive Traits line and Shadow-weakness line on the front of your character sheet.

Scholar



"Speak no secrets! Here is a scholar in the Ancient Tongue."

For you, knowledge makes the wild world a less threatening place to live in. Strangers become friends if addressed properly, yellowed maps in lost books replace a fear of the unknown with curiosity and wonder of places you have yet to explore, songs composed in ages past strengthen the weariest of hearts. A love of learning guides your every step, and illuminates

the way for you and those who listen to your advice.

Favored Skill Groups: Perception, Vocation

Trait: Rhymes of Lore

Shadow-weakness: Lure of Secrets

Treasure-hunter

*"Far over the Misty Mountains cold,
Through dungeons deep and caverns old,
We must away ere break of day,
To find our long forgotten gold."*

This world has seen the passing of the glory of many Dwarven kings and Elven lords, and their heritage is now buried in deep dungeons and dim caverns. Pale gold and bright jewels beckon all who dare to find them. Be it a family treasure stolen by raiding Goblins or the golden hoard of a Dragon, you seek what is lost, even when this means you will have to brave unspeakable dangers.

Favored Skill Groups: Movement, Perception

Trait: Burglary

Shadow-weakness: Dragon-sickness



FAVORED ATTRIBUTES

Body, Heart and Wits are the fundamental ratings of all heroes in the game. Each character starts with a set of basic values determined by their chosen background. Players now get to generate their characters' avored Attributes, by adding bonuses to the basic scores. avored Attribute scores represent the character's potential to excel when drawing on his experiences and training.

To generate the scores possessed by a hero as avored Attributes, players add 3 to one Attribute, 2 to a second Attribute, and 1 to the

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

You see your character a certain way, but maybe they are not quite where you want them to be. Each Character gains some life experience which, hopefully, will put you closer to your vision of your Character. You are granted ten (10) points to customize any of your character's Common or Weapon Skills, though none may present above three Ranks at this time. This allotment of points is for Character generation only; after this, Common skills will use Advancement Points, while all other improvements require Experience Points.

ENDURANCE & HOPE

Bardings begin the game with Endurance equal to your Character's basic Heart score plus 22 points, and Hope is equal to Heart plus 8.

STANDARD GEAR

A hero's traveling gear includes their weapons and armor, as well as personal gear, musical instruments, and the like. When resolving Fatigue test failures, players only take into consideration the Encumbrance ratings of their traveling gear (see page 158, LMBR). The last page of the [TOR Short Rules](#) document will be very handy, here. Press CTRL + Click on that link to open it.

Armor, Helmet & Shield: Select one each of Armor, Helmet, and Shield of your choice; you are not required to select any. Keep in mind the Encumbrance of each, as you can only carry so much.

Weapon(s): You may have one of each of the weapons for which you have a skill; you are not required to select any. Size limitations exist in our game, as represented in the following table for your character's race:

Race	One-Handed Weapons	Two-Handed Weapons
Human	Dagger, Short Sword, Sword, Long Sword, Spear, Axe	Great Spear, Great Axe, Long-hafted Axe, <u>Bow</u> , <u>Great Bow</u> , Mattock

Traveling Gear: The Encumbrance rating of traveling gear varies depending on the time of the year:

Winter and autumn gear (in the cold months of the year): thick warm clothes (winter coat, fur-lined cloak [hooded or not], layered breeches or traveling dress/robe, water-proof leather boots), water and food for one week. Winter traveling gear for one character has an Encumbrance rating of 3, causing the loss of three (3) Endurance on a failed Fatigue test.

COMBAT RATINGS

Damage: Usually, a character's Damage rating is equal to his basic Body score, both for attacks made with a close combat weapon or a ranged weapon.

Players should record their heroes' Damage bonus scores on the character sheet. Should a character's ranged attack Damage rating differ from that of close combat attacks, the player should record it in the separate box (special abilities and items might benefit one type of attack or another).

remaining one, copying the new totals in the smaller boxes overlapping the Attribute boxes on the character sheet.

