

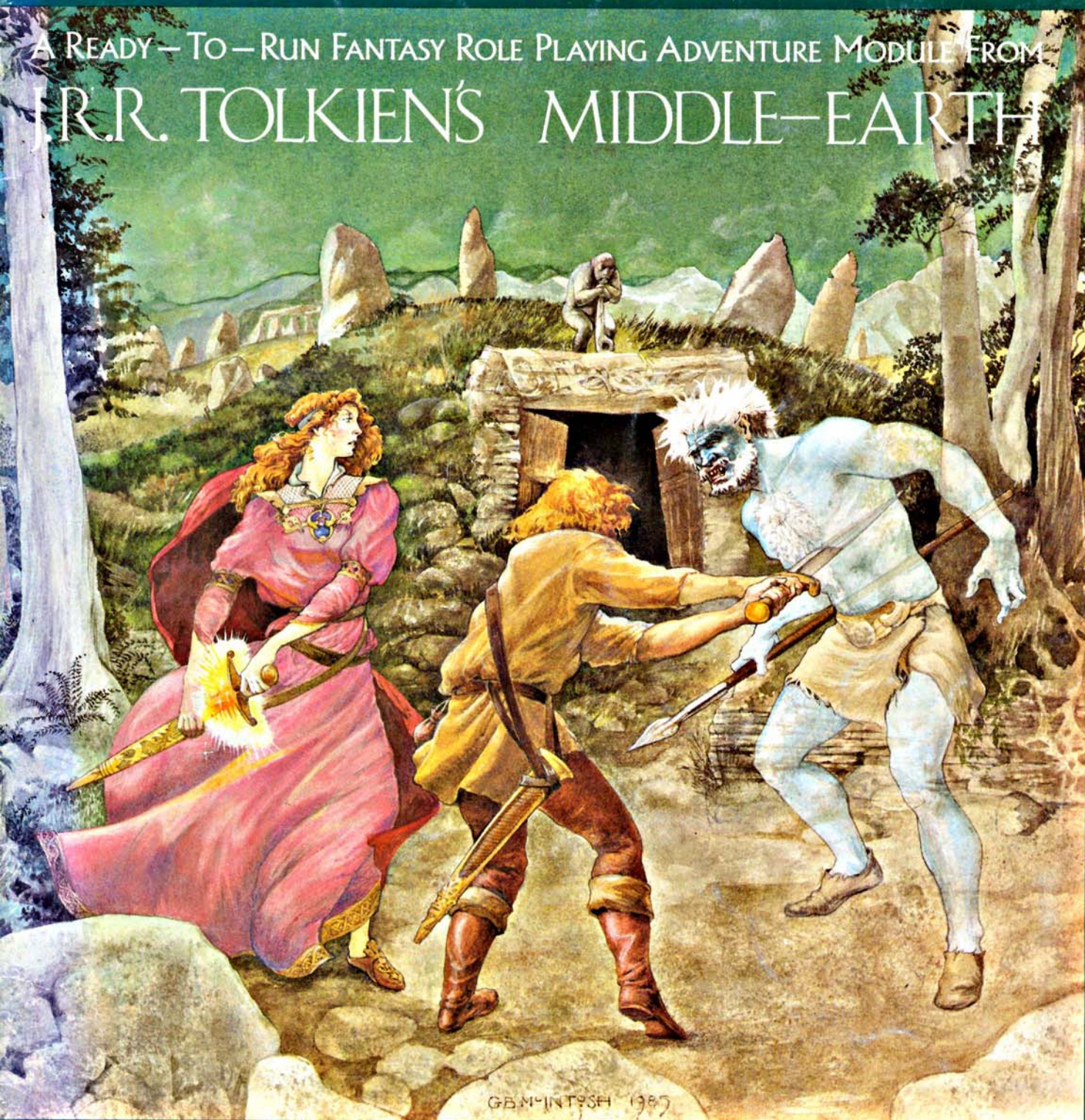
HAUNTED RUINS

of the Dunlendings™

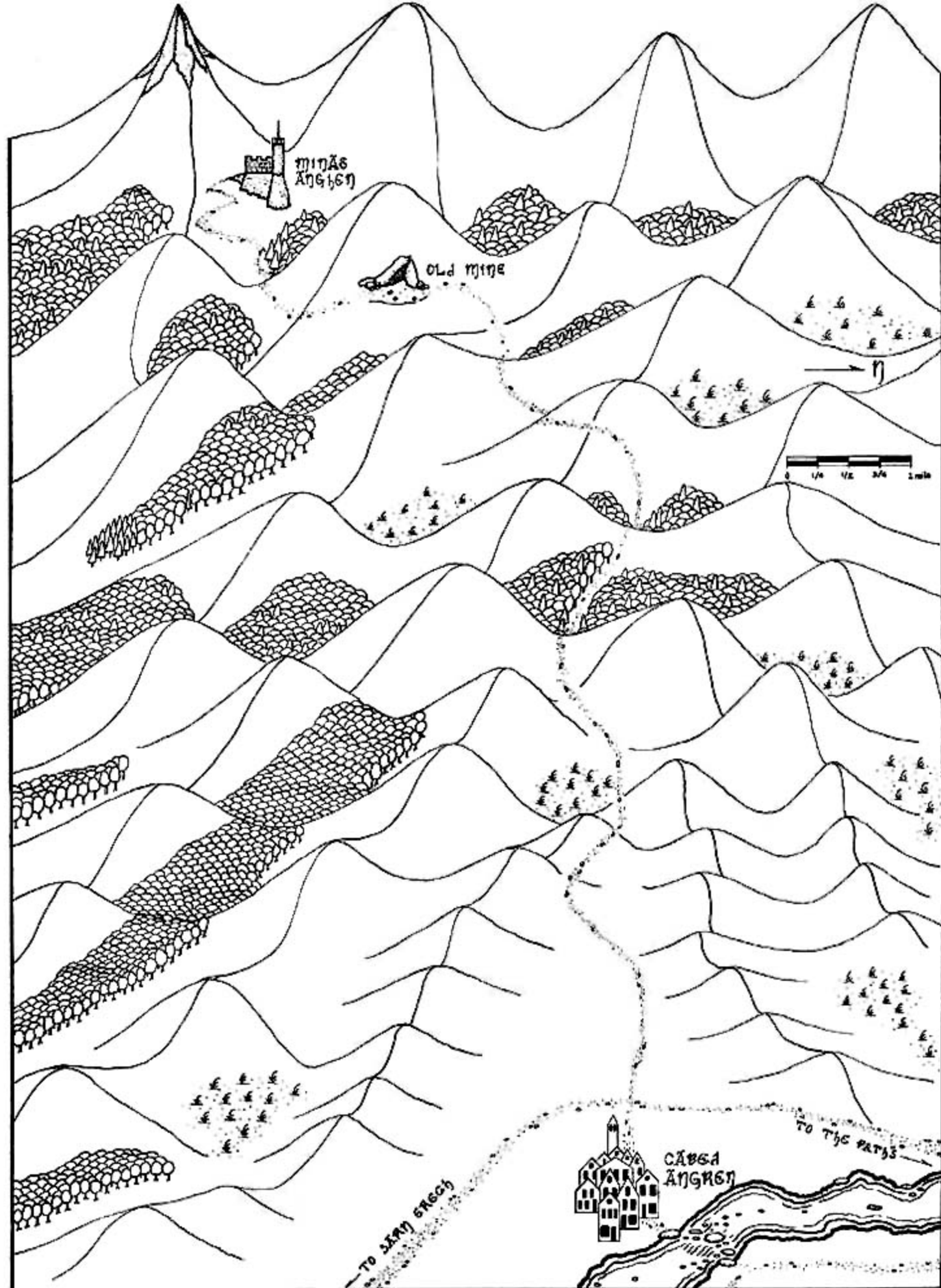
ST.# 8101



A READY-TO-RUN FANTASY ROLE PLAYING ADVENTURE MODULE FROM
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH



Three low-to-mid level adventures based on the **Lord of the Rings™** and **The Hobbit™**, each adventure stands on its own and can be set up in minutes. Produced and distributed by IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES, Inc.



