

FOREST OF TEARS™

#8015



Playable with

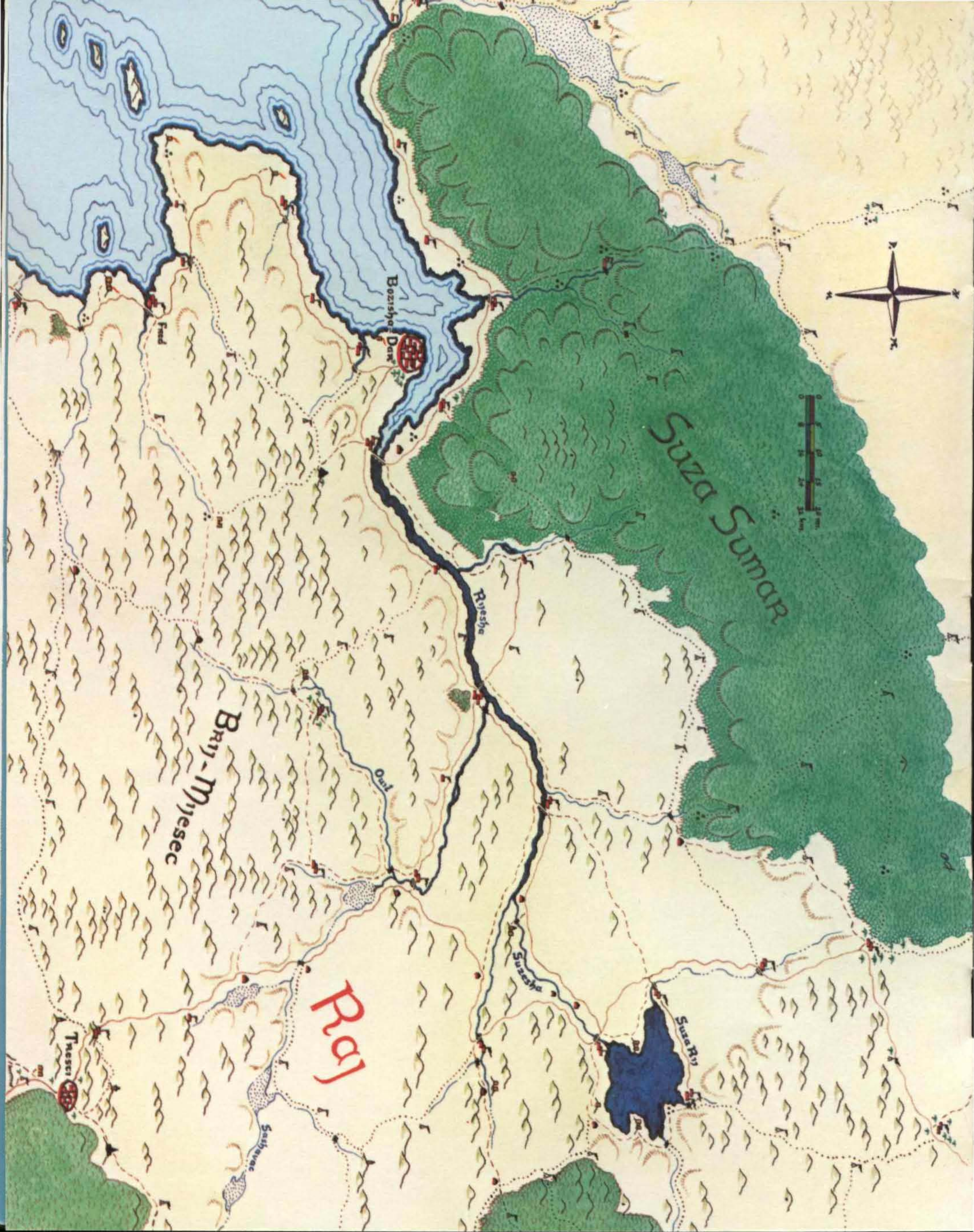


Rolemaster™



A Fantasy Role Playing adventure module from
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH®

Based on THE HOBBIT® and THE LORD OF THE RINGS™, this supplement draws adventurers into the mysterious Suza Sumar, a rainforest thriving in desert sands. The Honnin, a hidden people related to the Woses of the Ered Nimrais, dwell between the boles of the great trees, harvesting the forest's bounties and zealously guarding their secrecy. Despite their caution, the Dark Lord's schemes soon may boil out of the Forest of Tears to overrun all of Far Harad. This module links with ICE's Warlords adventure module and Far Harad campaign module.



FOREST OF TEARS™

CONTENTS

1.0 Guidelines

1.1 ABBREVIATIONS.....	2
1.2 DEFINITIONS.....	2
1.3 ADAPTING THIS MODULE.....	3
1.31 Converting Stats and Bonuses.....	3
1.32 Conversion Chart.....	3

2.0 Player Characters

3.0 The Honnin

3.1 THE HONNIN CULTURE.....	4
3.11 History.....	4
3.12 Social Structure.....	5
3.13 Religion.....	5
3.2 POWER AND POLITICS.....	5
3.3 WARFARE.....	5
3.4 THE ECONOMY.....	6
3.5 OTHER CULTURAL TRAITS.....	6
3.6 MAGIC AMONG THE HONNIN.....	6
3.61 Spells of the Tori-Ji.....	6
3.62 Spells of Mori-Kam.....	7

4.0 The Hidden Shrine

4.1 THE TALE OF THE HERBSELLER'S FOOTPATH.....	8
4.2 THE NPCs.....	9
4.3 THE SETTING.....	10
4.4 THE TASK.....	14
4.41 Starting the Players.....	14
4.42 Aids.....	14
4.43 Obstacles.....	14
4.44 Rewards.....	15
4.5 ENCOUNTERS.....	15

5.0 The Tower of Birds

5.1 THE TALE OF KLORIN'S AMULET.....	16
5.2 THE NPCs.....	16
5.3 THE SETTING.....	18
5.4 THE TASK.....	22
5.41 Starting the Players.....	22
5.42 Aids.....	22
5.43 Obstacles.....	22
5.44 Rewards.....	22
5.5 ENCOUNTERS.....	22

6.0 The Temple City of Pred

6.1 THE TALE OF MORI-KAM.....	23
6.2 THE NPCs.....	23
6.3 THE CITY OF PRED.....	27
6.4 THE TASK.....	37
6.41 Starting the Players.....	37
6.42 Aids.....	37
6.43 Obstacles.....	38
6.44 Rewards.....	38
6.5 ENCOUNTERS.....	38

7.0 Tables

7.1 NPC TABLE.....	38
7.2 BEAST TABLE.....	39
7.3 ENCOUNTER TABLE.....	40

CREDITS

Author/Designer: Charles Crutchfield

Editor/Developer: Jessica Ney

Cover Illustration: Angus McBride

Interior Illustration: Liz Danforth

Layouts: Jennifer Kleine; David and Ellisa Martin

Project Specific Contributions: *Series Editor:* Jessica M. Ney; *Content Editor:* Peter C. Fenlon; *Page Design:* Suzanne Young; *Layout:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie, I. Haines Sprunt; *Cover Graphics:* I. Haines Sprunt.

ICE MANAGEMENT — *Art Director/Production Manager:* Terry K. Amthor; *Sales Manager:* Deane Begiebing; *Editing & Development Manager:* Coleman Charlton; *President:* Peter Fenlon; *CEO:* Bruce Neidlinger; *Controller:* Kurt Rasmussen.

ICE STAFF — *Marketing Consultant:* John Morgan; *Print Buyer:* Bill Downs; *Production Supervisor:* Suzanne Young; *Editing & Development Staff:* Kevin Barrett, Rob Bell, Pete Fenlon, Jessica Ney, John Ruemmler; *Graphics & Production Staff:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie, William Hyde, Jennifer Kleine, I. Haines Sprunt, Kevin Williams; *Sales & Customer Service Staff:* John Brunkhart; *Finance Staff:* Heidi Heffner; *Shipping Staff:* John Breckenridge, Kurt Fischer, David Johnson, Leo LaDell.

Copyright 1989 © TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES, a division of ELAN MERCHANDISING, Inc., Berkeley, CA. *Forest of Tears*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings*, and all characters and places therein, are trademark properties of TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES.

Produced and distributed by IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES, Inc., P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

First U.S. Printing, December, 1989.

Stock # 8015

ISBN 1-55806-084-7

The image burned behind Orrit Kelarin's closed eyes. Brilliant plumage of cobalt blue, sulphurous yellow, turquoise, jade green, and crimson glowed on its outspread wings. An insane human face, stretched and deformed to create a bird's beak from its flesh, gibbered and drooled with hunger. And dangling from the tangled hair clutched in the Bird-beast's claws, a man's head spun and swung like a pendulum, sprinkling the jungle foliage with the blood that dripped from its severed neck. The Haradan warrior shuddered and took a firmer grip on his sword. He scanned the edges of the clearing surrounding him. When would the beast return?

The bushes rustled suddenly, and Kelarin jerked his gaze over one shoulder, pivoting rapidly. His weapon arm lunged forward, but his blade sliced only quivering leaves and shadows. False alarm! He faded back to the clearing's center, and only then noticed the strange tingling in his right shoulder. Another dart slapped the links of his chain hauberk and fell to the ground as the warrior's eyes drooped shut.

1.0 GUIDELINES

Fantasy role playing is akin to a living novel where the players are the main characters. Everyone combines to write a story which is never short of adventure. They help create a new land and strange new tales.

This series is designed as a tool for Gamemasters (GMs) who wish to run scenarios or campaigns set in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth. The adventure modules are complete and ready-to-run studies of very specific areas, and are intended to be used with a minimum of additional work. Each has statistical information based on the *Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP)* and *Rolemaster (RM)* fantasy systems. The modules are, however, adaptable for use with most major role playing games. Creative guidelines, not absolutes, are emphasized.

PROFESSOR TOLKIEN'S LEGACY

Each module is based on extensive research and attempts to meet the high standards associated with the Tolkien legacy. Rational linguistic, cultural, and geological data are employed. Interpretive material has been included with great care, and fits into defined patterns and schemes. ICE does not intend it to be the sole or proper view; instead, we hope to give the reader the thrust of the creative processes and the character of the area.

Remember that the ultimate sources of information are the works of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien. Posthumous publications edited by his son Christopher shed additional light on the world of Middle-earth. These modules are derived from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, although they have been developed so that no conflict exists with any of the other sources.

1.1 ABBREVIATIONS

GAME SYSTEMS

MERP *Middle-earth Role Playing*
RM *Rolemaster*

MIDDLE-EARTH TERMS

A Adûnaic	Mû Mumakani
BS Black Speech	Or Orkish
Cir ... Cirth or Certar	P Pel
Dr Drel	Q Quenya
E Edain	S Sindarin
El Eldarin	S.A Second Age
Es Easterling	Se Sederi
1.A ... First Age	Si Silvan (Bethleur Avarin)
F.A .. Fourth Age	T.A. Third Age
Har ... Haradrim	Ta Tantûraki

Hob. *The Hobbit*

Kh Khuzdul (Dwarvish)

Ki Kirani (Avarin)

LotR. *The Lord of the Rings*

Teng Tengwar

Tk Tuktani

Tu Tumag

V Variag

CHARACTER STATS

Ag Agility (**RM/MERP**)

Co Constitution (**RM/MERP**)

St Strength (**RM/MERP**)

Pr Presence (**RM/MERP**)

It(In) Intuition (**RM/MERP**)

SD Self Discipline (**RM**)

Me Memory (**RM**)

Ig Intelligence (**MERP**)

Re Reasoning (**RM**)

Em Empathy (**RM**)

Qu Quickness (**RM**)

GAME TERMS

AT Armor Type

bp bronze piece(s)

cp copper piece(s)

Crit Critical strike

D Die or Dice

D100 .. Percentile Dice Result

DB Defensive Bonus

FRP ... Fantasy Role Playing

GM Gamemaster

gp gold pieces(s)

ip iron piece(s)

jp jade piece(s)

tp tin piece(s)

Lvl Level (exp. or spell level)

MA Martial Arts

Mod Modifier or Modification

mp mithril piece(s)

NPC Non-player Character

OB Offensive bonus

PC Player Character

PP Power Points

R or Rad Radius

Rnd or Rd .. Round

RR Resistance Roll

Stat Statistic or Characteristic

1.2 DEFINITIONS

A few crucial concepts are detailed below. The majority of unique terms and translations from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* can be found in the text proper.

Apysaic — The dominant language family in southwestern Endor. Apysaic is associated with the Apysan (p. "Apysani") peoples, a group which swept westward through the Ered Harmal in two major migrations. The first Apysaic speakers settled to the southwest of Far Harad, in the areas called Hyarn, Elorna, Mirëdor, Drel, and Pel. The second wave of Apysani entered Harad over 1500 years later and came to control Far Harad. Their tongues are more properly referred to as New or Northern Apysaic, since their speech is heavily influenced by Haradaic.

Bozisha-Miraz — (Har./Ap. "Dowry of the Goddess"). The southern Haradrim's name for Far Harad.

Drúedain — (W. "Woses," "Drû-folk;" Wo. "Drughu," "Drûgs;" Q. "Rúatani;" S. "Wildmen;" sing. "Drúadan"). Often called the "Wild Men of the Wood," the Drúedain are found in rugged primeval woodlands like the Tawar-in-Drúedain of northeast Gondor, the Taur Andrast along the southwest flanks of the White Mountains, and the Eryn Vorn (S. "Black Woods") of southern Eriador. They are unexcelled woodcrafters and woodsmen who did not assimilate or cohabitate with other races. Instead, they prefer a rude life in the remote wilds; thus their name. Short, stocky and having little body hair, they resemble no other Men. Woses possess certain powers of enchantment and unique forms of magic, and guard their sacred places with bizarre carved images of themselves (Pûkel-men). These sculptures are said to have "powers associated with life," such as sight and mobility.

Far Harad — (W./S. "Far South"). The southern reaches of the vast arid area known as Harad. Far Harad encompasses all the lands north of the foothills of the Yellow Mountains and south of the line between An Aras on the Belegaer and Clyan along the flank of the Ered Harmal. The highlands called Raj is the cultural center and richest region of Far Harad.

Free Peoples — The "good" races of Middle-earth: Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, and Men (especially the Dúnedain); specifically those races which were in opposition to Sauron.

Harad — (S. "South"). The vast region located below the river Harnen, south of Gondor and Mordor. Although (periodically) autonomous, Umbar is in Harad. Harad is also called Haradwaith, a label which corresponds to the people of the region.

Haradaic — The dominant language family in northern (Near) Harad. Haradaic is associated with the Haradrim (Haradwaith). Southern Haradrim, however, generally speak various forms of (northern) Apysaic.

Haradrim — (S. "Southern People" or "Southrons"). Also called the Haradwaith. The Haradrim comprise various confederations of Haradaic- or Apysaic-speaking peoples who reside in Harad.

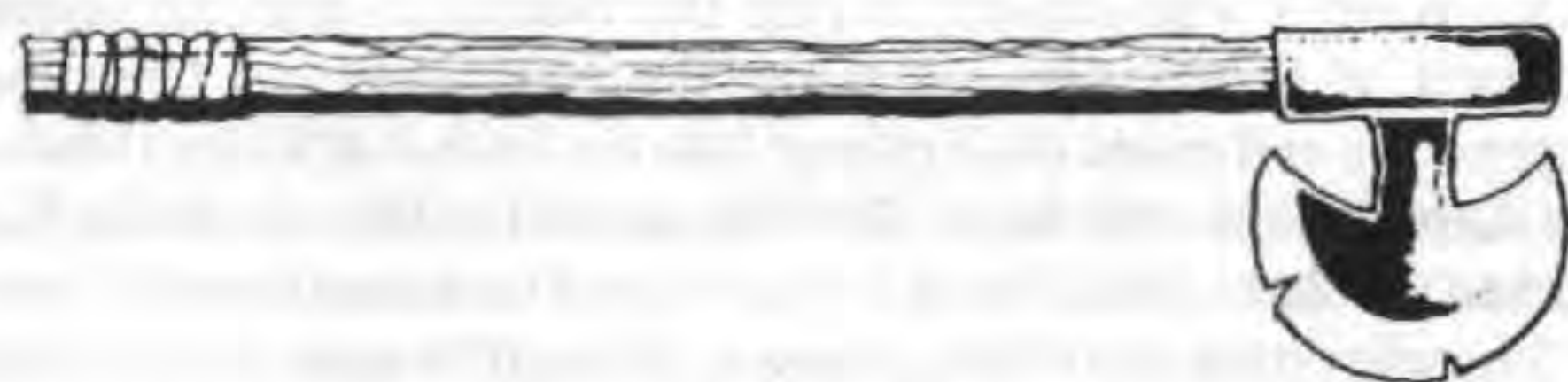
Haragaer — (S. "South Sea"). The ocean south of Middle-earth, part of the Ekkaia, or "Encircling Sea." The waters of the Haragaer meet those of the Belegaer to the west at Metharn ("Hyarnúmente").

Maia — (Q. sing. "Maia"). The lesser Ainur who entered Eä as servants of the Valar. They are also known as the People of the Valar, the Servants of Valinor, and the Servants of the Guardians. The ignorant (notably among Men) call them "Lesser Gods."

Raj — (Ap. "Paradise"). The fertile and relatively forgiving hill country surrounding the Rijesha river valley. Raj is the cultural and economic center of Far Harad.

Rijesha — (Ap. "River"). Chief river in southwestern Harad. Most of the waters of the Raj drain into the Rijesha, which in turn spills into the great Bay of Tulwang (at Bozisha-Dar).

Yellow Mountains — (S. "Ered Laranor;" Q. "Orolanari;" K. "Mablâd;" Dr. "Manjano Malimavi"). Known for their yellowish, loam-producing rock and the myriad ecosystems, the Orolanari run eastward from the Cape of Sare and bend across south-central and southwestern Middle-earth. Minyadhras, the westernmost and southernmost peak in the range, rises near the cape called Metharn (S. "South's End;" Q. "Hyarnúmente" or "Mentelanari") at the southwestern tip of the middle continent. The Yellow Mountains separate the hilly, humid realms along Endor's southern coasts from the drier reaches of Far Harad and the neighboring lands of Isra, Chennacatt, Ciryatandor, Hyarn, Elorna, Mirëdor, and Drel. Alpine in character, they rise to heights of well over 10,000 feet. Their higher peaks are snowcapped year round.



1.3 ADAPTING THIS MODULE

Like the rest of this series, this module is designed for use with the Middle-earth Role Playing game (*MERP*) or the more advanced Rolemaster (*RM*) system, but is adaptable to most other major FRP games. Statistics are expressed on a closed or open-ended scale, using a 1-100 base and percentile dice (D100). No other dice are required.

1.31 CONVERTING STATS AND BONUSES

Bonuses: When converting percentile values to a 1-20 system a simple rule is: for every +5 on a D100 scale you get a +1 on a D20.

Hits: The concussion hits numbers found in this module only represent general pain and system shock. They cover bruises and small cuts rather than serious wounds and fatal blows. The hit figures shown here are less important than those used in game systems where death occurs as a result of exceeding one's available hits. Should you use a game system that employs no specific critical strike results (e.g., TSR Inc.'s *Dungeons and Dragons*®), simply double the number of hits your characters take or halve the hit values found in this module.

1.32 CONVERSION CHART

If you play something other than *MERP* or *Rolemaster* and you do not use a percentile system, use the following chart to convert 1-100 numbers to figures suited to your game.

1-100 Stat	D100 Bonus	D20 Bonus	3-18 Stat	2-12 Stat
102+	+35	+7	20+	17+
101	+30	+6	19	15-16
100	+25	+5	18	13-14
98-99	+20	+4	17	12
95-97	+15	+3	16	—
90-94	+10	+2	15	11
85-89	+5	+1	14	10
75-84	+5	+1	13	9
60-74	0	0	12	8
40-59	0	0	10-11	7
25-39	0	0	9	6
15-24	-5	-1	8	5
10-14	-5	-1	7	4
5-9	-10	-2	6	3
3-4	-15	-3	5	—
2	-20	-4	4	2
1	-25	-4	4	2

2.0 PLAYER CHARACTERS

For each adventure in this module, a party of PCs must be selected with skills and equipment that make them equal to the task. The characters may be taken from the lands that lie about the Forest of Tears or, at the Gamemaster's option, these adventures could just as easily be run with PCs visiting Far Harad from other regions of Middle-earth. For each group of adventurers, the motives and circumstances of their participation will require a unique explanation, but this should not be difficult in most campaigns.

The first scenario is designed for characters of first level capabilities. Among the southwestern Haradrim, the warriors of such a group will be quite young, since combat training begins at an early age. Those of other professions will be aged more in order with what is expected in the northern realms. The characters will not be in any real need of special skills or equipment, if they stay near the footpath and make sure to fly the forest before dusk.

The characters chosen for the assault on the Tower of Birds should form a relatively strong third and fourth level band. The GM will have enough leeway in his handling of the tower's defenders to match the difficulties to most parties in this range. Aside from items that will be provided by their employer, they will need no special gear. However, it would be good to have at least one member who is familiar with the wood, or other, similar jungles. Otherwise, the challenges of a tough jungle crossing might prove too difficult.

For the journey to the city of Pred a very well equipped and experienced party will be required. At a minimum, they must have protection from the diseases carried by the jungle midges and a means of navigating in the forest. The PCs will be called upon to act as foragers, explorers, and diplomats, as well as skilled combatants. Half of the battle will be winning their way to the city itself. The PCs must surmount that challenge before they can hope to face the goddess Mori-Kam.

Bands of adventurers that meet these criteria, in addition to possessing the skills normally expected from a group of their level, should find just the right mix of challenge and reward in these scenarios. As always, though, the last responsibility for keeping things lively, but not too lively, falls on the Gamemaster. All of the situations described in this module will need adjustments, minor or major, to fit any specific combination of players and characters.

3.0 THE HONNIN

When the folk who now reside in the city of Bozisha-Dar first crossed the Yellow Mountains and the wilds of the southern desert, the land they came into was not uninhabited. They found an ancient people who called themselves the Honnin living in a small village at the bend of the Rijesha. The newcomers were welcomed by these small, ruddy-skinned men, and all lived peacefully together for some generations. A few of the Apysaic peoples intermarried with the Honnin, but the two cultures remained distinct. As time went on, the Apysaic speaking clans grew to dominate and then to subjugate their hosts. In the end, the tough little men retreated completely into the one part of their land where the tall ones could not follow. They entered the Forest of Tears to hide and gradually faded out of even the legends of their successors. Their immunity to the fever that keeps the new Haradrim out of the deeper sections of the Wood has allowed the Honnin to flourish there.

With the passage of centuries, their culture has declined, from one which erected great buildings of the white jungle stone to a level where it is dominated by tribalism and primitive ritual. Their religion, which they passed on to the men who displaced them (see 3.13 below as well as *Far Harad*), has changed as well, into elaborate nature worship. Though they still revere the Moon above all else, they have devoted shrines to many of the aspects of their jungle home. They live among the splendid buildings of their ancestors' Golden Age, but have reverted to a simplicity of culture that is similar to that of the Drúedain and Chaialla, who are in fact cousins to these ancient folk.

The nature of their retreat from the open country propelled the Honnin into a reclusive way of life that has held until the present day. They never leave the Wood, and for the most part they avoid the Haradrim who come within its borders. For this reason, they have slipped almost completely from the histories of the Haradwaith. They show up now only as the sprites and faeries of old wives' tales.

3.1 THE HONNIN CULTURE

Though the Honnin today have changed little since the latter part of the Second Age, their history is not without its periods of upheaval. They have ridden the tides of time, and their society has seen both extremes of the scale of development. Even their culture today, though it is largely static, is not without its own intriguing subtleties.

3.11 HISTORY

THE FIRST AGE

The origins of the people that is known in the Forest of Tears as the Honnin are lost in the mists of the First Age. They are the descendants of a race that once ranged at least from the north side of the White Mountains into the southernmost lands of Middle-earth. Their cousins still live in secluded locations throughout this region. As this slow-bearing race dwindled in the face of larger and more numerous peoples, their communities became islands, and by the end of the turmoil of the First Age, each group had forgotten that others of their kind even existed in the world outside their homeland.

THE SECOND AGE

When first met by the Haradrim, the Honnin were a mild but sophisticated people. Their society was peaceful, and a great deal of value was given to the pursuit of gentle pastimes. They produced beautiful works of art, carving in wood and stone, and the stonework of their modest buildings was well beyond the skills of the newcomers. The center of their civilization was their religion, which the Haradrim came to adopt in the years that the peoples lived peacefully together.

The outlook fundamental to the Honnin was quite distinct from that characteristic of the more aggressive Apysaic clans, and only the existence of the Azhaji (Ap. "Wrappers of the Dead" or "Embalmers" or "Caste of the Unclean") enabled the two peoples to dwell in the same city without strife. The Azhaji, a clan devoted by tradition among the Haradrim to the interment of the dead, were both revered and reviled by their own society. Respected for their understanding of the spirit world and their mastery of its denizens, the Azhaji could command the obedience of the clans on all religious concerns. They exercised their power frequently to protect the rights of the Honnin.

Yet, the Azhaji touched the flesh of corpses, and thus were not permitted to touch the living skin of any save a member of their own clan. They married among themselves and with the Honnin, whose contemplative nature complemented the spiritual viewpoint of the Azhaji. This proved the undoing of all. As the Wrappers of the Dead ceased to bear the racial features of the Haradrim, becoming instead an amalgam of the two peoples, the contempt always directed at them overpowered the reverence once their due. Stripped of the social power granted by awe, the Azhaji could no longer function effectively as mediators. Relations between the two races grew strained.

By S.A. 750, cohabitation with the Far Haradrim had grown quite sour for the Honnin and the half-Honnin Azhaji. With their demure temperament and low birth rate, they had been outpaced by the newcomers as leaders of the mixed society within the first five generations. Without the championship of the full-blooded Azhaji, their status eroded slowly but unhaltingly until, in the middle of the eighth century, they were quite openly treated as second class citizens in all areas of life. In the last, as the first Kralji (Ap. "King") was chosen to rule the Haradrim and the ancient Council of Elders was set aside, the Honnin broke from their oppressors and made their retreat into the Forest of Tears. Most of the Azhaji went with them. The lineage of the Honnin in the Suza Sumar would remain forever diluted by Haradrim blood.

The migration into the rainforest allowed Honnin to move into their Golden Age, but it was also the first step on their road to decline. In the safety of the Wood and free from the inhibitions of a subjugated people, the small men began a wonderful period of building and development. At Pred, they constructed a city of temples which would have amazed even the men of Westeros, had they ever seen it. Throughout the Wood, lesser shrines were erected to spirits of the Wood and the gods that watched over Honnin life. A university was built in the depths of the forest, where the knowledge and history of the race were to be kept.

Sadly, these great dreams were not to last for long. For the Honnin, life in the jungle was almost completely without challenges. Once the great buildings had all been built, there was nothing left to do but taste of the Wood's bountiful fruits and find shelter from the evening rains. In such an environment, the old ways of this passive people came again to the fore. In the eleventh century of the Second Age, the progress of Honnin society stalled; by the end of the thirteenth, they were well on the road into decline.

THE THIRD AGE

By the dawn of the Third Age, the culture of the Honnin had reached a state of complete stagnation. Their proud university, empty for over three centuries, had been lost to the jungle. Reading and writing had become almost unknown, giving way to a return to oral tradition. The temple city was still intact, but their religion was little more than primitive ritual and spirit worship. Though even at their height, the majority of the Honnin lived in simple huts rather than in their buildings of stone, by the latter part of the Second Age even the least of the white stone structures were held in awe as the work of heroes and gods.

Surprisingly, this aboriginal state of life, which has continued to the present day, marks what is probably the happiest period in the history of these folk since the first century of the Second Age. They are a people whose nature is suited much more to the simple life of jungle tribesmen than it ever was to the role of city builders. They are at home as a part of their environment rather than as masters of nature.

Today they roam the Wood, gathering what they need from the trees and vines, or hunting and fishing. Their society still centers on the temple city at Pred, and many of the young men go into the service of their gods. Aside from semi-annual pilgrimages to the city and occasional visits to other shrines that dot the Wood, each clan keeps mostly to itself. The members of each extended family grouping locate their shelters near each other and join together for hunting, or in times of danger. Among them, in their simple lives, the highest respect is given to men who pursue the one craft that has persisted with them throughout their history, the carving of Pûshel Nîn. Except for the fact that they are made from wood rather than stone, these are identical to the carvings made by both the Drúedain of Rohan and the Chaialla south of the Yellow Mountains. But no Honnin today can claim to have the power to animate his statues.

3.12 SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Honnin divide themselves into groups only along family lines. They are one nation, split into something over four hundred clans. Each clan is ruled by the eldest able female, with the approval of the heads of the individual households. These households are based on immediate family, with no more than three generations gathered together, again under the leadership of the eldest able female. Each household shares a shelter and all of the duties involved with its upkeep, as well as going together to handle hunting and foraging.

3.13 RELIGION

The Honnin religion evolved from a combination of misinterpreted truths, based on tales learned from Elves, and the experiences of the race during the terrible battles of the Valar which burned their land into the desert it is today. From the earliest times, their legends centered on an epic poem which described a Pantheon, represented by the bodies of the southern sky. Their patron was the Moon Goddess, Suzush, who was also wife to their nemesis Kai, God of the Sun. Almost all of the other gods, the many stars and constellations, were loyal to Suzush, but none could stand against the lord of the daytime sky.

Their legends set out the tale of the great battle of the gods, and described the deeds of men who helped them in their titanic struggles. Through the Second Age, these myths held virtually unchanged and governed the majority of Honnin life and society. It was a religion that entered into all facets of life, with a strong code of ethical morality.