Peter is determining the avored Attributes for his Woodman warden. The background for his character has given him the following basic scores: Body 3, Heart 4, and Wits 7. Peter decides to enhance his already high Wits score by adding +3 (raising his avored Wits score to 10), and then to add +2 to his Body and +1 to his Heart, raising both avored Attribute scores to 5.

Here, Common Skills are improved with a cost equal to the next Rank being purchased (ie – you have 2 Ranks in Hunting, and wish to have 3, instead, which will cost 3 of these 10 points). Weapon Skills cost double this number after the first Rank.

Improvements other than Common and Weapon Skills are disallowed at this time, nor may any of these skills be improved above three ranks for Character Generation.

Summer and spring gear (in the warm months of the year): light clothing (shirt, jacket, breeches or traveling dress/robe, cloak [hooded or not], worn boots or shoes), water and food for one week. Summer traveling gear for one character has an Encumbrance rating of 2, causing the loss of two (2) Endurance on a failed Fatigue test.

Both sets of traveling gear include food supplies for one week of active journey time (if the journey is going to last more than a week, the companions will generally have to rely on their skills as hunters).

Personal Gear: You have a sling bag OR backpack containing a blanket, a wood tankard, a wood cutlery set and a small cooking pot. Finally, you may also carry a few personal items (a locket or necklace, a hidden purse, a rune-marked token, or anything that cannot be classified as a weapon or armor, nor is it required for survival).

Musical Instrument(s): Music and song is an important part of the culture of the Free Peoples of Middle Earth. Skilled musicians will usually carry one or more musical instruments with them on their travels.

If a player-hero possesses a **Perform** (*instrument*) skill level of 1 Rank or more, their traveling gear may include a musical instrument appropriate to their culture.

Other: Look to your background to see if there is more equipment to be had.

Parry: This is a defensive bonus, reflecting a character's ability to keep his head in a dangerous situation, to be aware of opponents' actions and to ward off an opponent's attacks. Usually, the Parry rating of a character is equal to his basic Wits score, modified by a positive bonus if the hero is using a buckler, a shield or a great shield (see the equipment tables on page 123). Players should record their heroes' Parry score on the character sheet.

VALOR AND WISDOM

"There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure."

Valor and Wisdom measure a hero's resistance to Fear and the influence of the Shadow, and track his stature in terms of power and renown. Both scores range from 1 to 6, and rise over the course of the game.

Starting Scores: At this point in character generation, players are asked to prioritize one characteristic over the other; a starting player gives a score of 2 to one characteristic, and 1 to the other. Both numbers are entered on the character sheet in the boxes labeled Wisdom and Valor Current.

Virtues and Rewards: Starting with rank 2, characters receive a special benefit with every new rank they reach in either Valor or Wisdom. Benefits obtained by raising a character's Valor score are

VIRTUES/MASTERIES (for Wisdom)

If your character's initial Wisdom is 2, and for each point accrued in Wisdom from 2 on, select one of the following Virtues or Masteries to help improve your character.

Birthright: You are a rightful heir to an illustrious household that was powerful in the city of Dale. To many, your family history and fortune destine you for greatness, as they did your ancestors. Raise your standard of living from Prosperous to Rich; from now on, your Standing rating doesn't decrease during a Fellowship phase. If, during play, you receive a Wound that would normally kill you (a coup de grâce or a killing blow) you can choose between the following options:

1. You die, and let your direct descendant inherit the Birthright Virtue as an additional Cultural blessing (a free Virtue at character creation), or
2. You are saved by some miraculous circumstance that leaves you wounded but alive. You then reset your Standing rating to 0, as you are then presumed dead by your own folk. You can do this only once, and never again.

Confidence: Overcoming difficulties has hardened your spirit, and at the same time renewed your faith in a brighter future. Raise your maximum Hope rating by 2 points. When you choose this mastery, set your Hope score again to its maximum rating.

Dour-handed: When you throw a weapon or bend your bow, your hand is steady and your aim is sure. Raise your ranged Damage rating by 1.

Expertise: You have practiced a skill until it has become as natural as breathing. You can choose a new favored skill (either a Common skill or a Weapon skill).

