

# FIRST CONTACT

PART I - FIRST CONTACT  
"Gift Bearers of Númenor"  
**MerpCon III Version**

A fan-based Middle-earth role playing adventure module  
for use with any role playing gaming system set in J.R.R. Tolkien's universe.

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With many thanks for contributions by Chris W.

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Credits & Disclaimers....

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## Background

The entire campaign of 6 parts begins in the Second Age 611 and then spans several years from that time period. Around S.A. 600/601 the Númenóreans first made landfall in Lindon and were greeted by Gil-galad. In coming years, the Númenóreans explored other parts of Middle-earth and beyond, making first contacts with various species all over Arda. Some were accounted for in Tolkien specific tales, others are just implied. This campaign follows the implied path in the years following the first contact in Lindon. It begins with the first Númenóreans returning to Middle-earth making their “first contact” with the primitive Men after being away on the island-continent for many centuries (over 550 years). Tar-Elendil 4<sup>th</sup> King of Númenor, currently reigns since S.A. 590, and will do so until S.A. 740. The setting is roughly in the area that would later be known as Andrast.

*This was the beginning of that people that in the Grey-elven speech are called the Dúnedain: the Númenóreans, Kings among Men.  
-- The Silmarillion, Akallabêth. J.R.R. Tolkien.*

*To the Fathers of Men of the three faithful houses rich reward also was given. Eönwë [the Vala of \_\_\_\_\_] came among them and taught*

*“In the Great Battle [in The War of Wrath], when at last Morgoth was overthrown and Thangorodrim was broken [1<sup>st</sup> Age 587], the Edain alone of the kindreds of Men fought for the Valar, whereas many others fought for Morgoth. And after the victory of the Lords of the West those of the evil Men who were not destroyed fled back into the east, where many of their race were still wandering in the unharvested lands, wild and lawless, refusing alike the summons of the Valar and of Morgoth. And the evil Men came among them, and cast over them a shadow of fear, and they took them for kings. Then the Valar forsook for a time the Men of Middle-earth who had refused their summons and had taken the friends of Morgoth to be their masters; and Men dwelt in darkness and were troubled by many evil things that Morgoth had devised in the days of his dominion: demons, and dragons, and misshapen beasts, and the unclean Orcs that are mockeries of the Children of Ilúvatar. And the lot of Men was unhappy.”*

*-- The Silmarillion, Akallabêth. J.R.R. Tolkien.*

## Time-line First Age

540 - Morgoth destroys the dwellings of Fëanorians upon Amon Ereb. The last inhabitants of Beleriand flee to the south or to the Isle of Balar. Morgoth's triumph is complete.

542 - Eärendil arrives in Valinor and delivers the errand of the Two Kindreds.

545 - The Host of the Valar arrives in Beleriand.

545-587 - The War of Wrath. Morgoth is defeated; the remaining two Silmarils are stolen by Maedhros and Maglor, but are lost in the earth and in the sea; most of Beleriand and the lands to the north are sunk.

590 - Morgoth is cast into the Void; the Elves are summoned to Valinor and settle in Tol Eressëa; a small part of the Noldor and Sindar remain in Lindon or depart east and establish realms.

## **Second Age**

The Second Age was 3441 years long.

1 - Foundation of Mithlond the Grey Havens under Círdan, and Lindon as the Noldorin Kingdom under Gil-galad

32 - Edain reach Númenor, Elros is crowned first King of Númenor

c. 40 - Many Dwarves abandon the ruined cities of Belegost and Nogrod in the Ered Luin and join Durin's folk in Moria

61 - Birth of Vardamir Nólímon, eldest child of Elros. Subsequently three more children are born.

192 - Birth of Tar-Amandil

222 - Birth of Nolondil

350 - Birth of Tar-Elendil

361 - Birth of Eärendur

442 - Elros, also known as Tar-Minyatur, dies.

Vardamir Nólímon succeeds the throne but abdicates immediately. Tar-Amandil becomes third king of Númenor.

c. 500 - Sauron arises again in Middle-earth

521 - Silmariën is born in Númenor,[9] line of lords of Andúnië splits off the line of Kings

532 - Isilmë, sister of Silmariën, born

543 - Meneldur, brother of Silmariën, born

590 - Tar-Elendil becomes fourth king of Númenor.