Minas Anghen area (see Sec. 3.0)

haunted ruins of the dunlendings™

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CREDITS

Author: Ruth Sochard

Editor: Peter C. Fenlon

Series Design: Peter C. Fenlon, S. Coleman Charlton

Production: Kurt H. Fischer, Christopher Sean Murphy, Pete Fenlon, John Ruemmler, Steven Bouton, Chris Christensen

Cover Art: Gail B. McIntosh

Interior Art: Stephan Peregrine, Jessica Ney

Cover Graphics: Terry K. Amthor, Richard H. Britton

Maps: Jessica M. Ney, Judy Hnat

Graphics: Jessica Ney, Rick Britton

Charts: Steven Bouton, Coleman Charlton

Special Contributions: Terry K. Amthor, Carl Pitt, Olivia H. Johnston, Coleman "Spotswoods" Organs* Charlton, Bruce R. Neidlinger, Deane S. Begiebing, Chris "Give the Woman the Sword" Christensen, Sam "She Asked For Money?!" Irvin, Kevin "Young Hoser" Barrett, Mitch Walker, Bill Downs, Ted Pfalz, Jeff McKeage, Howard "Typesetter of Fortune" Huggins

Typesetting: Graphic Communications

Printing: Expert Graphics, Richmond, VA

This series is dedicated to Bruce Neidlinger. By Eru, he asked for it more than once.



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1.0 GUIDELINES

The *Middle-earth Ready-to-Run* Series is designed for Gamemasters who want adventures which can be set up in a few minutes and played in a few hours. The adventures require little or no preparation.

Haunted Ruins of the Dunlendings has four parts. Section 1.0 deals with guidelines regarding the use of the module. Section 2.0 provides pregenerated characters for the players (which can be used as non-player characters if so desired).

The third part contains Sections 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0, the adventures. Each adventure stands on its own, although a common theme unites the stories. They can be set anywhere in Middle-earth where the story seems appropriate. Alternatively, the adventure locations can be keyed to ICE's *Erech and the Paths of the Dead*, where mention is made of each site. Area maps are located on the inside of the front and back cover and provide a blowup of the immediate region around each adventure location. The fourth part of the module (Section 6.0) contains the encounter charts, and is located at the back of the book, permitting easy reference.

1.1 HANDLING PLAY

Each adventure is geared for a different difficulty level. The one found in Section 3.0 is challenging for 1st or 2nd level characters, or inexperienced players. Section 4.0's adventure is aimed at 2nd or 3rd level adventurers, while the adventure in Section 5.0 is designed for 4th or 5th level characters.

The adventures are divided into five standard parts: (1) the tale, which describes the setting and covers the background and plot; (2) the NPCs, a person-by-person description of the prominent non-player characters, including their stats; (3) the layout, a level-by-level, room-by-room description of the adventure site, complete with numbered diagrams, floorplans, and illustrations; (4) the task, a discussion of how to start the adventure, along with the aids, clues, obstacles, and rewards awaiting the adventurers; and (5) encounters, which cover typical or probable meetings between the adventurers and the NPCs.

The GM should skim each section of an adventure before beginning play. Then he can have the players pick pre-designed characters from those provided in Section 2.0, or he can permit the players to design their own PCs. (Of course, the GM can assign PCs.)

Once play ensues, the GM should refer to the Encounter Chart in Section 6.0, at the back of the module. It covers the probability of encounters for every spot in each adventure.

1.2 ADAPTING THE MODULE TO YOUR GAME

Like the rest of the 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.

1.21 CONVERTING HITS 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 hit numbers found in this module only represent general pain and system shock. They cover bruises and small cuts rather than wounds. Critical strike damage is used to describe 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.

1.22 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	D100	D20	3-18	2-12
Stat	Bonus	Bonus	Stat	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

The following chart provides a sampling of pregenerated player characters of varying profession and levels. Statistics are given for both **MERP** and **Rolemaster**. The GM may wish to assign players a character or allow them to select from the list. Of course, the GM can utilize the unused PCs as non-player characters. After all, the players may design their own characters or employ characters already in use.

The GM should remember, however, that regardless of how the players acquire their characters, each adventure is geared for a different difficulty level (see 1.1). We suggest PCs tough enough to meet the challenge.

Codes: See the NPC stats on page 5 for an explanation of the basic codes. The following is a list of other codes and abbreviations which might be ambiguous.

Power Points: The number (if any) given in parentheses indicates the possession of a "bonus spell item" and its bonus (see **MERP** Section 4.56).

Skill Bonuses: NA, SL, RL, CH = Maneuver and Movement in No Armor, Soft Leather, Rigid Leather, and Chain; 1 HE OB, 1 HC OB, 2H OB, Thrown OB, Missile OB, Pole-arms OB = Offensive Bonuses for 1-H Edged, 1-H Concussion, 2-Handed, Thrown, Missile, and Pole-arms; Dir. Spell = Directed Spells; Second. Skill = Secondary Skills.

Secondary Skills: Each secondary skill is abbreviated by giving the beginning letters of the skill (see **MERP** Section 2.33). The bonus for that skill is given following the abbreviation.

Languages: Languages are abbreviated by using their first three letters (see **MERP**, ST-1, p. 19); exceptions: BS= Black Speech and Bet = Silvan (Bethteur). The rank for each language is given following the abbreviation.

Spell Lists: Spell lists are abbreviated by using the first few letters in each word of the spell list name; for example, "Snd/Lt W." refers to the "Sound/Light Ways" spell list.

