

THE RING OF POWER
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the ONE RING™

ROLEPLAYING GAME



FANTASY ROLEPLAYING IN THE WORLD OF THE HOBBIT™ AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

BASED ON THE NOVELS BY J.R.R. TOLKIEN

BY FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

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Dedicated to Anita, who was born when *The One Ring* was first discovered.
Francesco Nepitello, Venezia, 24 Maggio 2011

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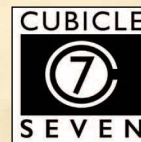
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... my friend, I wish I could persuade you to come here and see for yourself that what we accomplished together was not wasted in idleness. We have done much good since the slaying of the Dragon and the liberation of the Lonely Mountain. The splendour of our works far surpasses Thorin's grandest dreams of what we would accomplish, back when we were planning our little adventure.

To think that almost five years have passed! You might say that we didn't think much of you at the time. Now I miss very much our days together, and I would readily forfeit my peaceful life for one of dangerous adventure. Quite astonishing, I know, but I feel that sleeping under the stars with a sword at my side would ease my troubled mind.

I do not know precisely what troubles me, but disquiet weighs heavily upon my heart. The scourge of Smaug has been vanquished, the Necromancer has been driven out of his forest stronghold and, after the Battle of the Five Armies, the Goblins are afraid to leave their mountain holds. We have every reason to look forward to a new age of prosperity!

But something is wrong. I am not the only one to perceive it. A shadow, felt but unseen. The presence of a nameless threat that forbids people to rejoice fully in the hope and confidence that should follow the return of the light.

Nonsense? Possibly. I am an old Dwarf after all, and those who hearken to me are but a few. For every voice that dares to whisper words of warning, far too many answer that our recent victories have earned us a respite. Despite my nagging sense of unease, complacency is rife.

Dearest Bilbo, deep inside of me I feel that we should remain vigilant and warn others against the risks of self-congratulation. Everyone around us seems to look inwards instead, to their own concerns and the goings-on right in front of their noses. Soon I will confer with Gandalf upon these matters, and possibly come to visit you in the kindly West.

From a letter from Balin, son of Fundin, to Bilbo Baggins, Esq.



Home is behind, the world ahead, And there are many paths to tread

It is the year 2946 of the Third Age, and the lands east of the Misty Mountains are astir. From the cloud-shrouded peaks above the High Pass to the spider-infested gloom of the forest of Mirkwood, paths long-deserted are trodden once again. Busy merchants carry their wares to new markets, messengers bring tidings from foreign realms, and kings send forth armed men to extend their influence and the rule of law. Some say that a new age of freedom has begun, a time for adventure and great deeds to reclaim glories lost in long centuries of oppression and decline.

But adventures are not really things that people go out and look for. They are dangerous and rarely end well. While it is true that a handful of valiant individuals set out to make their mark on the world, for others it seems that adventure chooses *them*, as though it is the path they are fated to tread. They are restless warriors, curious scholars and wanderers, always eager to seek what was lost or explore what was forgotten. Ordinary people call them *adventurers*, and when they return successful, they call them *heroes*. But if they fail, no one will even remember their names...

In The One Ring Roleplaying Game, you take the part of the heroes of Middle-earth. You will travel the land, uncover its secrets, take part in its unfolding history and encounter its inhabitants and legends. As the Shadow creeps back across the lands of the Free Peoples, you will uncover hints of what is happening, and have the chance to play a part in the struggle against the Enemy.