As the Honnin culture regressed, reaching a static point of tribal hunters and gatherers in the first decades of the Third Age, their religion became more primitive as well. Though the goddess Suzush is still honored above all, and Kai is still despised, the other gods of their pantheon have come to hold greater importance. As with most similar cultures, the Honnin have turned to an animistic religion to form ties between them and the world in which they live. The gods, which were always as numerous as the stars of the sky, now have almost as many earthly manifestations. Each breed of animal has its own god, as do a great many natural features of the Forest of Tears. The important undertakings of the Honnin, such as hunting, gathering from the forest, and bearing children are all watched over by deities. There are gods in the trees and in the stones. Though each has its place in a complex hierarchy and some are not loved by many, all are revered and each receives its share of offerings and service.

Perhaps the most curious aspect of the Honnin's interesting religion is the fact that most of its gods are real. The Forest of Tears is almost as full of woodland spirits as the tales of the Far Haradrim claim, and over the centuries, these have found it advantageous to mold themselves to fit the legends of the forest's human population. They aid the Honnin as the primitive gods are expected to, and they gain energy from the homage received in return. They are not Valar by any means, but are of the same vintage. They are Nermir and Tavari (see *The Book of Lost Tales vol. I p.66*) which came into Middle-earth in the earliest days and made homes among the hills and forests of the land. The Honnin found them after their retreat into the Wood and a relationship formed quickly. In return for the offerings and reverence of the Honnin, these gods lend their aid in the areas which they are supposed to overlook.

The one exception to this is the goddess known to the Honnin as Suzush; she is in fact the Valar Varda. She also watches over the Far Haradrim, being called Ladnoca by the men of the desert. For the peoples of these harsh lands, she has a special sympathy. It was by her agency that the Sun came to burn the soil from the daytime sky. So she takes care to see that the men who face it at its hottest do not suffer without solace.

3.2 POWER AND POLITICS

The rulership of the Honnin is undertaken primarily by family leaders. Each family group is considered to be bound only by the rules its matriarch sets down. This system works well in their highly traditional society. Only a man who was willing to be completely cast out of his clan would disobey his elders, and all of the Honnin know that leaving one's clan is the same as suicide in the Forest.

It is obvious, however, that situations will arise where such internal law is not enough. In cases that involve members of more than one clan, or crises that threaten the whole nation, the matriarchs are bound by their traditions to gather in a conclave they call a Great Diet (Hn. "Ojiru"). At such a meeting, issues are debated and settled in a manner that might seem odd to most. It is essentially democratic, but all votes are taken on the morning after a raucous, drunken session of debates. It is felt that the wine will help the Honnin express themselves, but heads need to clear again before a vote can be taken.

The religious orders also play the role of mediators on occasion. For their monks, they operate just as a clan, but to family clans they are accepted as being somewhat more circumspect and objective. So, the word of a high priest is often used to settle inter-clan disputes.

It is rare, though, that there is need for the Great Diet or intervention by a shaman. The vast majority of disputes are settled amicably within the bounds of a clan, or through simpler negotiations between matriarchs. Life in the Wood is not too complex, and the Honnin are a mild people.

3.3 WARFARE

Unlike their neighbors outside of the Wood, the Honnin are not at all warlike. Though they do have weapons for use in hunting which can easily be turned to combat, the only men who give thought to such use are the ceremonial guards that are attached to some of the holy sites and temples. Even there, though they train for war as they have for generations, real conflict is so rare that most of these small men have no idea what it could be like.

This is not to say, however, that the Honnin pose no threat to intruders. They are quite accomplished as hunters and, once they overcome any initial squeamishness, they have the weapons and skills required to deal harshly with small groups. It is only in the face of an organized force, or in a situation where sharp tactical planning is required, that these folk cannot hope to provide viable opposition.

3.4 THE ECONOMY

The Honnin system of trade is based entirely on goods. There is no coinage, and there are few items that are so universally needed as to qualify as a standard of exchange. They also do not bargain with each other; when a Honnin wants something he will offer items in trade based on how much it is needed. The least bit of haggling would be deemed a sharp insult. If the offer is insufficient, the two traders will simply part company. It is acceptable, however, for one to find the other after a respectable thirty minutes or so to propose another trade. In this way the Honnin bargain without seeming to and, in their own laconic way, they maintain their economy.

3.5 OTHER CULTURAL TRAITS

In addition to these major points, several minor aspects of Honnin culture are described below.

CLOTHING

The people of the Forest of Tears wear very little in the way of real clothing. Day to day, men and women alike wear nothing more than spare loin clouts. For some of their activities, however, they will don more substantial attire. When travelling the jungle or foraging, a knee-length skirt of grass is worn for protection against the undergrowth. Men who hunt the jungle cats will often wear jackets and trousers of leather or snake skin. Finally, on religious feast days, Honnin who feel attached to the god of the hour will dress in elaborate robes of feathers and colorful leaves, with flowers in their hair and decked with jewelry of carved wood. These feast days come almost three a week, but in any community outside the god's own temple, there are likely to be only a few who have chosen to observe the revel with their costumes. The only exception to this is the Feast of the Moon, each month when the moon is full. On this day all of the Honnin dress their best.

In addition to whatever they choose for clothing, a great many of the Honnin are extensively tattooed. This varies from clan to clan, and with the religious leanings of the individual. Some carry no markings at all, and some have only one or two that denote special occasions in their lives, such as their first kill of a jungle cat or the passage into womanhood. Men of the more fanatical orders are often nearly covered with the vivid markings. In these cases, the proliferation of the images indicates rank or status, with various colors and designs being reserved for the highest members of the sect. The designs are flowing and intricate, and the colors are typically bright, though hunters will often turn toward more somber shades to blend with their surroundings as they move through the foliage.

FOOD AND DRINK

The Forest of Tears offers such a variety of edible plants that it is rare that the Honnin take any steps at all in preparation of their meals. Usually there is nothing more than a large bowl, filled with fruits and tubers. However, when meat is brought in, special steps are taken. As the flesh is cooked, the vegetables and fruits are also prepared with care, bringing forth dishes that compound the diversity of the Wood. The tastes run the gamut, from frightfully hot spices and curries, to sweet dips and glazes. The meats are so well complemented that a guest from outside the Wood might forget to ask whether he was eating cat or rodent.

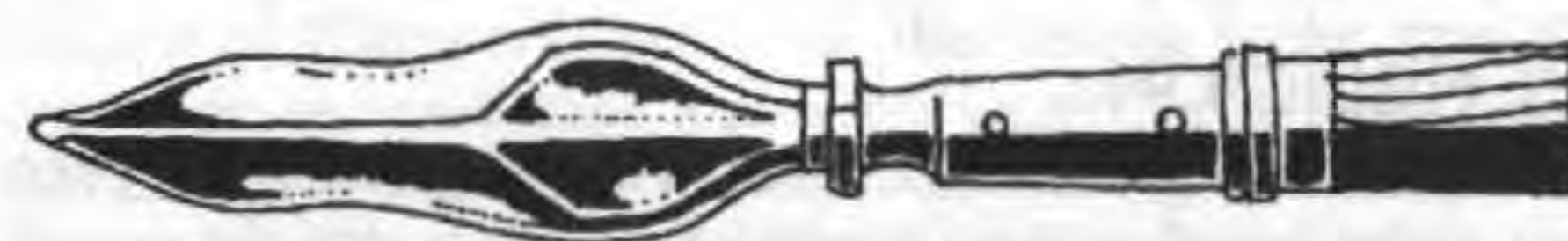
3.6 MAGIC AMONG THE HONNIN

At its height, the Honnin culture boasted magicians who were as great as any of its other craftsmen. There were users of Essence as well as those who drew upon the power of their many gods (i.e., Channeling).

In the centuries of their decline, however, the jungle folk have lost their knowledge of non-religious magic, along with so many other skills. The art that once flourished was powerful, and quite different from that practiced by mages outside the Wood. Now, only traces of it can be found; in items that have lasted through the generations and writings that are lost within the Wood. For someone who could decipher the ancient Honnin writing, the inscriptions on some of Pred's temple walls, or the writings that might still exist in the lost university could give an introduction to this forgotten art. Until then, the Honnin will know only the magic of their gods.

This Channeling is powerful as well, but only within the confines of the Wood. Outside their forest home, the gods' power dwindles rapidly to nothing. Items made through their magic will also fail. The one exception to this is the Goddess of the Moon. Suzush is a Valar, known to the Elves as Varda, and worshiped as Ladnoca by the Far Haradrim. The magic of her followers works as widely as that of any other Animists in Middle-earth.

In general, the spells used by Honnin priests are analogous to those used by channelers everywhere. They tend towards healing and other such applications. Lists can be derived from combining the spells of the channeling lists in *MERP* with a flavor for the realm over which the particular spirit holds sway. For the purposes of the adventures in this module, the spells of two Honnin gods are discussed below in more detail.



3.61 SPELLS OF THE TORI-JI

The spells provided by Oku-Tori are largely similar to those used by Animists outside the Wood. They have lists that correspond to each of the healing lists in *MERP*: Calm Spirits, Nature's Lore and Movement, Plant and Animal Mastery, and Purifications. They do not have spells for defense or protection, as the Honnin world has had no need for such things. In addition to these, the bird god gives the following two lists to those who attain rank among his followers.

AVIAN WAYS			
	Area of Effect	Duration	Range
1—Silence Birds	20'R/level	2 min/lvl	20'/lvl
2—Cloaking	Self	2 min/lvl	Self
3—Call Birds I	special	special	1mi/lvl
4—Bird Tongues	Self	2 min/lvl	Self
5—Call Birds II	special	C	1 mi/lvl
6—Taming	1 Bird	P	10'/lvl
7—Bird Shape I	Self	5 min/lvl	Self
8—Fly	Self	10 min/lv	Self
9—Bird Shape II	Self	C	Self
10—Call Birds III	special	C	1mi/lvl

- 1—**Silence Birds** (F) Causes all birds within 20'/level to fall silent.
- 2—**Cloaking** (E) Renders caster undetectable to all birds.
- 3—**Call Birds I** (F) Allows caster to summon all birds of first level or less, within 1mi/level. They will flock to his location, but will behave normally otherwise, though they will probably be excited and noisy. The call goes on as long as the caster concentrates, after which the birds will begin to dissipate. The rate at which they arrive will depend on the population of birds within the caster's range. In the *Forest of Tears*, this will usually result in a thick gathering within the first minute.
- 4—**Bird Tongues** (P) Allows caster to speak with the birds of the Wood. Conversations will be limited by the intelligence of the birds, but questions like, "Did a man in orange clothing pass here?" can be answered.
- 5—**Call Birds II** (F) As *Call Birds I*, but birds of up third level may be called. Alternatively, the caster may call to a single bird of a specific type, up to third level. If such a bird is within range, it will come and do the caster's bidding as long as he concentrates upon it.
- 6—**Taming** (F) Allows the caster to tame a bird of up to half his own level. The bird will serve its master as would a good, but stupid dog. Used with *Bird Tongues*, the partnerships formed with this spell can be quite useful.
- 7—**Bird Shape I** (F) Allows the caster to assume the form of any first level bird. In this form, he may use any of the combat and maneuvering abilities of the bird. He will retain his own hit points, but criticals from attacks should reflect the decreased size. Any equipment held by the caster will not be transformed with him.
- 8—**Fly** (U) Allows the caster to fly. His speed and maneuverability will be about the same as a very large owl. There is not a weight limit, but any extra weight carried will inhibit movements as much as it would for a walking man.
- 9—**Bird Shape II** (F) As *Bird Shape I* except the caster may take the form of any bird, up to half his own level.
- 10—**Call Birds III** (F) As *Call Birds II*, except that birds up to level 5 may be called in flocks, and a single bird up to half the caster's level may be drawn to do as it is told.

COMMUNIONS			
	Area of Effect	Duration	Range
1—Read Birds	Self	C	Sight
2—Sense Birds	Self	C	100'/lvl
3—Commune I	Self	C	10'/lvl
4—Touch Bird I	Self	C	Sight
5—Bird Sight I	Self	C	Sight
6—Commune II	Self	C	100'/lvl
7—Touch Bird II	Self	C	100'/lvl
8—Bird Sight II	Self	C	100'/lvl
9—Commune III	Self	C	1 mi/lvl
10—Commune True	Self	C	20 mi/lvl

- 1—**Read Birds** (P) Allows caster to read the attitudes of the birds around him as well as might a good forester. He will be able to detect the approach of danger, the proximity of food, and other similar types of general information. What form the danger or food might take, will be unknown.
- 2—**Sense Birds** (P) Allows the caster to know what sorts of bird are presently within the range of the spell.
- 3—**Commune I** (P) Allows the caster to share the feelings of the birds within the range of the spell. The information gained is like *Read Birds*, but more specific and from a greater area.
- 4—**Touch Bird I** (P) Forms a link by which the caster can read the feelings and thoughts of one specific bird within the range of the spell.
- 5—**Bird Sight I** (P) Allows the cater to see through the eyes of one bird within the range of the spell. He will not have control over what the bird chooses to look at.

- 6—**Commune II** (P) As *Commune I*, but with greater range, and the ability to distinguish specific areas within the range. For example, if some of the birds within range are feeding, but others are being hunted, the caster will be able to sort out which feelings are where.
- 7—**Touch Bird II** (P) As *Touch Bird I*, with greater range. The direction from the caster and the general type of bird may be specified, but if no suitable bird is found in the area (as determined by the GM), the spell will be wasted. The caster may also, switch birds up to three times, with the same options as to type and direction.
- 8—**Bird Sight II** (P) As *Bird Sight I* with the same enhancements as *Touch Bird 7*. For changing birds, the caster may move his vantage point from one bird to another that is within the first bird's field of vision without any chance of failure. Or, he may chose another direction or type of bird, with the same possibility of failure as in *Touch Bird II*.
- 9—**Commune III** (P) As *Commune II* with greater range.
- 10—**Commune True** (P) A combination of the 7th, 8th, and 9th level spells of this list, with enhanced range. If, at any point, the caster fails to make contact with a bird, as with *Touch Bird II*, the spell will be ended.



3.62 SPELLS OF MORI-KAM

The followers of Mori-Kam are given spells that match their calling. These include *Calm Spirits*, *Nature's Lore and Movement*, *Plant* (at one higher level than normal) and *Animal Mastery*, and *Purifications* from *MERP*. However, rather than any healing or offensive spells, they receive the following list.

HERB/POISON MASTERY

This list gives its users the ability to duplicate the effects of any of the jungle's herbs. For purposes of play, the GM can assume that any of the herbs from the tables in *MERP* will have substitutes somewhere in the *Forest of Tears*.

The herbs that a priest of Mori-Kam can duplicate are regulated by level. For poisons, this can be determined by comparing the attack level of the poison to 1.5 times the level of the caster. For healing herbs, the level required is the same as the level of a comparable spell on one of the healing lists. Other herbs should be rated with discretion by the GM. Range is also decided by level. First, second, and third level Monks must touch their targets; fourth through sixth must be within ten feet; seventh can cast the spell at thirty feet, and from there the range goes up by ten feet per level. Resistance rolls are given for all unwilling targets, versus the level of the caster, not the level of the herb being duplicated. Then an additional roll is made against the herb itself, if it is a poison.

Power Points are expended for each spell by the level of the comparable spell, in the case of healing, or the attack level for poisons. For other effects, the GM must decide on a reasonable level.

4.0 THE HIDDEN SHRINE

The land of Far Harad is home to a great many wonders. The face of the region seems to be a study in the extremes to which the soil of Middle-earth can be pushed. The Dune Sea and the plain of stone that the Far Haradrim call the Mirror of Fire stand surrounded by league after league of blached earth. But amid all of the dust and arid expanse there is the greatest wonder of all, the Forest of Tears. This wood rises up from the baked terrain like a misplaced piece of a more southerly jungle; a true rain forest, in a land where rain is virtually unknown. It is a brilliant splash of green, vibrant beauty set in contrast with all the region around. For the men who live beside it, the forest is also a pocket of mystery, for swarms of disease carrying insects keep even the bravest of the Haradrim from probing far into its depths.

4.1 THE TALE OF THE HERBSELLER'S FOOTPATH

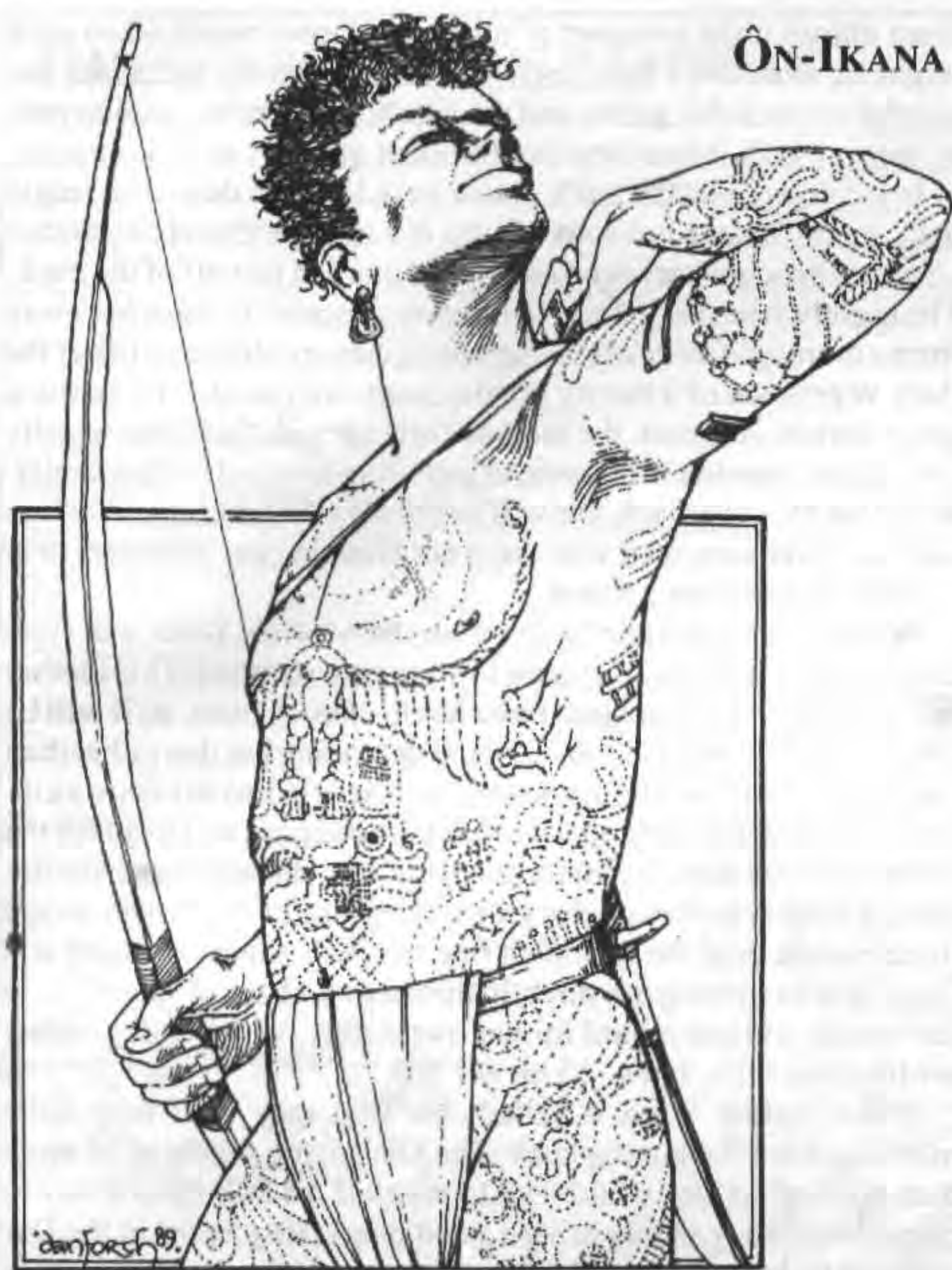
Although the Forest of Tears holds many dangers, it is also a source of livelihood for a fair number of Far Haradrim. Trappers, woodcutters, and herbalists journey every day into the eaves of the wood in search of plants and animals found nowhere else in the land. One man with great interest in this practice is Min Oturna, among the largest herbsellers in the city of Bozisha-Dar. Though he has long since retired from the actual gathering of roots and berries, he remains in the business by sending his hired hands to do so and selling their harvest at his stall in the city market.

The practice for Oturna's men, and for most of the others who live off of the produce of the forest, is to work from camps on the banks of the Rijesha. They push into the wood by day and retire at sunset, before the insects begin to stir. In their work, the men gradually cut pathways that often stretch several miles into the trees before looping back to the open land at another point. These paths are cleared over the course of some weeks and then used until they have been tapped out. Then the process begins again. Each is laid out so that a half day's walk will take a man from end to end, leaving a half day for work within the wood.

Today, however, Oturna is faced with a problem. On one of his new paths, his work parties are disappearing. He estimates that the path was half way through its arc, at its deepest point into the wood, when his men stopped coming home at the end of the day. The herbseller is puzzled and does not know what to think. He treats his men well and sees that they have what they need for their camps, but they may have found something in their explorations that they would rather not share with their employer. Perhaps another herbseller or a timber merchant is hiring them away in the face of customs that forbid such recruiting. Or, maybe, there is real danger afoot in the wood; something more than the hunting cats or giant snakes that are known to prowl among the tall trees, something capable of killing nearly a dozen men in three days.

To seek out the reasons behind his troubles, the herbseller hopes to hire a band of young adventurers. For a purse of seventy real silver coins, this group is to journey into the wood in the guise of a party of foragers to solve the mystery of the herbseller's footprint.





The young man is more of a free-thinker than the majority of his folk. He is curious about the lands he can glimpse from the eaves of the forest and, though he is careful not to let it show, he longs to find out what the outside world is like. Of all his folk, he is actually best suited for such a journey, through an accident of birth. In addition to his surprising size, ÔN-Ikana is blessed with a form of telepathy or empathy. It is not a coincidence that he is gifted when it comes to his dealings with others; he is able to sense their wants and motives and adjust his stance accordingly. The youth is not really aware that his skills are special, and he's good-hearted enough that he would never use this power to dominate his fellows. The power is effective with regard to all Men (or other similar races), and though he has thus far met only Honnin, language gaps will not trouble him. In fact, by tapping into the thoughts of a subject, he will be able to speak in the subject's native tongue, though his accent will be very strong.

ARU-SÛM THE SHAMAN

The shaman in charge of the shrine's guardians is a stout man known as Sûm. He is a steady member of his order, but not given to initiative or innovation. He is also somewhat dull in the eyes of the young Honnin he oversees; they follow his orders none-the-less. Since ÔN-Ikana's arrival, the situation has changed somewhat. The young man has done nothing to threaten the shaman's authority, but his popularity with the others has won him no points with Sûm. Still, there has not been any excuse for the shaman to voice his displeasure with such a conscientious guard.

The shaman's spells are somewhat different from the normal spells of Animists outside the forest. He has three lists that will serve him in a fight, which correspond to the Spirit Mastery list of Essence users, and Spell Defense and Surface Ways of the open Channeling lists in MERP. Other spells at his command deal with foraging and healing illnesses. See 3.6 for additional information.

4.2 THE NPCs

The players will not encounter a great number of NPCs in this adventure. In addition to Min Oturna, they may have contact with other citizens of Bozisha-Dar as they prepare for their sortie. The most important NPCs they will meet, however, will be the band of the aboriginal men who guard the hidden shrine. This group consists of five warriors and one shaman who have been given the charge of preserving their shrine from exposure to intruders. The men belong to the people who call themselves Honnin, which means in their tongue, the first men. This strange people is described in detail in section 3.0 and on the Master NPC table. All but one the men who guard the shrine are typical for their race. They are very much set in their ways and harbor an unquestioning fear and hatred for outsiders. The man who does not fit this mold is known as ÔN-Ikana and is described below, along with Aru-Sûm, the shaman.

ÔN-IKANA

The youngest of the Honnin standing watch at the shrine is a clever fellow called ÔN-Ikana. Though the shaman who oversees the guards thinks him an upstart, the other Honnin have already come to treat him as their captain. He is a bit too naive to recognize this fact, or the effect it has on the mood of the shaman, but he is friendly and is happy to have the good will of his older comrades. Few among the Honnin grow to more than five feet in height, but this young hunter, at the age of seventeen, has already touched six foot one. His build is leaner than the majority of his neighbors', though he might still be called heavy set in a group of Haradrim. Among his elders, he has already been noticed as a man destined for leadership. For many, his stature alone would indicate this, but he also possesses a remarkable talent for communication that is sure to serve him well throughout his life.

ARU-SÛM



4.3 THE SETTING

The skirts of the Haradwaith's great forest are the only portion of the wood itself that are known at all to the men who live outside it. They are a curious mix of light and dark, with more spots of golden sunlight than the rest of the wood, but still filled with the great trees, the lush undergrowth, and the quiet pools that typify the region. For about fifteen miles, all around the wood's perimeter, this half-jungle holds and is regularly traveled by outsiders. At the perimeter, there is only a narrow strip of dry scrub forest before the open lands begin. It is in the atmosphere of these skirts that the adventure of the hidden shrine is set.

The path that Oturna's men have cut is little more than a wide track. Even within five miles of the eaves, the forest allows such thoroughfares only grudgingly. The earth is still rough with the broken stems and the stumps of plants that the workers removed. Each day, a few new tendrils find their way into or across the cleared strip and make a step towards reclaiming the path.



UNCA

THE UNCA'S LAIR

The only large mammal of the wood is the Unca. This cat is on a par with a leopard in its stature, but its body is more similar in shape to that of a common house cat, stockier and more powerfully built than its spotted cousin's. The Unca's pelt is patterned with splotches in various shades of brown, giving the predator perfect camouflage amid the plants of the forest. This it uses to excellent advantage while prowling the overgrown jungle floor or hiding in low branches in its search for prey. The animal life of the wood is typically small and quick, so most of the cat's time is spent chasing through the leaves of the brush. However, the sturdy build of the

beast allows it the prospect of turning to larger beasts when such might be available. This stops short of the deadly petla, but the playful stetan is fair game, and the cat shows no reluctance to prey on men as well, when they can be taken quickly, and by surprise.

In the days since the work crews were last sent down the jungle path, a new tenant has moved into the neighborhood. A mother Unca has brought her seven kits and built a den just off of the track. The nightly rains leave little in the way of scents to warn her away from a thoroughfare of men. The young cats are sheltered under the thick vegetation of a thorny gondig bush, well hidden by its thick green leaves. At times, the mother curls up with them, but usually she is either hunting in the area, or prowling as guard for her family. When the PCs approach, she will be playing the latter role. Though she has never seen men who were not Honnin, any strangers near her brood constitute a threat.

When attacking larger beasts than themselves, Unca will typically drop from an overhanging limb to gain surprise. This mother has a number of perfect tree branches to choose from, so it will be little trouble for her to do so. As she is defending her den rather than hunting, she will not attempt to stay with her victims to assure a kill. Instead, she will leap to attack, inflict her damage, and head for the cover of the bushes. If circumstances allow, she will make similar attacks from branches or charging through the undergrowth, every three rounds until the intruders flee. If she is forced to stand and fight, or if her young are directly threatened, she will stay close in and attack without regard for her own safety, which will give her a +10 on all OBs, but a -15 on her DB.

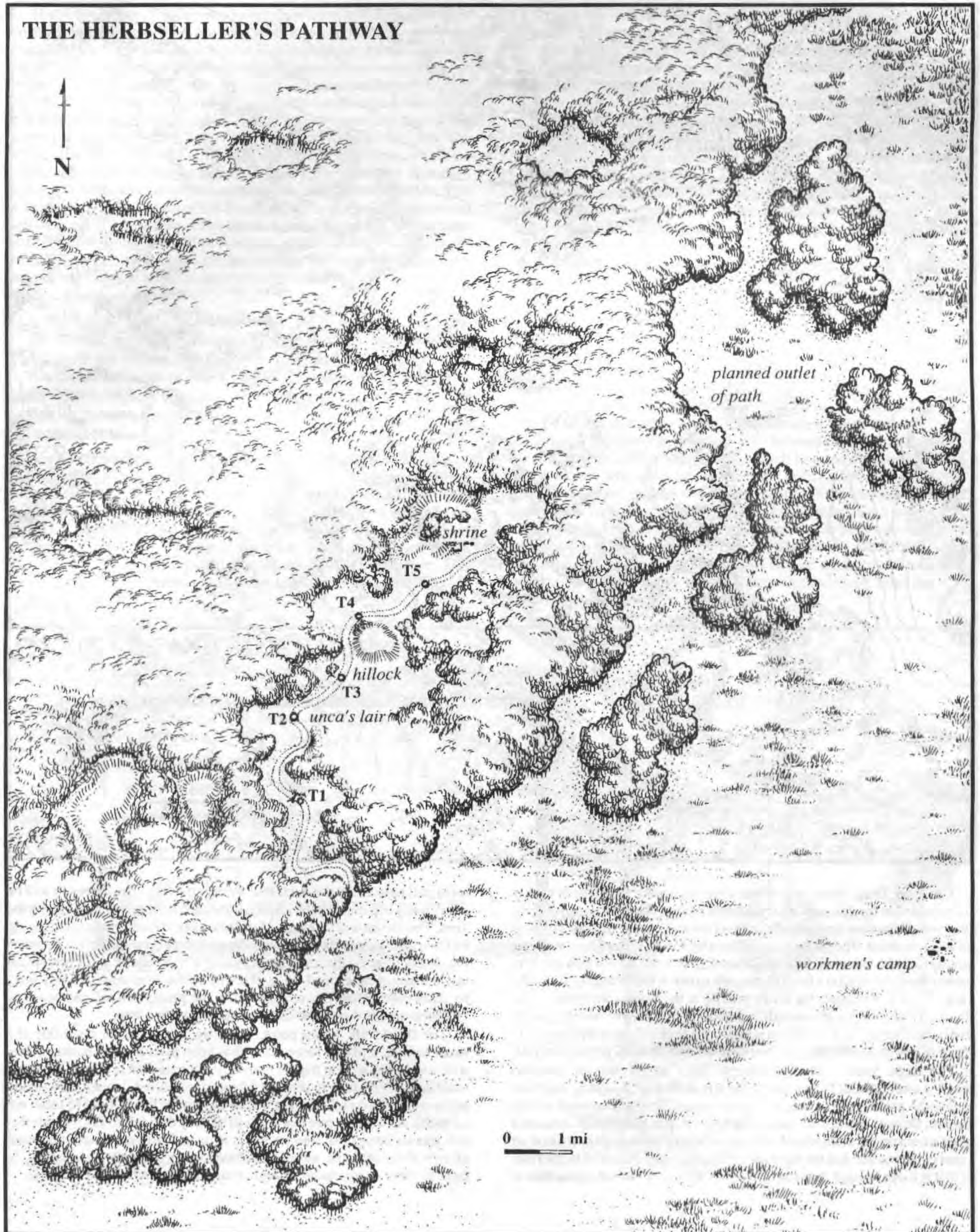
If the mother Unca is killed, the PCs may well hear quiet mewling from the gondig bush. The kits are too young to be more than playful, so they could well be taken if the PCs have a way to carry them. They would bring a good price (10sp each) in the Dar or could be kept as stout, though risky pets. If they are left here, it is likely that none will survive. For their skins, each would bring 1sp and the mother's hide, if not too badly damaged, will bring 7.