PC 1: + 10 comp-bow, 2 Mirennia
PC 2: + 15 non-fumble mace, + 10 longbow, gauntlet of "Charm Kind" 1x/day
PC 3: + 15 comp-bow, Belt of Shield 1x/day, Boots Land 1x/day Leap 1x/day, 1 Kathkusa, 1 Klagul
PC 4: + 10 mace, ring + 10 to traps
PC 5: + 10 warhammer, armor + 10 to maneuvers, 1 Degiik
PC 6: set of tools + 15 Locks and Traps, Cloak of Hiding + 15, 1 Zur, 1 Mirennia
PC 7: + 10 falchion, + 2 adder, glasmain orb heals 10 hits 2x/day
PC 8: + 2 adder, boots + 15 Stalk/Hide, 1 Mirennia
PC 9: + 10 warhammer, x2 multiplier, trained falcon
PC 10: + 2 adder, amulet + 5 DB
PC 11: + 2 adder, collar 10% negates neck crits and + 10 to Ess. RR, 3 Suranie
PC 12: x2 multiplier, gauntlet 5 free Healing PP/day, 5 Rewk, 1 Mirennia, 1 Ebur
PC 13: + 15 broadsword, + 1 adder, lute + 10 to Controlling Songs
PC 14: + 10 comp-bow, + 2 adder, monocle + 5 to Staves/Wands
PC 15: + 15 longbow, x2 multiplier, chalice of Waterwall 2x/day, 2 Mirennia, 1 Edram, 1 Brelidrar
PC 16: + 2 adder, belt + 10 DB, 2 Mirennia, trained cat
PC 17: x2 multiplier, + 15 shortbow
PC 18: x3 multiplier, + 10 shortbow

°C 10: + 2 adder, amulet + 5 DB
 °C 11: + 2 adder, collar 10% negates neck crits and + 10 to Ess. RR, 3 Suranite
 °C 12: x2 multiplier, gauntlet 5 free Healing PP/day, 5 Rewk, 1 Mirennia, 1 Ebu
 °C 13: + 15 broadsword, + 1 adder, lute + 10 to Controlling Songs
 °C 14: + 10 comp-bow, + 2 adder, monacle + 5 to Staves/Wands
 °C 15: + 15 longbow, x2 multiplier, chalice of Waterwall 2x/day, 2 Mirennia, 1 E
 °C 16: + 2 adder, belt + 10 DB, 2 Mirennia, trained cat
 °C 17: x2 multiplier, + 15 shortbow
 °C 18: x3 multiplier, + 10 shortbow

3.0 ADVENTURE AT MINAS ANGHEN

High in the mountains, west of the mining town of Cabed Angren, a solitary tower rises above the stunted trees. Locals tell discerning travelers that this is Minas Anghen (S. "Long-eye Tower"), home of the Seer Niniel, an eccentric old recluse. Climbing the mountain by way of a narrow foot-path, travelers approach the tower, finding it to be the dominant feature of a little garth, or enclosure, set in a clearing just below the mountain's peak. There is no obvious sign of inhabitation. The iron gates of the garth are closed, locked, and rust-streaked.

3.1 THE TALE OF THE LONELY TOWER

In T.A. 1170, during the reign of Prince Turgon II of Morthond, a Seer named *Glirhuin* came to the area. He tried to find a quiet place to pursue his esoteric studies, purchased this mountaintop from the Prince, and brought in an odd assortment of workmen, including some Dwarves from the Misty Mountains. He erected his home upon the seared foundations of a Diinadan watch-tower. The structure that became known as Minas Anghen grew remarkably quickly and was restored by the winter of T.A. 1171.

Glirhuin hired several locals as servants, his only requirement apparently being that they have no dependents and no relatives in the area. One of these servants became his apprentice and took over as master of Minas Anghen when Glirhuin died. So he founded the "dynasty" of Seers of Minas Anghen, and so it continued. Over time,

few saw these Seers except their servants, and the only sign of their continued presence was the servants' trips to town for supplies (either in Sarn Erech or Cabed Angren).

The latest Seer in the tower was Niniel. She was not the first female Seer, for the Seers traditionally found that talent sprang forth in women as often as it did in men. An orphan in the Foundling Home from the age of five, Niniel was adopted by the Seer Lowenec when she reached twelve. She went from the poor but happy life of the Foundling Home, where she had 10 other children to play with, to the wealthy but confined life of Minas Anghen. Brought in as a housemaid, she became Lowenec's apprentice only two years later.

The old Seer was basically kind, but distant and absent-minded, and the other servants generally ignored Niniel after she became the apprentice. She grew from a lonely child to a lonely and eccentric woman. When Lowenec died, Niniel was 31, and she was as absorbed in study as any of the Seers had ever been. Reluctant to subject another child to a suffering life of isolation, she did not pick an apprentice.

When the Plague came in 1636, Niniel knew of it from her magical observations of nearby towns; but her discoveries were mistimed. Although the tower was isolated enough to save the Seer and her household from the dreaded sickness, the last supply run came too late. A servant caught the Plague and infected the others. Niniel possessed some healing power and for a while all was well, but then, suddenly, all three servants succumbed, one after the other within the space of two days. Niniel buried them herself and retired to her library. She felt tired and dizzy and died that night, alone among her books and scrolls. No one knew about her passing. If they had, someone might have carried out her will, which dictated that all her money was to go to the Foundling Home.

The Coming of Coerba and Sunil

Two years after her death, a man and woman arrived at Minas Anghen. Named *Coerba* and *Sunil*, they were fleeing from arrest for banditry and robbery in the Linhir area. Their pursuers followed them to Sarn Erech, where the pair barely escaped by climbing out the back window of the Seven Stars Tavern. After observing the garth for a day and seeing no signs of life, they cautiously scaled the locked gates and entered the stables, where they found the bones of two mules and a horse in the stalls. Disturbed but weary, and finding no other signs of life, they bedded down for the night in an empty stall. The next day, the pair continued to explore, deducing that the place was abandoned. The Room of Doors mystified them, but they were too prudent to search further.

After waiting two weeks for the hunt to die down, Coerba left to see if he could dig up any of his old gang members, leaving Sunil to guard the new hold. He returned in three weeks with his old henchmen *Dirhavel* and *Vagor*, their new friends *Mallor* and *Gorlim*, and five stolen horses. Soon the new gang was ready for business. Prince Arador's lack of interest in maintaining patrols to insure the peace provided Coerba's band with an opportunity for steady business.

The size of the gang waxed and waned as they recruited new cut-throats and lost others. One gang member, a cocky mongrel named Craun, disappeared when he accepted a dare to walk through one of the openings in the Room of Doors. Although never seen again, a few gang members heard a voice calling from somewhere near the kitchen during the days following his departure.

Two months ago, the gang recruited a very odd new member, a crazy old man found wandering the mountainside and muttering about Ghosts (and how they were afraid of him). Thinking that he might amuse Coerba and Sunil, they brought him back. Coerba realized that he must be a Cleric (Animist) and decided that it would be convenient to befriend someone who could heal them. He told the gang to agree with the old nut (who calls himself *Gorghiric*) as much as possible. Now *Gorghiric* is convinced that they all worship the



minas anghen

Dark God and is looking forward to having them bring back a sacrificial victim soon. They are seriously considering indulging him, since he has been such a useful mediciner.

Today, no one in the valley knows if Niniel is still alive. All know, however, of the sixteen merchants who have been killed in the last year and a half on the road between Cabed Angren and Sarn Erech and the two who were killed between Mornen and Sarn Erech. And all know that Prince Arador has no plans to do anything about it. Trade has all but ceased near Cabed Angren, so local property owners, led by Forlong, have offered 200 gold pieces (plus any unidentifiable loot still in the bandits' hands) to anyone who offers proof that the vermin have been wiped out entirely.

3.2 THE NPCs

The following folk are a varied lot with generally blended blood, mostly of swarthy Dunlending heritage. Diinadan and Northman influences meld with the old Dunman culture, lending these Dunnish people a checkered character.

3.21 COERBA THE SNAKE

Coerba is a 32-year-old bandit of mixed ancestry. Originally from Dol Amroth, he never knew who his parents were and was raised by an old woman who trained children as pickpockets and cutpurses. He ran away from her at age eleven and began a life of more serious crime, killing for the first time two years later. Coerba has killed several score since then, but has maintained his sardonic sense of humor. Vocal but nearly illiterate, he is given to boasting, telling wild

tales, and singing old Dunnish epics slightly out of key. Still, his tortured character affords him no sense of mercy.

