

THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

THE CARD GAME

BENEATH THE SANDS™

Difficulty Level = 5

There had been a commotion in the night: something had startled the Oliphaunts and their trumpet calls awakened the heroes. They heard screams and the sound of scuffling, but they could see nothing in the utter darkness of the night. Kahliel called to his men to organize them, but his shouts were drowned out by the loud braying of the Mûmakil. That soon faded as the frightened beasts tore their harnesses and stampeded away into the desert.

When the morning came, the heroes searched the ground for signs of what had transpired in the night. They found strange animal tracks at the edge of their camp, and heavy lines in the sand indicating that some of their company had been dragged away.

"I don't recognize these markings," said one of the heroes, lightly touching one of the animal tracks.

"There's no blood on the sand," observed another. "What kind of animal takes its prey without spilling any blood?" he asked.

"The great spiders of the desert," answered Firyal. "They use their poison to paralyze their victims, then drag them back to their den to eat them."

"Then we must follow the trail to their lair and rescue our friends!" exclaimed the first hero, standing up and shaking the sand from his hands.

"Just so," said Firyal. "What say you Kahliel: Do we pursue the Mûmakil that fled in the night? Or do we seek the spiders in their den?"

The Haradrim chief narrowed his eyes and gazed into the desert, then he looked at the tracks at his feet. "The Mûmakil have fled beyond our reach, but even if there was hope to recapture them, we could not abandon our friends," he said. "Gather your weapons. We follow the spiders."

"Beneath the Sands" is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter sets: Beneath the Sands, Desert Creatures, and Harad Territory. (Desert Creatures and Harad Territory can be found in **The Sands of Harad** deluxe expansion to **The Lord of the Rings: The Card Game**.)



On Track / Off Track

Included in Beneath the Sands is a double-sided **Search** objective: On Track / Off Track. This objective represents whether or not the heroes are heading in the right direction to find their missing companions. When setting up the scenario at the beginning of the game, the players are instructed to add the **Search** objective to the staging area with the Off Track side faceup. While Off Track is in play, players cannot place progress on the main quest because they are searching in the wrong direction. While On Track is in play, progress can be placed on the main quest, but the scenario becomes more challenging because the spiders grow more vicious as the heroes draw closer to their lair.

Track

Track is a new keyword in the scenario Beneath the Sands that represents the heroes' efforts to locate their missing companions somewhere in the spiders' labyrinth. After the players travel to a location, if they are off track, they discard X cards from the encounter deck, where X is the active location's Track value. If any of the discarded cards has On Track printed in the lower right corner, then the players flip the **Search** objective to On Track. If the encounter deck is ever empty while the players are resolving the Track keyword, shuffle the encounter discard pile into the encounter deck and continue resolving the Track keyword. When the **Search** objective is flipped from Off Track to On Track, discard all resources on it.

Example: Mercedes is playing "Beneath the Sands" and the **Search** objective is Off Track. During the travel phase, she chooses to travel to Nest of Vermin with Track 3. After she resolves the **Travel** effect on Nest of Vermin, she resolves its Track keyword by discarding the top 3 cards of the encounter deck. However, there is only 1 card remaining in the encounter deck, so Mercedes shuffles the encounter discard pile back into the encounter deck and discards 2 more cards from the top, for a total of 3. One of the discarded cards has "On Track" printed in the lower right, so she discards each resource on Off Track and flips the **Search** objective to On Track.

Valour

Valour is a trigger that appears on some player cards in the The Haradrim cycle. **Actions** and **Responses** with the **Valour** trigger, presented as “**Valour Action**” or “**Valour Response**,” can only be triggered by a player whose threat is 40 or higher.

If an event card has two effects, one with the **Valour** trigger and one without, you may only choose one of these two effects to trigger when you play the card. You may still only choose the effect with the **Valour** trigger if your threat is 40 or higher.

DO NOT READ THE FOLLOWING UNTIL THE HEROES HAVE WON THIS QUEST.

The heroes found their friends bound by giant webs to the walls of the spiders' cavern lair, but there were others there too.

“Kahliel?” cried one. “My chief, is that you?”

Kahliel turned to see who it was that called his name.

“Lorgan?” he exclaimed in astonishment.

“Yes! It's me!” answered a Haradrim man bound with spider cords. “And Hadid is here too! Look Hadid, our chieftain has come to rescue us.”

“We thought you were dead.” said Hadid with wonder at seeing her chieftain alive, and in the spiders' den.

“We thought the same of you. How did you come to be here?” Kahliel asked as he cut them loose.

“After the Orcs attacked the village, they took some of us captive,” answered Lorgan. “They put us in wagons and brought us to their tower in the Ephel Duath.”

“Cirith Gurat?” asked Kahliel.

“Yes,” said Lorgan. “They put us to work in the mines below the fortress, but we found a way out: a narrow passage that opened into the mountains. We climbed down and fled into the desert. The spiders must have captured us in our sleep because we woke up here.”

“Then there are others of our tribe still in Cirith Gurat?” asked Kahliel.

“Yes, my chief,” said Hadid. “Your son is there too.”

Kahliel froze. His heart dropped into his stomach. “Abaan?” he whispered, eyes wide with fear.

The Haradrim chieftain staggered out of the spider's cavern and braced himself against the entrance. “My son is alive, and a captive of the Orcs,” he groaned and stared across the desert

plain towards the Mountains of Shadow. Turning to face his companions, he continued: “I must rescue him.”

“Is this possible?” asked one of the heroes. “He is a captive of Cirith Gurat.”

“My chief, we do not have the strength to assault the fortress.” added Jubayr.

“I am his father!” Kahliel shouted, and the others were silent.

“I must at least try,” he stammered. “But the burden is mine alone. I do not ask any of you to come with me.”

“You shame me, Kahliel,” said Jubayr. “I only meant to say that we need a plan.”

“Quite right,” added the hero. “You rescued us from the desert and saved our lives. It is our duty to help you in your time of need, but we need a way into the fortress.”

“Can we not enter in through the opening Lorgan and Hadid used to escape?” asked Firyal.

“Perhaps,” answered the hero. “But the Orcs are certain to have noticed their escape by now, and their patrols will be doubled. If we are discovered, there will be no hope of rescue or escape.” he added thoughtfully.

“Then we must find another way in,” said Firyal, “but how?”

“We will enter through the front gate,” said Kahliel gazing into the distance again. This time his eyes were focused on a distant caravan coming up the Harad road. “The Black Serpent brings his tribute to Mordor as we speak. We will ambush his caravan, and march into Cirith Gurat under his banner.”

The story continues in “The Black Serpent,” the fourth Adventure Pack in “The Haradrim” cycle.



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