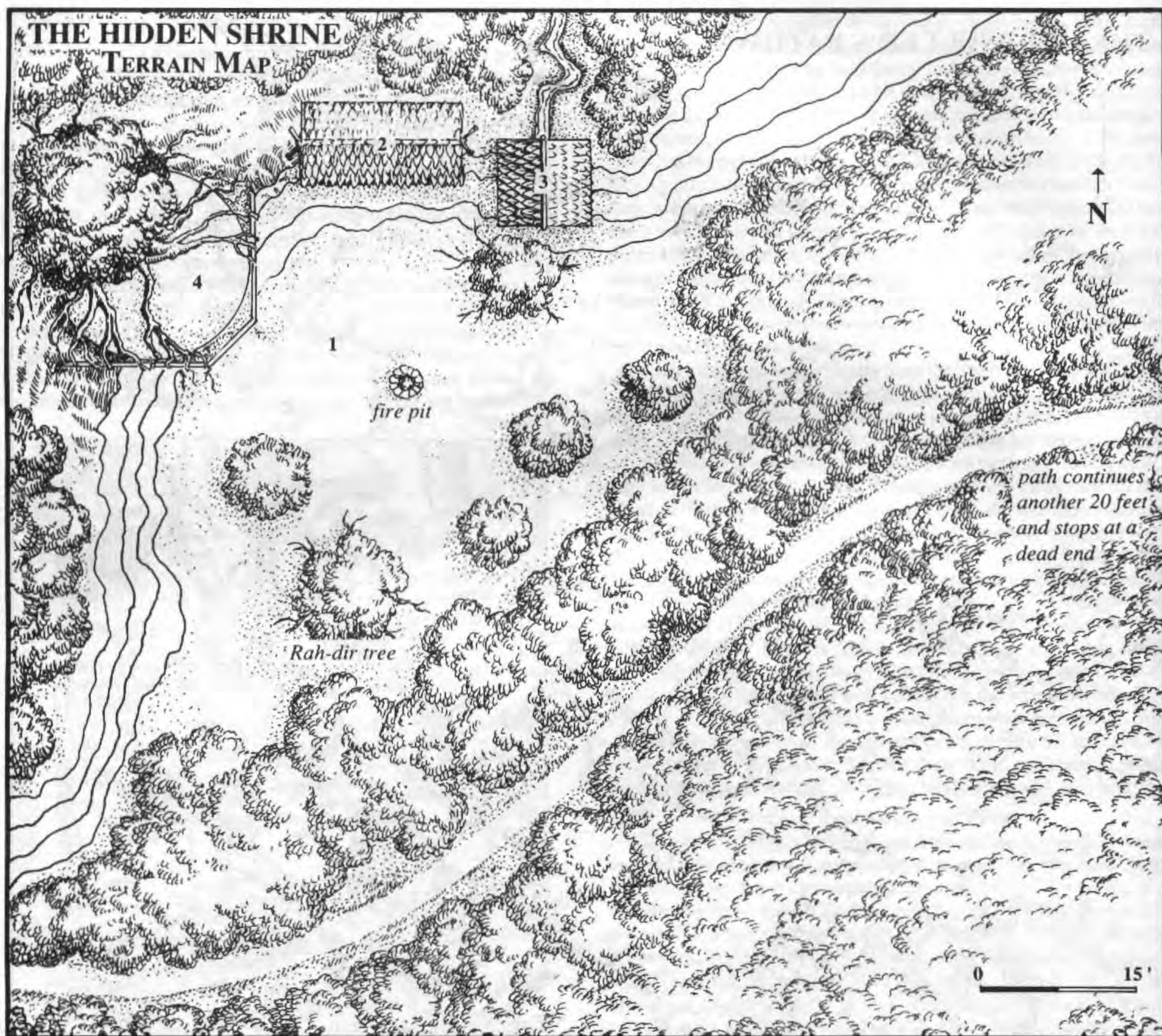
THE TRAPS ALONG THE PATH

The goal of the Honnin that guard the shrine is simply to keep outsiders from learning of themselves and the locations they frequent. They have watched the city men's ways of working the wood many times before, and feel sure that all they need do is make this new path more costly than normal and the workmen will turn elsewhere. To this end, they have set several obstacles and traps along the route. Most of these are designed to seem natural; a few have been copied from the hunting traps of other Haradrim. Each is set along a trail section littered with vines, twigs, branches, and undergrowth. Though it is possible for a group to investigate carefully every possible trap, they would have to move at a crawl to do so. With the time constraints set by the need to leave by sundown, it is unlikely that the PCs will be able to be as cautious as they might wish to be. Most of the traps will simply inconvenience passersby, but there are five that pose real danger; they are described below.

1. The Tree. At a sharp turn of the path, one dead tree has been leaned precariously against another. Branches of the loose one hang down across the way and block about half of it. This really looks like just one of the many spots where the path has been partially reclaimed. However, unless a careful and time consuming effort is made to avoid touching the foliage, each passer-by will stand a chance (01-30) of bringing the tree down onto the path. Each person within fifteen feet of the PC who springs the trap will have a chance (01-40 minus his Agility bonus) of being hit by the trunk or branches. A hit will deliver an unbalancing attack with a bonus of +10 to +60 (d6 x 10). If a player makes a -25 perception roll, he will notice that the tree is in danger of falling onto the path, but it would take a great deal of tracking skill to determine that it was actually a deliberate trap, even after it falls.

THE HERBSELLER'S PATHWAY





2. The Bow Trap. From one of the slain workmen, the Honnin took a horn short bow for this trap. As is common among Haradan trappers, they have lashed the bow horizontally across two saplings so that the arrow is set between them. The string is held drawn by a stick set against one of the saplings and to the stick is tied a vine that will act as a trip-wire. The contraption is located at a bend in the path so that it aims directly down the track. When it is tripped, the arrow will fly at the back of the victim. The attack will be rolled as an unmodified arrow attack with no normal defensive bonuses applied. Each PC passing on the trail will have a chance (01-45) of tripping the vine trigger. Noticing it requires a -20 perception roll.

3. The Rope Snare. Here the Honnin have copied another Haradan hunter's snare. About fifteen feet to the left of the trail, a sapling has been bent to the ground with a vine tied to its crown. The vine extends across the path through a patch of leafy undergrowth that has already managed to get a hold on the cleared soil. On the far side of the way, it is hooked on a spur of root so that just the right tug will pull it loose. Also tied to the vine, so that it loops around the area of the trip-wire, is a second strand that is

set to pull tight about the ankle that springs the trap. The net result will be a very hasty trip through the undergrowth, off of the path and in among the trees. The victim will take one -15 unbalancing critical and be left hanging by his ankle six feet off the ground. As with the bow trap, there is a chance (01-45) of tripping the trap, but detecting it will require a -25 perception roll because of the ground cover. If the PCs have been made actively wary by other traps before this one, however, the perception roll can be set at -10 because this does look like a perfect spot for a trap.

4. The Dead Fall. At one point, where the path hugs the steep side of a small hillock, a pile of large stones has been placed in the bushes above with a vine trip-wire to trigger a small avalanche. If it is tripped (chances identical to #3), it will shower fifteen unmodified 1-hand concussion weapon attacks on all who are within ten feet of the victim (15 total, not 15 each). As with the tree in #1, it will be very difficult to say for sure that this was an intentional trap once it is sprung. There are vines and stones all over the place here, and it could have been a coincidence of nature. In light of other occurrences, though, foul play may still be a fair guess.

5. The Whip Snare. This is perhaps the most lethal of the Honnin traps. Like numbers two and three, it is very similar to a technique used by city men when they fight each other for the right to work in a particular part of the wood. A stout branch has been wedged between two trees that grow an arm's length from the left side of the path. It is arranged so that it crosses the way at right angles but has been pulled until it curves back like a bow. It is held in place by a vine that is looped around a tree and then strung across the way like the one in #3, but without the constricting loop. The whole assembly is shielded from view by a stand of tall ferns, which are common along both sides of the trail. Finally, there are two sharpened stakes set into the front of the branch to impale its unfortunate victim. This is the least easily disguised of the five traps, and a normal perception roll will detect it. If it is not detected, the chances of tripping it are the same as #2. The result will be a +45 unbalancing attack for the PC who trips the vine and any who are within 3 feet behind him. For each victim (until two have been hit), there is also a chance (01-30) of being hit with a +35 horn attack from one of the spikes.

THE SHRINE

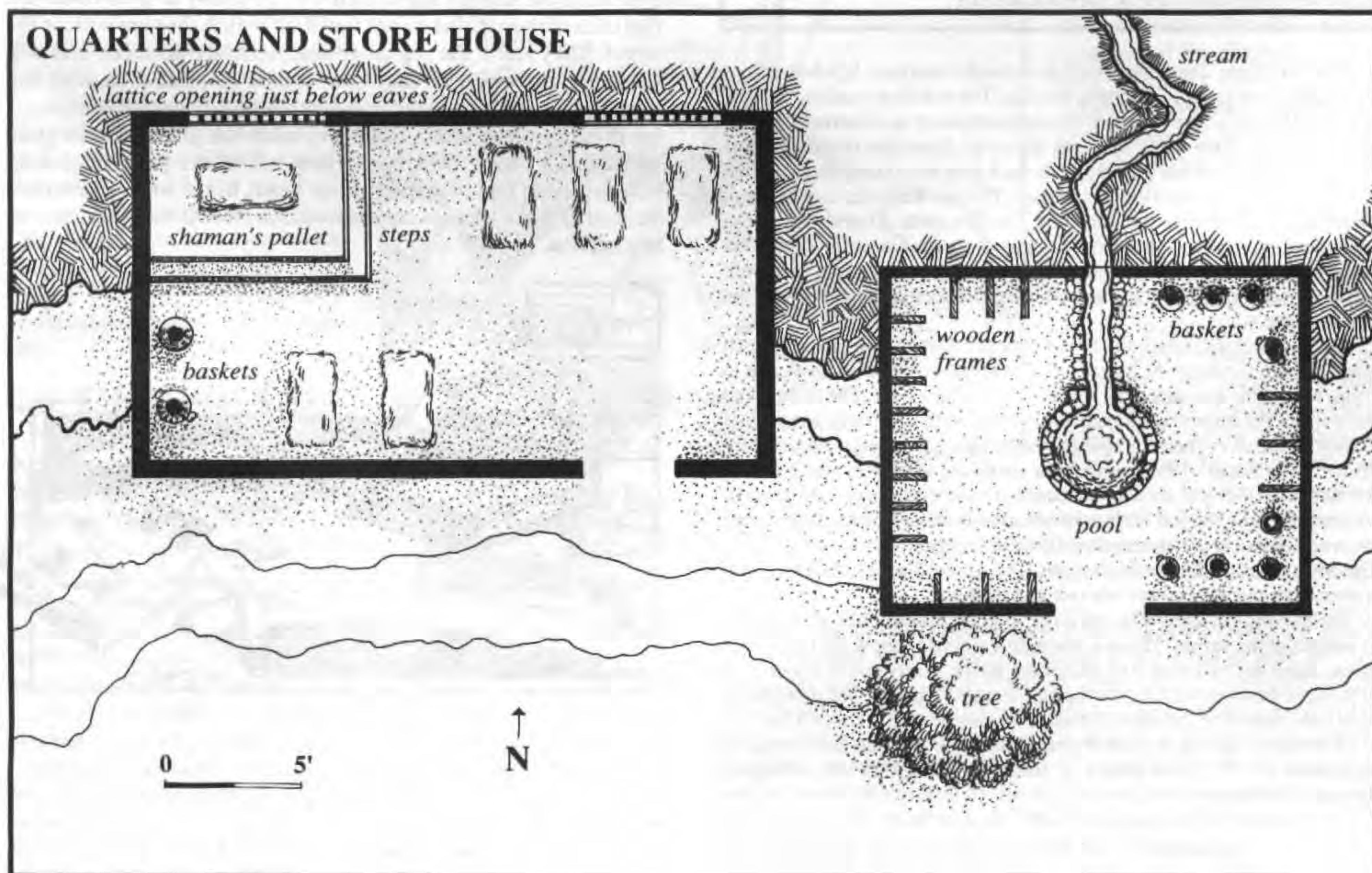
The source of Oturna's trouble is a small shrine to the Honnin goddess of the Moon, Suzush. It is nothing more than a stone pavilion with a couple of huts for its attendants, but it is the nearest of the forest people's buildings to the city of Bozisha-Dar. For this reason, they set a special guard over it to ensure that it is not discovered by outsiders.

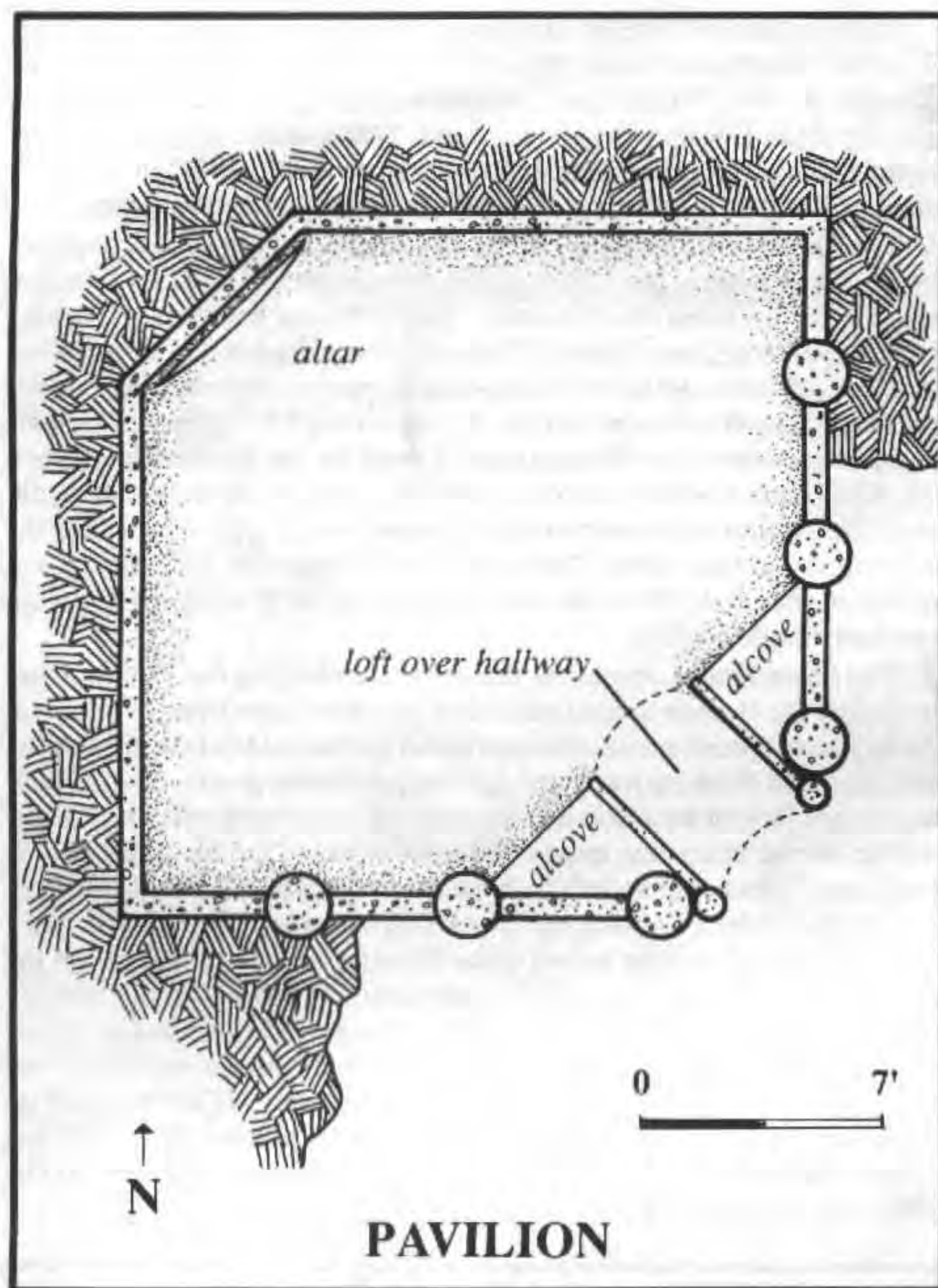
1. The Clearing. The three buildings that make up the shrine compound sit around this relatively open area. Only ten feet of brush separate it from the path Oturna's men have cut just to the southeast. The north and west sides of the rough square rise up a bit and the shrine itself is built into the bank. The sleeping hut and the store room are set along the north side of the glade. These buildings look out on a space of bare packed earth where the coming and going of the jungle men has driven out all vegetation. This square is about forty feet to a side and it holds six old trees and a large cooking pit.

Of the trees here, five are of species which are not made for climbing; their first branches are more than fifty-five feet high. The last, however, is a Rah-dir (Hn. "High Road") which has strong, evenly spaced limbs starting about five feet from the ground. This is commonly used by the Honnin as a place to relax after meal times, so there will often be one or more of the guards lounging in its branches from 15 to 30 feet up.

2. The Quarters. The guards of the shrine and the shaman live together in this low structure. The building, like the storage hut standing beside it, is a simple, one room structure with a frame of stout branches and a thick covering of large, tough leaves. These leaves secrete a resin which binds them to each other and keeps out the nightly rains. On the earthen floor rest six sleeping mats woven of soft fronds, one set slightly off from the others, in the corner where the shaman sleeps. Except for the hours of dusk, when the rains come, this hut is unoccupied from sunrise to midnight. At night, since the first intruders came to call, there are always two men patrolling the clearing in four hour shifts. The Honnin do not know that their visitors will not come after dark. When the men are sleeping, each will have his sword and bow beside his bed.

3. The Store House. A smaller version of the sleeping hut, this structure is used by the Honnin to hold their food and other provisions. It is built at the source of a small stream that runs down the back side of the hill serving as a source of drinking water and cooling perishable goods. A small pool has been hollowed out and in it floats a collection of fruits and tubers which will be served in coming meals. From the wood of the building's frame hang many bundles of herbs which are used as spices and also for healing. At the time of the PCs' visit, this stock will be somewhat depleted, since the workmen who came before them did inflict a few casualties on the guards. However, there is still a fair selection. For those who can identify them, there are six tarnas bulbs, a bundle of bright red witan leaves, a dose of anserke and two of belan, and submerged in the pool a pottery jar that holds seven doses coraco juice (see *Far Harad* and *MERP* for stats on these healing herbs). Also kept in this hut are a number of totems and charms for visitors to the temple. These necklaces are worn for weeks following a pilgrimage as signs of piety.





4. The Pavilion. The shrine itself is a simple structure. It is built all of stone and displays very fine craftsmanship. The building is set into the side of a low hill, and in the course of the centuries since its construction it has become a part of the landscape. Just above its dome-like roof, in the turf of the hill, a great tree has grown and its thick gray roots come down around the walls of the shrine in a loving embrace. The two walls that face out from the hillside meet at an arched doorway. They are made of tightly set blocks to about waist height and from there up they are carved in lattice work. This structure is strengthened by three thick circular columns set into each wall. The doorway stands open. Its carved lintelposts are slighter versions of the pillars of the walls.

Inside, the shrine is dark and relatively cool. A short, low-ceilinged hall leads in from the door. At its end, the room opens out, with an alcove to either side of the entrance way and a sort of loft above it. The ceiling and the walls of the interior are beautifully carved with a swirling pattern that represents the airs of heaven, spangled with a host of tiny star shaped silver mirrors. The floors of the two alcoves are raised three feet above that of the main chamber and set with hundreds of candles on stone candlesticks for festival days. The loft is empty and can be reached quickly from either alcove, though a few of the candles would probably be upset in the process. The remainder of the shrine is open. The stone floor is scattered with woven cushions for visitors who sit and meditate.

The carvings of the walls converge directly opposite the door on the altarpiece of the shrine. This is a silver disk etched to show the face of the moon. Each day, the men who attend the shrine gently polish it and each of the three hundred stars so that they all sparkle brightly when there is any light in the chamber. A cradle of stone is set into the wall to support the disk at its bottom edge, but it is otherwise unattached. The disk will bring the equivalent of 100 silver pieces in the Dar, if the PCs are willing to desecrate the shrine.

4.4 THE TASK

In this adventure, the players are faced with a simple enough task. They must follow the trail of Oturna's men and try to discover the root of the wealthy herbalist's troubles. If all goes well, this will be compounded by the more pressing task of keeping body and soul together. For a party of young adventurers, this should prove challenging enough to make the rewards they reap seem well earned.

4.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

The players should be started in the Dar. Once they have been contacted by Oturna, or his agents, and a price has been negotiated, they will be given all of the information available to the herb seller: little more than the location of the entrance to the path. Then they can make their way with little trouble to the eaves of the wood where the adventure begins.

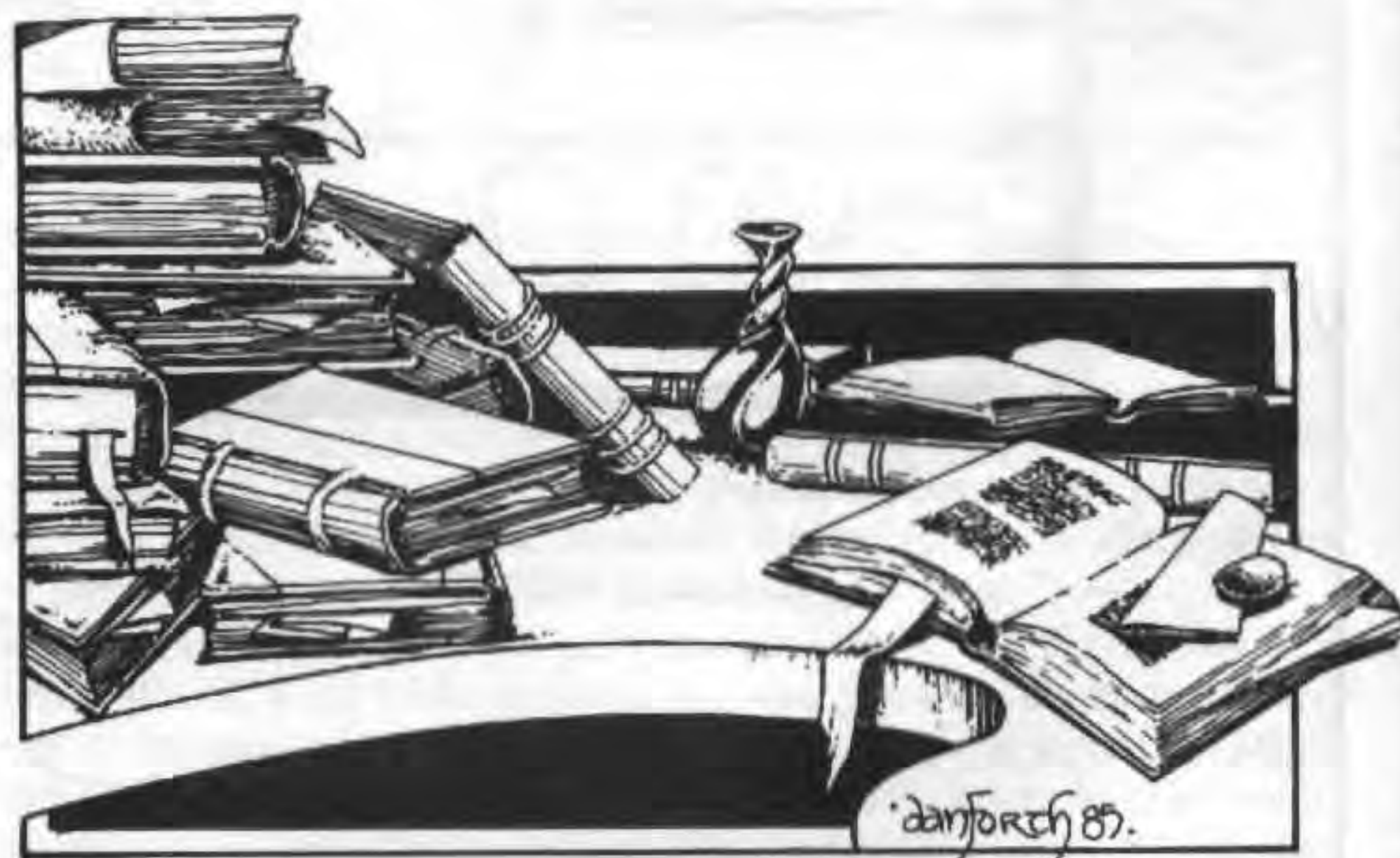
For a twist, the players might be presented with the job as a mere problem of labor relations. They could be sent in to find out who is stealing away Oturna's men, or why they are running off, without any mention of more sinister possibilities.

4.42 AIDS

The only real aid the players can expect to receive is the information the Oturna will give them. If the GM sees fit, though, the merchant might also send along some of his beneficial plants to help in times of need. Otherwise, the PCs will have to survive with only what they take into the forest with them; a weapon or two, their own talents, and the stalwart spirits of true heroes.

4.43 OBSTACLES

The main challenge to the PCs will come from the six Honnin who keep the shrine. These men will go to any lengths to ensure that tales of their shrine do not find their way to the men outside the wood. They know the region around the place perfectly and will make use of every trick they have at their disposal to destroy any intruders. In addition to these, there may be threats from the jungle itself. Many of the beasts that prowl under the great trees are quite dangerous to men. Simply straying off of the path, or getting otherwise lost can be deadly if one heads in the wrong direction. Several of these hazards are described in more detail elsewhere in this section.



4.44 REWARDS

In addition to the prestige that will come to any who bring news of the existence of the Honnin (assuming anyone believes them), the PCs stand to receive a fair amount of material gain from this endeavor. The reward from the herbseller, added to what treasure they may find at the shrine, should set them up in style for some time. The merchant, by-the-by, will be more than happy to give his reward in the form of herbs from his stock, trading them against his silver at twenty percent less than their normal market value. In this deal, he will come out slightly ahead, since he usually turns about a twenty-five per cent profit, once all of his costs have been calculated.

Players from Far Harad should be given some questions by the image of the moon in the shrine. It may stir images from their own beliefs. The proper action for them to take is difficult to determine and will depend on each character's attitudes. If they take it, they could sell it or donate it to a priest of Ladnoca, but most potential buyers would wish to know its source and might have qualms if they learn the truth.

The final possibility of reward will come if the PCs choose to befriend the Honnin they meet. If they assure the jungle men that the secret will be kept safe, they will win a friendship that might prove invaluable should they ever return to the wood. It may even be possible for them to have the best of both worlds, if they can concoct a plausible falsehood to tell Oturna that will still cause him to abandon his trail. A story, for instance, of a narrow escape from a wide and treacherous bog which shrouds the end of the trail with noxious fumes might do the trick. On the other hand, if they intend to double-cross Ôn-Ikana, it is likely that he will sense their duplicity and abandon his attempts to negotiate.

4.5 ENCOUNTERS

Several of the encounters that the PCs may experience have been covered above in section 4.3.

Their meetings with the Honnin, however, will be dealt with in the following paragraphs. Depending on the nature of the players and the campaign, the final segments of the adventure could take wildly differing courses. Based on these possibilities, the GM must decide how much time he would like to spend with the encounters on the way to the shrine and balance this with the amount of action he expects at the shrine itself.

The PCs will almost certainly be discovered by the Honnin two or more miles before they reach the shrine. From that point on, the jungle men may begin to harass them. This can range from simple howling and hooting in the trees in an attempt to discourage them, to real attacks from the sides of the trail. Two of the guards will be given this duty, while the others wait and guard the shrine itself.

Once the shrine is reached, unless real diplomatic efforts are made by the PCs (or by Ôn-Ikana), a battle will begin. The Honnin are not a warlike people, and they will avoid a stand-up fight if they can, opting instead for quick, disjointed attacks. The Honnin hunters will use their bows first and then their swords. The shaman will begin with spells and then use his own sword if need be.

NOTE: *The Honnin are not very well equipped for real fighting. Their swords are poor at best, being badly designed for fencing and made only of bronze (-5 short swords). Their bows are somewhat better, and each man carries twenty arrows, which are barbed and will inflict two additional hits of damage for each wound they deliver.*

If diplomacy is brought into the scheme of the adventure, a more complicated scenario will form. The attitude that the guardians of the shrine have displayed thus far is one of open hostility. They

have murdered a number of workmen to prevent their discovery by outsiders, and their first inclination will be to carry this practice on to members of the players' party. However, when they are faced with the concerted actions of a band of armed adventurers, they are likely to take pause to reconsider. From this, a number of encounters can be built. Early on, the PCs may be met with bold attacks giving them no choice but to fight. However, as the game progresses the GM might choose to mediate the aggressiveness of the Honnin. Rather than toss their lives away in a fight, the guardians may see the possibility of reconciliation. The shaman will resist this tendency, but he is not a strong enough leader to force his men to fight against their will. Ôn-Ikana may try to communicate with the intruders using his telepathy and empathy, if he perceives that the players might be receptive. He may plead that they simply return to their homes and allow the trail to close again. In return, he can offer them healing herbs from



MIN OTURNA

the storage shed for whatever damage they have suffered and safe passage out of the jungle, as well as a totem saying that they are friends of the Honnin, which might save their lives sometime in the future.