Tall and swarthy, Coerba wears his thinning black hair long and tied into many small braids. His jet beard is likewise braided. Coerba's recent acquisitions include a fancy pair of white leather gauntlets studded with gold and pearls (10 gp), which he wears in spite of the fact that they have assumed a grubby air. He also sports a very fancy red leather sword belt and scabbard, with silver and pearl studs (90 gp). Although rarely without it, the belt has also lost much of its charm, for it shows the stains of brigandry.

3.22 SUNIL NINE-FINGERS

Sunil is a she-weasel of the fiercest kind. The illegitimate daughter of a noble of Dol Amroth, she ran away with a handsome soldier at the age of fourteen. The warrior left her with a robber-prince in the Ringlo Valley six months later, exchanging her in Spathlin for a horse and a fine sword. Sunil responded to her plight by killing the bandit-lord within the year (after he had cut off her left little finger "to teach her some respect") and fled with a hundred gold pieces and two horses to Glanhir. There she set up as a fine lady for a year. By then she squandered all her stake, together with the small fortune she earned from thievery, gambling, and occasional seductions.

Then she met Coerba. It was infatuation at first sight. Together they traveled, or rather fled, to Linhir — a step ahead of a local Lord called Cliin Daer. After donning new identities and purchasing the murder of their pursuer, the two lovers settled into the relaxed life accorded two of the city's most successful bandits. Their robber-band

STATS FOR NPCs AT MINAS ANGHEN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile Ob	Mov M	Notes
Coerba	4	64	RL/10	35	Y25	N	78bs	72cp	15	Warrior/Rogue
Urban Man, +10 bs, +5 cp, +20 invisible throwing dagger, Boots of Leaping 1x/day, 1 Arpsusar, +5 Main gauche										
Sunil	4	57	SL/7	30	Y25	N	87ha	55sb	10	Warrior/Rogue
Urban Woman, +15 ha, Amulet +5 MM, 2 Mirennas.										
Niniel	12	140	No/1	65	N	N	105qs	-	35	Ghost Mage/Seer
Lesser Dunadan, Female, +15 qs, 54 PP, Awareness 1000'r 3x/day, Crown x3 PP, +15 vs Chan., -15 DB										
Gorghiric	5	26	RL/9	10	N	N	10da	30lb	15	Animist/Cleric
Northman, 5 PP, +2 spell adder, 10 Rewk, 1 Edram.										
Duoveris Cleg	5	40	RL/10	15	N	N	59sp	34sb	5	Bard.
Rural Man, +10 sb, 10 PP, +1 spell adder, Belt of Presence 1x/day, 1 Kathkusa.										
Gaem Wulsen	1	18	No/1	20	Y15	N	20bs	15sb	10	Bard
Rural Man. Will run from any combat.										
Eriel	4	21	No/1	20	N	N	10da	30sb	5	Mage/Seer
Rural Woman, 16 PP, x2 multiplier, Cloak of Invisibility 1x/day										
Forlong	2	31	No/1	15	N	N	20bs	10cp	20	Warrior/ Fighter
Mixed Man, land owner, +5 bs, Purse of Coins (detects counterfeit/debased coinage)										
Dagnir	1	31	RL/9	30	Y25	A/L	35bs	30cp	10	Warrior/Fighter,
Gorlim	1	28	CH/13	20	Y20	N	40fa	30sb	5	Warrior/Fighter.
Vagor	1	30	RL/10	25	Y20	A/L	35ha	30cp	10	Warrior/Fighter
Pwyll	1	31	RL/9	25	Y20	N	35bs	30lb	10	Warrior/Fighter
Hirgon	1	27	SL/7	20	Y20	N	40sc	20sb	5	Warrior/Fighter
Dirhavel	1	30	CH/14	20	Y15	A/L	45pa	20sb	10	Warrior/Fighter
Treva	1	14	No/1	15	N	N	15ss		10	Kitchen Maid,

* — Armor or weapon is magical or specially made.

Codes: The statistics given describe each NPC; a more detailed description of some of the more important NPC's can be obtained from the main text. Some of the codes are self-explanatory: **Lvl** (level), **Hits**, **Sh** (Shield), and **Mov M** (Movement and Maneuver bonus). The more complex statistics are described below. A parenthetical reference indicates that the NPC possesses an equivalent device or spell.

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* armor type.

(Defensive Bonus): Note defensive bonuses include stats and shield* *SNeid* 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.

OB*s (Offensive Bonuses): Weapon abbreviations follow OBs: fa—falchion, ss—short sword, bs—broadsword, sc—scimitar, th—two hand sword, ma—mace, ha—hand axe, wh—war hammer, ba—battle axe, wm—war mattock, cl—club, qs—quarter staff, da—dagger, sp—spear, mi—mounted lance, ja—javelin, pa—pole arm, sl—sling, cp—composite bow, sb—short or horse bow, lb—long bow, lcb—light cross bow, hcb—heavy crossbow, bo—bola, wp—whip, ts—throwing star, hb—halbard, ro—Rock (Large Crush). Animal and unarmed attacks are abbreviated using code from The Master Beast Chart. Combatants untrained in a type of weaponry (e.g., *Ores* untrained in missile combat) suffer a penalty of -25 when attacking. Melee and missile offensive bonuses include the bonus for the combatant's best weapon in that category.

operated in the area for two and a half years, but finally met their match when Faltar the Ranger moved from Pelargir. Rumbled after an aborted ambush along the Ethring Road, they fled to Minas Anghen.

Sunil is fair-skinned and white-haired, with the bluish eyes of a Dunlending and the stature of a Dunadan (she stands 5'9"). Sunil's fiery disposition, love of games, and unabashed zest for living on the edge make her a fascinating wench. Although not particularly comely, she exudes strength and sensuality. Few women are so attractive. Even the lisp born of her scarred tongue fails to impair her wild enchantments. Sunil and Coerba are not exactly in love; they fight all the time, but they are the only people that each can trust.

3.23 THE GHOST OF NINIEL THE SEER

Now a Ghost, Niniel appears every so often and frightens some poor bandit, leaving him in hysterics. Coerba's band discounts these encounters, although they all suspect the truth. Gorghiric sees the dead Seer quite often, but he thinks that she is the White Mountain Lady, patron of frozen deaths, so he just prays. (This allows Niniel to drain some energy from the crazed Cleric, but she abhors the old man's presence, and invariably wanders off before he gets too weak.)

Niniel remains outside the tower most of the time, however, preferring nocturnal sojourns into the neighboring valley. During these travels, she is unsure of herself or her surroundings, for Minas Anghen remains the focus of her consciousness. It is in the tower that Niniel perished, and all she really remembers while outside it is that she has to make sure that the orphans in the nearby Foundling Home get money. She can sometimes be heard at quiet moments of the night, murmuring: "The children are hungry...hungry...the gold must go to the hungry children..."

3.24 GORGHIRIC THE CLERIC

Gorghiric is a deranged Northman Cleric of advanced years. His fondness for spirits, particularly spiced mead, has led to the erosion of his heavy, sixty year-old frame and given him the look of a wizened wildman. Yet, he occasionally walks with noble bearing and argues with a tart and educated tongue, particularly when angered or during the lucid moments of the morning.

