

To the East away from Thiefs

1 Deck Listing

Table 1: Starting Company

| Characters | Minor Items |
|-------------|-------------|
| Beorn | Black Arrow |
| Bard Bowman | Black Arrow |
| Dain II | |
| Peath | |

Table 2: Deck

| Characters | Resources | Hazards | Sites |
|------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Saruman | Gates of Morning | Twilight | Rivendell |
| Saruman | Gates of Morning | Twilight | Lorien |
| Gimli | Gates of Morning | Call of Home | Grey Havens |
| Legolas | Sun | Call of Home | Edhellond |
| Beregond | Sun | Call of Home | Isengard |
| Óin | Sun | Muster Disperses | Beorn's House |
| | The Cock Crows | Muster Disperses | The Lonely Mountain |
| | The Cock Crows | Muster Disperses | Thraunduil's Halls |
| | Lordly Presence | Weariness of the Heart | Shrel-Kain |
| | Lordly Presence | Weariness of the Heart | Iron Hill Dwarf-hold |
| | Lordly Presence | Weariness of the Heart | Lake Town |
| | Vanishment | Ambusher | Wellinghall |
| | Vanishment | Ambusher | The Wind Throne |
| | Wizard's Flame | Ambusher | |
| | Wizard's Flame | Brigands | |
| | Glamdring | Brigands | |
| | Durin's Axe | Brigands | |
| | The Arkenstone | Pick Pocket | |
| | Roac the Raven | Pick Pocket | |
| | Quickbeam | Pick Pocket | |
| | Beornings | Thief | |
| | Wood-Elves | Thief | |
| | Men of Dorwinion | Thief | |
| | Iron Hill Dwarves | Indûr Dawndearth | |
| | Easterlings | Hoarmûrath of Dír | |

(9 rares cards of which 3 sites, 2 promotional card)

2 Overview

This deck focuses on the regions to the east of the misty mountains where most of Bilbo's adventures took place. There **Beorn** and **Dain II** will team up to muster not only their own people but also the **Wood-Elves**, the **Men of Dorwinion** and even the tough **Easterlings** with the help of **Raoc the Raven**. Assisted by Saruman's spells and by the light of the **Sun**, they will also retrieve some precious artifact of old, such as **Durin's Axe**, **Glamdring** and the much coveted **Arkenstone**...

On the hazard side, you will try to systematically rip off your opponent's companies by using an army of thugs comprising **Thiefs**, **Brigands**, and **Pick-pocketers**, which will also feel emboldened by the **Sun** just like your mannish characters.

3 Resource Strategy

The resource strategy of this deck is pretty straightforward. Head quickly to your sites beyond the misty mountain and try to collect items, factions and allies as fast as possible, while keeping your **Gates of Morning** in play at all costs so that your men on both the resource and hazard side of your deck can benefit from the strength bonus given by **Sun**.

The only important point to keep in mind about is that this deck does not contain any short-events to help you fighting or avoid your opponent's creatures, so that it is important that **Saruman** joins your companies pretty soon to help them out with his **Vanishment** and **Wizard's Flame** spells, which he can conveniently recycle. Hence, should you not draw **Saruman** in your opening hand, move to **Isengard** on your first turn to maximise your chances of meeting him. In fact, in **Isengard** you may also find **Durin's Axe** or **Glamdring**, which will considerably boost your characters. Once you have **Saruman** and one or two spells either in your hand or discard pile (do not hold them until **Saruman** appears), he and **Dain II** should be able to manage on their own. If everything fails and **Saruman** decides to remain behind the scenes for a while, do not despair. Just keep your starting company together and use your **Black Arrows** mercilessly. Seeking for strength in numbers will be also essential if attempting to retrieve **The Arkenstone** at **The Lonely Mountain** without **Saruman's** help. On the other hand, even if **Saruman** joins you at the beginning of the game it could easily happen that you have no items, factions or allies that can be played at sites that you can reach from **Rivendell** in your first turn. In this case, the best gamble is to move to **The Wind Throne** where you can play your two major items and from where you could reach all your other sites. If you feel lucky and have a spell or two in your opening hand, send also **Saruman** and **Dain II** to **Lorien**, where they could be joined by some of your other characters the following turn.

Beside these initial precautions, the only combination that you should try to build in your hand is the **Roac the Raven – Easterlings** punch, whereby during the site phase you discard the raven to bring in play the **Easterlings** using the **Lordly Presence** card. Since you can always play the raven at any time while you wait for the **Easterlings**, and given that you dispose of three **Lordly Presence**, in practice you will need to hold in your hand only the **Easterlings** until you draw **Roac the Raven**. Note that this is the only way in this deck to bring the **Easterlings** in play, as the **Easterling Camp** was left out of this deck on purpose to limit the number of rare cards in it.

Of course, **Lordly Presence** is there to help you mustering all your factions, not only the **Easterlings**, and suits well a deck rich in diplomats such as this. As regards **The Cock Crows**, this is an awesome card when **Gates of Morning** is in play, as it allows you discard all sort of hazard permanent events, including Nazgûls and corruption cards!

Coming to your extra characters, **Legolas** and **Gimli** are not just great thematically but can also be very helpful to muster the **Wood-Elves** and the **Iron Hill Dwarves**, respectively. They are also tough fighters and handy diplomats. As in many other decks, **Óin** is here as a useful backup ranger, whereas **Beregond** is a cheap but tough dunedain fighter that will particularly benefit from having **Sun** in play. In this respect, it is worth noticing that insisting to keep **Sun** in play may not be the best idea if you face an opponent with a deck heavy in dunedain, as these will have the upper hand on your hazard man creatures.

4 Hazard Strategy

Your hazard strategy stems from the desire to exploit the favourable environment for your man creatures that is set up by having both **Gate of Morning** and **Sun** in play. In particular, you will steal your opponent's items using creatures such as **Brigands**, **Pick-Pocket** and **Thief**, typically following a first attack with your **Ambusher**. Preparing the right ground for your thugs is especially important before sending in your **Brigands** as these are quite weak and cannot choose the defending characters, as opposed to your **Thief** who is huge and **Pick-Pocket** who picks his victims.

In this respect it helps to attack companies that are quite compact, which is why you will keep your opponent constantly aware of the importance of not using all his or her general influence through the repetitive use of your **Call of Home** and **Muster Disperses**. These hazards will also let you hit your opponent's companies when they will venture regions or sites outside the reach of your creatures, and could significantly help you in the race for marshalling point (MPs) and in particular for faction MPs.

As regards **Weariness of the Heart**, this short-event could not only help your creatures fighting but may also contribute to remove your opponent's characters and items from play with a well-timed corruption check. For instance, this could work well after a successful **Call of Home** and the transfer of an additional item to the target of **Weariness of the Heart**.

Finally to your two Nazgûls, which are meant to be used as permanent-events. **Indûr Dawndeath** makes it even harder for your opponent's characters to hold on to their items once they are wounded, which is something that you could inflict with your **Ambusher**. Still, it is **Hoarmûrath of Dîr** who will have more often the largest impact in the game, when you will tap him to add one more strike to your **Pick Pocket** or **Thief**.