This last scenario is one that opens the most doors for future relations with the men of the jungle. If the Honnin here are just killed off and word is brought back to the city, it is quite likely that the Haradrim will treat their new-found neighbors no better than the Rohirrim treat the Woses of their forests. If a peaceful settlement is reached though, it may be possible for the PCs to have many more adventures in the wood without ever telling the city folk what they have found. This would spare the Honnin much suffering and almost certainly win their friendship.

5.0 THE TOWER OF BIRDS

Among the people of Far Harad there have always been fanciful tales of the Forest of Tears that were put down to nothing more than superstition. The stories told by old aunts and the veteran foresters in the taverns place all manner of sprites and demons in the wood, waiting to do mischief on the poor man who should stumble upon them. One of the most terrible of these is the tale of Tica the Birdman, a flying man-shaped monster which hunts for the heads of folk who linger too long in the paths of the forest. The adventure of the Tower of Birds centers on the kernel of truth from which this legend was built.

5.1 THE TALE OF KLORIN'S AMULET

One of the most skilled magical craftsmen of Bozisha-Dar is a man named Ferit Klorin. In his shop, he produces swords, charms, and talismans for the wealthiest of Far Harad's citizens. His latest work, though, is not for sale. It is an amulet which he plans to give away. The reason behind this is a sad tale indeed, and its effect on the man has been hard. It is one that he has told often though in the course of his search, the search for men who can avenge the death of his only son.

Ferit Klorin was not as gifted as his father in the pursuit of magical arts, but remained in the family business doing a job for which he was more suited. He gathered items and ingredients for his father's projects. The tough young warrior hunted the Prelaz Bic of the desert for their tough, scaly hide; he garnered ore from the remains of fallen stars; and he journeyed into the Forest of Tears to gather rare earths from among the ancient trees. On a trip into the wood, he met his end.



FERIT KLORIN

With two of the family's guards, he went into the shadows of the jungle to gather a bagfull of a certain loam, called Lon-Tiefil. The guards, when they returned with their leader's body, told a gruesome tale. As night was falling and they approached the edge of the trees, a horrible shriek sounded from above them, and a terrible beast, a winged man, dropped on Feritor's back. Before his strong body had even dropped to the earth, the thing had used its great claws to tear his head from his shoulders. Then, with a piercing cry of glee it leaped into the air and flew back into the wood, leaving only the broken body of Feritor and a few stinking feathers. The guards gathered their wits, picked up the body and the feathers, and made tracks back to the city.

When the old craftsman heard the tale, he was distraught. He went immediately to the officers of the city watch to ask for help. He was told that he should hire more reliable guards in the future, and that, if he could show proof of their misconduct, he could certainly have his son's companions charged with the murder. An important man like himself should have little trouble with the formalities.... Ferit was not inclined to mistrust his men, however, and chose another course instead.

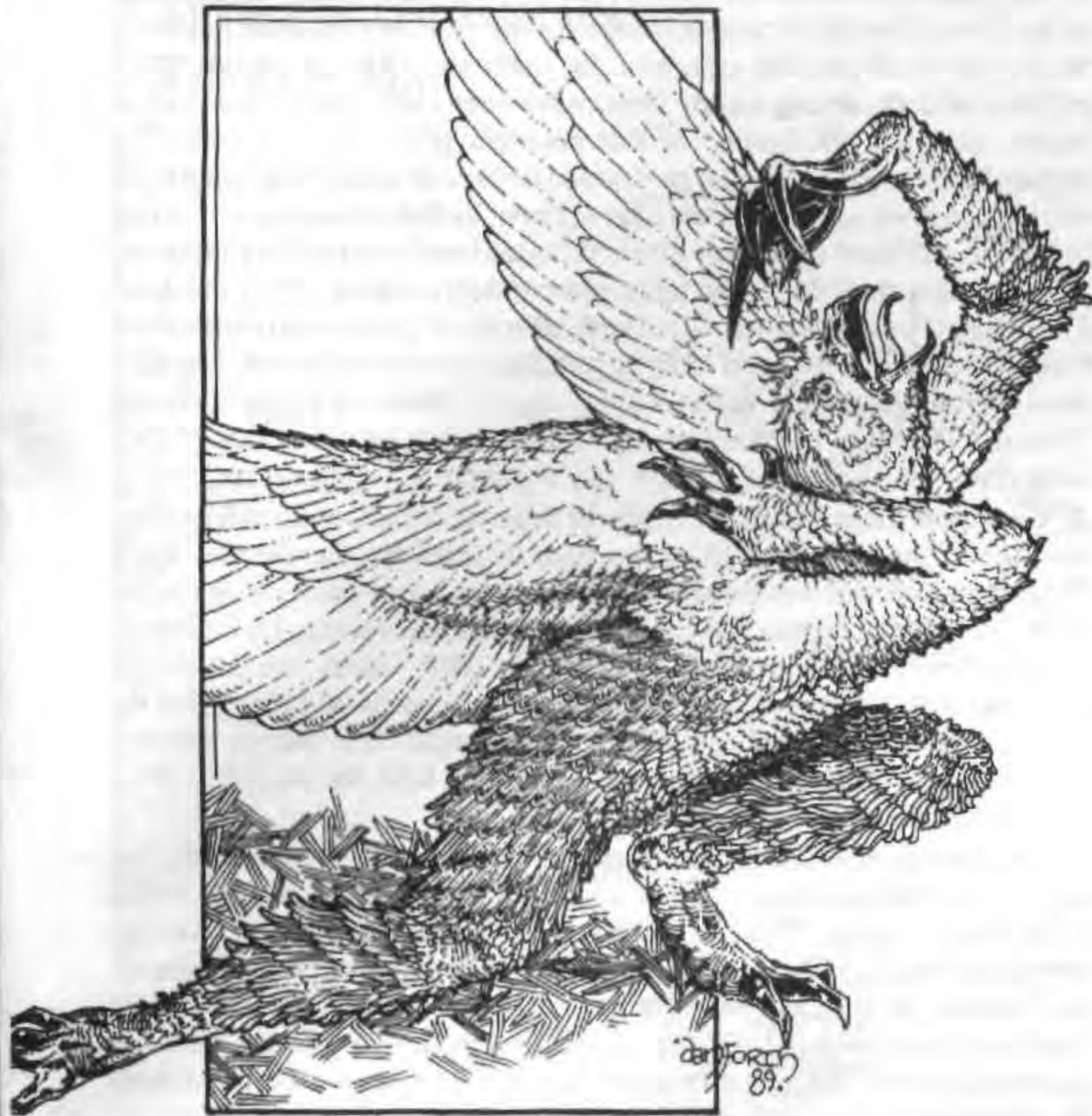
He constructed a device which will find the murderer. Using the feathers his guards brought back, he set a small arrow on a chain which will point to the nest from which they came. To this, he added a charm, a ceramic amulet, made from the loam which his son was sent to get. From it, there emanates a sphere thirty feet in diameter into which the insects of the forest will not fly. He hopes now to arm a band of adventurers with the items and send them to find the beast that slew his son. He is offering a generous reward, but to a brave band the thrill of a journey into the mysterious wood should be enough incentive for them to jump at his offer.

5.2 THE NPCS

Aside from the citizens of Bozisha-Dar that they will encounter as they prepare for their excursion, the player characters will meet only the Honnin that guard the Tower of Birds. These are all staunch followers of the Tori-Ji, the Honnin bird cult. The members of this sect, though they are not numerous, are known for their devotion and fanaticism. The men who guard their highest temple fit this description to the letter. In the service of their god, they will stop at nothing, and legend holds that more than one worshiper has given himself willingly to Tica's unsavory appetites. The temple's compliment at present consists of seven men, two priests of the order, two initiates, and three novices. The two priests have nearly identical tenure and direct the affairs of the temple together. These men are described in detail below, along with the bird god himself. Statistics for the others may be found on the NPC table.

TICA THE BIRDMAN

The being that is the focus of the Tori-Ji is an interesting mixture of deity and beast, known to the Honnin as Oku-Tori. A normal man has been taken by the god of birds as a channel through which to communicate with the Honnin. The spirit itself has little more intellect than the forest birds it rules, and its life is filled only with the satisfaction of its animal appetites. When it is joined with a man, however, it takes on some of his understanding. The spirit can communicate with other men, and it can comprehend their desires. The unfortunate host is driven completely mad by this possession, and nothing of his original character shows once he assumes his role. In return for the strength it derives from their worship and the food they bring to sustain its host, the god gives the Honnin help when they hunt the birds of the Suza Sumar and information on the passings that are seen by its avian legions. It should be noted that the birds themselves are not revered by the jungle faith; they are just one of the forest's many resources which their gods help the Honnin use to better advantage.



TICA THE BIRDMAN

In addition to the role of medium, the god gives the body it takes the power of flight. Almost instantly upon possession, bright feathers sprout from the skin of the man, and broad wings form at his shoulders. His face stretches forward into a cruel beak, matched by fearsome talons at his hands and feet. Whenever the spirit chooses, it can fly from its open roost at the peak of the tower, out across the forest to join with its minions in the freedom of the skies. Strangely though, the deity spends the majority of its time huddled in a rude nest, surrounded by its own filth. Each day, however, it does venture out at least once. At the setting of the sun, the spirit in its altered body takes wing to gather heads. The reason for this is unknown even to the members of the cult, but it is accepted as the right of the god. It is really nothing more than the sort of purposeless interest which some more normal birds take in gathering small, shiny objects. In addition to the many tattoos that are common among their people, the men of the Tower of Birds wear a complicated image of their god upon their throats. Oku-Tori does not shy away even from his own servants when the hunt is on, and they believe that this mark will deliver them into further service of the avian spirit if he should take their lives. They also make an effort to be inside their temple through the hours around dusk.

In appearance, the god of the Tori-Ji is both terrifying and sad. Though it is only of typical Honnin stature, its spreading wings span thirteen feet, and the blackened claws that have replaced its hands and feet are powerful and razor sharp. The creature has no instinct towards grooming, and the fine feathers that grow from the human flesh are soiled; spattered with blood as well as the beast's own wastes. Its smell is powerfully repulsive, but the men who serve in the temple have grown used to it. It wears no clothing, but the tattered, filthy feathers cover all of its body except the face, where mad eyes stare from normal Honnin features above a bony beak.

ÔN-ENO

The younger of the two priests (Hn. "Ônu") is the more senior in the eyes of the order. His initiation preceded that of Ôn-Tomu by only a few days, though, and he recognizes the wisdom of the older man. Luckily the two are very similar in outlook, so there is rarely any friction between them. Eno is as fanatical as any member of his order, and this fervor is matched by an impressive intellect. He is also charismatic and popular with his fellow clerics. His rise through the ranks of the Tori-Ji has been very fast, bringing him into his position of authority at the age of only thirty-three.

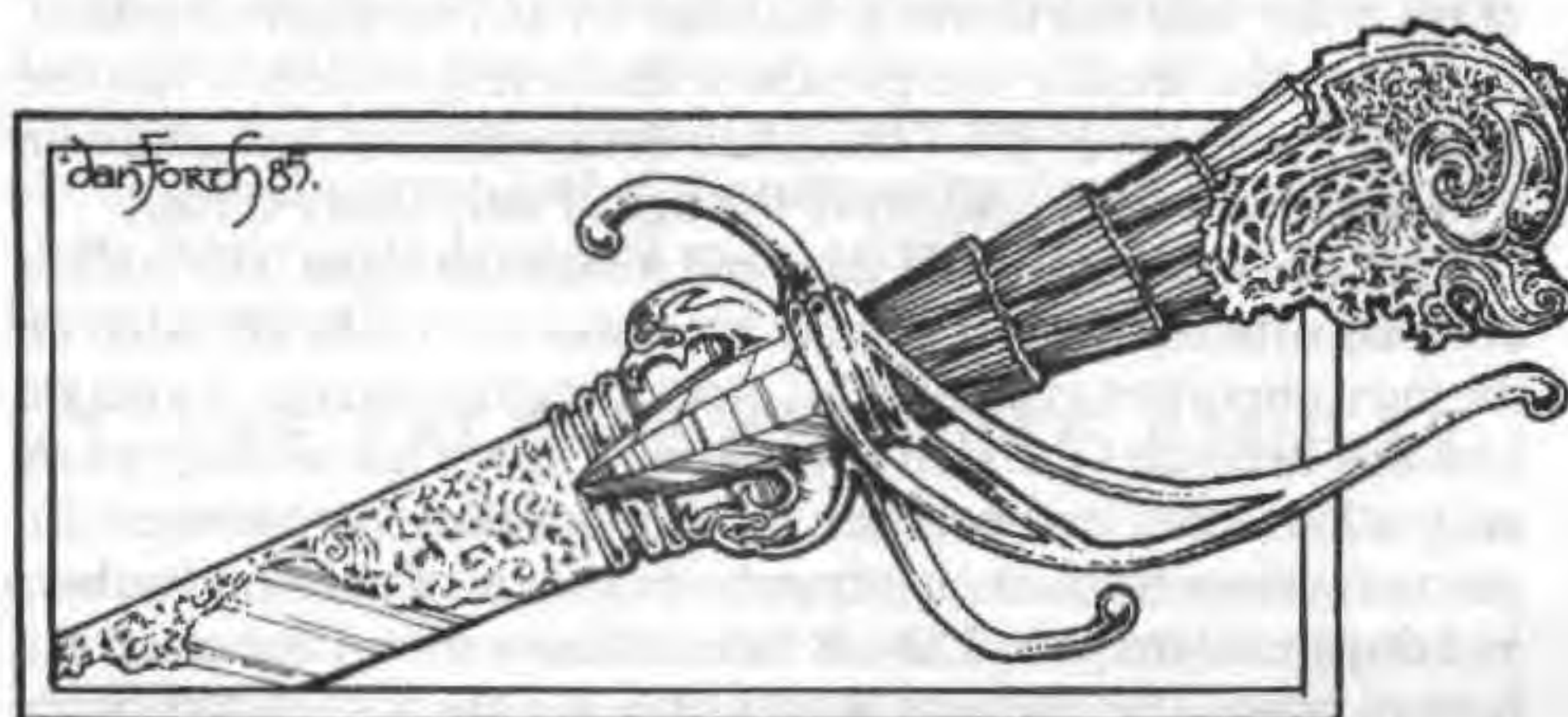
Eno, like all of his race is dark and somewhat squat. His body is covered with tattoos that display his status and focus attention on the most important symbol of his order, a stylized image of a jungle bird that decorates the skin of his throat. The priest usually wears only a loin cloth except when he is conducting ceremonies. On such occasions he dons an impressive raiment of colorful feathers and tiny metal mirrors. This includes a heavy robe, trousers, and a beaked cowl. The costume leaves only his black eyes and decorated chest exposed.

ÔN-TOMU

The oldest of the attendant priests, Ôn-Tomu began his career as a simple hunter. He was already over forty when a rotten branch dropped him from a tree, leaving him with a crippled leg. He would have died there in the jungle, but a flock of Iu-Tori was disturbed by his fall and their squawking brought other Honnin to investigate. The fourteen years that have passed since have been spent in the service of the bird god, to whom Tomu believes he owes his life. He is devoted to his order, and neither his age nor his twisted leg have dampened his zeal. He has retained much of the strength he had as a hunter and will prove surprisingly formidable to any who opposes him in melee. He is a man of powerful personality as well. If anything should happen to Eno, the other members of the order will not suffer from any lack of leadership while Tomu is alive.



Tomu clothes himself much the same as his colleague, though his formal finery is a trifle less elegant. His old body has weathered well, but still lets age show where it has begun to sag around the corners. The wrinkled features of his face still hold fire and life. Under greying brows, his eyes glitter and his voice matches them, full of the authority that comes only with experience.



5.3 THE SETTING

The Tower of Birds stands in a small clearing amid the trees of the forest. From its foundation, the structure rises in five stories to an open chamber eighty feet above the earth. A tight spiral stair runs up its center with a landing at each floor. The first floor holds the kitchen and common room for the temple and a dormitory for the lower ranking members of the *Tori-Ji*. The second is taken up by the sanctuary where the faithful perform their rituals to please the temple's god. Above this are the chambers of the order's priests, and above them the temple treasury where centuries of offerings have been gathered to await the pleasure of Tica. In the top chamber of all lives the chosen of the birds himself.

The structure is built all of the white stone common in the Forest of Tears. Its outer walls are carved with rank after rank of anthropomorphized images of birds. Feathered warriors and laborers climb together about the circumference of the building in a gentle spiral. The beautifully carved stone shows its age in the deposits of dirt that sport small outbursts of greenery among the blocks, and in the smoothing of its edges from centuries of wind and weather.

The interior shows the same stone, though not so richly carved. Windows, hidden from the outside amid the bas relief, let light in through sheets of oiled cloth. Torch brackets are also set throughout the structure. The first floor is entered through an almost circular arch which leads to a wide hallway. This stretches back to a circular chamber at the tower's center which contains the stairway. There are three doors off of this which open onto the rooms of the ground level.

1. Dormitory. The priesthood of the Honnin bird god is not large. This may be attributed to the low relative standing that Oku-Tori holds among the jungle deities, and to the risk of decapitation that goes with service at the shrine of the deity. At present, under priests who live upstairs, there are five novices and initiates who live in this chamber. Each has a simple cot, framed with wood and padded with soft leaves over a net of vines. Two other cots wait without bedding for new initiates to join the order.

The temple has never had a need for guards, but one of the men from this room always sits a vigil through the night in the sanctuary, ready to serve any needs of the god. The rest sleep here from about ten in the evening until dawn, when the birds of the wood awaken. Each of the residents of the room owns only his clothing and his weapons, which he keeps with him at all times. So, if men are here asleep, their light bows and bronze short swords will be beside their beds. Otherwise, the room holds nothing of value or real interest.

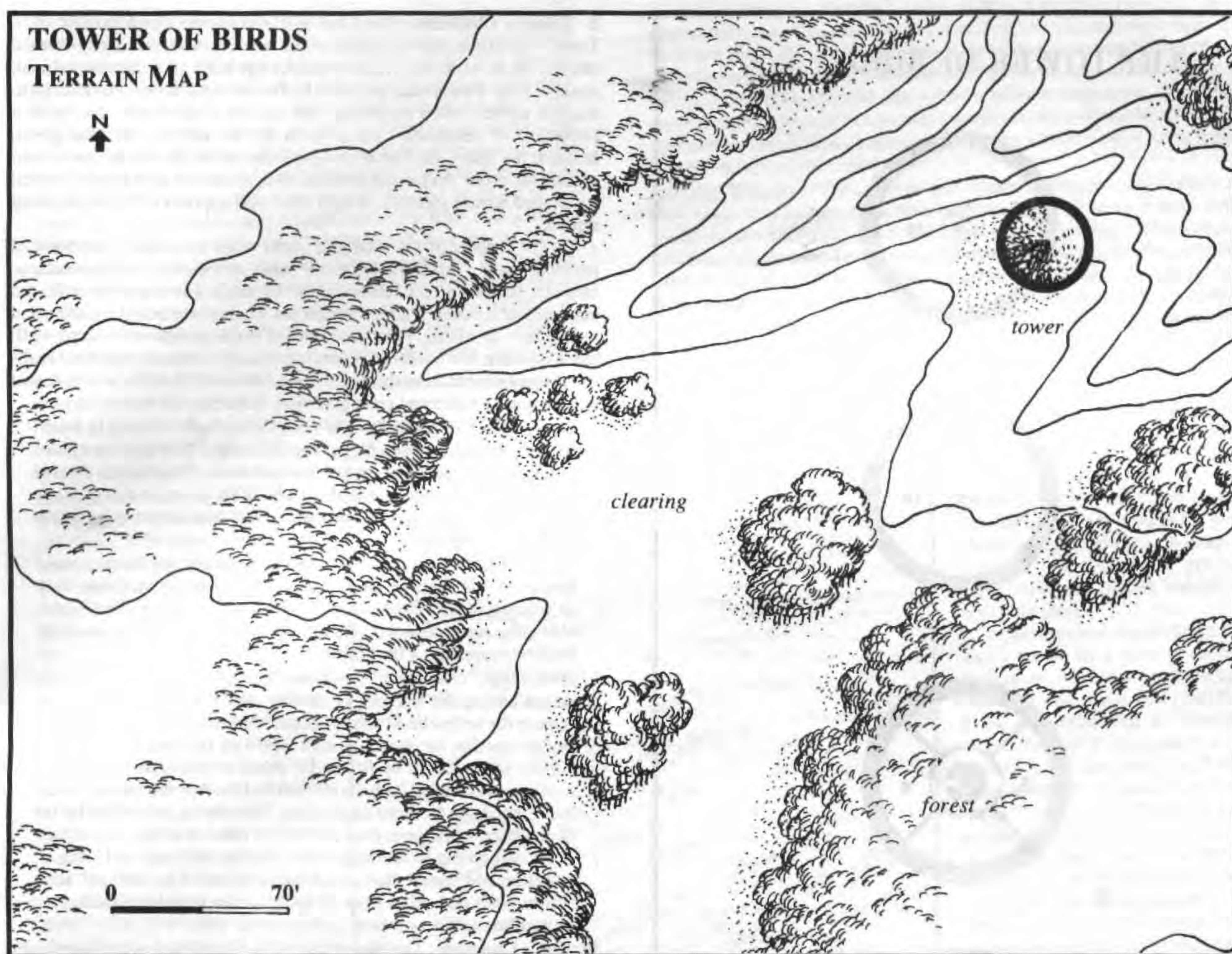
2. Kitchen. In the chamber across the hall from the dormitory, the meals of the tower's residents and offerings for the god are prepared. A stoutly built oven is set into the center of the outer wall. On either side stand cabinets of dark, strong wood. These have been rather poorly repaired in places, showing the decline of this people's skills in such work. The middle of the room holds a large wooden table with all of the kitchen tools hanging on hooks around its top edges. These include many items of wood or bronze, but none of steel or glass. Wooden bowls and pottery items are arranged on a shelf under the table and on shelves to the left of the door. The cabinets by the oven are filled with all sorts of jungle food stuffs, from fruits and greens to the meat of large rodents preserved with salt. For each meal, two of the temple inmates are given the duties of preparation and clean up. They will be found here in the two hours on either side of each meal time. Through the rest of the day the room is usually empty.

3. Common Area. When the duties of their rituals allow them free time, the men of the temple often gather here to entertain themselves. Eight chairs of wood and woven vines are set in two loose semi-circles in the open space of the room. The curved outer wall is bare, but the inner side of the chamber holds shelves cut from its rock. These are somewhat cluttered with Honnin recreational items. Two boards and pieces for the game of Kari, a simulated hunt, are tucked amongst other games. There is also a store of props and costumes for the ritual tales the jungle folk tell each other to pass the time.

4. The Sanctuary. The entire second floor of the tower is taken up by this open chamber. It is dominated by a ten foot bronze statue of Tica which is the order's altar. The god stands, decked in natural feathers, wings stretching back from his shoulders, and his hands extended to embrace his worshipers. Almost out of sight by his right foot rolls a very lifelike carving of severed head. The figure stands upon a stone block which has two bronze torch racks set into it and a bowl-like depression between them for offerings. To the left and right of the altar are matching sets of alcoves. The right-hand three hold stone seats where priests of the *Tori-Ji* sit during ceremonies. On the other side, each has a large cage, filled with colorful and noisy birds. Most of the room is filled with stone benches, carved from the stone of the floor and only about three inches high. They are set out in semi-circles with an aisle running from the altar to the stair, and on back to the rear wall.

5. Priests' Meeting Chamber. The third floor of the tower is divided into quarters around a circular hall (#6). The room directly above the temple's main entrance is used by the priests as a study and a meeting chamber. Like most of the building's chambers, it can be seen that this was designed for finer furnishings. The stonework is nicely carved and would fit well with the crafted furnishings of a Haradan home; instead the Honnin appointed the chamber with rough wood and woven vines. Stone shelves, obviously built for books, are cluttered with simple artifacts of the jungle folk. Though they go far to illustrate the decline of the Honnin culture, these do include some items of interest and value. The majority of the shelves' contents are costume elements like those in the room (#3) downstairs. These are used in the rituals of the *Tori-Ji* and are of high quality, fabrics woven from a jungle silk with ornaments of bronze and even some gold and gem stones. If the whole lot should be taken back to the Dar, it could be sold for upwards of eighty silver pieces.

Stored among these garments, carvings display the impressive skill of the Honnin in this art form. One of these is shaped from stone, rather than wood, and dates back to a much earlier age. It is a squat Honnin, standing as if on guard, looking intently into the middle distance. The carving is a charmed item from the days before the Honnin met with the Far Haradrim. It is a warder that can be placed in a campsite and will give a warning if any threat approaches. It can be used by foreigners as well as Honnin, but it will not see any men of the jungle race as threatening. If left in the open, it will give a low howl as its alarm which awakens all but the heaviest sleepers as soon as any enemy or dangerous animal comes within one hundred feet of a camp. It does not, however, work to defend any permanent dwelling. The wooden figures have no special powers, but their beauty will draw 20 to 30 spe each if they are taken to the markets of the Dar. There are fifteen of these, each standing about twelve inches tall.



6. Hall. The central chamber of the third floor holds four bronze sheathed doors and the stair itself. On the stone of the walls, as well as the metal of the doors, the carving is richer than the floors below or the other rooms of this level. It matches the decorative themes of the exterior and is continued up the stair and throughout the remaining two stories. Among the images here are found two guardians of the temple that even its inmates know nothing of.

Legend among the Honnin has always held that their great craftsmen of the elder days could produce carvings with the power of motion and even thought. Two alabaster statues found in this small anteroom offer proof of these tales. When any person who is not sanctified by the order of the bird god attempts to pass up the stairs to the treasury, the figures that stand at the stairway door become aware. Each is carved to represent an avian warrior, with a sharp beak and a taloned club which attacks like a morning star. The creatures, their weapons, and their feathered armor are all of stone, as tough as chain mail (AT Ch/16). In addition, each time a normal bladed weapon strikes a critical blow against one, the stone will blunt it enough to reduce its attack rolls by one until it is sharpened. As is true of the similar figures found in northern lands, these suffer from neither stun nor bleeding criticals and display a remarkable cunning. They will work together to gain whatever advantage they can. They have a preference for ambush attacks and can communicate telepathically to organize their assaults. The disadvantage to their close relationship is that, if one of these Pushel Nin should fall in battle, the other will also lose his animation.

7. Empty Bedroom. To the left as one faces the door to the meeting chamber, the next portal opens into one of three large bedrooms. These are designed to house the priests that lead the bird god's attendants. This one is not presently occupied. Its last occupant, a young priest called On-Mono, left to serve Tica at his shrine in the Honnin temple city of Kahmer, where the order has its governing council. His replacement has yet to arrive. The furnishings are spare and ill matched to the richness of the stonework. Between the irregularly shaped windows of the outer wall, and along the wall that abuts the meeting chamber, are dozens of shelf-like niches that once held the library of a learned man. Now all save one hold nothing but a few spider webs. Near the joint of the two walls, though, is one item that the vacating priest forgot, or chose to leave behind: a small soapstone box with a sliding lid. It holds nothing more than a handful of dry seeds and berries, but in the lands that surround the tower it is anything but useless. Certain ranking members of the order, who are supporting Mono, provided him with this handful of birdseed to help him avoid falling prey to the appetites of their deity. It is charmed to instill a great hunger in Oku-Tori if it is scattered around him causing the bird god (on a roll of 01-75) to forget all else and fly off to feed on the fruits of the jungle. Along the east wall of the chamber are arrayed its simple furnishings. These include only a bed of wood and vines and three chairs of the same construction.

THE TOWER OF BIRDS



0 25'

8. Tomu's Chamber. Fitted much like the empty bedchamber (#7), Tomu's room is across the hall from the meeting chamber. Along side the bed and chairs on the south wall stands a large Suranku, a portable cabinet, made of stout wickerwork and used by Honnin who have status enough to warrant porters when travelling. Set up like a wardrobe, this holds a collection of ceremonial robes worn by the temple's second priest. Beneath the finery lie Tomu's only reminders of the life he once lived outside the order. A coat and trousers of light canvas are wrapped around a sheathed bronze machete, a light bow, and a quiver of barbed hunting arrows.

On the shelves of the west and north walls is a wide assortment of personal items. This includes some small carvings and a few costume elements that have been left out of the Suranku. The priest has collected hundreds of colored feathers which are bound into bright bundles and tucked into the niches. Finally, on a shelf in the middle of the outer wall, alone between two windows, Tomu has placed a store of medicinal herbs and drugs gathered from the forest. Tied into small cloth bags or in sealed clay pots are a variety of cures and aids, including the following:

Tarnas (Hn. "Shirranna") — When a Tarnas bulb is boiled in water, a fluid is produced that will heal organ damage. Tomu has two bulbs wrapped in the petals of a white Tarnas bloom. The Honnin believe this method of storage will allow the bulbs to retain full potency longer, but in fact dried Tarnas bulbs will last almost indefinitely with no special care.

Coraco (Hn. "Akamisu") — A small, stoppered jug holds sixteen ounces of this valuable juice. That is equivalent to two doses, each of which will heal from two to twenty hits of damage. The fluid is also quite sweet; one who did not know better might mistake it for nothing more than a fruit drink.

Jendin (Hn. "Odoru-Kat") — These doughy mushrooms are highly prized among the warriors of the Dar, though they are very rarely seen in the herbsellers' shops because they do not keep well in the dry air outside the wood. A man who eats just one will have his Agility bonus raised by fifteen for about an hour afterwards. This explains the fact that both the Honnin and the Apysaic names for the herb come from the word for dancing. The only negative effect of the drug comes when more than one dose is taken in a day. Subsequent doses do nothing to further increase Agility, but they will bring on a tension and unease that can cloud judgment. This will call for a fifteen point deduction from all rolls that are based on intelligence or intuition and may inhibit perception as well.