Once, Gorghiric served Uirdiks, the Thyn of a powerful Northman clan. His skill with herbs and ability to sooth the soul gave him renown... until the death of his only daughter (Eosantha) at the hands of the Thyn's amorous nephew (one Olcared). Rather than accepting the traditional gold offered to appease his offspring's death, Gorghiric went to the long-house of the unfortunate killer and slew both Olcared and Wuilcared, the young man's father. Then, when Uirdiks came forth to halt the carnage, the Cleric wounded his own Thyn, leaving the youthful clan-lord a cripple. Gorghiric fled into the night.

Since that time, Gorghiric has taken to drink in order to forget his woes. Stays among the mountain Dunlendings gave him no new peace and he remains tortured by visions of his dying daughter, and the Ghosts of his bewildered victims. He scoffs at wealth and comfort, relaxes little except while healing or imbibing, and often cries when alone. His is a sad tale.

3.25 FORLONG AND THE MASTER JUGGLER

Outside of Minas Anghen there are a few folk who figure prominently into any events or adventures surrounding the haunted ruin.

Bard Duoervis the Master Juggler

Duoervis Cleg, the Master Juggler of Cabed Angren, is the brother of two of the local merchants killed by Coerba and Sunil's henchmen. He has sworn revenge. Although rather old (75) and corpulent, Duoervis is a formidable opponent who commands the loyalty of fifteen bright and talented youths, the Jugglers' School. His pupils are too young to be risked against Minas Anghen, but they have proved

invaluable as messengers and keep careful watch for mercenaries who might try their hands in the service of their Master.

Duoervis is a superb bard and unexcelled juggler. Given to wearing bizarre attire and telling rude or confusing jokes and tales, he is a unique, disarming character. He appears easily distracted, but actually has the ability to simultaneously concentrate on numerous subjects. His flights of fancy tend to be calculated and, as his better students have learned, are often designed to keep those around him consistently off-guard. Perhaps, this desire explains his curious reliance on his familiar *Cwaflagur*, a trained War-ferret who performs tricks and errands with startling creativity.

Forlong

The Master Juggler is in league with a number of locals who seek to restore order to the area. Of these Men Forlong, Duoervis' childhood nemesis and uneasy ally, is the most vocal. Wealthy, shrewd, and a bit jaded, Forlong is the richest of the local landowners. He, his meek wife, and his three frustrated and over-indulged children live in a fine home in Sarn Erech, thirty miles from Minas Anghen. During his fifty-five years Forlong has witnessed a great growth in trade and settlement in the region and he is now impatient with the inaction surrounding the "banditry problem." It is hardly surprising to find that he has collected quite a sum (200 gp) in order to reward those who might rid the region of robber vermin.



eriel the seer

3.26 ERIEL THE SEER

Eriel is an exceptionally young and beautiful woman with a heart of stone. A Seer from Rendul on the Morthond, she is on a quest to make herself mistress of the legacy of Minas Anghen's long line of enchanters. Thus, she has come to Cabed Angren, where she uses her myriad disguises to manipulate the townfolk. Only Duoervis' presence bothers her; but assuming she can keep the Master Juggler's faction at bay, she has grand plans for the treasures of Minas Anghen.

Normally, Eriel has black hair and purplish eyes. She stands five and a half feet tall and walks with the fluid, graceful, and sensuous gait of a proud cat. Her deep voice is a legend in the bars of her hometown. No Man on whom she has ever set her sights has evaded her touch; most long for her without control.

Unfortunately, however, her pride has swelled with her growing power and she expects too much of herself and those she would respect. Eriel scoffs at the well-meaning efforts of even the finest of her peers and has a healthy distaste for those around her. This bitterness makes her both dangerous and vulnerable.

3.3 LAYOUT OF MINAS ANGHEN

Minas Anghen is a slightly ruined watchtower built in the early days of the Two Kingdoms in Exile (circa T.A. 77). It sits perched on a wild mountain outcropping overlooking the strategic canyon to the east. Round and rather graceful, the tower rises seventy feet above the low, rectangular stone complex that hugs its base. The curtain wall of this enclave is twenty feet in height and encloses a yard, upon which looks the gatehouse, kitchen, stables, and barracks. Iron plating covers the oaken cores of two outer gates and an entry portcullis. Openable only from the gatehouse, they guard the only access to Minas Anghen other than a pair of small sally ports. (Each gate is very hard, -20, to break down, even with a battering ram.)

Minas Anghen is built of unusual, coal-black granite and topped with white limestone roofing. The floors are either limestone or slate. Wonderfully sculpted, the tower proper is faced with interlocking, diamond-shaped blocks, which probably require no mortar but are nonetheless reinforced with a reddish cement grout.

3.31 THE OUTER STRUCTURE

1. Gatehouse.

Lower level. There is a portcullis as an inner barrier to the garth. The gatehouse can be entered on either side. Ladders lead to the upper level.

Upper level. Windows act as arrowslits and "murder holes" pierce the floor, opening on the entryway below. Two braziers (with kettles on chains above them) are arranged so that water heated in the kettles can be poured through the murder holes (victims receive a + 50 attack = to a fireball).

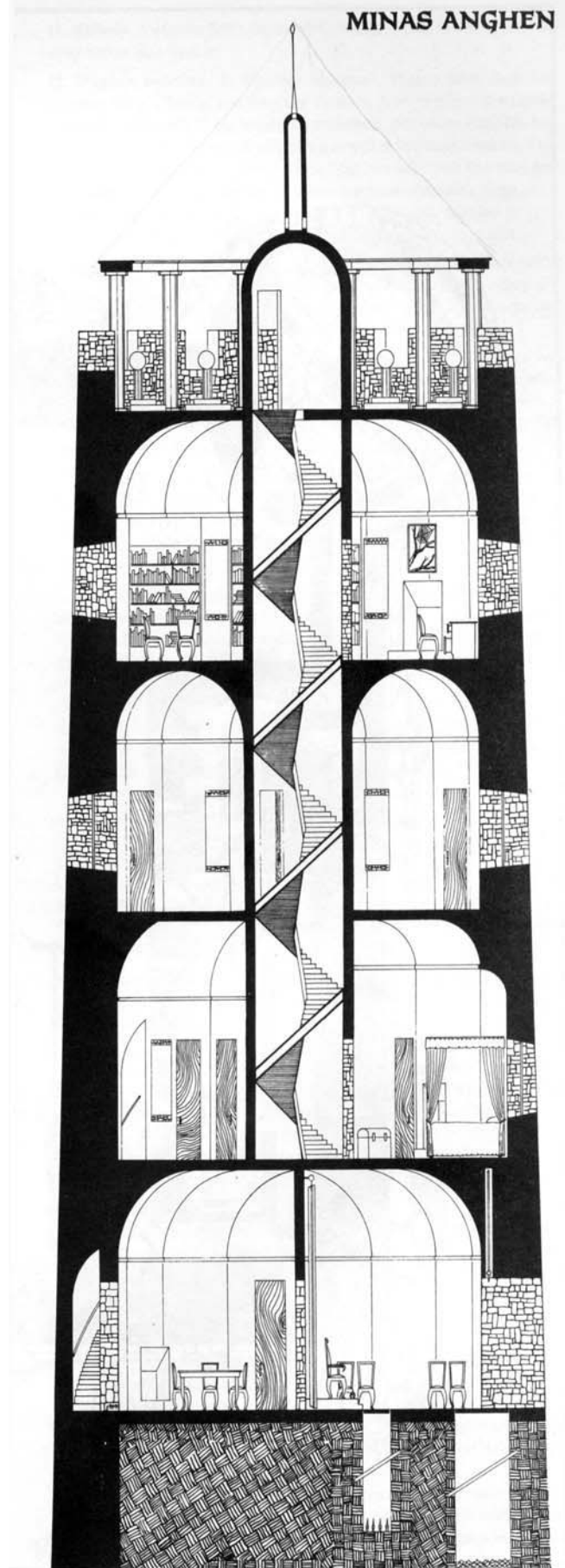
2. Garth. The yard of the garth was grassy, but now is weedy. There is a well and two apple trees, an enclosure with a trough for horses, and a henhouse. A low building of one story runs along the north and west walls. The tower is in the northeast corner.