Fell-handed: You have learned to put all your strength into your blows in hand-to-hand battle. Raise your close combat Damage rating by 1.

Fierce Shot: You have learnt to bend your bow so fiercely that you hear its string crack like a whip when it sends its arrows flying. When you are using a Great Bow your ranged damage bonus is based on your favored Body score.

Gifted: Adventuring is honing your inborn talents. Raise one of your favored Attributes by one.

called Rewards, while benefits granted by ranks in Wisdom are called Virtues. Thus, when players choose between these characteristics during hero creation, they are also choosing if their character will start the game with a Reward or with a Virtue.

A starting character with **Valor 2 and Wisdom 1** has earned his/her first Reward, for which the player will select one from the list of Rewards or Qualities listed later in this document.

A starting character with **Wisdom 2 and Valor 1** has activated his/her first Virtue, for which the player will select one from the list of Virtues or Masteries listed later in this document.

King's Men: The former glory of the proud hosts of Dale has been restored by King Bard, and so the martial discipline that once made the city powerful is again imparted to all young men and women alike, lest the city be caught unprepared by assailants. You have sworn to protect the city and its king with your life, and in return you are regularly trained by the most expert swordsmen and bowmen of the realm. Raise your maximum Endurance score by 3 points. Additionally, from now on the cost of raising your skill rating in Sword, Long Sword, Spear or Great Bow is lowered by 1 Experience point at each level.

Resilience: Your determination and stamina have improved through hardship and toil. Raise your maximum Endurance rating by 2 points. When you choose this Mastery, set your Endurance score again to its maximum rating.

Swordmaster: A skilled warrior can use his sword to deflect blows that would have otherwise hit their mark. You have learnt to fight defensively using your weapon to full advantage. When you are fighting in a Defensive stance, you get a bonus to your Parry equal to the Encumbrance rating of your sword (either a sword or a long sword).

Woeful Foresight: Many citizens of ancient Dale found themselves blessed – or cursed – by a sort of foresight following Smaug's destruction of the city. As a descendant of one of these bloodlines, you share this gift. Sometimes, you feel a sense of foreboding that warns you of impending catastrophe and other gloomy events. But the future is always uncertain, and sometimes what you foresee does not materialize.

Raise your maximum Hope score by 1 point. Additionally, once per Adventuring phase, you may invoke your power of foresight. When this happens, the Lore-master should give you a relevant piece of information regarding negative events likely to occur during your current adventure. If no such information is available – or the Loremaster prefers not to divulge it – at the start of the next Fellowship phase, he must award you 1 Experience point instead (your foresight contained a more intimate message, leading to a sudden bout of insight or deeper understanding). Your foresight manifests in many forms: it can be a hazy vision, a recurring and enigmatic dream, or a cryptic message borne by a talking bird.

REWARDS/QUALITIES (for Valor)

If your character's initial Valor is 2, and for each point accrued in Valor from 2 on, select one of the following Rewards or Qualities to help improve your character. More information on Rewards and Qualities can be found on pages 113-114 of the LMBR.

Close-fitting (armor or headpiece): A skillful smith has made this piece of protective equipment more difficult to overcome with a piercing blow. The selected item's Protection rating gets a bonus of +1. This upgrade may be applied to any suit of armor or helm, and can be selected multiple times (always up to a maximum of 3 Qualities per item).

Cunning Make (armor, headpiece, or shield): A skilled craftsman has made this piece of equipment lighter or less cumbersome than its lesser counterparts, thus reducing its Encumbrance by 2 (to a minimum of 0). This upgrade may be applied to any defensive item, and can be selected multiple times (always up to a maximum of 3 Qualities per item).

Dalish Longbow (great bow): The bowyers of Dale used prodigiously tall and powerful staves of fine yew wood to make bows for their King's men. When you get a ♀ on the Feat die using a Dalish Longbow, the target must roll the Feat die twice and choose the worst result for his Protection test roll.

Fell (weapon, unique): Hard and straight, a piercing blow from a fell weapon is stopped less easily by a suit of armor. The weapon's Injury rating is raised by 2. This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon type.