9. Eno's Chamber. The High Priest of the temple keeps his apartments in a style that is rich by his people's standards, though it will still seem somewhat plain to an observer from outside the wood. The furnishings are of the finest made by Honnin craftsmen, with frames worked from single blocks of wood and cushions woven from the delicate fronds of the Fukui fern. Even his large Suranku, which stands over seven feet tall, has been shaped in one piece from the great trunk of a Futotte tree. Unlike the four chairs, and the large bed which are smooth and natural looking, the wardrobe is decorated with intricate carvings that depict many of the lovely birds of the wood. These carefully etched parrots, kites, and eagles are a hint to would-be trespassers that the cabinet is not completely ordinary.

If anyone besides Eno himself touches the chest, a frighteningly loud screeching of birds arises from the wood itself. This will draw the attention of any who are within earshot of the tower, but noise is the limit of the charm. No harm will come to any thief, except from the Honnin the clamor attracts. Inside the Suranku hang garments and other items that Eno uses for the rituals of the Tori-Ji. These include colorful robes, loose smocks, and pants decorated with feathers, beads, and mirrors, as well as three staves which signify the priest's rank in the order. These rods all have the same motif, the decorated head of a bird atop a length of polished hardwood, but one is markedly more impressive than the other two. The lesser two are symbols only, but the third is an item of some power, when wielded by a servant of Oku-Tori (see next page).

The Rod of Birds — This four foot staff is the primary emblem of Eno's rank. Though he uses the other staves for lesser occasions, this is considered to be his totem. It has a number of powers that are specifically tied to the priest's role in the service of Oku-Tori; such things as bestowing blessings upon bird trappers who come to the temple to honor their patron. It also provides a telepathic link between Tica and the priest. This is a limited form of communication at best, because of the spirit's animal intellect, but simple messages can be passed. In times of danger, the rod can also be an aid to the priest. In battle it strikes as if it were one of the Bird-man's talons (90MCI — Tica is rated as LCI because he uses two talons in conjunction). This attack does not depend at all on the fighting ability of the priest, and the weapon will fight on for him as long as he remains conscious. It will not leave his hand on fumbles or disarming techniques, and if he is downed by a blow, the staff will return him to his feet in one tenth of a round. Once a day, the rod will conjure a great woodhawk (see below) that will obey any command of the priest, so long as he retains possession of his totem.

Great Woodhawk — This bird, known to the Honnin as O-Taka, is a less powerful relative of the desert Orao. It is found only in the more central regions of the wood, so it is virtually unknown to the men who live in surrounding lands. With a wingspan of almost ten feet, the hawk is the largest bird native to the forest, and its sharp beak and powerful talons make it a formidable adversary for even the hunting cats that share its habitat. The hawks will not typically attack anything larger than the smaller jungle rodents or other birds, but in defense of young or other extreme cases, they have been known to take on men or even the mighty constrictor snakes (Hn. "Shindobi") that prowl the trees. The Woodhawk, because of its environment, is much better than other accipiters at fighting in close quarters.

In coloring, the bird is a subdued mix of browns and greys, and the males bear a tall crest of white. The camouflage this provides is used more for the defense of young or sleeping birds than for hunting. When taking prey, the birds will scan the treetops from some height and dive to capture victims in the upper branches or in clearings. Depending on the weight of their prey, they will either climb back above the forest canopy, or take a controlled fall to the earth with the hapless creature caught fast in the bird's talons. Once the hawk has reached the ground, or a safe height, the strong beak will come down to begin the meal. In combat with a more powerful foe, the O-Taka will fight with beak and talons together and beat its powerful wings to add force to its attacks.

The room's wall niches hold other items for the temple's ceremonies. Five headdresses of varying degrees of ostentation occupy wooden stands, looking disquietingly like severed heads upon the shelves. Placed among these are a wide variety of items ranging from a collection of sanctified vessels for pouring water and wine in libation to the god, to a knife of immense age used for sacrifices on before the altar. This blade is of steel rather than bronze, which shows it to date back to times before the fall of

Honnin culture. It is inscribed with a portion of the creation myth that is central to Honnin religion, though the craft of written communication has been lost to the Honnin for centuries. The most interesting feature of the knife is this inscription, because one side has the passage in Honnin while the other has it in Apysaic. For a true scholar of languages, this could provide enough of a clue to translate the other Honnin works that are found sparsely scattered through their land, opening a wide field of knowledge that has been lost for some time.

10. The Treasury. The smell of this chamber will greet any visitors as they begin to climb the stairs from the floor below. The air is thick with the scents of rotting meat and fruits. Flies buzz everywhere, feeding on the offerings left for Tica. The room occupies the entire floor, holding only the gifts of centuries of Honnin within its richly carved circular wall. A nine foot hole gapes in the ceiling just above the un-railed opening to the central stair. The water from the nightly rains keeps the area beneath relatively clean, running off down the stair. Everywhere else, the floor is littered with

a great many unpleasant things. In recent generations, offerings have been in the form of edible goods, though they are never eaten except by insects. In older times, though, the gifts were often more valuable, and some of these lie here as well, in the shadowy areas around the windowless walls. There is a heap of assorted coins from the grander days of Honnin culture, totaling to 350 gold pieces.

At another spot, a coiled rope lies half covered by a heap of ancient fruit skins; it is too old to be of use, but at its end, there is a grappling hook of bronze that is charmed. When thrown, it will speed to the chosen target and attach itself with one hundred percent accuracy, though it will only find purchase where a normal hook could hold. It will also detach itself if the person who threw it holds the rope and thinks the command. It operates by the user's thoughts rather than words, so language is not important. Unlike items fashioned using the power of the Honnin gods, this hook

draws on the older Honnin magic of the realm of Essence and will function perfectly well outside the forest. There are also objects carved from wood or stone, including a beautiful sedan chair that must have been brought in from the floor above rather than up the stairs, but none are of real worth except to a collector of art.

Amid all of this dubious tribute lie fifteen skeletons, horribly deformed, of men who have worn the mantle of Oku-Tori in past generations. Their skulls are drawn forward into beaks, their fingers and toes carry dagger-like claws, and the frames of great wings spread from odd joints at their shoulders. Each has been left where he fell dead when Tica chose to move to a new host. Though most of these lie quietly, the poor men having finally found rest, three spirits remain in their ruined bodies as undead creatures. Two lie near to the stair, and one is prostrate upon the heap of coins. If any is touched by a living being, all three will rise and attack any living creatures in the room. They are not intelligent and will attack without regard for defense or strategy, seeking only to extinguish life. They are also relatively weak, but will not suffer from any stun or bleeding critical and are not affected by spells that attack the mind or the spirit. Critical strikes that break bone, however, will have double their normal effects in terms of rounds down and decreased abilities.



11. The Home of Oku-Tori. The uppermost level of the tower is home to the object of the Tori-Ji's devotion. It is not, however, the sort of home one would imagine for a god. The chamber is open to the sky, but the floor is so filthy that even the nightly rains cannot wash it clean. On the western side, a nest of dry brown fronds and vines is pressed up against the seven foot carved wall, set in a basin that was obviously crafted for the purpose. Other than this, the entire level of the tower is bare, except for the evidence of Oku-Tori's unsavory appetites. The floor is thickly strewn the skulls of the Bird-man's victims. This will inhibit any maneuvering by wingless visitors, giving them a -20 on all actions that require moving about (fighting, leaping, etcetera). If Tica is taken by surprise, there is a chance (on a roll of 01-90) that he will be huddled in his nest, though he sleeps rarely (on a roll of 90-95). The remaining part (96-00) of his day is spent flying about the wood. If commotion, or contact from Ôn-Eno, has warned him though, he will be waiting, angry, and prepared to fight any trespassers who arrive from the floor below.

5.4 THE TASK

The challenge to the players will be relatively uncomplicated. They must find the Tower of Birds and put an end to Tica's marauding, if they can. With the jungle trek and the actual mission into the tower, this should provide a challenging session of play that will leave the players feeling that they have earned each piece of treasure they manage to acquire.

5.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

It is most likely that this adventure will begin in one of the Dar's many taverns, with an appeal from the sorrowful Klorin. If the players are slow to rise to this sort of bait, it could be added that the younger Klorin was known to them, perhaps a boyhood companion of one of the PCs, or another acquaintance of theirs could have suffered a similar fate in the wood. After the tale is told and a reward is decided upon, the PCs will prepare themselves as best they can for a journey into the unknown and depart for the wood.

5.42 AIDS

The only aid the players will receive will come in the two tools that Klorin will donate to the cause, the arrow and the amulet. Aside from these, they will have only the equipment and abilities they carry with them, and whatever herbs, items, or knowledge they can pick up along the way. This might include tales from the taverns that will tell little that is useful, but may point out the useful fact that the Bird-man seems to hunt only at dusk.

5.43 OBSTACLES

In achieving their mission, the players will be faced with two serious obstacles. The first will be the wood itself; to win their way to the Tower of Birds will require that they overcome the natural dangers that are so common in the forest. Beyond these, they will meet the Honnin of the Tori-Ji, and the Bird-man himself which should prove to be all the challenge any adventurers could want.

5.44 REWARDS

For their rewards, the PCs can expect a fair amount of booty to be gained from an assault on the temple itself, in addition to the purse offered by Klorin. To this, they may also add quite a bit of fame if they can return with proof of their adventures. The men who conquer the legendary Tica will ride high indeed in the taverns of the Dar.



ÔN-TOMU

5.5 ENCOUNTERS

To allow for a good session of play, this adventure has been designed to escalate somewhat slowly. Early encounters, aside from whatever the PCs might run into as they travel across the wood, should be with lower level members of the order. As their attack on the temple begins in earnest, the PCs should face the middle level Honnin, perhaps with backing in the form of magic from one of the two priests. As they reach the third floor, a final confrontation with the Honnin of the temple can occur. The climax will be the battle with Tica himself.

Since a pitched battle with all of the Honnin of the temple would doubtless go poorly for the PCs, the GM must use the confusion and uncertainty the raid will cause to muddle the jungle men a bit. They are not used to combat with other men, and particularly not with trained adventurers, so they may make poor choices and lose initiative by waiting for the trespassers to make the next move.

In their eventual meeting with the bird god, the PCs will face the temple's most powerful danger. The spirit will not come down the stairs, but will fight fiercely in the treasury, on his own level, or outside the tower. Tica is not clever though, and will not use any real strategy in dealing with them. He may, however, make use of his powers of flight, if he is wounded, to cheat them of immediate victory by winging away to recuperate. Within a day or two of his flight, he will return to the tower, somewhat healed. At this point, he may surprise any who have waited for him.

6.0 THE TEMPLE CITY OF PRED

The society of the Honnin centers on a city of great beauty deep in the Forest of Tears. Though only a few of the small men live within its bounds, the temples that are its buildings draw each of the jungle men to the city every few months. The earthly manifestations of their gods reside in the great buildings of white stone, and the city is home to spectacles of ritual and ceremony throughout the year. Visitors from across the wood join the monks who live in this holy place to take part in the worship of their gods.

6.1 THE TALE OF MORI-KAM

Mori-Kam is the Honnin god that ensures success to the men who forage among the trees for food and herbs. In the dawn of their history, just after the burning of their land, the Honnin were befriended by many of the gods for the services they had done their queen, Suzush, Lady of the Moon. Mori-Kam was the first of these to lead men into the Forest of Tears and help them to settle there. Though many others followed suit, she has always been offered a special reverence.

For centuries, the jungle folk have worshiped her among their other patrons in the temple city. Her role in their daily lives as one of the chief providers has brought her a temple which is nearest of all to the shrine of the Moon, a position of great prestige. Offerings are made to her out of the bounty she has helped the gatherers bring in. Of all the gods, her revels are the most joyous, and her place in the eyes of the Honnin today is second only to Suzush.

The true nature of the Honnin gods is less lofty than their followers imagine. Though the legend that lies at the bottom of the Honnin religion (see *Far Harad*) is certainly based in part on truth, the current objects of their reverence are not Valar. They are, instead, spirits of the wood that have molded themselves to fit the tales. Many are very simple and barely aware of their own sentience. Some, though, have learned many anthropomorphic traits from their followers. They inhabit the gray area between creature and deity with some powers and limitations from each group.

Mori-Kam has long been among the more Mannish of her species, and as such she is open to many human temptations. After centuries of peaceful involvement with the Honnin, a change has finally come upon her. The power of the Dark Lord has been turned towards winning her since the Storm King first delved into the wood's mysteries. Though she and her fellow spirits have little real power, their influence over their people could be used to Sauron's advantage when next he makes moves within the region. In recent days, Mori-Kam has finally been taken in by the dark will. And things have changed greatly around her temple.

The sway the Honnin gods hold over their servants is such that only a few of Mori-Kam's followers have left her service, but the duties of those who remain are quite different now. For generations the tasks they have been called upon to perform have been nothing more than tending the building, gathering offerings, and leading simple rituals to bring good foraging. Today these men have been transformed into a terrible band of killers. They step forth each night and abduct victims from the Honnin that have come to visit the city and camp near by. The reward the goddess offers is still good foraging, but now she demands human sacrifice in exchange.

The men, and even the gods, of the other sects are in a quandary. All are quite distressed by this turn of events, but no faithful Honnin will raise his hand against the men of Mori-Kam's temple without the orders of another deity, and none of the forest spirits will turn against their sister. Thus, the solution must come from the outside. Only a band of heroes that are not bound by the faith of the Honnin might dare to step into the temple of Mori-Kam to end the terror the spirit has brought to the city.

6.2 THE NPCS

The players in this adventure may encounter any number of NPCs in the days leading up to their arrival in Pred, depending upon the campaign and the method chosen by the GM for introducing the scenario. However, once inside the city, they will have surprisingly little contact with anyone besides the Honnin in the service of Mori-Kam. Any Honnin they chance to meet within the city will have nothing to do with them as they will seem to be either folk of legends or intruders, both of which are too daunting for the typical jungle man here in the holy city. It is likely, though, that they will meet the characters described in the paragraphs below, as well as ten novices, four initiates, and three priests in the service of Mori-Kam, who can be found on the NPC Table.

MATSÛM THE RENEGADE

This young Honnin is something of a puzzle for the priests of Suzush, in whose temple he has taken refuge. In all of the Honnin traditions, there is no rule to govern the handling of a renegade priest. He has left the service of Mori-Kam, and come to the Temple of the Moon, confirming the priests' worst fears about the events behind the doors of his former home. Now they are unsure whether he should be praised or cast out for his actions.

MATSÛM



The tiny Honnin is also in a state of confusion, having lost the direction his life once took from the goddess he served as an initiate monk. He is convinced, however, that his erstwhile mistress must be stopped. He will aid any who are willing to move against her with information, though he will not take part himself. He knows much about the daily routines of the order and can sketch the layout of the building roughly, though he knows nothing of maps and will be inaccurate as far as scale and direction are concerned. He did see the arrival of Shebbin Vûr, but it did not make much impression, since the trouble was only beginning then. He will not remember to mention the guest unless prompted with questions about visitors or strangers. Even if Vûr does come up, he will be nothing more than a tall priest of the reptile god as far as Matsûm is concerned.

In appearance, Matsûm is small even for a Honnin, and his dark skin seems to hang somewhat loosely over an unusually slight frame. He is timid and nervous, but will cling to his convictions when the affair of Mori-Kam is concerned. The events of his last week in the temple, including the human sacrifice that prompted his flight, are etched sharply in his mind, and he will recount them in vivid detail.

ÔN-URI-GÊS

The High Priest of Suzush is an ancient Honnin who has served his people's patron goddess since his earliest days. Despite his age, his bearing is erect, and his body is still quite strong. His hair is white as snow, but his skin is almost completely unwrinkled. His intellect is also quite undimmed. He rules the monks of the temple fairly, but strictly, in the ways of Honnin tradition.

ÔN-IKO



The recent events in the house of Mori-Kam have brought a great deal of controversy among the members of the community, but uri-Gês remains calm. He is certain that his goddess will act when the moment is right, and until then he will wait. It will not surprise him to see strangers come at a time like this, as they will certainly be the help Suzush has deigned to provide. He has even spread the word that any who do arrive should be led, with the highest respect, to the court of his temple, where he will receive them with honor.

ÔN-IKO

The High Priest of the order of Mori-Kam is an old and somewhat bitter man named ÔN-Iko. The changes in his goddess are well suited to his own nature, since he has long felt that the sleepy Honnin needed a spur to bring life back into them. For twenty years, he has waited without relief, and now he jumps to his new role with a fervor unmatched by any of his fellows.

He is not so pleased, however, with the presence of Shebbin Vûr (see below). He sees the foreigner as an anomaly and a threat to his own position, since his goddess seems to welcome the tall Haradan. He tolerates his visitor because he must and even offers pleasantries and smiles, but he will not trust him. This could prove troublesome for both halves of the dark partnership that is being forged, if trouble should arise. Iko will not be likely to work with the proud Haradan in a crisis and, as is said below, should fighting break out, Vûr will have little patience with jungle men who are slow to follow his commands.

Iko is a plain man, as Honnin go. He is four foot eight inches and somewhat pudgy. White hairs are beginning to show amid the black, and his skin is wrinkled at his eyes and mouth. He is not very healthy, but there is always medicine at hand to sooth the discomforts of his poor constitution. This often leaves him a bit drowsy (-10 at all things), one of the many things that Vûr finds annoying about him. He is not a clever strategist, which is not surprising considering the peaceful lives of his people. If trouble breaks out, he will likely make mistakes if given the chance to direct the efforts of his followers.

The High Priest is, however, a spell caster of some power. If he is allowed to stay free of the actual fighting, his strange brand of spellcraft is likely to be a great headache for any intruders in his temple. The spells he commands, which he shares with his goddess and the other men of his order, are described in section 3.6 on Honnin Magic. He also carries a rod of office that triples the his natural allotment of power points. It is a simple, gnarled branch, thin and plain, but it will strike as a +30 club if the priest is forced into melee.

SHEBBIN VÛR

A mysterious guest has been hosted by the High Priest since the day of Mori-Kam's re-alignment. He arrived in the guise of a Honnin priest, in robes that hid his features, under the cover of night. He is Near Haradan, tall and well muscled, but from all but ÔN-Iko and his three aids, he continues to hide his identity. All can see that he is not Honnin, but none of the lesser inmates know more than that. This proud warrior has been sent by servants of the Dark Lord as an emissary, to seal a compact with Mori-Kam. His name is Shebbin Vûr.

In his homeland, Vûr is respected and feared as a military and political tactician. He is quite skillful as a diplomat, which is why he was selected for this journey. He is not pleased with the duty, though. He has no respect for the small dark men of the wood and finds their accommodations distasteful. He also feels that they have nothing to offer his Near Haradan masters. Even so, he is dutiful and panders to his hosts, giving compliments and praise that do not show their insincerity. Should trouble arise, however, it is unlikely that Vûr will work well with the Honnin against a threat.

SHEBBIN VÛR



The envoy is a striking man. He is tall among his own folk and towers over the jungle men around him; even in the hooded robes he wears about the temple, he looks out of place. His skin is dark and his hair is as black as coal. A trim beard and glittering black eyes finish out the image of a polished desert warlord. He does not let the peaceful nature of his mission outweigh the habits of a lifetime; he wears armor and weapons beneath his robe. His armor is a shirt of fine chain, worn over a padded tunic of scarlet leather. The shirt has been muffled against jingling with strips of thick cloth woven into the rings. From a belt around his waist hangs a long, slightly curved sword that is his favorite weapon. Its long grip allows it to be used one- or two-handed, and Vûr is quite adept with either style. The sword is not magical, but the quality of its workmanship gives the blade a bonus, +20, in combat. A charmed dagger is tucked into the left sleeve of his robe. This is +35 for throwing and returns to the hand of its wielder at the end of the round in which it is thrown. Vûr's clothing is rounded out with a pair of loose black trousers and soft boots of black calfskin. The envoy also has three special items that were given to him for this mission: a ring, a brooch, and a globe of black crystal. He keeps these with him at all times; the ring on his right ring finger, the brooch on the collar of his robe, and the five inch ball of glass in a leather bag that dangles from his swordbelt.

The Ring of Kellot Shul — This beautiful ring, wrought of silver and steel, has been passed down through the Near Haradan followers of Ard, since it was taken from a warrior of the Dúnedain two centuries ago. It gives its wearer complete protection from disease and infection. It does not, however, have any power to cure any illnesses already contracted.

The Brooch of Tongues — This interesting piece of jewelry was prepared by a powerful mage of Near Harad for just such missions as this. It is somewhat unsightly, with a pattern of mouths and ears etched into a two inch disk of brass, pierced with a thick pin of the same material. Placed within a foot of a sleeping human through a night's sleep, it will become imbedded with the sleeper's native tongue. From that point on, any who wear the brooch will be able to speak and understand the language with level four proficiency. This in addition to any languages he may already know. It can carry only one language at a time, and will reset each time it is left near a sleeper. The only exception to this is for Haradaic, which it will not learn, since it was made for men who spoke this tongue already and might wish to keep it with them as they slept. Other folk might be surprised to find that the brooch seems useless to them after they have slept with it nearby; it will have learned their language and offer them no benefit. The item is currently set with the Honnin speech, learned from a guide that met Vûr at the forest's northern edge.

The Gift — Like the rings made for Dwarves and Men, this intriguingly beautiful sphere of crystal is a tool designed to ensnare the will of its keeper. It is to be offered to Mori-Kam at the end of Vûr's stay at the temple, as a parting gift and to seal the pact. It will allow the goddess to speak directly with her new ally; not unlike a Palantír of Númenor, but it will only link with the mind of the Sauron. Once this intimate link is established, the Dark Lord will begin an inexorable process of binding the weaker will to his service. Luckily for any mortals who might find it, the sphere can only be activated by a spirit such as Mori-Kam.

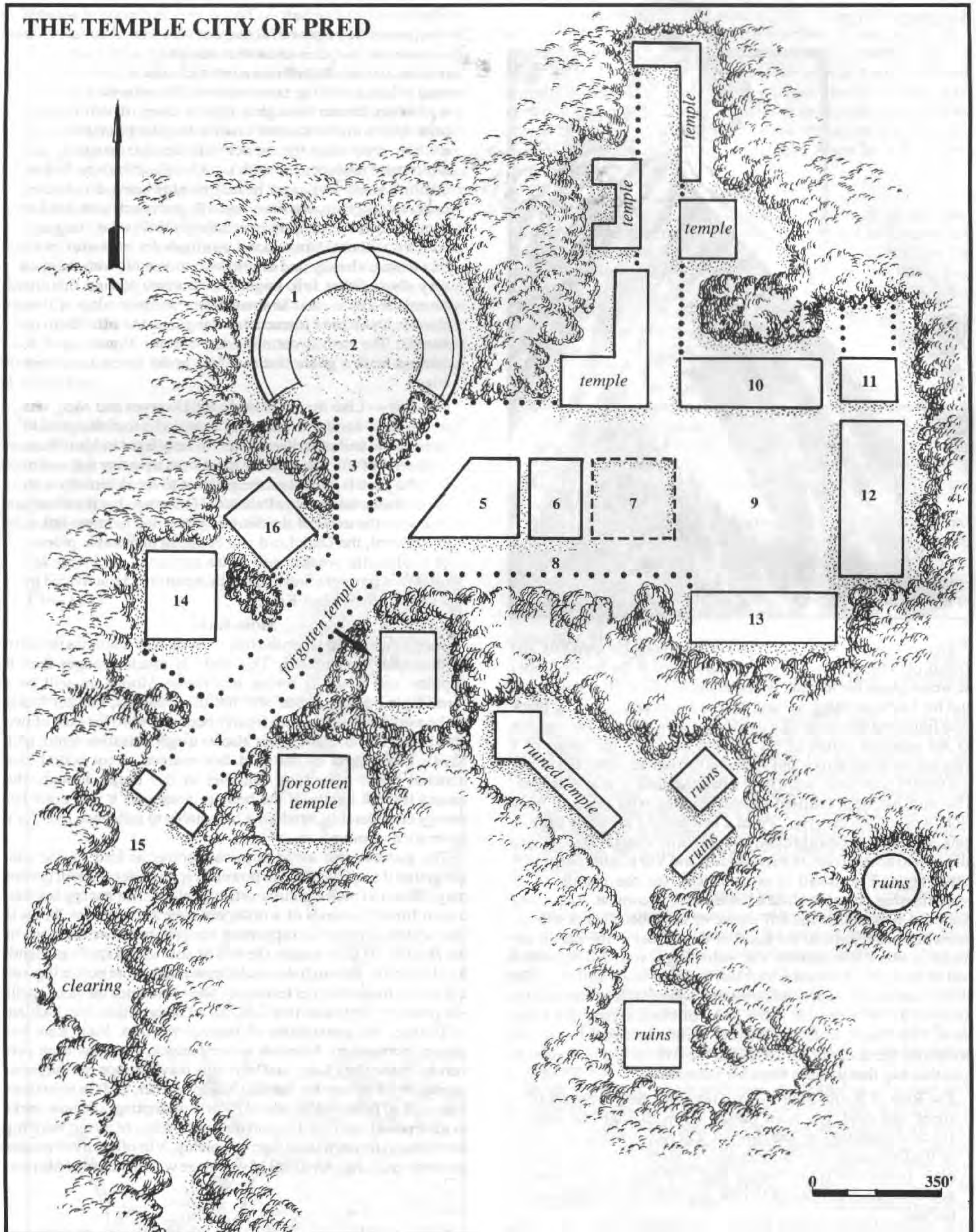
MORI-KAM

The spirit that has taken the role of Mori-Kam assumes the form of a slender Honnin girl. This body is much stronger than it appears, and if she is forced into melee Mori-Kam will be a formidable opponent. She will not use weapons, but her hands strike as clubs. She has an offensive bonus of +100 for each of two attacks per round. Her flesh is also as tough as leather armor (AT SL/4). Like others of her kind, her essence is not bound to a material body. After long centuries in this shape, though, she cannot leave it lightly. If the body is destroyed, it will drain her energy considerably, rendering her unable to influence men for a generation or more.

The goddess will avoid physical combat as long as she can, altogether if possible. She is a powerful spell caster and will use her magic to avoid melee if circumstances allow. Her energy is great, drawn from thousands of worshipers over the centuries, but it is also widely invested in supporting her priests across the lands of the Honnin. At short notice, she will be able to cast spells as a tenth level Animist, although she could draw much more power if given a few days to marshal her resources. She commands the same spells she provides her priests (see 3.6), but all of the effects are doubled.

Through the generations of Honnin worship, Mori-Kam has grown increasingly Mannish in her outlook. This has been perceived by the Dark Lord, and he is now playing upon her burgeoning desire for power. He has sent Vûr to win her, and she is anxious to join with so powerful an ally. At Vûr's prompting, she now seeks to gain power over the Honnin through a reign of terror, building her strength through their fearful worship. Vûr offers even greater power in exchange for a pact of vassalage with the Lord of Mordor.

THE TEMPLE CITY OF PRED



6.3 THE CITY OF PRED

This wonderful city was built at the dawning of the Honnin Golden Age, in the years after the Apysaic speaking Haradrim pushed them into the wood. As the capital and religious center of their race, the city was constructed with all of the industry and skill the Honnin possessed. Today, however, it is somewhat less grand. As their culture has declined, the men of the wood have continued to maintain the streets and buildings as best they can, but this means only that they keep the jungle from reclaiming the land, which they now see as holy. No Honnin have had skill enough to build new temples or even repair the old for many generations. But still, the city stands proud, a monument to the architects and artisans who carved its foundations from the body of the Harad Wood.

Pred is located at the foot of one of the forest's largest hills. The Grand Collonade runs along the bottom of the slope and the great temples spread out to either side. Those to the northwest occupy terraces in the hillside, and the rest lie on the flat ground of the forest floor. Out from the large structures that make up the city itself, to the south and east stand a great many smaller shrines, devoted to gods of lesser stature. Most of the temples actually house the spirits to which they are devoted, but others simply contain the political heart of their orders, while their god resides somewhere farther from the city.

All of the buildings are built of a hard, white stone the Honnin call Shirosh. Rich carvings deck the majority, though some depend solely on elegance and simplicity to convey a message of beauty. The white of their walls and domes is set off against the lush greens of the jungle foliage with its brilliant splashes of colorful flowers. In the center of the city, the trees and bushes of the forest grow like garden plants. Farther out, the roles are reversed and shrines stand as islands in a sea of green.

The following paragraphs describe a number of the most important sites of Pred. These are all within the area of the city that still sees regular use with a steady flow of small dark men moving among them on their various errands.

1. The Temple of Suzush. The finest of the city's structures, and the most carefully maintained is the temple of the Moon Goddess Suzush. It rises proudly from the hillside above the city with a view over the roofs of all the other buildings. Of all the Honnin gods, only Suzush has no earthly incarnation. Her temple is only a place of worship, and not a residence for her. Its spreading, two story wings are home, however, to over three hundred Honnin monks, both male and female, who attend the temple at all times. These wings stretch out from the central hall to form two thirds of a circle. The remaining third is open and the wings enclose the Plaza of the Moon (described below). The hall that forms the core of the temple is an impressive, oval chamber, under an enormous dome. The architecture is graceful and flowing, without any need for adornment. It is also irregular enough to remind an observer of the blemished face of the moon.

2. The Plaza of Suzush. Encircled in the wings of the Moon Goddess's temple is a broad expanse of polished stone, the Plaza of Suzush. Its circular surface is perfectly smooth, but shows markings in various shades, like the veins found in marble. To someone standing on the plaza, these seem to be no more than imperfections; from the height of the temple's second floor, a pattern can be seen. The shadows and lines form a perfect image of the face of the moon. The art by which this was brought to be is quite lost to the Honnin. It seems so natural that the jungle folk see it as the work of the goddess herself, set down in one piece by her great hands. The likeness is only marred by an eight foot rod of solid silver that rises from the circle's center. On the clear southern nights, monks of the temple measure the shadows cast by this rod with great care and when the moon stands directly above the plaza and the shadow disappears, a great feast is declared. The Honnin lucky enough to be visiting the city on such a night will count themselves blessed for ten years to come. And all who

live within two days' journey flock in to catch the three day festival before its end. Once, these events were marked on calendars for years in advance, but such predictions, like so many other things, are beyond the power of the men of the wood today.