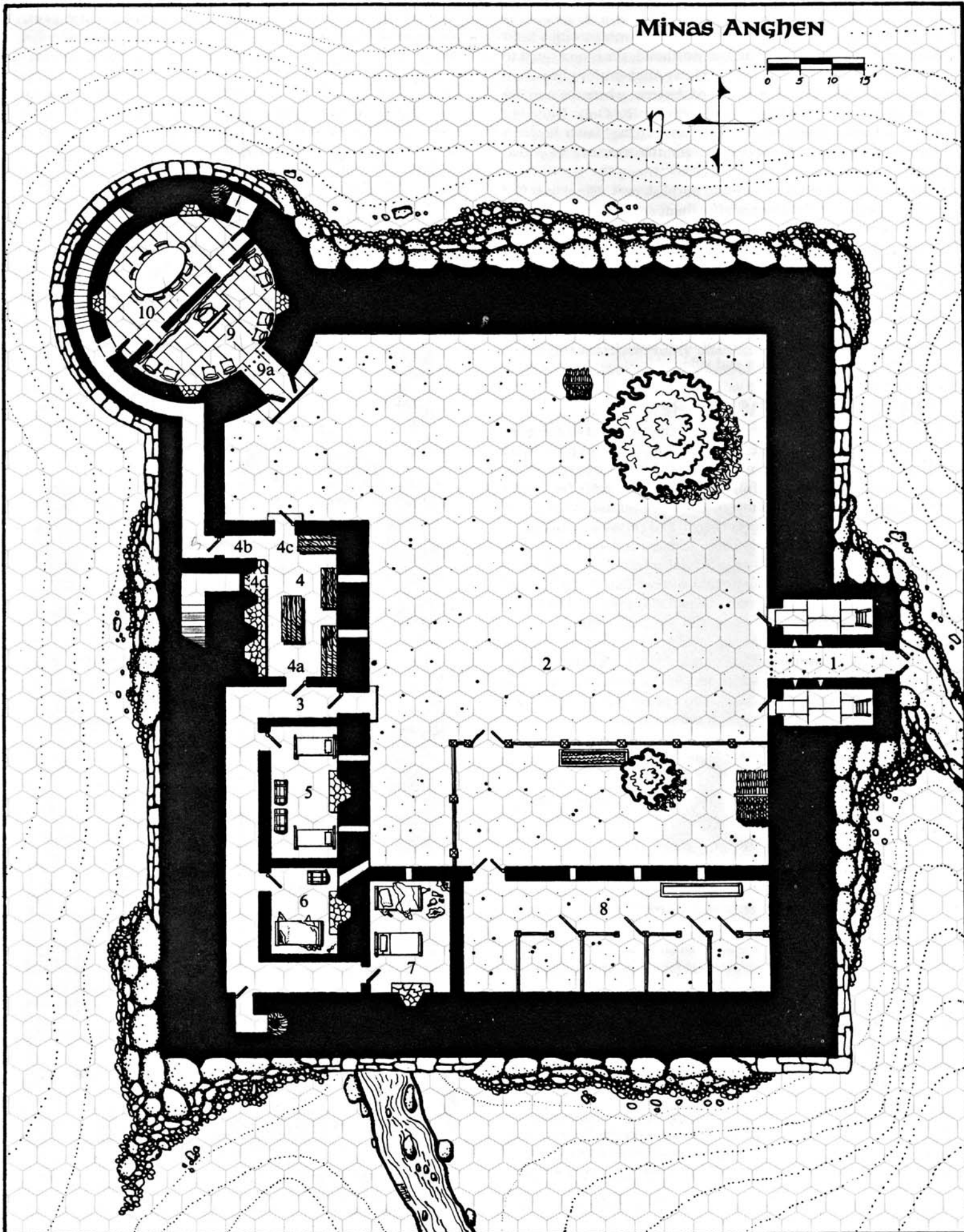
3. Hallway. Access to the servants' quarters.

4. Kitchen. Two hearths, one with a built-in bread oven, dominate the bricklined main chamber. The walls are filled with shelves and counters and a fine, mixed (and stolen) assortment of kettles, cleavers, and pots adorn the racks which hang from the low rafters.

The kitchen is now very messy, for Treva, the bandits' nineteen year-old white-haired slave, cannot keep up with the cleaning herself. Every so often Sunil gets fed up and browbeats the youngest bandits into helping her with a little (very little) cleaning. When not at work or dreaming of a way out of her hellish prison, Treva sleeps here.

There are four kitchen doors: (4a) one leads to the servants' quarters; (4b) another to a hallway that allows access to the tower; (4c) a third opens onto





the garth, while (4d) a fourth leads to stairs descending to the lower level (see 3.33 at #19).

5. Dagnir and Gorlim's bedroom. This was the servants' sitting room. It now houses Dagnir and Gorlim, two beds, and two locked chests, the latter hard (-10) to open. Dagnir's chest contains 21 gp and a bottle of fine red Belfalas wine; Gorlim's holds 16 gp and a book, *Tales Behind the Cotton Curtains*, a rare tome of bawdy pictures and ribald stories (he cannot read) worth 15 sp.

6. DirhaveFs bedroom. His somewhat untidy room has three extra longswords and eight bottles of wine (three empties) under the bed and a huge poleaxe (use as +5 pole arm or -5 battle axe) leaning in one corner. The bed is covered with a stained blue satin down quilt. A locked chest, which is hard (-10) to open, contains several woolen tunics and a leaking bottle of oil (for cleaning swords). Beneath the tunics is a purse containing 75 gp and a small jar which holds 5 mirennas berries. A massive gold chain worth 100 gp rests beneath the chest's false bottom, in a compartment which is very hard (-20) to detect.

7. Vagor and Pwyll's bedroom. Unfortunately, these two are an odd pair. Pwyll's half of the room is scrupulously neat and tidy, while Vagor's half would make a warthog burst out crying and run home. They hate each other, but neither wants to sleep in the stables, and neither Dagnir nor Gorlim (see #5) will switch with either of them.

Hidden under the mattress of Pwyll's neatly made bed with its white fur coverlet is a golden headband set with green tourmalines (most folk would think they were emeralds, but these are less expensive) worth 60 gp. Pwyll owns 7 gp and always carries them with him. Vagor has a silver ring set with a jargoon (some might be fooled into thinking that it's topaz). The ring is worth 10 gp and is hidden in an old boot under Vagor's bed, along with various apple cores, wine bottles, dirty clothes, chicken bones, old rags, etc.

