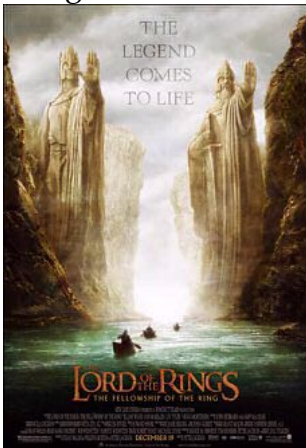




The Rangers are the Great Men from over the sea, from Numenor, who guard the good peoples of Middle-earth, especially the Hobbits of the Shire. They were the Edain (Men) who helped the Elves in their fight against Morgoth in the First Age; and so, they were granted their own island in the sea outside of Middle-earth. This island they named “Numenor.” They were a great and noble civilization of Men; however, things changed with the passage of many years. One of the kings of Numenor achieved a great military victory in which he took Morgoth’s lieutenant prisoner. The lieutenant’s name was Sauron.

Back in those days Sauron had bodily form and was fair; he was not ugly as we see him in the movies. He very effectively feigned repentance and, being fair and persuasive, gained the ear of the king. He persuaded the king to lead the Numenoreans in revolt against the good “guardian angels,” the Valar, who watched over Middle-earth and its surrounding realms. Like the real angels and like the true God, they really cared for and loved Men, Hobbits, and all rational beings. As Satan deceived Adam (Man) into thinking that God did not love him,



but rather was jealous of him, trying to keep good things and power from him; so also Sauron deceived Men (the Numenoreans) into thinking that the Valar had prohibited them from sailing to the Undying Lands out of jealousy and fear, rather than – as was truly the case – out of love. Such rebellion by the Numenoreans had to be punished, and so Numenor was destroyed; like Atlantis, it was sunken into the sea. Yet there was a remnant, as relatively small number of people called “the Faithful,” who wanted no part in the revolt against the Valar. Under the leadership of Elendil and his sons, Isildur and Anarion¹, the Faithful sailed to Middle-earth. There they

founded the kingdoms of Arnor (in the north) and Gondor (in the south). The Faithful Numenoreans in Exile and their descendants came to be called “The Dunedain”² [dune – uh – dine] or “Men of the West,” since they came from the west across the sea. They also are the Rangers, who patrol Middle-earth, keeping the Shire safe from evil – from the power of Mordor and particularly from Sauron and his Nazgul or Black Riders. Significantly, Aragorn (known as Strider) is *the* Dunedain. He is the pre-eminent leader of the “Men or the West”

¹ You may recall from the movie *The Fellowship of the Ring* that the Company sails down the River Anduin and Aragorn points out the Argonath to Frodo. The two kings of the colossal stone monuments are Isildur and Anarion.

² In the Elven tongue, *Dun* means “west” and *Edain* means “Men.” The singular and plural forms are spelled and pronounced exactly alike. Aragorn is *the* Dunedain, the Man of the West.

Volume 3, number 5: May 2008: *Who are the Rangers?*

or Rangers, descended in direct line from Elendil and Isildur. He is *the crownless [who] shall again be king* and the one whom Sauron has most to fear. In next month's issue, we will see what happens when Aragorn looks into a *palantir*, the Stone of Orthanc. He reveals himself to Sauron. Stay tuned!