3. The Quiet Path. The terraced walk leading up to the temple of Suzush is known to the Honnin as Uru-Michi, the Quiet Path. All who come to Pred to worship Suzush ascend this stair in a slow and silent procession. At each of one hundred and twenty-three columns, they pause for a moment of reverent reflection. These columns are carved with what the Honnin today refer to as Omu-In (Hn. "Prayer Pictures"). To any literate visitor, it will be obvious that they are inscriptions. They recount the epic poem that is the center of Honnin mythology, and from which the Haradan Kat Polozaj (see *Far Harad*) was originally taken. In older days the men who came to pay homage would read the entire tale as they walked toward the temple; now only an imitation of the practice has survived.

4. The Grand Collonade. This wide, flat road is the main thoroughfare of the city. In ancient times, it was the scene of constant bustle, but now it often goes unused for days. Along both sides run double rows of thirty foot pillars, connected with great crown pieces in a frame like an arbor. The columns and cross pieces, and even the cobbles of the roadway, are all of the white jungle stone, though it is somewhat more pitted and weathered here than in the temples themselves. Some of the crossbars have fallen over the generations, but there is no one to restore them to their places. So, the jungle men simply walk around, mumbling a prayer to the gods who built the city and asking them to return and repair it.

5. The Temple of Earth. This temple is home to a slow and subtle spirit, worshiped as the god of the soil. Like the other Honnin gods, he has only taken on the role they wished for him to fill, but in return for their reverence he exerts his will towards enhancing the earth from which the jungle plants spring. The square building is bare of carvings, but shows in its design a sense of solidity and firmness. It also houses forty monks who attend to the spirit's needs and lead ceremonies to his honor.

6. The Shrine of Rain and Storms. The Honnin have one god to represent the elements of air and water. The spirit who has assumed this role is not as intractable as might be expected from a god of storms. She is steady and generally benevolent, working to protect those who do her service from such things as flooding and wind damage. She resides in a temple that is decked with carvings that show lightening, clouds, and falling rain. Tall columns and open breezeways give it a feeling of lofty openness that stands in stark contrast to the stout Temple of Earth just to the west. This goddess is attended here by only seven priests, but she has servants in shrines all across the wood.

7. The Hollow of the Sun Shrine. The god of the sun, and also of fire, is recognized within the city only out of spite. Hika is the husband of Suzush, but is also her bitterest enemy. It is he who burned the lands that surround the wood, and would burn the Honnin holdings too if not for the efforts of their patron goddess. For this, the ancient Honnin built a great foundation and left it bare, that he might know what place he might have had with them. To this day, the soil within the foundation stones will take no seeds and holds no water. It is ever as dry and barren as the deepest corners of the Haradwaith.

8. Avenue of Warriors. The elemental temples lie between the Grand Collonade and this somewhat smaller boulevard, the Avenue of Soldiers (Hn. "Shimach"). Along its curb stones are arrayed long ranks of stone Honnin soldiers, nearly a thousand all told. Their style is similar to that of the Pûshel Nîn the jungle folk carve today, but more refined and detailed, showing the influence that the Apysaic culture still exerted on the craftsmen of the Honnin Golden Age. Each one is different, and among them stand figures that are obviously sailors and desert raiders as well as more typical jungle fighters. All are more elaborately equipped than any warriors that walk the jungle today. They bear swords and armor of complicated design, much of which would be impractical if made from the soft Honnin bronze. To the jungle men, this merely indicates the magical skills of their forebears, but to an observer from outside the wood it is just another bit of evidence that the Honnin culture has seen more advanced ages.

9. The Court of Beasts. The largest open area of the city is the Court of Beasts. It is a square about eighty yards to a side, paved with flagstones of Shirosh. Around its perimeter and scattered about the square are statues of all manner of animals, many of which are not known anywhere in the forest. The foreign animals are treated with the greatest reverence by the visitors to the plaza. Like the warriors along the Avenue of Warriors (#8), these statues are all finely detailed and realistic. The oddest thing about this menagerie is that the placement of the figures does not remain the same. No Honnin can claim to have seen the beasts move, but from day to day, their positions and locations in the square do shift. This is all that remains of an enchantment that once animated the entire collection for the entertainment of the city's visitors; it was created and is still maintained to a minor degree by the gods of the four temples that surround the court.

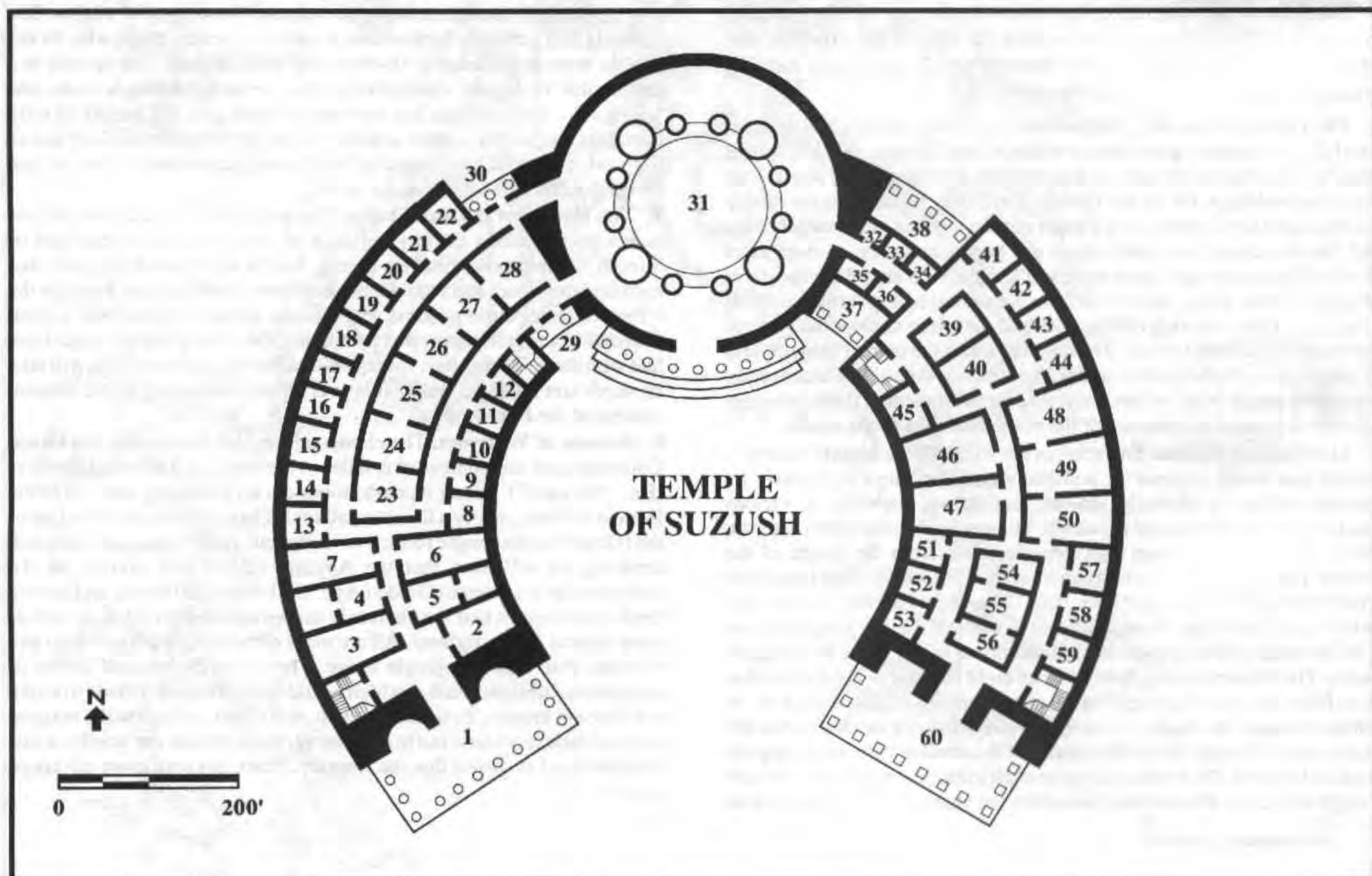
10. The Temple of Cats. Completely covered with intricate carvings of stylized feline forms, this low, shadowy building is home to Shin-Ko, the Honnin god of cats. The spirit is well suited to this role, as it is much like a cat in nature, proud but playful, self-righteous but aloof. For all the pious service he receives from the small jungle people, he gives nothing in return besides some rather interesting spells for the priests of his order. He has developed power over the cats of the jungle, in keeping with his place in Honnin lore, but he typically uses it only to commune with them in their comfortable existence. His temple is guarded by two great maned cats, the like of which are found nowhere else in Middle-earth. These are the last of a breed of lion that once stalked the hills of the Haradwaith. Their brethren have long since been exterminated by the Far Haradrim, but these two were brought here and have been kept alive over the centuries by the power of Shin-Ko. Both are male and the hold on their minds is such that they perceive no real passage of time beyond the hours between their feeding times. They will not leave the temple grounds without Shin-Ko's direction, but none who do not come to worship will enter the temple without besting these fierce cats.

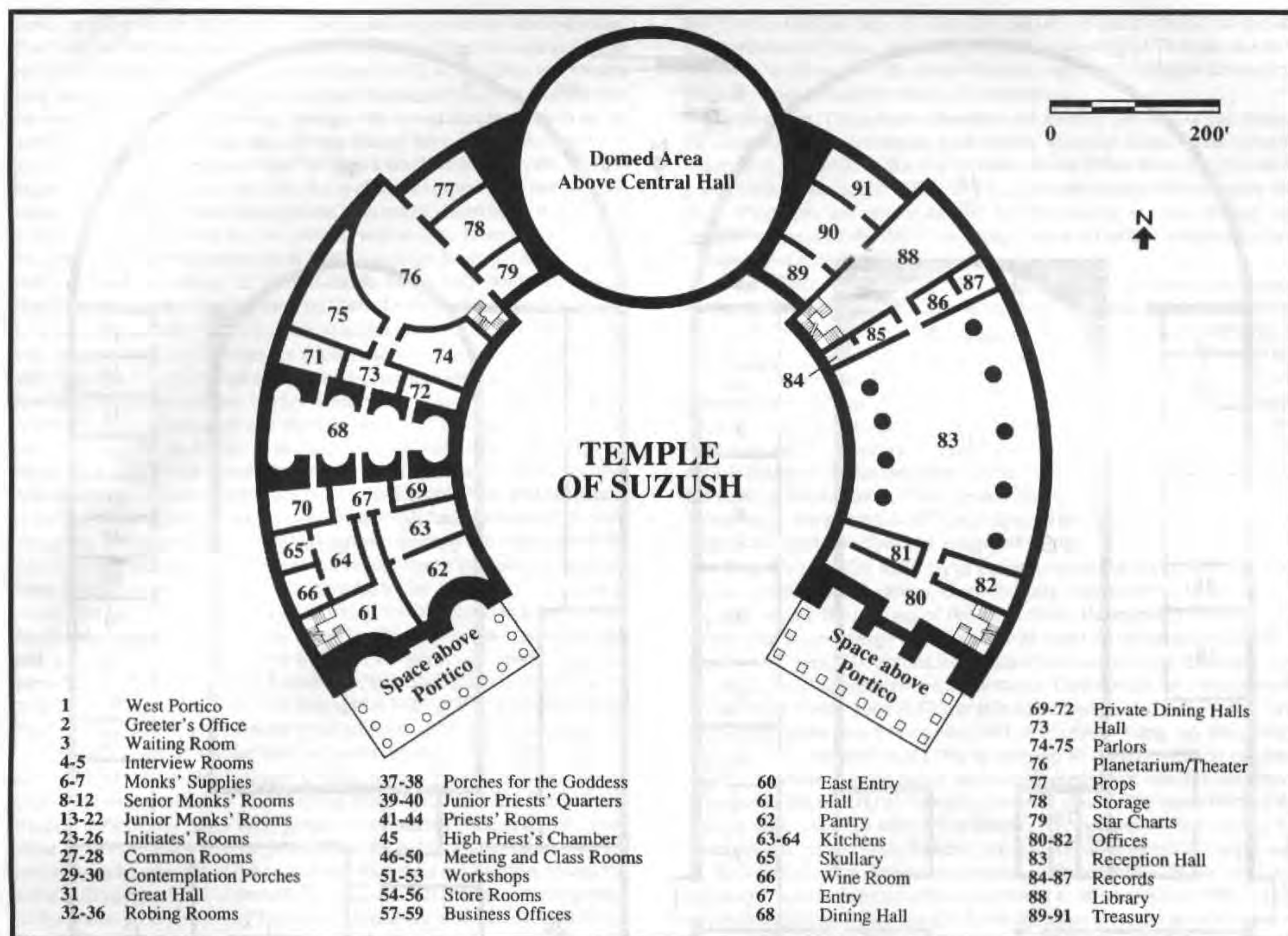
11. The Shrine of Oku-Tori. This small temple is dwarfed by the other structures that abut the square. It is a beautiful building nonetheless, with delicate carvings all over its stonework. These are lifelike representations

of a thousand different species of bird. As with the beasts of the open court, many of these fowl are completely unknown within the bounds of the wood. The shrine is not home to the spirit to which it is dedicated; he lives in a remote tower, described in detail in the Tower of Birds (section 5.3). Here in the capital of the Honnin, only the political arm of the order maintains residence. The risks involved in serving their god directly prompt many of their most talented men to settle for a slightly less prestigious post here. The shrine is home to twenty monks.

12. Home of the Lord of Reptiles. This one-story structure is perhaps the most strangely designed temple in the city. Were it not for its location amid the other structures, it might easily be taken for a natural outcropping of rock, pocked with a scattering of caves. Only close inspection reveals the hair-thin joints between the great stone blocks of which it is built. Within this odd edifice lives the Lord of Reptiles, Uro-Lok. Like Oku-Tori, this spirit is barely more intelligent than the creatures the Honnin set him over. He is also much like a reptile in his habits, spending a great majority of his time at rest. He is the only god of the temple city that is seen regularly by men. Most afternoons he suns himself on the roof of the temple in the shape of an enormous sand drake (see *Far Harad*). Though this form offers him the power of flight, he never leaves his home. In return for the worship he receives from the Honnin, the spirit will often heal victims of snake bites and aid in the production of various drugs that are drawn from the bodies of his creatures. Also within the cave-like chambers of this building dwell thirty-five monks.

13. The Haven of Rodents. The clever spirit who the Honnin place over the rodents of the wood is the most intelligent of their deities. The prayers they make to him are answered in aid when they hunt the small mammals of the jungle. He resides in a temple that is decorated along the same lines as those of the cats and birds, with carvings of rodents covering its walls. It is built as a warren of small rooms, like the thatch homes built by the In-Nek (Ap. "Stetan"), a large otter-like rodent native to the wood (see *Far Harad*). With him dwell thirty monks who make up the entirety of the order which serves him, and a huge colony of large jungle rats that live like pets within the building.





14. The House of Human Tasks. Near the western limits of the city, some distance up the slope of the hill, stands a beautiful columned pavilion that is home to the third most revered of the Honnin deities, Aru-Baito, the God of Human Tasks. The spirit who plays this part in their mythology is as Mannish as any that live in the wood. She takes great interest in the doings of her followers and seeks always to help them with the endeavors they undertake. Her intelligence, however, is on about the level of a six year old child, so she has little to offer by way of innovation. The airy rooms of her temple hold workshops for all of the Honnin crafts, and each of her monks is a skilled artisan in one or more of these pursuits. Each has spells that ease the labors involved in many tasks and can pass charms to visiting worshipers that will have the same effect, but only for a limited number of times.

15. The Forest Gate. The westernmost point of Pred is the end of the Grand Collonade, the Forest Gate. In older days, this was the customary point of entrance for all visitors to the city. Today its titanic arch is almost never used, as the Honnin enter the city from whatever direction happens to be convenient. They leave the gate for the use of their gods and the heroes who built the city, all of whom are supposed to return to Pred when Suzush finally overcomes the Sun God. In hopes of this homecoming, the stone of the gate is kept free of vines and dirt by the monks of the city. It is carved from base to keystone with scenes from the great battle which brought Hika to power, and tiny Honnin figures can be seen running among the feet of their warring gods.

Many other buildings spread south and east from the central avenues. Some of these are tended by the orders of minor gods, but others are no longer used at all. Their gods have been forgotten even by the tradition conscious Honnin as the culture of the jungle folk has declined. Power still lurks in some of these, and knowledge of the high Honnin culture can be found within them. But the placid jungle men have no interest in lost gods or ancient secrets; their day to day lives are enough to keep them busy.

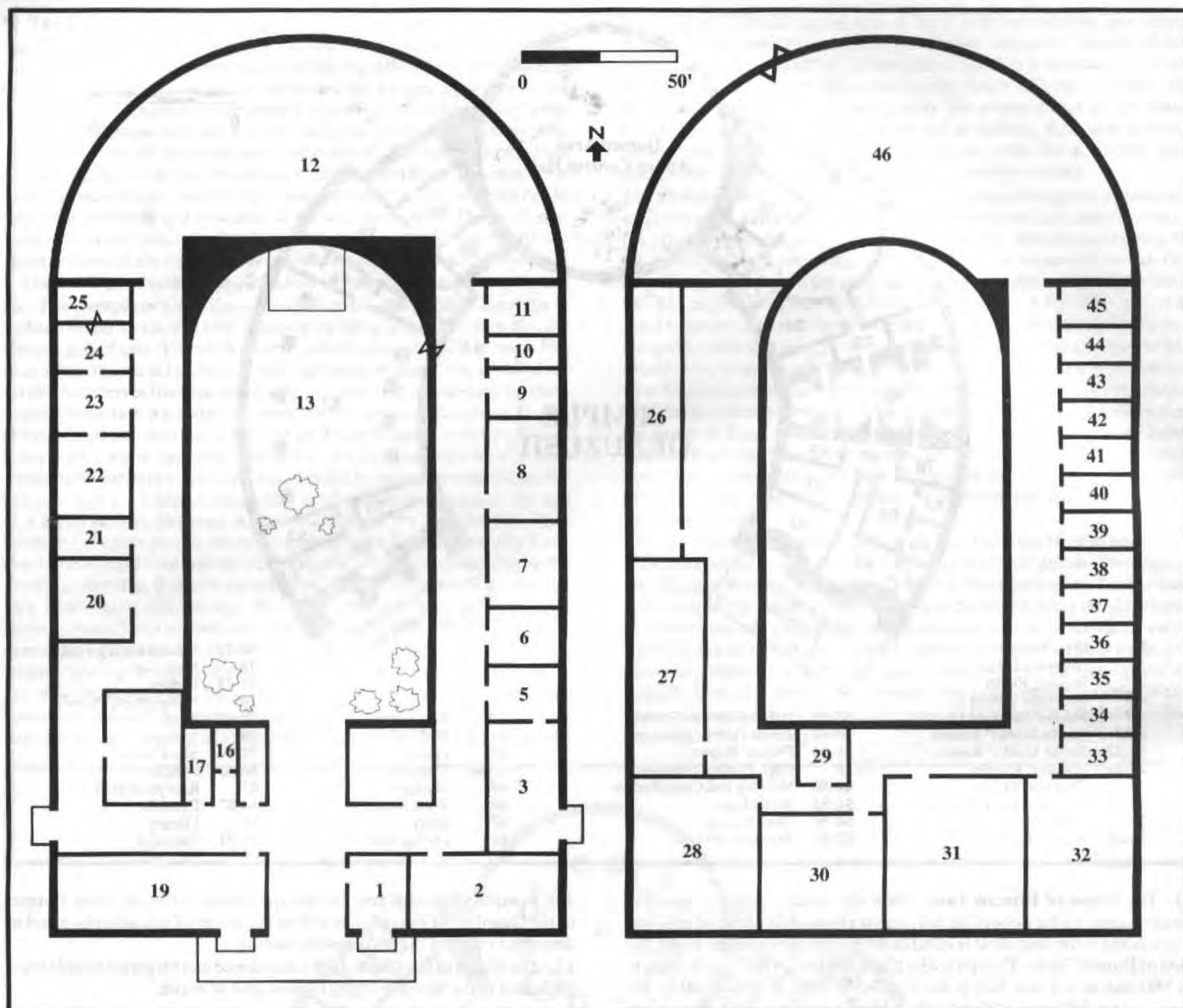
16. Temple of Mori-Kam. The last site of note in the city is the Temple of the Guardian of Foragers. It will be the center of this adventure and is described in detail in the following section.

17. The Ruins of the Onak-Ji. An abandoned and forgotten temple once dedicated to the worship of the Honnin god of music.

THE TEMPLE OF MORI-KAM

Just below the temple of Suzush on the hill that forms Pred's northwestern edge is the home of Mori-Kam. She has always been second only to the moon goddess in the eyes of the Honnin, and her temple reflects their adoration. It is large and beautifully designed, set into the hillside just below the terrace of Suzush's shrine. The only branch off of the Quiet Path leads to the door of this lovely building. The front of the edifice is rectangularly shaped, but at the rear, where the stone meets with the soil of the slope, the walls curve together and form a semi-circle. In the building's center a large courtyard of the same shape serves as the order's sanctuary, a garden filled with beneficial plants.

The most wonderful aspect of the temple to be seen from the path approaching it is the panorama that decorates its exterior walls. The white stone is carved in a perfect image of the trees, vines, and undergrowth of the surrounding jungle. Each plant depicted is captured in life-like detail, down to the fronds of the smallest fern. The doors and windows of the temple are worked into the scheme with such skill that they are barely noticeable, seeming to be no more than shadows amid the bountiful growth.



There are six entrances accessible from the ground. The main gate, which has no door, is an arch formed by two alabaster Rah-Dir trees, and a smaller doorway stands to each side of this. There is a door on each side wall, near the front corners, and a secret passage accesses the second story from the higher ground at the rear of the building. The first floor windows are all at least thirteen feet above the earth.

1. Doorward's Office. Just to the right of the main entrance, and accessible through the right hand side door, is the office of the temple's doorkeeper. The room itself is plain with nothing more than a pair of wood and vine seats and a low table set between them. Stone shelves built into the northeast wall suggest that scrolls were once kept here, probably with a registry for visitors to the temple. Now these are bare except for a few Honnin games for passing away the time. There is always at least one member of the temple's complement on duty here. Since Mori-Kam's change of attitude, there have been few visitors; the doorwardens are often asleep. For playing purposes, there is a chance (01-30) of finding the man asleep, and a chance (01-20) that he will be accompanied by one other member of the order, drinking wine and playing games of chance. In addition to the door from outside, a sturdy wooden slab with hinges of bronze, the room has an entrance in the southwest wall that opens into the high ceilinged hall from the main gate.

2. Waiting Room. Visitors to the temple of Mori-Kam, who are not powerful enough to require special treatment, wait in this room between ceremonies. It is furnished with a score of chairs and four circular tables. The walls of the room, like the walls throughout the building, are carved with scenes of jungle flora. For the last few weeks, this room has stood empty, and it is now draped with the thick webs of industrious jungle spiders. There is nothing of particular value present here, but any who search through the webs have a chance (01-30) of being bitten by one of the tiny arachnids, a Ki-Mitta. These creatures are small enough to be nearly invisible, but their poison is dangerous. It will bring on a sleepiness that will give the victim a fifty point penalty on all activities. The affliction will last for one hour per ten points of RR failure. It can be cured almost immediately with a dose of Yat-Tanai, an herb stored in powder form in the herb pantry (# 22).

3. Disused Workshop. This room is also filled with webs, and the same risk of spider bite accompanies any passage through it. It has not been entered as long as any remember, since the Honnin priests feel that it is set aside for the return of the builders of the city. In these many years, the door through its outer wall has fallen into grave disrepair. The wood around the bolts of its hinges is soft with rot from the nightly rains; a solid push will topple it completely, causing only a soft thud as the old planks fall to pieces on the floor. The workshop holds tables and equipment for working with the stone from which the temple is constructed. This includes two great

tables, or more accurately wooden blocks, that were used as workbenches. They are set with channels and guides of worked steel to hold the stone under the artisans' chisels. Along the inner wall, which does not have a door through to the corridor, are stacked hardwood planks and beams for the construction of scaffolding, though the wood has lost much of its strength in the generations since it was placed here. Any who brave the bites of this room's spiders stand to reap a small reward. In the room's south corner, shelves are set into the walls, all empty save one; on the lowest rests a ring of yellow soapstone. It is magical and holds a spell that will turn up to fifty cubic feet of stone as soft as clay. It was once used by the stonewrights for particularly difficult carvings. Its magic is of Essence and will work anywhere in Middle-earth, but it only holds four more charges, and no one alive knows the spells to replenish its power.

4. Parlor. The more important of Mori-Kam's visitors are allowed to wait in this comfortable chamber while others stay in the Waiting Room (#2). The door from the hall opens into a central lounging area that holds two low tables and eleven chairs. Unlike those found in most Honnin buildings, the furnishings are padded with silk cushions, rather than woven vine. The perimeter of this sitting room possesses four curtained sleeping areas. Each is fitted with a bed, with a mattress of vines, and two more chairs. This parlor is currently home to Shebbin Vûr, and his gear is in the northern quarter. From a hook on the wall hangs a robe of Honnin design, an enveloping affair that is sometimes worn by the followers of the Reptile God; careful examination will reveal that it is made of Haradan linen rather than silk, marking it as foreign to the wood. A low Suranku, lent by the High Priest, stores a selection of travel gear, also from outside the wood. This includes a pair of heavy leather boots, a pointed grey hat, and a hooded cloak that seems to be of no particular color. Like the garments made by the Elves of Lothlórien, this cloak shifts its hue to match its background, adding +40 to all attempts at hiding. If Vûr is here asleep, usually from just after midnight until an hour after dawn, the items he carries on his person will be laid out neatly on the chest's lid.

5. Small Kitchen. This kitchen is used for the preparation of food to nourish guests waiting in the Waiting Room (#2) and the Parlor (#4). Honnin fare usually takes little preparation, and the fittings of this room seem a bit elaborate. The large oven on the outer wall is used only for baking bread, and most of the cooking is done over a firepit that shares the oven's chimney, a hood of stone stretching out over it. One of the two stone tables is also used for cutting fruits and vegetables; a bronze cleaver hangs from a hook on its side. The other table, however, and a rack along the southeast wall which once held a wide range of cooking implements, show that cooks here once produced a wider range of delicacies.

6. Disused Study. Like the Workshop (#3), this chamber, with the two rooms to its northwest along the corridor, remains unused these days. It was once a study for the High Priest and his assistants, but now its tables are bare of all but dust, and the six wickerwork chairs are so brittle that they will hold no weight at all. Several small niches are set into the northwest wall, and each holds a small statue of a Honnin deity. The girlish form of Mori-Kam is in the second from the left, with Suzush to her right. Four other statuettes are arrayed in the other spaces, but only one is remembered by the Honnin. That is Oku-Tori, in the right-end alcove. Another is actually Uro-Lôg, the Reptile Lord, in an older, man-like form. None of these have any special powers, but all would prove valuable as artwork in the squares of the Dar.

7. Empty Library. The walls of this chamber are covered with shelves and the dust of the tomes that lined them. A long scroll rack divides the room in half and is filled with the center dowels of more than two hundred scrolls. Tiny, curving fragments of the parchment lie upon the floor. During the morning hours, sunlight slants in through windows near the high ceiling and illuminates the particles of paper that hang in the air. None of the priests or acolytes ever come within to see it though. When the door was last opened, the books and scrolls were still intact.

8. Disused Office. As it has for so many rooms and artifacts across the land, the decline of Honnin culture has left this office obsolete. In ages past, the High Priest of Mori-Kam worked here to keep up correspondence with members of his order while his assistants tallied offerings and expenses each month. Now, two tables carved from stone, two chairs of brittle wood and vine, and shelves decked with scraps of leather and paper are all that bear testament to the work that was done. The only article of real noteworthiness is a map imprinted on a large ceramic tile which is imbedded in the surface of the larger desk. This dates from the height of

the Honnin Golden Age and shows locations of a half a hundred shrines and settlements. Some, like the great university city of Di-Gak, are now lost even to the men of the jungle, but any who can decipher the ancient Honnin script should be able to locate them.

9-11. Vestries. These three chambers are used by the men of the temple for donning their ceremonial garb before worship. Each holds a bench along each side wall, with rows of hooks above. From these hang robes of green for the priests, and yellow and red for acolytes of different ranks. All three chambers are empty except for the twenty minutes before the commencement of the daily ceremony, when all of the temple's priests gather to prepare themselves.

12. Fest Hall and Chapel. This large chamber is used for special occasions when the members of the order prepare great feasts for worshippers. On such days, the worship rituals are conducted from a low platform at the center of the room's curved back wall. The faithful can share in the bounty of Mori-Kam as they give thanks for her aid. Festivals are held at irregular intervals, about twenty times a year, when the goddess informs the High Priest that the forest is at its most generous. The room is furnished with long tables of wood, to which sturdy benches are drawn up. These follow the curve of the richly carved walls, with gaps at intervals to allow for food to be carried in from the south and removed to the east. In the weeks since the human sacrifices began, no festivals have been called by Mori-Kam, and this chamber has stood empty.

13. Court Yard. The majority of ceremonies in the honor of Mori-Kam are held in this lovely garden. Until recently, these were held each day in the hour before the coming of the rains. Now, the members of the order, along with their foreign guest, gather at night to perform the goddess' ghastly new rites. The garden itself fills about two thirds of the court, with gravel paths winding between plots that are filled with the lush greenery of the forest. Every bush or flower is in some way useful to men; some are medicinal, some are poisonous; and still others bring on heightened abilities. The ignorant would be ill advised to sample these at random, since even those that are purely beneficial might have unexpected effects if prepared improperly or mixed with other plants. The remainder of the yard is open, floored with white gravel, and focuses on the altar at the center of the curved wall. Beside this, a secret door opens into a passage to the vestries. The door is concealed in the carvings of the wall and locating it will require an active search and a -30 perception roll; or a -80 perception roll without a search. From the other side, the door is not at all hard to discover; it is set into a four foot deep alcove and the handle that will open it is in plain sight.