8. Stables. The horses are bedded on old leaves rather than straw and rarely get hay, but they sometimes have oats, when the bandits can steal some. Three of the horses are stubborn nags (one has no stall and lives in the corral outside), but two are good light horses, fast and sure-footed (+5 to all mounted maneuvers). One's a bay; the other's a piebald.

3.32 THE TOWER

9. Presence room. This blue limestone-flagged room was used by the Seer on those rare occasions when someone came up to consult him or her on some matter for which they needed magical help. A large, throne-like black oak chair with white wool cushions dominates a central dais and eight beech chairs line the outer wall.

An inner portcullis (9a) can be controlled from the oak chair by a footpedal hidden under a padded, spring-set footstool that is permanently attached to the dais. The portcullis is extremely hard (-30) to open, while the footpedal is very hard (-20) to discern.

The left arm of the oak chair operates a pair of **floor traps**. Shaped like a bird's wing, the arm contains a rotating handle which is hard (-10) to perceive.

— *Trap #7:* A left turn of the oak handle opens a 10' x 5' panel in the floor (5' on either side of the portcullis). The forty foot deep maw below invites the victim to a swift death. At the bottom (after a +20 Fall/Crush attack), the unfortunate prey lands in the rush waters of a stream which runs beneath the tower and exits out the cliff face some sixty feet below. Should the victims be caught in the turbulent waters (extremely hard, -40 to negotiate), they may well find themselves cast out over the Long-eye Falls, a series of four cascades (four +90 Fall/Crush attacks). In order to close and reset the panel, one must turn the handle back to center position.

— *Trap #2:* A right turn opens a five foot wide panel which surrounds the dais. Beneath the panel is a twenty-foot deep, spike lined pit (+20 Fall/Crush attack, accompanied by one to five +/- 75 spear attacks). The trap resets like panel #1.

A huge tapestry curtain, only just starting to show signs of age, hangs on brass rings across the back of the room on a long iron pole. The curtain conceals two doorways to the room behind. Coerba sometimes plays Lord of the Castle here, but the place is usually left unused.

10. Dining room. The seven foot long oval table of once-polished oak still seats eight. It is now decorated with initials and ruder carvings. Two doors afford exits; one leads to a privy; the other opens onto a corridor with an ascending stairwell at one end and a door into the kitchen at the other.

11. Hallway. A window lights this narrow corridor. Doors to a privy and two other rooms lead from it.

12. Hirgon's bedroom. As Coerba's lieutenant, Hirgon rates these fine quarters. He is a dandy, and the room shows it. A silver mirror in a carved frame of jade (worth 15 gp) occupies a prominent spot on the wall. The bed has a purple satin quilt stuffed with down as well as fine wool blankets. Two chests, each locked and very hard (-20) to open, are filled with fine wool and heavy silk tunics. Under one pile of tunics is a purse containing 32 gp and a green glass jar containing 5 doses of Golden Cress salve. Another 50 gp is under a loose brick in the hearth, a hiding which is hard (-10) to spot.

13. Sunil and Coerba's sitting room. This chamber was once Ninie's favorite. It is a pleasant room with applewood chairs cushioned in golden yellow silk and a shelf full of ornaments. Most are just cheap ceramic trinkets, but one little carved apple is of jade and is worth 30 gp.

14. Sunil and Coerba's bedroom. The curtained and canopied bed has draperies of dark green velvet embroidered with gold. One entire side is missing because Sunil liked it so much that she made it into a cloak for herself. A blue bearskin rug is on the floor. Under the rug is the outline of a secret 2'x2' floor compartment, which is very hard (-10) to detect.

— *Trap #3:* If this hiding is opened without first pressing in the center rose in a pattern of carved stone roses around the top of the fireplace, a rain of crossbow bolts is unleashed through the ceiling. Anyone within 3' of the compartment will receive one to four +20 crossbow bolts.

In the compartment may be found 105 gp, a small box carved of a single large, flawed amethyst, worth 30 gp and containing two Tyr-fira (a leaf that restores Life if administered within 56 days of death; worth 1200 gp); a bracelet of silver, set with garnets (110 gp); a necklace of electrum set with peridots (transparent pale green) and heliodors (transparent golden yellow) (90 gp); and a small red velvet pouch containing a tiny caltrop (portable spike-trap) with needle-sharp points smeared with Madwort (one to four +30 tiny attacks if someone just reaches in and grabs) and a platinum and gold ring set with morganas (transparent pink, it's worth 125 gp).

Two large black cloak-chests strapped with iron are very hard (-20) to unlock, and are filled with Sunil's and Coerba's clothing. Under Coerba's is a little red leather pouch containing 42 gp, a blue leather pouch containing 8 mirennas berries, and a brown leather pouch which holds a deck of cards. Unknown to Coerba, if either of the red aces is torn in half, the pieces will explode as a +20 Fireball three rounds later. Under Sunil's clothing is a crystal flask of perfume worth 2 gp and a blue silk purse containing 26 gp. A door in the inner wall leads to a spiral stairway up.

15. The Room of Doors. This strange chamber takes up an entire floor of the tower. It has no furniture at all, although the oak walls are beautifully carved and the flagstone floor is graced with fine carpets.

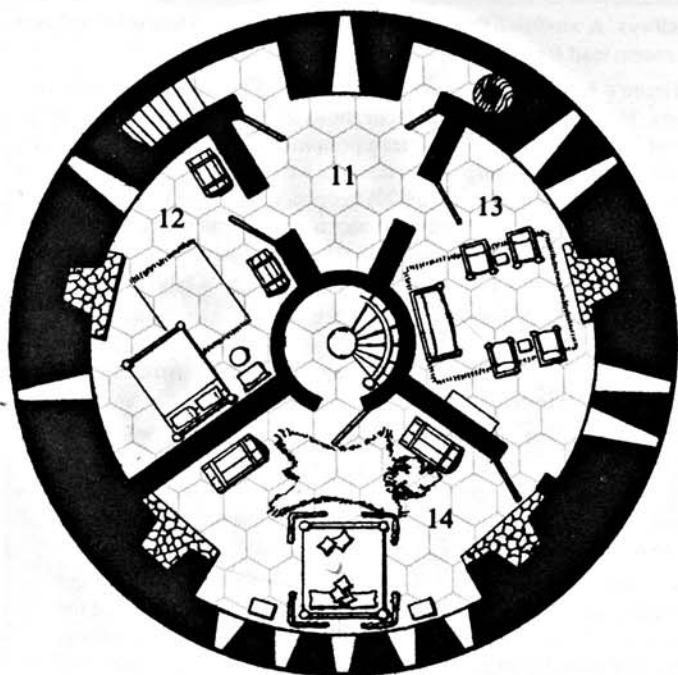
Six doors (a-f) are equally spaced around the room. According to the original plan, the one immediately to the right of the entrance from the stairway is considered "a", and the lettering runs clockwise. When any of the doors are opened, there appears to be nothing but a grey mist beyond. If someone steps into the mist and 50 lbs of his weight pass beyond the blue laen door sill, he passes to another place. Door 15e will take him to the Seer's Library on the next floor. All of the other doors deposit the intruder in the Secret Prison deep under the Garth (see #25).