600 - First Númenórean ships sail to Middle-earth.

611 – This campaign begins in the month of \_\_\_\_\_ (August) on the 21<sup>st</sup> day in the location of \_\_\_\_\_ with Part I “First Contact”.

616 – Autumn, October 29<sup>th</sup>. Beginning of Part II

“No Good Deed...”.618 – Late Summer, August 1<sup>st</sup>. Beginning of Part III “ Ill Omen”.

620 – Spring, May 5<sup>th</sup>. Beginning of Part IV “Held Hostage”.

624 – Winter, January 1<sup>st</sup>. Beginning of Part V “Truly Dirty Dozen”.

624 – Spring, April 15<sup>th</sup>. Beginning of Part VI “Battle”.

## **Part I – First Contact**

*And the Dúnedain came at times to the shores of the Great Lands, and they took pity on the forsaken world of Middle-earth; and the Lords of Númenor set foot again upon the western shores in the Dark Years of Men, and none yet dared to withstand them. For most of the Men of that age that sat under the Shadow were now grown weak and fearful. And coming among them the Númenóreans taught them many things. Corn and wine they brought, and they instructed Men in the sowing of seed and the grinding of grain, in the hewing of wood and the shaping of stone, and in the ordering of their life, such as it might be in the lands of swift death and little bliss.*

*-- The Silmarillion, Akallabêth. J.R.R. Tolkien.*

**MerpCon III Session: #1.**

**MerpCon III Game System: ICE MERPS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.**

**“Level” equivalent: 1<sup>st</sup> Level.**

**MerpCon III Primary GM: Hawke R.**

**MerpCon III Secondary GM: Carl B.**

**MerpCon III Tertiary GM: C. W.**

**Time: S.A. 601 \_\_\_\_\_ (August 21<sup>st</sup>)**

## **Game Master's Overview**

For the first time in centuries (568 years), since they first settled the “Land of Gift” () the Númenóreans have sent ships to visit Middle-earth. They at first made landfall in Lindon and were greeted by Gil-galad. Over the years, the Numenoreans have been exploring the rest of

Middle-earth and Arda.

Those players that chose Dúnedain/Númenórean, Noldor Elf, or Sindar Elven as their race, are on one of these “first contact” ships.

Those players that chose any other type of elf or Drúedain/Drûgh/Drû-folk/Wose would be on the shore (players/GMs discretion) aiding the villagers/PCs escape as a guide. Hobbits do not yet exist, though in a pinch a roughly similar (though taller) predecessor to the Fallohides could be used if it's insisted.

Any characters NOT of Dúnedain/Númenórean, or

terror, about the “Tall Men” (other titles?).

Others are whipped into immediately attacking the people on the shore. The Númenóreans on the ship are in a longboat, approximately 500 yards away when the attack on those on the shore begins.

The party is pinned at the shore having been pursued by Sauron's dark minions, who were in the middle of pillaging their villages, and all the villagers that could, have fled, being pursued by the Orcs and wicked men, when they see a ship with tall men, and a long boat rowing to shore. There are (##) men on the long boat. (##) have bows...

The King and most of the great chieftains possessed swords as heirlooms of their fathers; and at times they would still give a sword as a gift to their heirs. A new sword was made for the King's Heir to be given to him on the day on which this title was conferred. But no man wore a sword in Númenor, and for long years few indeed were the weapons of warlike intent that were made in the land. Axes and spears and bows they had, and shooting with bows on foot and on horseback was a chief sport and pastime of the Númenóreans.

-- *Unfinished Tales, Description of the Island of Númenor. J.R.R. Tolkien*

the above elven races or Drugh race, must be on the shore of Middle-earth when the ship(s) arrive. (Drûgh can be either). The people of the villages are descendants of “The Folk of Haleth” (Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, Peoples of Middle-earth), who are the ancestors of the Dunlendings eons later.

These members are on the shore and see/greet (as the bravest of their people since the rest cower in fear of these unknown ships and their tall Men) the Númenóreans for the first time. This would allow for Dwarves and humans, and non-Númenórean men.

Meanwhile, Sauron's minions see the ship and the Númenóreans on the shore. Some leave to run and notify their chieftain, in

The Númenóreans help the party route the dark forces on the shore, some of which might escape and send word to their chieftain.