Grievous (weapon, unique): The weapon is strong and heavy, inflicting more harm on its targets. The weapon's Damage rating is raised by 2 (a weapon that can be wielded with one or two hands

A SHORT WORD ABOUT FELLOWSHIPS

The life of a hero is one of excitement, but it is often full of hardships and trouble, and burdens easiest to bear when shared with others. For this reason, adventurers of all sorts gather in groups of companions, united by a common cause, be it to fight the Enemy, to lead a hunt for a prized prey, or to scour the land seeking for a lost or stolen treasure.

Representing friendship, loyalty and trust, Fellowship points and Fellowship focuses can be used by all player-heroes. Both provide a companion with a way to recover Hope points.

How Fellowship Points Work: Hope is an ever-dwindling resource; to overcome the many formidable challenges he is going to face, a player-hero who has just started his adventuring career is bound to count on it quite often (veterans might come to rely more on their own abilities).

To recover their much-needed trust and self-confidence, player-heroes should look no further than their own companions. Points taken from the Fellowship pool can be spent to refresh a character's Hope, while the company of a hero's Fellowship focus can allow him to recover points for free.

Fellowship Points: The number of points in a Fellowship pool available to a company of heroes at the beginning of the game is equal to the number of heroes in the group. These points are spent much like Hope, in that they can save the life of your character, be used to perform an extraordinary feat of strength,

gets the bonus to both its Damage ratings). This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon.

Keen (weapon, unique): Sharp and well-balanced, this weapon is more likely to produce a piercing blow when hitting its target. The weapon's Edge rating is reduced by 1 (note that an Edge rating of ♀ becomes a rating of 10). This upgrade may be applied only once, to any one weapon type.

Reinforced (shield, unique): The shield's structure is reinforced, possibly with a metal rim or a larger iron boss, letting its wearer parry blows with greater ease. The shield's Parry bonus is raised by 1. In addition, the shield cannot be smashed. This upgrade may be applied only once, to any type of shield (buckler, shield or great shield).

Spear of King Bladorthin (spear): The Dwarves of the Mountain forged these spears for a king who lived before the Dragon came. Their thrice-forged heads never lose their keenness, and their shafts are inlaid with gold. When you make a ranged attack using a Spear of King Bladorthin, you roll the Feat die twice and choose the best result.

Tower Shield (great shield): The soldiers of Girion, Lord of Dale, carried great shields that were so tall that it was said that a grown man could completely hide behind them. When you are using a Tower Shield, your Parry bonus gets an additional +3 against ranged weapons.

agility, or skill that the character may otherwise not be able to perform. However, in order for this to work, the group has to agree that taking a Fellowship Point is in the best interests of the Player-hero and/or the group. Fellowship Points are not replenished during the course of an adventure, but are renewed at the beginning of the next, while Hope Points may be replenished at the GMs discretion. A character whose player has spent most or all of their Hope Points, may pull from the Fellowship pool, though only at the agreement of the group.

Fellowship Focus: Fellowship focuses represent the strong ties between brothers in arms, close kinsmen and compatriots. Fellowship focuses have two effects in gameplay, as sources of Hope or as sources of inspiration.

Source of Hope: The presence of a Fellowship focus affects the way a character recovers Hope. If a PHs focus survives an adventure without a wound, they may either regain one point of Hope, or add a new one, whereas if the focus is wounded they may lose one point of Hope, or three if the focus died.

Source of Inspiration: Being a part of a Fellowship, and having a Fellowship focus, if spending Hope to protect all for the sake of protecting the one, as well, may be deemed to have sacrificed enough to immediately, or by the end of the session, regain their spent Hope.

STANDING

When heroes return home after months or even years spent traveling abroad, they should not be surprised to find themselves receiving suspicious looks, or even presumed dead by hasty officials and neighbors. Valor and Wisdom may mean much to the Wise and Powerful, but for the common folk there is nothing as damaging to one's respectability than going away to have adventures, especially if one cannot disguise one's new queer habits and keeps disturbing the peace by disappearing on a regular basis.