14. Altar. A seven foot statue of Mori-Kam, depicted as a slender Honnin girl, is the focal point of the altar. She is carved of deep green jade, veined and flecked with gold, and stands atop a pedestal of shirosh. At her feet rests a large stone bowl for offerings. This has been crudely reworked recently; the rim has been roughly chiseled down in five places to accommodate the head and limbs of a human body. The white stone of the bowl is marred by an uneven, ruddy stain from the blood of Mori-Kam's victims.

15. Steward's Office. Like the doorkeeper's room (#1), this chamber shows signs that it was once used for a great deal more record keeping than it sees today. It is the office of the temple's steward, a junior priest (4th level) called Ôn-Eda. For years he has maintained a steady schedule that kept him in this chamber from morning 'til evening, always ready to greet visitors to the temple. The recent changes in temple routine, and the fall off of guests have shifted everyone's schedule, and Eda now leaves this chamber empty at most times, spending his time studying with his fellow initiates instead. The room itself holds a table and three chairs near the door. Beyond these are two long racks that once held scrolls filled with information on the doings of other orders, that the steward might always be prepared to greet guests from outside his temple. Now these have been converted to hold dozens of hooded green and brown robes instead. The robes are given to visitors for the worship services, to honor the goddess with her favorite colors. Vûr wears one such robe, hooded and tied tight, whenever he moves among the temple's inmates. Trespassers might be able to bluff their way past lower members of the order by donning them as well. Assuming no alarm has been sounded, such attempts will have a chance (01-65) of success with novices. Other members of the order will question any visitors they do not know to expect, so a lone PC might pass for Vûr, but any group of two or more will arouse suspicion.

16. Stair. This chamber holds the staircase providing access to the second story of the temple. It is a somewhat narrow affair, composed of two flights that meet at a small landing. A banister runs along the inner side of the stairway, carved like a thick strand of vine and supported by uprights shaped like small saplings.

17. Shrine of the Moon. Each of the temples of the city has within it somewhere a shrine to Suzush of the moon. The house of Mori-Kam is no exception, but her new inclinations do not include reverence to any higher god. She has had her followers destroy the lovely decorations and fittings that furnished this chamber. Where once five stone benches faced an altar topped with a silver disk, patterned like the moon, now there is only a confusion of broken stone work and a battered three inch ball of shiny metal, cast into a corner and forgotten. Any of Honnin blood, or who even know of the jungle culture, will be shocked and astounded at the sacrilege that has been worked here.

18. Infirmary. One of the chief areas where the Order of Mori-Kam always aided the Honnin people has been in healing. Wounded or ailing folk were treated with herbs and magic by the priests of this temple, and its shrines across the wood. This infirmary was used, until recently, to hold the patients waiting for care, or convalescing afterwards. Like the Waiting Room (#2), though, it has been empty now for several weeks. The room holds little of interest. Thirty wood and vine cots are present, but only ten have any bedding, and only two of these show signs of recent occupation. These were for two hunters who had taken fever just before Mori-Kam redirected her followers. The poor fellows were the first two victims of her new rituals. Among their belongings, under their cots, are two suits of the leather garb hunters wear to stalk the jungle cats, and two bronze short swords with leather scabbards and belts.

19. Feast Hall. The temple of Mori-Kam holds three real dining areas, the Fest Hall (#12) at the rear, the Inmates' Mess (#27) upstairs, and this chamber, the Feast Hall. On days when important visitors are present, but that are not festival days declared by the Goddess, meals for the High Priest and his three assistants with their guests are prepared in the large kitchen upstairs and served here. The room contains only a double row of sturdy hardwood tables, with comfortable chairs of solid wood, rather than the wood and vine that is most common among the Honnin. With all of the seats full, this room could hold just over one hundred guests, though it rarely sees more than twenty, and none have come to visit since the temple changed its practices; Vûr dines in his room, or alone with the High Priest.

20. Store Room. This chamber was once another office, but it has been converted to a store room for the order's ever growing collection of ceremonial masks, costumes, and other paraphernalia. All of the walls are lined with shelves of stone, and stout racks have been built in the middle of the chamber for hanging garments. The shelves are jammed with candles, ewers, bowls, and other similar items, as well as one hundred thirty-two green and yellow masks of varying degrees of ostentation. Richly-decorated robes of green, yellow, and red, with sequins, mirrors, and all manner of silk flowers and fruits sewn onto them, are hung by the score from the racks. These are worn rather than the robes in the Vestries (#9-11) on the days of Mori-Kam's festivals. Over the generations, the priests of the order have grown more and more extravagant in their garb for these holidays. This is but a sign of the growing vanity of their goddess.

21. Store Room. This smaller chamber is used for the storage of more mundane items. The dishes and cutlery for the two dining halls of the first story are kept here on wooden shelves along the walls. A supply of the dried ferns (Hn. "Fukui") used by the Honnin as bedding is heaped in a wooden bin that fills the center of the room. This soft, brown material is quite flammable, so the Honnin never bring torches into the chamber. If it should be ignited, the blaze would go out of control almost instantaneously, but the stone construction of the temple is such that it would not be likely to spread beyond the room. The floor of the kitchen (#26) above might well crack, though, and the heat would be unbearable in any of the neighboring rooms.

22. Herb Pantry. This large chamber is devoted to the preparation and storage of herbs. The northeastern half contains the equipment one might expect in a kitchen; an oven and a fire pit sharing a chimney on the outer wall, a counter along the opposite, a wooden table with a handful of bronze implements hung beneath it. A large ceramic mortar and pestle can be

found on the counter. Beside it is a basin with a spigot above it on the wall. This bit of plumbing, fed by a rain barrel built into the temple's roof, is ancient and a constant dribble shows that it has not been kept in good repair. The water is constantly at the basin's rim and each six or eighth drop sends a small rivulet over into a catch pool with a drain. Over the fire pit hangs a large copper kettle, from a swinging arm of ancient iron. These items are all used to make the powders, potions, and glazes that are the useful forms of the forest's herbs.

The remainder of the chamber is given over to storage. It possesses shelves of stone, around the walls, which hold a wide variety of medicines, poisons, and drugs. Though all of these have been properly prepared, there is still nearly as much risk from random sampling as there is in the courtyard garden (#13), since many have been allowed to spoil in the recent weeks. For both areas, the Gamemaster should use his discretion in determining just what the PCs should find. For any effect listed on the herb and poison tables in *MERP*, there will be a substance here to bring it about. Which can be figured out by the adventurers should be determined by game balance and need, since none of the Honnin are likely to help them choose among the hundreds of small packages. Some herbs that are present are listed below, but many more can be decided on by the GM.

Yat-Ana—A small stone jar with a spider carved upon its lid holds four doses of this powdered resin. It is a strong stimulant and is used to help priests who must stand sleepless vigils. It will also counteract the effects of the bites of a variety of jungle spider, the Ki-Mitta, which induces a sleeping sickness.

Shirranna—Four Tarnas bulbs, wrapped in white petals. These will heal organ damage (see 5.3).

Akamisu—Three clay jars hold eight ounces each of this sweet juice. Each 8 oz. dose will heal from two to twenty hits of damage (see 5.3).

23. Healing Chamber. Those who come to the temple for herbal healing are treated in this chamber. It holds little besides two tables of wood, padded with leather, and a counter along the outer wall where the healing priest sets out his medicines. This room and the Herb Pantry (#22) are currently deserted. The Honnin are unwilling to come to the temple, no matter how severe their ailments.

24. High Priest's Office. In this chamber, Ôn-Iko tends whatever business he must conduct for the order. It holds a table and four chairs of carved hardwood. Around the walls are shelves, worked into the carvings, which hold a collection of colorful masks, like those found in the store room (#20). These and a beaded rope that lies upon the table are the room's only contents. The rope, called a Sam-Biki, is used with a complex system of knots and movement of the beads to do remarkably intricate calculations. Many Honnin who have accounting to keep use these in conjunction with notched tally sticks as substitute for ledger books. A hidden door in the northeast wall (-15 to find) leads into the treasury.

25. Treasury. The offerings that are brought to Mori-Kam by her worshipers are usually nothing more than fruits and other samples of the bounty she is thought to provide. When more valuable gifts have been brought, over the centuries, they were moved to this chamber for protection. Such measures are certainly unneeded among the Honnin today, but the tradition dates from an age when the jungle folk were much more civilized. The hidden door from the High Priest's Office (#24) opens into a dim space, choked with the dust of ages. It holds an interesting selection of gifts that have been brought before the spirit of the temple. To the far right of the door stands a large iron cauldron, filled with coins and gems. This cache is worth about a thousand gold pieces all told, but also weighs nearly three hundred pounds without the vessel that holds it all. The cauldron itself, eighty pounds of iron standing on three stumpy legs, is more than it might seem. Any concoction of brewed herbs that is prepared in it will have twice the normal potency. This is due to an Essence spell laid on it by an herbalist of the Honnin university; the priests of the time thought it no more than a curiosity, since they could acquire all the herbs they needed from their patron. Between the kettle and the door stand three life-sized statues, carved from wood. These are in the great tradition of the Pûshel Nîn, shaped from lovely, deep red hardwood in the image of Honnin foragers with pouches bulging.

To the left, past a great heap of moldering leather that was once a collection of well worked foraging pouches, is a travel chest of wicker which holds the temple's most interesting treasure. Wrapped in folds of oiled Honnin silk are the armor and weapons of a Númenórean adventurer. The Honnin who felled the equipment's owner only succeeded through the use of a poisoned arrow, so he gave the man's possessions to the goddess in thanks. The armor is a hauberk of steel links (+15), each ring engraved with a line from the tale of Gondolin. The helm once had leather lining, but this has rotted away; the frame that is left is charmed to add +15 to its wearer's perception bonus. Finally, the long, straight sword that is wrapped into the center of the bundle is a fine example of the height of Númenórean craftsmanship. It is beautifully decorated with gold and silver hounds, chasing around an ebony hilt and down the steel of the blade. If drawn from its scabbard, the blade will ring with a lovely tone, which is reproduced each time it strikes another weapon. The sword shows its enchantment with a ruddy glow whenever it is used in battle and provides its wielder with +25 to his offensive rolls.

26. Kitchen/Goods Storage. This long chamber holds cooking facilities to feed gatherings ten times the size of any that have formed to honor Mori-Kam in recent generations. The entire northeast wall is lined with shelving above a preparation table that runs its length. The room's center contains four large fire pits, each with its own suspended hood of beaten bronze. The outside wall is broken by three great ovens, one of which has a second chamber for warming. All but the firepit, oven, and counterspace nearest the door go completely unused today. This small portion of the room's capacity is employed for what now rate as the big revels of the order. A six foot wide, three foot high window opens over a counter into the Mess Hall (#27). Food is passed through this at meal times. Though most of it is always idle, the whole chamber is still kept clean by the monks who serve duty as cooks. The only other artifacts to be found are a few bronze cooking implements.

27. Mess Hall. The faithful of Mori-Kam gather here for their daily meals. The hall is lined with benched tables along its walls, but the interior space is open. This is used by priests who speak with the men of the order during meals. They pace as they orate, and all of the monks in attendance listen in silence. This tradition is followed at every meal, sunrise, noon, and sunset each day. At these times, the room will be crowded with diners for about a half-hour, and for twenty minutes after cleaners will be clearing up. The dishes and cutlery are stored in the room's north corner on shelves set into the wall, beside a window and counter that looks into the kitchen (#26).

28. Work Rooms. This area is divided into stalls around its perimeter where monks labor at the more mundane tasks of keeping up their temple and equipment. Tools for sewing, woodworking, polishing, and other such chores are found, neatly put away on wooden shelves, in each work area. It is obvious that the fittings of this room are of much more recent construction than the temple itself, but the purpose the chamber served in earlier times has long been forgotten. In recent weeks, even its new purposes have been neglected by the inmates of the temple. They are too caught up in learning their new rites to find time for other activities.

29. Stair. This room holds only the head of the stair from the first floor (#16). A latched door opens into the hallway through its southeast wall.

30. Novices' Common. This room is used for leisure by the young men who are novices in the service of Mori-Kam. Its shelved walls are packed with costumes for Honnin storytelling and pieces for various games of chance and skill. Ten chairs of wood and vine circle three low tables. During the day and evening, except at meal or worship times, the room is usually occupied by two to seven of the young monks, playing games, talking, and in recent times studying the steps to new ceremonies together. In the case of an emergency, word will be sent here, and to the Initiates' Common (#31) and the Council Chamber (#32), as quickly as possible, and the monks will rush to handle the crisis. Any other time, though, any who are in this room will be rather easily taken unawares, as the Honnin tend to be uncautious in their homes after so many generations of security.

31. Initiates' Common. This room is used in idle hours for relaxation and pleasant discourse. It is less filled with the objects of outside Honnin life, the games and costumes, since the older monks are more tied up in the concerns of their order. Usually the three remaining initiates use the

room's two tables and six chairs merely as a place to talk amongst themselves. During the days, these men are busy tending to the affairs of the temple, but in the heat of the afternoon and in the early evening, all three are often found here. They sit, discussing the ways of their goddess and their coming role among the jungle people until further duties call for their attention.

32. Council Chamber. In this chamber, the leaders of the order meet to hold council. Ōn-Iko and his three lieutenants can often be found here in the afternoons and evenings, talking or arguing, and drinking a sweet Honnin wine called Momo. The room is large, but wooden partitions break it up into six smaller chambers. One is the entrance way and leads into a central area that holds six chairs and a low table. Around this are four cloisters used for meditation by the priests. Each holds a small altar with a statuette of Mori-Kam, candles in ancient holders carved from stone, and a low seat of shaped wood for kneeling before the image of their goddess. There is of great value except for a small silver gong that hangs in the entrance way. The disk is about six inches across, suspended by light chains in a wooden frame. On its face is etched, in lines so fine that none have noticed them for years, a depiction of the surface of the moon. It is charmed by the priests of Suzush, who is also Vatra. When it is sounded, the nearest of her servants will always hear, no matter how far off he may be. If it had been recognized by Iko, he would have destroyed it as he did the shrine downstairs (#17), but it has been so long since any have taken notice of it that its purposes are quite forgotten. Once it was used, like similar chimes in each of the other temples of the city, to summon envoys from the Lady of the Moon whenever her advice was needed.

33-37. Novices' Chambers. Each of these rooms is shared by two novices of the order. A bunk occupies each of the side walls, a stone niche with a mattress of Fukui fern. On the back wall, in the middle, a cabinet of woven cane holds any possessions the novices own. This is nothing more than a change or two of simple clothing and perhaps a wood carving or a trinket of bronze, given to the young man by his family. The order does not believe in the accumulation of material wealth, and this stance is reflected here. The monks will only be found in their chambers in the hours between their midnight rituals and their pre-dawn breakfast. During these times, they are likely to be sleeping quite soundly, since their days are long and full.

38-41. Initiates' Chambers. These slightly smaller chambers are given to the initiates who have been chosen to remain and serve in the temple. Of each group of ten novices, eight or nine are sent out into the wood to serve in shrines. Only the most devoted are selected to serve the goddess directly. The rooms are plain, like the novices', but rather than the second bed each of these has a broad desk built into the wall. Of course, these serve only as tables for the monks who live here today. The initiates are no more encouraged to have possessions than are their juniors, so none of their rooms have any objects of real note. Ōn-Eda, the steward, lives in the first chamber (#38) along the hall. The cell (#40) once used by Matsūm the renegade has been completely ransacked due to frustration at his betrayal. The initiates spend about the same hours in their rooms as do the novices, described above.

42-44. Priests' Chambers. These rooms are nearly identical to the cells of the initiates; they only differ in the addition of a somewhat faulty plumbing system, like that in the herb chamber downstairs. A basin and a chamber pot are both set into the back wall of each, with leaky faucets above them. They drain through sluices inside the walls with an outlet at a stream lower on the hill. These men also have more in the way of possessions than their students, their devotion to the goddess being beyond the temptation of a few worldly items. These are almost uniformly items of purely religious significance, though, with nothing of interest to outsiders. Each room holds a number of carvings and pieces of decorative beadwork depicting tales from Honnin mythology. It may be noticed that images of Suzush are not to be found; these have been destroyed because of the new orientation of the temple. Under normal circumstances, the priests would sleep the same hours as their fellow inmates; now, however, they use an hour or two of each night to stalk in search of sacrifices. This is done on a shifting schedule, but on any given evening there is a 1 in 6 chance each hour of all of them being out of the temple. Members of the other orders have sought to watch and wait outside the door to stop the raiding, but they have yet to see anyone leave the temple.

45. High Priest's Apartments. Ōn-Iko occupies the last apartment on the hall that leads to the goddess' chamber. The layout is just the same as the chambers used by his three lieutenants, but the High Priest is more extreme than his novices in his rejection of worldly goods. Except for one change of clothing, folded neatly in his cabinet, Iko has not one piece of property to store here. With his office comes a rod of twisted wood (described above in section 6.2) which he sets upon his desk during the two hours he sleeps each night. Otherwise the room is always empty.

46. Home of Mori-Kam. The room where Mori-Kam resides is filled with a strange enchantment. It is completely unfurnished, and quite large, with walls that bear the same carvings that are found throughout the temple. However, it is filled with plants that seem to have been taken straight out of the deepest portions of the wood. Trees rise into a layer of mist, just below where the ceiling should be. Bushes, vines, and flowers grow among them from earth that seems to cover the floor. These plants are quite real, but it is obvious that they are not here naturally. The goddess maintains them here, though they are growing out in the wood at the same time. This is a magic that she has engineered over many many years, and now it is flawless. She lives among the greenery and will receive the priests here on occasion. Vūr has also visited her in this room.

Mori-Kam can control the plants in her garden as well, causing them to shift, bringing thorny vines to replace flower stalks in an instant. This she does with almost no effort, so it will not distract her from anything else she may be doing. If she wishes it, the room, or any portion of it, can be filled almost instantly with undergrowth that will slow all movement to one quarter speed (one half, if a machete is used). If she makes a real effort, abandoning all other tasks, she can even cause the plants in small areas to attack with their thorns and branches. This requires that she maintain concentration, as if she were casting a spell. The victims of such attacks will be subject to a total of fifteen unmodified pincer attacks from thorns, six +20 grappling attacks from vines, and three +45 concussion attacks from branches of the trees around them. These can be divided among as many targets as stand within the room, with all other areas of the indoor forest remaining calm.

If the power of the goddess is broken, all of the plants, with the earth at their roots and the mist above, will vanish at once. A small door opens through the curved rear wall to the outside. It is well disguised on its outside (-85 to find), but inside it stands plain in the stonework, though it is usually obscured by greenery. It is through this door that the priests usually leave to gather sacrificial victims.

47. Side Door. This door is rarely used by the inmates of the temple, but it has been kept in good repair. White paint helps its outer side blend in with the carving of the wall, but close inspection will reveal it without effort. It is made of thick wood planks, with cross pieces on the inside. The door latches with a simple bronze hook that fits a ring upon the wall.

THE RUINS OF THE ONAK-JI

To the south of the Avenue of Warriors, across a hundred yards of thick jungle, is a clearing that holds several ruins. These buildings were once temples, but now their gods have been forgotten by the people of the wood. Among them is the home of the Tavar who was once worshipped as Onak, the Honnin god of music. Though the jungle folk still have songs in plenty, their worship of the god dwindled to nothing generations ago. Now the jungle threatens the once proud structure, and few Honnin will venture near it. It is said, though, that haunting strains of melody can sometimes be heard on the breezes of the night. These enchanting notes have been blamed for the disappearance of more than one young Honnin, drawn in among the ruins, never to be seen again.

The temple of music was once the finest building to be dedicated to any of the Honnin lesser gods, the deities that oversee the more trivial aspects of jungle life. It has only one story above ground, but its cellar is of equal size, giving it as much room as it would have gained from a costlier two-story design. The stone of the temple is carved in a manner that is unique among Honnin structures. In a style reminiscent of a popular Haradan metal-working motif, the white Shirosh has been inlaid with brass and more colorful stonework to produce lovely patterns throughout the building. The ceilings are set with skylights through most of the main floor,

another feature that recalls a more Haradan flavor than is found elsewhere under the trees of the forest. The actual structure, though, is obviously built for Honnin alone. The doorways are all less than six feet tall, and the treads of the stairways are close-set to fit the short legs of the jungle men.

Since its fall into disuse, the temple has lost only a little of its beauty. In a few places, the fine inlay has come free of the white building stone, leaving only a dark silhouette where cement has caused a discoloration. Vines have taken hold across portions of the roof where fallen leaves have turned to soil over the generations. The surrounding clearing was once a garden of gravel, smoothed and raked into pleasing patterns, so the plants of the forest are only beginning to encroach upon it. A few saplings have taken root, and a bank of shrubbery is tucked into the corner between the colonnade and the east end of the temple's entryway. A fallen tree has given the jungle under-growth a strong foothold just to the temple's southeast.

From the outside, the temple is a simple structure. It has a slightly pitched roof, made of terraced stone. The entrance is a covered porch, set with seven slender columns, reached by two shallow steps that run all the way around its sides. The seven pillars are wreathed in vines of jade, lapis, and brass. A colonnade (#2) fronts the eastern wing, where the floor level is about two feet above the surrounding gravel. Even in daylight, not much of the interior beyond the columns can be seen, since the eaves are relatively low and cast deep shadows.

1. Entrance Hall. The grand entry of the house of Onak is lit by a pair of large rectangular skylights, one on each side of the roof's peak. Their light shines down on a floor covered with an intricate pattern of swirling lines and patches of brilliant color. The workmanship is very fine, and the inlay is as smooth as glass. The pattern flows across the floor in four intertwining streams from the columns along the western wall. The pillars end a few feet below the high ceiling, and their purpose is actually musical rather than structural. Each has leaned against it a baton of heavy, black hardwood; when the stone is struck, a clear tone will sound. From south to north, they produce the Greater Tones of the Honnin scale, repeating the first, one scale higher, at the end. Honnin music is has no keys, but has three orders of tone: Greater (C, E, and G), Lesser (D, F, A, and B), and Intermediate (the remaining half-tones). At the start of temple festivals, these were used by four junior priests to produce the melodies that would awaken their god.

2. Colonnade. Stretching around the east wing, the colonnade gives access to the six festival shrines of the temple. Its inner wall is plain white stone, but the pillars are richly decorated with complicated designs. Each pattern is unique, capturing a different mood or spirit; some are angular and bold, others subtle and subdued. Before each of the six doors, the floor is marked with a complex inscription which, in highly stylized calligraphy, denotes the class of musical instrument to which the shrine is dedicated.

3. Shrine of Voices. The festival cycle of the Onak-Ji was organized around seven holidays: one grand celebration to honor the god himself, and six that were tied to the six families of Honnin music. The first of these was the Feast of Voices and was initiated in this shrine. The shrine, like the other five along the colonnade, possesses two small chambers on either side of the vestibule for storage of vestments and ceremonial items. Each portion of each shrine is lit by its own skylight. The left chamber of the Shrine of Voices holds robes and trappings for the priests and monks. The robes, simple garments of white and blue fabric, are hung on brass hooks set into the colorful walls. A stand at the center of the rear wall supports the headdress of the high priest, a mask of brass set with lapis and opals that depicts the open-mouthed face of a singer. The opals would bring 30 gold pieces separately in the market of Bozisha-Dar, and the mask in one piece would bring about 35 gp. The right-hand room in each shrine is given over to the instruments and equipment for the priests who performed at the ceremonies; each follower of the Onak-Ji was required to master one instrument in each family. In the Shrine of Voices, this chamber holds only seven cones of thin bronze. These were used by certain members of the chorus to amplify their vocal parts. Each is set upright on its own stand,

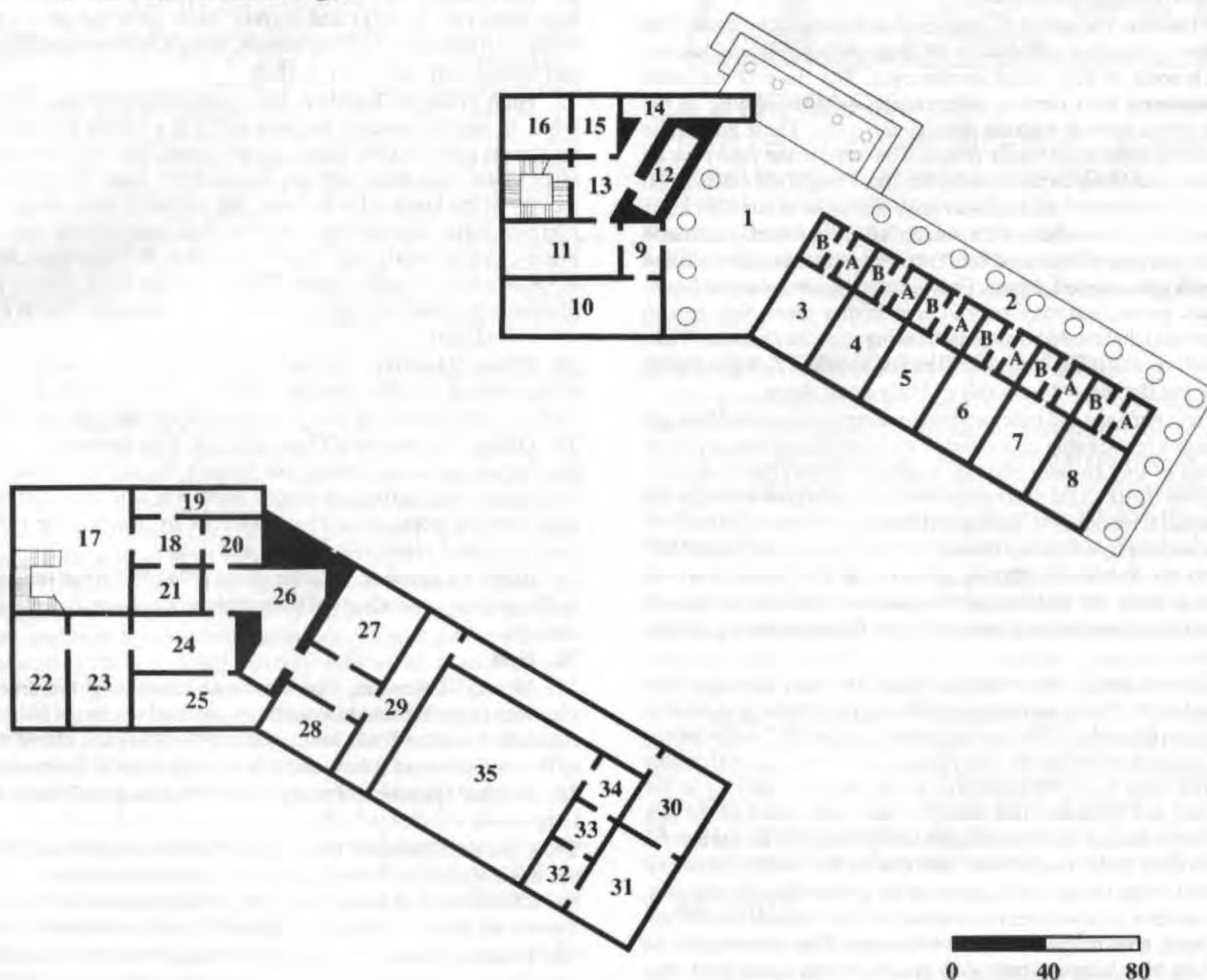
and they range in size from about twelve inches to three feet long. They have no powers beyond those given them by their shape. The main portion of the shrine is empty. Its floor is tiered upward at the back to accommodate the ranks of a choir of about thirty. The walls are inlaid with blue in broad flowing patterns.

4. Shrine of Bells. Where the Shrine of Voices (#3) was decorated in blue and white, the Shrine of Bells is appointed in silver and black. Wood of the Kurok tree has been inlaid in rectangular panels into the white stone, and pools and veins of silver spread across its dark surface. The floor is much like that of the Shrine of Voices, but a platform on the right side interrupts the stepped rise, and the floor is pierced all around the tiers with circular holes about an inch across. This was used for the great gong (see below), while a bell choir took places around the rest of the room. In the left chamber, robes of black and silver hang from hooks in the dark wood. The headdress, on its stand at the rear, is a broad-brimmed helm from which hang sixty-four tubular silver bells, ranging through four scales. Luckily for any who might don the helm, though, all of the bells are damped so they may be seen but not heard. The headdress is of solid silver and is worth about 50 gp. The right-hand room is filled with the bells of the choir. One hundred twenty-eight silver cylinders hang there, each from its own four foot wooden crook. The wooden shafts are set around the walls in holes in the floor, like those that mark the tiers in the main chamber. In the center of the room stands a large silver gong in a rack of black wood. This is patterned with smaller circles and will produce different tones depending upon where it is struck. Two mallets hang from its rack, and another thirty are stored in a rack beside the door for use with the individual bells.

5. Shrine of Strings. The third shine was dedicated to stringed instruments. Its walls are plain white Shirosh, but lines of brass form criss-cross patterns throughout the room. The main chamber is open, and its floor is flat. Only two stone seats break its surface, facing the door from the rear third of the room. Two stringed instruments were known to the Honnin of older days, though neither is played by the jungle folk now. One was a simple 64 stringed harp (Hn. "Rin-Ka"), and the other (Hn. "Shiki") was a seven stringed lute with a fretted finger board. During the Feast of Chords, the order's most accomplished players would perform for the honor of their patron deity. The vestuary holds robes of brown and gold, but no headdress was used for the Feast of Chords. In the instrument chamber, carved wooden stands hold the Rin-Ka and Shiki of the Onak-Ji. Unfortunately, time has done poor work on the Shiki; it is askew on its stand, and the tension of its strings have broken its slender neck. The Rin-Ka is in better shape; it is oval in shape, carved from a single piece of dark wood so that the rings of the tree run around its form. The instrument has remained sound through the years, though it could use a good tuning. To a collector of fine harps, this instrument might be worth as much as 30 gp.

