

# The Old Forgeress

An adventure for The One Ring by O. Nygard

Hobbiton fonts by Nancy Lorenz

Comments and suggestions at [boningen.org](http://boningen.org)

## The Return of Radagast

When the player-heroes return to Rhosgobel, they are informed that **Radagast** the brown has returned. The Wizard has been gone since Turnday, a most unusual thing for him to do. The reason behind this journey was an urgent letter from Gandalf, concerning matters beyond the reach of the Grey Wizard that only Radagast could see to.

Shortly after the player-heroes return, they are requested to meet with Radagast on some urgent matters. As the pcs heed the call, Radagast offers them soup and freshly baked scones, the latter only slightly burned by an unfortunate mishap with the stove. They may talk of spring and the coming summer, wander in the garden and feed the birds, exchange gifts or otherwise make merry. Sooner or later however, the wizard will steer the subject to more sinister topics. First he asks the pcs to tell what has happened since Turnday. Being a wise man, Radagast has already learnt most of the news from the birds and the trees, but he would like to know more details. This is also a good way for the players to recapitulate what has happened, so that everyone's in on the story so far.

After this, Radagast will start talking about the letter that urged him to leave his home. He has learned something of utmost importance not only to Rhosgobel, but to all of the free towns. If the pcs will listen, he will share his knowledge with them and tell them of a perilous mission that needs to be done. Once he finishes, the player-heroes must choose whether or not they will undertake the journey. If they do, they will risk much but gain the gratitude of all of Rhosgobel (and quite possibly gaining Radagast as a Patron for coming adventures). If they don't, no shadow will fall on them since they are likely to be tired from their previous adventures. However, the matter is urgent and the pcs need to make a decision the very same night.

### The thing in shed

Should the pcs agree to listen to his request, Radagast will lead them out of his house to a large shed placed nearby. Stopping outside of the shed, he gives them a menacing stare and urges them to speak no words until they are back inside, for the thing that is trapped in his shed will take every word and use it against them all.

This said, he unlocks the door and the fellowship can enter the small shed. In its centre a birdcage is placed, covered in heavy black cloth. "Behold!" cries Radagast, removing the cloth. Inside the cage sits a large black raven, with razor claws and a jagged beak covered in dried up lumps of blackish blood. Its foul eyes are covered with a falconer's hood, but blind and maddened with rage it shrieks of hatred, furiously attacking the thin metal that separates it from its captor.

"Its name is **Crebain**, and foulest of all flying creatures it is. Long has passed since last one of its kind was spotted over these lands, and black tidings they bring. This is what Gandalf wrote me about – a flying spy for the creatures of evil."

### **The perilous mission**

By interrogating the creature, Radagast has learnt that it was to report back to its master at an outpost known in older times as **Gladderfall Tower**, by next full moon. Nowadays, the outpost is nothing more than a ruin located close to a small trading post, where mountain tribes and farmers from the lowlands meet and trade goods, furs and livestock. There are reasons to believe that there may be more spies in or around the trading post.

The perilous mission is as follows

- travel to Gladderfall Springs
- stay at the trading post until the moon is full, without drawing suspicions
- at full moon, visit the old fortress to learn the identity of the other spies, if any, and their master

Since the mission is equal parts dangerous and urgent, the pcs must choose whether or not to accept it. Should they choose not to, Radagast will send someone else and the fellowship may enter the Fellowship Phase instead.

## *Gladderfall Springs*

### **The journey there**

If the pcs accept the mission, they must leave the next morning to travel up the river Gladder to its cascading springs. Possible misfortunes along the way include the crossing of Anduin River, whose current is both broad and strong, the harsh terrain of Gladden fields and foul weather at the foot of the mountains.

As a bonus, a fellowship travelling through Gladden Fields may catch a glimpse of a hooded figure, clad in beggar's clothes but with the poise of a proud and noble man. A character who succeeds with a hard test against Awareness may notice that it gleams of white from under his hood. Should the characters try to pursue the figure, they will lose a day and possibly their direction, but they will not catch up with the wanderer.

### **The trading post at Gladderfall Springs**

The trading post consists of a few houses, roughly mimicking the longhouses of the Wildmen, but built on stilts to avoid the spring floods. Depending on the season, the area may be drenched in water, with footbridges laid out from the houses to dry land and the waterfalls roaring, or a quaint little town where people sit in rocking-chairs under their stilted homes, as other folks would on porches.

To blend in and avoid suspicion, the pcs are free to do whatever they please. When they interact with the townsfolk, or inquire about the ruin perched on the nearby hilltop, have them make skill checks for any relevant skills. The skill tests are made against TN 14, and the fellowship are allowed to continue until they either fail two tests or succeed at five.

Starting at impossible (TN 22+), the TN for visiting Gladderfall Tower unnoticed is lowered by one level for each successful test. Once the pcs fail two tests or reach TN 12, the encounter is considered over.

## The Old Fortress

Visiting the old fort unnoticed might be hard, if any or some of the townsfolk are suspicious of the fellowship. If they successfully blended in, however, stealing away at full moon will be rather easy.

To successfully reach the fort unnoticed, each player is required to make a Stealth test. The difficulty for the test is determined by how well they performed during the previous encounter.

*For each successful test (stealth/awareness) the players learn one of the following*

The spymaster and his allies are called **Smaghain, Arak** and **Firnog**.

They have a large treasure-chest full of silver used to pay the spies for their treacherous deeds. Should the pcs steal the chest its contents are worth 20 Treasure, which would severely harm the spymasters operation.

They are restlessly waiting for the arrival of the raven, as well as another spy from Rhosgobel called Marek. If the pcs found and defeated **Marek** during last episode, they will wait in vain. Otherwise, Marek will show up, dressed as a seasoned hunter.

Smaghain keeps a wooden box, which contains messages from the spies now present as well as several others. Should the pcs manage to steal this box, they will learn the names and whereabouts of many of the shadow's spies.

Marek informs Smaghain about the failure of Baldac, stating that Rhosgobel has withstood the corruption and remains strong. The coming invasion must be delayed indefinitely, until a more successful breach is made. Smaghain gives Marek a new assignment – to seek out a fiendish creature in the depths of the forest and see if they can form a pact.

That something terrible will happen if they don't leave this place immediately.

Each player is only allowed one failure. Once all players have failed their tests, or the fellowship has learned all the information above, the forest will resound with iron and trampling feet. It is the orcs of Mountain Pass that have come to collect the wooden box and the treasure chest and bring them to their dark masters.

The Orcs are numerous, far too numerous to fight. However, if the pcs are still unnoticed they may try to steal the chest of silver and the box of information. If they decide to do it, they better do it really quick and head for the forest.

The Orcs will pursue the fellowship tirelessly, if they get away with the treasure and messages. Keep in mind that the treasure chest is heavy and failed travel tests may force the pcs to leave some or all of its contents to be able to continue their journey.

Once the pcs have successfully crossed Anduin, the Orcs will retreat into the mountains.

## aftermath

At this point, summer is probably here and it may be a good time for a shorter fellowship phase. If the player-heroes got away with some information, they may either hand it to Radagast or study it themselves. Either way, the contents of the wooden box may make for a continuing campaign. Thus, I leave it to you as a GM to decide exactly what's in it.

As for experience points, successfully completing all three should make for seven experience: two for each session, plus an additional for the bravery of accepting Radagst's perilous journey despite being tired and maybe even wounded from previous adventures.