WHAT KING BARD SAYS... (*attitude toward other cultures*)

- **Bardings:** "Ours is a small kingdom, and a very young one; we cannot claim much more than what is encircled by the walls that protect our city. But within these walls now dwells a folk whose blood is the same of those lords of old whose banners flew in many winds. Today I accept this Crown that once was theirs, and a day will come when all Men from the North will recognize its rule, from the Running River to Redwater. And even if I won't live to see that day, my heirs will."
- **Beornings:** "Beorn does not welcome guests easily in his hall, but he recognizes that our two folks are of one blood. A sea of darkness separated us, but after the Battle of Five Armies, ours is a bond that neither hundreds of leagues of distance nor centuries of estrangement can sever."
- **Dunlendings:** "I know little of these Dunlendings, though traders from the Blue Mountains speak fondly of them when they pass into this kingdom. Perhaps, one day when our fortunes bare better, we may accompany those same traders to meet these Men of the South."
- **Dwarves of the Grey Mountains:** "We have begun to see Durin's folk coming from their ruined mansions in the North, their long struggle against the worms of those mountains taking its toll, and seeing a better number come to reside within Erebor. They are a hardy folk more than those of the Iron Hills or the Blue Mountains, though short on courtesy."
- **Dwarves of the Iron Hills:** "Counted among our greatest allies are those Dwarves who came to defend Erebor, and instead wound up defending the entire region of the Dalelands, as well, during the Battle of the Five Armies."
- **Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain:** "King Dáin Ironfoot ceded his crown in the Iron Hills to become King Under the Mountain, the greatest of Durin's folk, and our sure ally against any enemy. The fate of the Folk of the Mountain is closely tied to our own."
- **Elves of Rivendell (*High Elves*):** "Legend speaks of the hidden valley of Imladris, the last great Elf stronghold in Middle Earth and, though I've never met Elrond Half-elven, stories passed

How Standing Works: A hero's Standing represents his position amongst the members of his own folk, as well as those in places he has visited. Depending on the traditions of a culture, Standing may translate to admiration, acclaim or simple respectability. Standing ranges from 0 (lowest) to 6 (highest), and players record their rank on their character sheet. Adventurers start their career with one rank in Standing for their home town, which is also their first Sanctuary. Standing is used to gauge how influential a hero can be in places they have been, and their rank is put to practical use, especially during the year-end Fellowship Phase.

from the first and second ages, and from our own, speak only well of him."

- **Elves of Mirkwood (*Silvan Elves*):** "The Silvan Elves are formidable warriors, and their king is strong. Unfortunately, King Thranduil rarely concerns himself with anything taking place beyond the borders of his forest."
- **Hobbits of Gladden Fields (*Wild Hobbits*):** "I've heard only legend of these Wild Hobbits, we have no trade or relations with them, and have heard nothing of them since long before the fall of the Dragon."
- **Hobbits of the Shire:** "Bilbo the Hobbit has shown us an aspect of valor that our fathers did not tell us about. I wish that more like him could find their way to our lands."
- **Men of the Lake:** "Our kin to the South have earned the right to carve their own path and, as long as we don't pressure their nobles, who were long ago of Dale, trade will continue to flow within and out of our lands, and the Dale-lands may continue to prosper, as well as those Under the Mountain and all who would partake in such prosperity."
- **Rangers of the North (*the Dúnedain*):** "These must surely be a myth, as none have ever crossed into our lands. By legend alone, I may seek to find more information about them."
- **Riders of Rohan:** "The great peoples of Eorl the Young moved South along the Anduin vales long ago, and into the South, to tame those lands. These have become the denizens of Rohan."
- **Woodmen of Mountain Hall (*Firienseld*):** "Our kin, and that of our Wilderland brethren, live harmoniously with the harshness of the mountains, and live well apart from us. Perhaps, one day, we will be united in common purpose."
- **Woodmen of Wilderland:** "As hard as it can be to recognize it, we and the woodland dwellers share a common heritage. I hope that one day they will find a leader capable of demonstrating that they can join us in our destiny."

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