6. Shrine of Horns. The Feast of Horns was begun in this shrine. The walls are inlaid with bright red and yellow arcs and rays. The main chamber is bare, but a bit shadowed by vines that have begun to obscure its skylight. The robing room is darker still and smells musty from water that leaks in where tendrils of green have separated the panes of glass from the frame. The garments the chamber holds, once bright red and yellow, have largely been taken by mildew. The floor has been stained by the rain.

THE RUINS OF ONAK-JI



In the opposite room, the light flows in unobstructed, shining on an array of interesting horns. The Honnin have neither oxen nor antelope from which to take natural horns, though in their days with the Far Haradrim they used such instruments. Here, on wooden stands, are four horns that were made from brass and silver, formed into graceful curves and decorated with delicate inlay and etching. Beside these are three horns of spiral shell, taken from Kori-Ton, squid-shaped shellfish that can be found in the larger lakes of the wood. The shell instruments are un-worked, except for the addition of a smooth-edged hole for a mouthpiece. The metal horns are set with keys to allow for a greater variety of pitch. The smallest of the shell horns, about sixteen inches long, is also charmed. Twice daily it will play a tune of healing which will cure from 2 to 20 hits of damage. The tune, however, must be learned, and the only teacher now available is the spirit that sleeps in the sanctuary downstairs.

7. Shrine of the Flute. The fifth shrine along the colonnade is dedicated to the Honnin flute. The walls are patterned, tan and green on white, with the stems and leaves of the jungle Totto plant, a bush with tough, hollow stalks that are used to make the flutes of the forest people. The floor is smooth and the chamber holds no furniture. The robing room holds garments of tan and green. There is also a headdress that is carved from pale wood in the form of a Honnin sitting and playing a large flute. The chamber to the right holds the four sacred flutes of the temple. Ranging from six inches to three feet in length, these instruments cover a range of eight Honnin scales. Each is of Totto wood, but the holes and mouthpiece have been inlaid with silver worked in a pattern of tracery that is beautiful to behold. The matched set would bring 40 gp in the markets of the Dar. The skylight here is almost completely obscured by vines, and several panes have fallen to shatter on the floor, letting the greenery spread to the interior as well. A large petla has taken this as a shady spot to rest and poses a threat to any who might pass below.

8. Shrine of Drums. The last of the shrines is dedicated to the drum. The walls, floor, and ceiling are patterned with large circles of black, brown, and red which seem to play tricks on the eyes. The floor of the main chamber is scattered with circular indentations as well, adding to the difficulty one might have in walking through the room. These are for the placement of hemi-spherical Honnin drums. The robes in the vestry are all of sombre brown and black on the outside, but show bright red silk linings. The headdress at the rear of the chamber is an elaborate affair with eight carved arms extending from behind the wearer's head and neck, each hand holding a different type of drum mallet. The instrument chamber is filled to capacity with hide-topped drums. Each is made from a carved hemisphere of black wood, and they vary in size from a giant, four feet in diameter, to several that could be used as drinking cups for children. Time has taken its toll on a number of the instruments, and their hides or bodies have cracked, but the majority are still in fairly good shape.

9. Hall. The rear portions and basement of the temple are entered through this hall. It holds a remarkable collection of wooden statues that depict an entire orchestra of tiny Honnin players, arranged around the chamber's walls. Light from the skylight casts somewhat eery shadows amongst the figures. The detail is remarkable, and again Haradan influence can be seen, since the men are less stylized than is usual for Honnin carving. Each little musician holds his instrument, playing or at rest, as if all were caught in the middle of a piece. In addition to the passage from the Entryway, doorways from this chamber lead south into the Parlor and west into the Feast Hall.

10. Parlor. Guests visited the temple of Onak for many reasons when Pred was at its height. Musicians came to offer homage to the god, to seek training, or to join the order. Others came merely to hear the lovely music. Both sorts of guest were received with pleasure in this once comfortable chamber. Vines have done their damage to the skylight here as in the Shrine of Flutes, and the water that seeps in has made a ruin of the silk cushions that once decked the fifteen chairs and six couches set against the walls. The wood of their construction, and that of the room's three low tables, has held strong, though its finish is not the glossy black it once was. On one of the tables rests a wooden box worked with an inlay of gold (5gp). It holds three hard, brown nodules that look like nuts. They are actually the dried fruit of the Kin-Ja tree. Their juice is quite sweet when fresh, but ferments into a mild poison with time. If these are eaten, the PC must make an RR against a 5th level poison (-10/nodule eaten) or fall into a fit of vomiting that will drain him of 2-20 hits.

11. Feast Hall. The meals of the temple day to day, and the feasts that went along with the various festivals were served on the long tables of this hall. Two run the length of the room, while a third, smaller one is set across the western end. Chairs of plain wood are pulled up to the two, while cushioned seats line the west edge of the third.

12. Store Room. The shelves that line this chamber were once packed with all manner of dry goods and supplies. When the building was finally abandoned, though, the monks took with them all of the items that would be useful elsewhere.

13. Passage.

14. Guest Chamber. Visitors to the temple who required accommodations were put up in this spare chamber. It holds seven cots of wood and vines, and a small wicker chest for each.

15. Scullery.

16. Kitchen.

17. Hall.

18. Hall.

19. Classroom. The novice monks of Onak were trained in the basics of music in this chamber. A number of chairs are scattered about, but they have been damaged by rain blown in through a broken window at the top of the north wall. A large puddle fills the center of the room. This is the breeding ground for a swarm of the jungle gnats. At night, the insects will be out in the evening air. By day, however, they cover every surface of the room in a smooth, grey layer. If any are disturbed, the whole swarm will take flight and fill the room with a biting, disease-carrying cloud.

20. Library. Scrolls of musical notation, and volumes of written work once filled this room's stone shelves. Now there is nothing left but dust and fragments of parchment and hide.

21. Instrument Storage. This small room holds only a handful of instruments on its racks and shelves. Most were removed when the last monks left the order. Still stored here, though, are two small drums, a flute, and a large horn of Kori-Ton shell.

22. High Priest's Chamber. This room housed the ranking priest of the Onak-Ji, and his remains are here still. On a simple cot, tucked into the southwest corner of the largely empty room, lies the skeleton of the last High Priest. This bitter old man insisted that none of his followers were worthy of the knowledge he held, and carried a great many secrets with him into death. Among these were the ritual tunes for the induction of new priests, and the yearly high feast of the order. Without these, the followers of Onak were left to drift apart. The room also holds a chest with the old Honnin's personal belongings, but the only item of value is a small flute of silver (15gp).

23. Priests' Quarters. The three priests that served under the High Priest of the order shared this chamber. It now holds only the beds in which they slept, as they carried all else with them when they left the temple.

24. Office. The temple of Onak was one of the last areas where the art of writing was preserved among the Honnin, but still this office had passed into disuse long before the temple itself was abandoned. It holds only a large table of wood, somewhat weakened by age, and the empty shelves that were once filled with ledgers and tallies.

25. Record Chamber. Like the office (#44), this room remained unused in the last few generations of the temple's operation. It contains only bare shelves.

26. Hall.

27. Monks' Common. The monks and priests of the order used this chamber to gather and talk amongst themselves, or to hold impromptu concerts. It holds a dozen low, comfortable chairs and a large wicker chest with a collection of games and a few plain musical instruments.

28. Monks' Quarters. Twenty-four plain cots are all that remain in this long room.

29. Concert Chamber. For many of the festivals of Onak, the Honnin of the order would perform in concert here to honor their patron deity. The room holds nothing more than forty wooden chairs, but these have been thrown all about the chamber. Many of them lie broken on the floor.

30. Waiting Room. Visitors to the temple who desired direct contact with Onak were allowed to wait here while a priest prepared the way for them to come before the god. The room once held a number of comfortable chairs and three low tables, but these have been even more abused than those of other areas.

31. Reception Chamber. In this large, empty room, visitors were instructed by a priest in the proper conduct to be followed while in the presence of the deity. Four Honnin skeletons lie here, past victims of the temple's eerie musical call. These may be animated to fight as Undead (see the Beast Table in section 7.0) by Onak's servant spirit Tako who is described below. He will only do this if guests attempt to leave without waking his master.

32. First Door Chamber. The door from the Reception Chamber (#31) into this room is sealed with a spell. It can only be opened if the four silver bells set into its face are rung, in order from right to left. The four ascending tones are the Major tones of the Honnin scale, the same four tones that were made by the great bells in the Entrance Chamber (#1). The chamber itself is empty, except for another three skeletons like those in the Reception Chamber.

33. Second Door Chamber. Like the previous chamber (#32), this room can only be entered after the musical lock of its door is activated. In this case, the notes must be played on a wooden flute that rests on a shelf by the door. Even if he is not trained in the flute, a PC who has figured out what notes need to be played should be able to produce them from the instrument after a short period by trial and error. This room holds another two skeletons, one of which is more recent than the rest, leaving it in a gruesome state of partial decay.

34. Third Door Chamber. Entry here can only be gained by singing the four required notes. This is signified by a carving of a singing face that is set into the door. Once inside, the PCs will see the source of the temple's recent mysteries. The god Onak is, in Honnin legend, served by a sixteen armed spirit called Tako who takes the roles of champion and valet for the absent-minded god of music. The Tavar that has taken on this role waits here for his master to awaken. His non-corporeal many-armed form floats in the east corner. He is not able to rouse his master himself, but it is he who has produced the haunting music to draw Honnin to the temple. Once within the temple, the Honnin were called to the doors and held at each until they solved the lock or collapsed and eventually died. None has yet made it into this final chamber. Once the PCs arrive here, the Tavar will gesture them on toward the open door into the Hall of Onak (#35). If they resist or refuse, he may attempt to charm with his music (RR vs. 10th level charm), and he will block their retreat with the animated bodies of the Honnin that have come before them. His corporeal form has been slipping away, though, the longer his master sleeps, so he will not make any physical attacks himself. He also cannot be attacked physically as weapons will pass through his form. If attacked magically, assuming his charm fails, he will be forced to retreat, passing out through the walls.

35. The Hall of Onak. This large room is home to the sleeping Tavar for whom the temple was built. It is empty except for four silver bells, resting by the door on a table of red wood, and a large stone basin in the south corner. The basin is filled with water by a spring, and the run-off flows as a stream across the chamber and down through a hole in the floor at the north corner. The god sleeps as a nebulous, smoky form, reclining in the far west of the room. The notes that will awaken him are the same as the PCs will have used at least three times before, the Major Tones of the Honnin scale. However, they must be played on the bells within this chamber, which presents a problem. All of the bowl-like silver bells are the same size, and so, will produce the same tone. To produce the notes the god must hear, they must be filled partially with water, from the basin. When this is done, again by trial and error, the god will stir and take on human form. In the shape of a young Honnin, he will come before the visitors to offer his thanks. If they do not speak Honnin, he will try other languages (Apyaic, Quenya, etc.) until he finds one which they can understand. He will explain that they have permitted the re-establishment of his order, since he can now step out among the forest folk and draw new worshippers to his temple. In return, he will offer each member of the party mastery of a chosen musical instrument. This will take the form of seven skill ranks, to which the player may add any Agility bonus and whatever skill he may already have. If the GM desires, the Honnin of Pred may also choose to offer additional, and more tangible, rewards for the service the visitors have done.

ÔN-URI-GÊS



6.4 THE TASK

The PCs in this adventure will be faced with a challenging task. They will be required to make a dangerous trek through miles of the Forest of Tears before ever setting foot in Pred. Once they reach the city, they will have to face the order of Mori-Kam and the goddess herself, and best them to free the Honnin of their troubles. Such a mission should be daunting to even a powerful band of characters.

6.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

The previous adventures of the PCs will play a large part in the choice of beginnings for this mission. Adventurers who have won the trust of the Honnin in *The Hidden Shrine* may be approached by the jungle men themselves for help. Less diplomatic PCs might be hired by a Haradan Lord whose estate borders the Suza Sumar. Perhaps Mori-Kam's priests directed a raid outside the borders of the wood, abducting a young Haradan child to serve as the next victim. Its father, a powerful oligarch of the Dar, can well afford sending a rescue party into the forest where a track of broken brush indicates the child was taken. Another starting point exists in Bozisha-Dar itself. If the players are devout Far Haradrim, a priest from the temple of Ladnoca (inspired by a vision from his goddess) might approach them with a plea to aid Varda's unknown worshippers in the Harad Wood. Foreigners in the city might also be called on for service, but with a reward offered to entice them. Once the PCs have been hooked on the quest, it will be a simple matter of putting together supplies and planning their expedition.

6.42 AIDS

A number of factors may be brought into play to aid the adventurers in achieving their goals. In addition to their own skills and possessions, which should include some form of protection from disease. Other aids are listed in the paragraphs below.

Early during their visit to the city, the PCs may be met by monks of the Temple of the Moon, who will lead them to their home to meet Ôn-uri-Gês. The priests of Suzush speak a distorted form of Apysaic as an ancient "holy tongue." The men who built the city were bi-lingual and portions of their speech have been carried down through the generations. This will add to the impression that the strangers have come at the will of Suzush. The High Priest will help them with information about the city itself and the Order of Mori-Kam. He will also introduce them to Matsûm the Renegade who will have more to tell them.

Once they go against the monks of Mori-Kam, the poor relations between Vûr and his hosts may also aid the PCs. When things begin to go sour, Vûr's temper is such that he may strike out at his hosts, if they do not perform as well as would his crack Haradan troopers. This can be used by the GM, as needed, to enhance game balance.

6.43 OBSTACLES

Standing in the players' way will be two main obstacles. First will come the challenge of the forest itself. Making their way to the city will require the adventurers to overcome numerous natural dangers, and perhaps roving Honnin hunters as well. In the city, they will be faced by the Honnin of Mori-Kam and the Near Haradan Vûr. All told, these should prove enough to make any group of PCs feel that they have earned any rewards they may earn.

6.44 REWARDS

The PCs stand to gain considerable material reward. If they are not motivated by religious fervor, the priests of Ladnoca may offer them a substantial purse. The treasury of the temple will quite

possibly be at their mercy, though they should be careful of openly looting a Honnin temple when they must escape past other jungle men, unless arrangements have been made with the priests of Suzush. The possessions of the monks of the temple will certainly be fair game. In the end, when this is coupled with the obvious benefits to their social status and moral character, the PCs should certainly feel that their troubles have been well rewarded.

6.5 ENCOUNTERS

Any number of encounters may stem from crossing the forest into the city. These can be generated from the encounter table. Once the PCs reach the city, the priests of Suzush will approach them with an offer of support. This encounter should be handled based on the character sketches above and the PCs involved.

In the temple itself, encounters must be handled very carefully. The ten novices and four initiates should be used as needed to provide challenges for the players. The priests must be used more carefully, as their skills present more of a danger. All of the Honnin of Mori-Kam's order have lived their lives in peace. They do well enough taking victims from among the weaker pilgrims, but they will quail somewhat in the face of seasoned adventurers. They will not perform at the standard of what would normally be expected from NPCs of their level. Shebbin Vûr and Mori-Kam herself, however, will show no lack at all when it comes to ferocity.

The three assistant priests are all quite energetic, due to their use of certain drugs. All receive added bonuses for this on the NPC Table, but the three lieutenants have a chance (01-15) each hour of needing a boost. At such times, they will operate at -25 until they can make it to the herb pantry for another dose.

7.0 TABLES

7.1 NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile/ 2ndary OB	Mov M	Notes
NPCs FOR "THE HIDDEN SHRINE"										
Ôn-Ikana *	1	35	No/1	20	N	N	15ss	20sb	15	Honnin Scout/Hunter
Aru-Sûm	4	47	No/1	5	N	N	20ss	20sb	5	Honnin Animist, 12PP
Junior Guard (3)	1	30	No/1	15	N	N	25ss	50sb	15	Honnin Scout/Hunter
Senior Guard (1)	3	40	No/1	15	N	N	45ss	75sb	20	Honnin Scout/Hunter
NPCs FOR "THE TOWER OF BIRDS"										
Tica the Birdman	10	150	No/1	25	N	N	90LCI	80LPi	30	Nermir Spirit
Ôn-Eno †	5	40	No/1	5	N	N	90MCI	—	10	Honnin Animist, 15PP
Ôn-Tomu	5	45	No/1	5	N	N	45ss	60sb	5	Honnin Animist, 15PP
Novice (3)	2	22	No/1	10	N	N	20ss	45sb	15	Honnin Animist, 4PP
Initiate (2)	3	27	No/1	10	N	N	25ss	50sb	15	Honnin Animist, 6PP
NPCs FOR "THE TEMPLE CITY OF PRED"										
Mori-Kam §	10(30)	195	RL/9	20	N	N	100cl (2/rnd)	—	20	Tavari Spirit, 60PP
Ôn-Iko Ω	9	51	No/1	0	N	N	50cl	—	5	Honnin Animist, 27PP x 3, -10 due to drugs
Shebbin Vûr	10	120	Ch/13	20	N	N	160bs	130da	15	Haradan Warrior
Priest (3)	6	44	No/1	10	N	N	30ss	50sb	—	Honnin Animist, 18PP
Initiate (3)	4	33	No/1	5	N	N	27ss	45sb	—	Honnin Animist, 8PP
Novice (10)	2	22	No/1	5	N	N	25ss	35sb	—	Honnin Animist, 6PP
Matsûm	4	33	No/1	5	N	N	27ss	45sb	—	Honnin Animist, 12PP
Ôn-uri-Gês	15	60	No/1	5	N	N	100qs	—	—	Honnin Animist of Varda, 60PP x 4

* Honnin short swords are -5 because they are made of soft bronze. This has been taken into account in the NPC OBs.

† Without the Rod of Birds, Tsu-Eno fights as well as an initiate of his order, but will have to find weapons to wield.

§ Delivering 195 hits will destroy Mori-Kam's current body only.

7.2 BEAST TABLE

Type	Lvl	#/Enc	Size	Speed	Hits	AT	DB	(Primary/ Secondary/Tertiary) Attack	Notes
Gnat	0	3-300	T	FA/MD	1	No/1	45	10Tbi/disease/—	Nocturnal. Carry Weeping Fever.
Goat	3	1-2	M	FA/FA	70	No/1	20	50MHo/40MBa/30MTs	Only males have horns.
Hawk	2	1-2	S	VF/BF	25	No/1	50	40MCI/25SPi/—	Aggressive hunting behavior.
Horse, Wild	4	1-20	L	FA/FA	120	No/3	40	40MCI/30MTs/40Sbi	Mixed breeds, hardy.
Lesina	2	1-10	M	M/MF	50	No/1	20	80MBa/30MBi/—	Undead (Ghoul).
Lisica	3	1-5	S	FA/VF	45	No/3	50	60Sbi/—/—	Nocturnal Fox.
Lizard	1	1-2	S	MD/FA	25	No/1	40	30SCI/—/—	Harmless.
Majmun	1	2-200	S	FA/VF	25	No/3	40	30Sbi/—/—	Monkey.
Orao	6	1-4	L	FA/VF	90	No/1	30	80LPi/60LCI/40MBi	Desert Eagle.
Otravati	1	1	S	VF/VF	30	No/1	30	35Ho/—/—	Snake.
Petla	4	1	L	FA/FA	120	No/3	10	85LGr/80LCr/40MBi	30' constrictor. Use Large Creature Criticals.
Prelaz Bic									
Young	3	1-2	L	VF/FA	110	RL/12	30	100Lbi/50LCI/50LCL	Use Large Creature Criticals.
Mature	7	1	L	FA/FA	135	RL/12	20	110Lbi/70LCI/70LCL	Use Large Creature Criticals.
Old	18	1	L	FA/MF	160	Ch/16	15	120Lbi/90LCI/90LCL	Use Large Creature Criticals.
Púshel Nin of the Tori-Ji	3	2	M	M/MF	70	Ch/16	15	80wp/45LPi/—	Telepathically linked
Rat	0	2-20	S	MD/MF	10	No/1	20	20Tbi/20Sbi/—	City rats larger than desert rats.
Sand Devil	3	1	L	FA/FA	75	No/1	10	See Notes	Whirlwind. Tortured Mannish spirit. Attack — 1st rnd: blindness, 1 pt damage; 2nd: deafness, 1 pt; 3rd: suffocation, 2 pt; 4th: damage/rnd doubles every 2 rnds.
Sand Drake —									
Young	4	1-2	L	VF/FA	125	No/4	40	90Lbi/50LCI/80HBa	Use Large Creature Criticals.
Mature	8	1	L	FA/FA	150	No/4	25	100HBi/70HCL/90HBa	Use Super-large Creature Criticals.
Old	20	1	H	FA/MF	175	RL/12	20	110HBi/90HCL/90HBa	Use Super-large Creature Criticals.
Skeleton	3	1-10	M	MD/MF	55	No/1	10	40wp/50MBa/—	Honin lesser skeletons
Stetan	2	1	M	VF/VF	50	No/3	40	40MBi/—/—	Otter-like creature.
The Razarac	20	1	L	BF/BF	250	RL/12	40	80HCL/120Lba/—	Demon. Strikes 3x/rd. Use Large Creature Crits.
Trusa	1	1-5	T	SL/SL	10	No/1	30	0TBa/50TSt/poison	If TSt obtains critical, lvl 4 poison.
Unca	3	1-2	M	FA/VF	100	No/3	35	80MBi/50MCI/—	Large cat. Active in morning and evening.
Vuk	3	5-30	M	FA/FA	110	No/3	30	70MBi/—/—	Wild Dog.
Woodhawk	4	1-2	L	FA/VF	70	No/1	40	60LPi/50LCI/35MBi	Giant Hawk
Zamka	1	1	M	VF/BF	30	No/1	30	60MGr/45MCI/30MBi	7' long "Snare Snake."

Codes: The statistics given describe a typical creature of that type. Most of the codes are self-explanatory: **Lvl** (Level), **#Enc** (number encountered), **Size** (Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or Huge), **Hits**, and **DB** (Defensive Bonus). The more complex statistics are described below:

Speed: A creature's speed is given in terms of "Movement Speed/Attack Quickness": C = Creeping, VS = Very Slow, S = Slow, M = Medium, MF = Moderately Fast, FA = Fast, VF = Very Fast, BF = Blindingly Fast.

AT (Armor Type): The two letter codes gives the creature's **MERP** armor type (No = No Armor, SL = Soft Leather, RL = Rigid Leather, Ch = Chain, Pl = Plate); the number is the equivalent to the **Rolemaster** numeric armor type.

Attack: Each attack code starts with the attacker's Offensive Bonus. The first letter indicates the size of the attack; T = Tiny, S = Small; M = Medium, L = Large, and H = Huge. The last two letters indicate the type of attack; Ti = Tiny, Pi = Pincher/beak, Ba = Bash, Bi = Bite, Cl = Claw, Cr = Crush, Gr = Grapple, Ho = Horn, Ts = Trample/Stomp, St = Stinger, and We = Weapon. These codes may differ slightly from the **MERP** and **Rolemaster** codes. Each creature usually initiates combat using its "Primary" attack, which is the first attack listed. Depending upon the situation or success of the Primary attack, it may later use its "Secondary" or "Tertiary" (the next two attacks listed) attacks, perhaps all in the same round if previous attacks are very successful.

KEY TO NPC TABLE

* — Armor or weapon is magical or specially made. Bonus is included in the DB or OB.

Codes: The statistics describe each NPC; a more detailed description of some of the more important NPCs are in the main text. Some of the codes are self-explanatory: **Lvl**(level), **Hits**, **Sh**(shield), and **MM**(Movement and Maneuver bonus). The more complex codes are described below.

AT (Armor Type): The two-letter code gives the creature's **MERP** armor type (No = No Armor, SL = Soft Leather, RL = Rigid Leather, Ch = Chain, Pl = Plate); the number is the equivalent **Rolemaster** type.

DB (Defensive Bonus): Note defensive bonuses include stats and shield. The DB of normal shields is 25. Shield references include quality bonus (e.g., "Y5" means "yes, a +5 shield").

Gr (Greaves) - "A" and "L" are used to indicate arm and leg greaves, respectively.

OBs (Offensive Bonuses): Weapon abbreviations follow OBs: ba-battle axe, bs-broadsword, cl-club, da-dagger, fa-falchion, fl-flail, ha-hand axe, hb-halberd, ja-javelin, ma-mace, mg-main gauche, ml-mounted lance, ms-morning star, pa-pole arm, qs-quarterstaff, ra-rapier, sc-scimitar, sp-spear, ss-short sword, th-two handed sword, wh-war hammer, wp-whip, wm-war mattock, bo-bola, cb-composite bow, lcb-light crossbow, hcb-heavy crossbow, lb-long bow, ks-kragashsard, kn-kragrif, ro-rock (as club except base range = 15), sb-short bow, sl-sling, ts-throwing star. Animal and unarmed attacks are abbreviated using code from the Master Beast Table. Combatants untrained in a type of weaponry (e.g., Orcs untrained in missile combat) suffer a penalty of -25 when attacking. Melee and missile OBs include the bonus for combatant's best weapon in that category.

7.3 ENCOUNTER TABLE

Encounter	Open Forest		Honnin Shrine	Honnin Dwelling	Pred	Waterhole	Ruin
	Day	Night					
Chance	10%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	10%
Distance (miles)	4	4	—	—	.2	—	—
Time (hours)	3	3	.25	.25	.5	1	1
Inanimate Dangers							
Trap	01-03	01-03	01	—	—	01-03	01
Natural Danger (Storm, Mud-slide, etc.)	04-09	04-09	02-07	01-06	01-06	04-09	02-07
Sites							
Lair	10-14	10-14	—	—	—	—	—
Waterhole	15-20	15-20	—	—	—	—	—
Dwelling	21-25	21-25	—	—	—	—	—
Shrine	26-27	26-27	—	—	—	—	—
Ruin	28-30	28-30	—	—	—	—	—
Animals							
Gnats *	31-33	special	special	special	special	special	special
Great Woodhawk	34-35	31	—	—	07	10	08
Hawk	36-37	32	—	—	08-09	11-12	09-10
Iu-Tori (Parrot)	38-40	33-34	08-12	07-14	10-18	13-18	11-19
Lizard	41	35	13-14	15-16	19	19-21	20-28
Petla	42-43	36-38	15	17	20	22-27	29-32
Rat	44	39-41	16-26	18-27	21-25	28-32	33-38
Stetan	45-47	42-45	27-33	28-33	26-28	33-41	39-40
Trusa	48	46-47	34-35	34-35	29-30	42-44	41-44
Unca	49-50	48-50	—	—	—	45-50	45-50
Honnin							
Hunters (1-5)	51-61	51-68	36-44	36-40	31-46	51-62	51-63
Shamans (1-10)	62-67	69-76	45-65	41-55	47-61	63-74	64-75
Non-combatants (1-20)	68-69	77-78	66-80	56-85	62-76	75-80	76-77
Foragers (1-5)	70-79	79-85	81-89	86-92	77-91	81-92	78-88
Other People							
Haradan Foragers (1-10)	80-86	86-88	—	—	—	—	—
Creatures							
Pûshel Nîn	87	89	90-95	93	92	93	89-91
Sand Drakes	88	90	—	—	—	—	92
Undead ¥	89-90	91-94	—	94	93	94-95	93-95
Special †	91-00	95-00	96-00	95-00	94-00	96-00	96-00

* See *Far Harad* — Gnats are everywhere at night, but stick to their hive-like nests during the day. A daytime encounter will mean disturbing one of these nests, under a pile of damp leaves, in an old stump, etc.

¥ The forest has undead, like any other region, ranging from level 1 to level 10. The GM should select an appropriate type.

† This should be some interesting and possibly dangerous NPC on an errand in the wood. It may be one described in this module, some other Honnin, or a visitor from outside the forest. It could even be one of the spirits of the wood.

NOTE: These encounters reflect normal conditions. During periods of additional activity (such as the times of the adventures described here), the GM must adjust encounters to match the circumstances



FOREST OF TEARS™

Explore the sunspeckled twilight beneath the boughs of the Forest of Tears. Amidst the songs of brilliantly feathered birds, a small people struggles with its insane gods, fighting to keep the traditions of its age-old society intact. Obsessed with secrecy, the Honnin are troubled by a cannibalistic spirit who preys on its worshippers and a Tavari seduced by Sauron's promises of power. These dangers threaten visitors to the mysterious Forest of Tears.



An Adventure Module suitable for use with MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE PLAYING™ (MERP) and ROLEMASTER™, and adaptable to FANTASY HERO™ and most other major Fantasy Role Playing Games.

©1989 by Tolkien Enterprises. MIDDLE-EARTH and THE HOBBIT are registered trademarks of Tolkien Enterprises. THE HOBBIT and THE LORD OF THE RINGS and all characters and places therein are trademark properties of Tolkien Enterprises, a division of Elan Merchandising, Inc., Berkeley, CA. All characters and places derived from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien are common law trademarks used by license from Unwin Hyman, Ltd., publishing successors to George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, UK.

Made in U.S.A.

#8015



0 10599 00700 7

ISBN 1-55806-084-7

FOREST OF TEARS™ contains:

- TWO FULL-COLOR MAPS: including a regional map and a map of the nearby city of Bozisha-Dar.
- THREE EXCITING ADVENTURES: confront an order of the Honnin Monks intent on guarding the secrecy of "The Hidden Shrine"; avenge the death of a Haradan youth in "The Tower of Birds"; and combat a local goddess pledged to Sauron's service in "the City of Pred".
- DETAILED LAYOUTS: of all adventure sites.
- STATISTICS: for Honnin priests and monks, beasts of the Suza Sumar, and one of the powerful Tavari.

IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES holds the exclusive worldwide license for Fantasy Role Playing Games and Adult Boardgames based on J.R.R. Tolkien's THE LORD OF THE RINGS™ and THE HOBBIT®.