This is the major combat of the game session. There could be some (adjustable, judged by time and GM's favor and party's bloodlust) additional combat at the village.

The Númenóreans will only encounter just this one tribe during this entire session. The Númenóreans do not meet any other tribes until their return in “Part II – No Good Deed...”

If some suggest going back to the main ship for reinforcements, add some screams and yells in the near distance from the village, to try to make it clear waiting for reinforcements will take too long. Try to encourage those who are there to go into the

fray as is. The reinforcements will come in handy during the following session, and are not really going to be needed or effective for this first session.

Then they can/will help them route the attackers out of the village. It's no contest, at the site of these tall terrible Men, all/most/many (Time & GM's discretion) the evil forces flee immediately to bring word to their leaders of a new threat.

After the fight is over, the Middle-earth men take the Númenóreans to their primitive homes/villages/hideouts that survived the attacks, to meet their leaders and elders. At this point negotiations can begin between the Númenóreans and the Middle-earth denizens.

The Númenóreans could help the Middle-earth denizens in clearing the woods in the area, fortifying their defenses, and driving out through superior Númenórean forces combined with local denizens the unprepared (at first) dark minions of Sauron (orcs, trolls, etc.).

There are (##) additional Númenóreans on the main ship(s).

## ***Players Introduction***

There are two introductions available to read to the players. The first introduction is for any players on shore. If there are any Númenórean player characters in your group, then you will need to read the second introduction to them afterwards. If all the player characters are Númenórean, then skip the first introduction, reading only the second, and the GM will instead play those seen on shore as NPC's.

### ***Languages & Barriers.***

***Players depending on the Drûgh to be translator and guide. And the Númenóreans are very estranged after 600 years in their language from the Mannish tongues. Their Adûnaic having taken on much of Quenya and Sindarin influences and it's own permutations. However, anyone able to speak in Quenya or Sindarin will be able to converse fluidly with the Númenóreans.***







## Players on shore Introduction

It is the tenth day of the month of \_\_\_\_\_ (August) in the six hundred eleventh year of the Second age.

You and the others of your party have spent the night at this village of primitive Men. The villagers call themselves \_\_\_\_\_, and their village \_\_\_\_\_. You and your companions have wandered far, through much peril, trying to avoid and survive the many dark minions from the East that have overrun much of Middle-earth over the centuries. It is a hard time for all. Only in the few small outposts and strongholds of the Elves and Dwarves does some light shine in this land covered in darkness. The villagers have been very kind and generous. They have looked at those of you not of their race in awe, wonder, and fear. But once you made clear your intentions were not harmful, they opened up surprisingly quickly. They are a primitive people. They know not of metal working. They make primitive huts in the dense woods with only 10' high very poor walls of woven grass and mud protecting the village from the many beasts and wicked things roaming the wild lands.

They are amazed at your armor, weapons, and many other items far advanced beyond their means.

They have told you tales of their repeated flights from the “Wicked Men” of the East, and their cohorts the “Night Hunters”. From their description you believe these “Night Hunters” to be Orcs.

It is now very early morning, the sun has not yet risen above the treelines, so the mists from the shore still lie heavy on the land.. You have just finished getting up for the day, being fed and donning your gear in preparation to continue your journey of exploration. You were in the middle of saying your farewells to the village chief and villagers, when a scream was heard from the other side of the village. All at once chaos erupted. Wicked Men and dark orcs started to leap from the walls and tear down the weak wooden gates bursting in. There are a score or more of them coming from all directions, dark metal gleaming. The villagers have only primitive wooden spears with rock tips and rock knives, no match for these assailants metal. Everyone, including the chieftain and his family flee in multiple directions. A Drúedain, who has been a guide to your group, quickly beckons for you and those few villagers pleading for your protection, to follow him. He quickly leads your party around between the huts and over a wall, and then you flee south with a handful of villagers.

Unfortunately, you did not escape undetected. Moments after you dashed into the woods, you heard the crashing noises and guttural laughter of swiftly following pursuit. The Drugh comments that he does not know this area, but is trying to find the fastest path of flight. You break out of the trees moments later, with the mist beginning to clear as you realize you have come to the shoreline of a lagoon. A few moments later you realize you have walked into a dead end. The creatures behind you slow their pace and begin throwing stones and wicked darts casually at you and the villagers. one villager panics and tries to climb the sheer basalt cliff face. he is a mere ten feet up when a heavy spear pierces him and he falls to the ground with a scream.

You turn to face your foes. Prepared to fight to the death...



The number of assailants needs to be adjusted by the GM depending on the number of players at the table. There will be 4 villagers who accompanied them, one of which the party will realize is the Chieftain's daughter if any party member pauses to ask or take count of who they have with them, this will be quickly noted. Only the chieftain's daughter, the Drugh, and one of the villagers who is a hunter has any weapons besides the player characters. The rest are completely unarmed.

If none of the players chose to play a Wose, then use the NPC "Drugh #1" as the guide. See NPC Chart – Part I – First Contact.

The attackers will number 8 "Wicked Men" plus their leader and 8 "Orcs" plus an orc leader. Totalling 18 assailants. This would be overwhelming odds for low level characters. Their survival depends on the help of the Númenóreans joining in as soon as possible.

If you have fewer than 4 players, then make the numbers 6 of each foe (plus the leaders). If you have 7+ players, then make the numbers 10 of each foe (plus the leaders).

The attackers will initially "toy" with their prey, waiting for the PCs to take action first. As soon as one of the assailants actually becomes hurt however, they will become enraged and charge in and attempt to slaughter them all. Keep in mind the daylight penalty for the orcs is currently only at half penalty because the sun is not fully up and the mist and trees diffuse it. The normal daylight penalty for the orcs is \_\_\_\_\_.



## Númenóreans' Introduction



It has been more than five centuries since your ancestors, the Edain, left Middle-earth for the Andor, “The Land of Gift”, now known as the Kingdom of Numenor. More than five hundred years since your people have set foot on the lands of Middle-earth. You are all excited and anxious as you row your longboat from your great sea vessel through the narrow lagoon and approach the shore for the first time.

A heavy mist obscures the shoreline, you can only see the tops of tall, ancient trees above the mist helping guide you to the shore with cliffs on either side of you.

All you hear is a soft swish as your oars smoothly dip in and out of the water in strictly disciplined order.

Then you hear a cry echo from the cliff walls, followed by screams of terrors, shouts of agony, and guttural yells and laughter. You can not tell exactly where the noises are coming from, but you assume it comes from ahead.

A few more moments, and then the mist thins enough for you to see the shoreline.

You see in the distance smoke roiling up in black and grey clouds. You see that you are 300' from a soft sandy shoreline. On that shore is a cluster of people running along the shore, followed close behind by others throwing wicked-looking darts and stones, obviously taunting the terrified individuals attempting to flee. But they are trapped. They have come to a tall wall forming the cliffs. One attempts to scramble up the cliff, only to be pierced by one of the pursuers' missiles and fall to the ground with a scream of pain.

There are 8 of you in this longboat. None of you brought your armor and most only brought weapons normally used for hunting and foraging. You have only some spears, wood axes, and the bows that the leader and yourself brought. You are now longing for your armor back on the ship. No one has yet looked in your direction. What do you do?

If asked, give the details as listed in On Shore Players Introduction as to the numbers of people they see. The villagers are wearing primitive animal skins. But there is a group of heavily armed “others” amongst them. The Numenoreans only brought hunting gear. They were not prepared for heavy combat. Any player character that is on the boat did NOT wear armor. They only brought swords and axes. Only the leader has a bow (plus any player characters that may have brought a bow as well).

After the Númenóreans help the Middle-earth folk organize and improve their defenses, they left to take their ship back to Numenor to report home. They promise to come again with more reinforcements (how long is the trip each way?). It has been (months? years?) since the ship left...

*Then the Men of Middle-earth were comforted, and here and there upon the western shores the houseless woods drew back, and Men shook off the yoke of the offspring of Morgoth, and unlearned their terror of the dark. And they revered the memory of the tall Sea-kings, and when they had departed they called them gods, hoping for their return; for at that time the Númenóreans dwelt never long in Middle-earth, nor made there as yet any habitation of their own. Eastward they must sail, but ever west their hearts returned.*

*-- The Silmarillion, Akallabêth. J.R.R. Tolkien.*

This should end Session #1.

**SESSION #1 END**

Segment #2 “No Good Deed...”