16. Seer's Library. Ninie's skeleton occupies the chair at the desk. It is slumped forward with her head resting on her arms. A golden headband has slipped from her skull and now encircles her neck. It acts as a helm (when it is on a head)! She has an amulet of gold and emerald (raw worth 200 gp) around her neck that serves as a 3x PP multiplier and adds +15 to RRs vs Channeling; it also adds +15 to the wearer's DB.

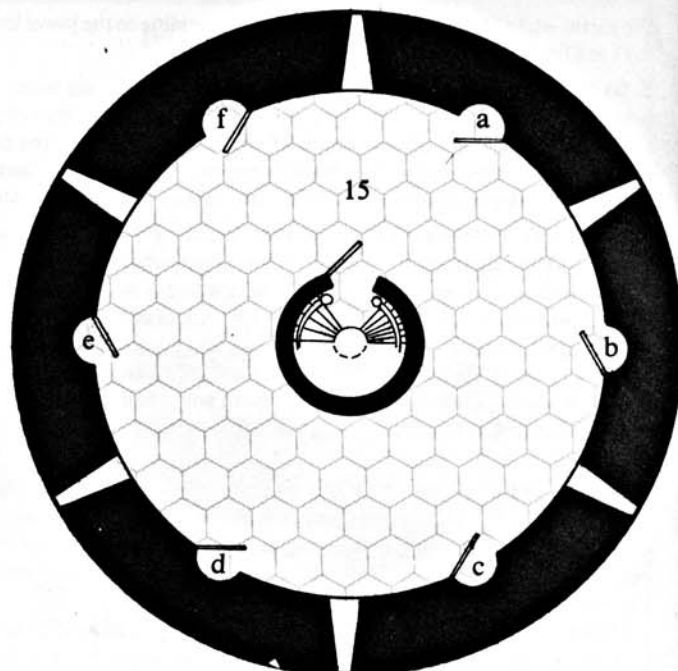
A ring of mithril on her finger (the *Cor Tirin* or "Seer's Ring," worth 200 gp) serves as a key to the Seer's Vault below.

The room's six windows cannot be seen from the outside. Their glass is coated with magical mithril-based silver paint (*Ithilcaid*) that permits viewing from the inside at twice normal range (+50 to Perception) but reflects gazes from without.

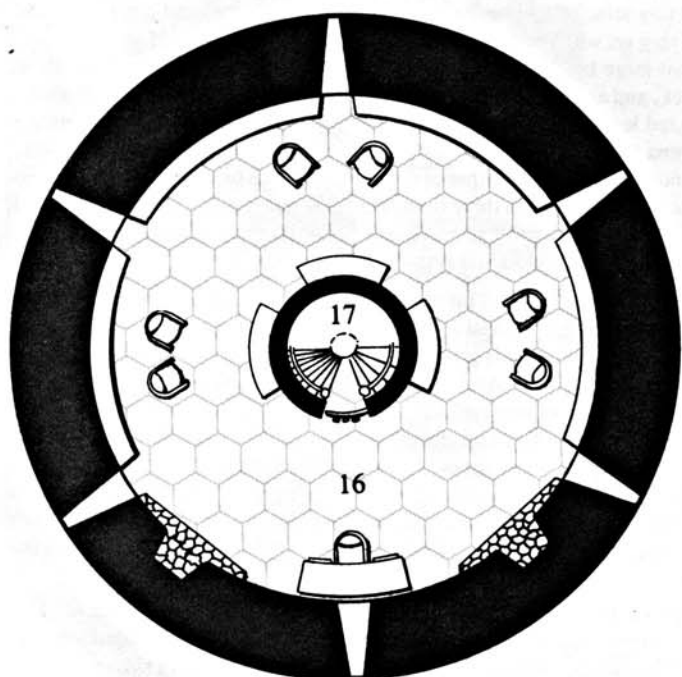
The books on the shelves around the walls are mostly on arcane lore of interest to Seers (and could be sold to one for 1000 gp, if a wealthy enough buyer could be found). One, entitled *Gilrhuin's Tower*, contains instructions



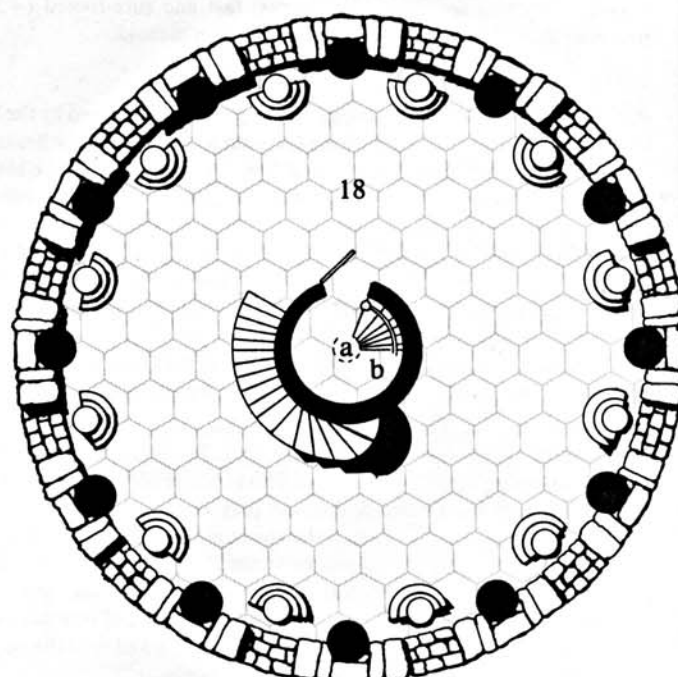
Level 2



Level 3

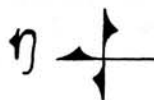


Level 4



Rooftop

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for using the Seer's Ring, as well as other keys to moving about the tower.

The book also tells how the bottom left-hand drawer of **Niniel's desk** (16a) contains a certain little wooden box (the "Box of Panes"), with nine compartments, arranged three by three.

— *Box of Panes*: The center compartment stands empty, while the outer eight compartments contain eight colored glass cubes. The book calls them red/prison, blue/outside, green/vault, yellow/ roof, orange/door room, violet/recovery, black/nowhere, white/ holding. If a cube is in the central compartment, anyone entering the central shaft of the room, the "Seer's Door" (#17), will be sent to the associated place. Should the cube be withdrawn from the central nook, anyone on the spot corresponding to the "other side of the Seer's Door" will be transported back through the Seer's Door, so long as they are still living.

a) Black Cube - the cube of **instant death, sending victim(s)** hundreds of feet into the earth

b) White Cube — suspends folk between dimensions until recovered by placing the violet cube in the center. While in suspension, the body does not age or deteriorate. Only one person can be suspended at a time.

c) Blue Cube — places the person near the exit to the secret way out of the lower level (see #23), in a small cavern three miles due west.

d) Green Cube — sends a single person to the Seer's Vault (#27), but it will only work if the person in the Seer's Door is wearing the Seer's Ring. Once that person is in the vault, the Seer's Ring can be sent back for someone else by placing it in the depression on a corresponding green cube on a pillar in the vault. The ring then appears on the indentation in the green cube in the Box of Panes. A person without the ring can still get out of the vault.

e) Yellow Cube - sends user to a yellow slab of limestone (**18b**) near the center of the roof (see #18).

f) Orange Cube - sends person to an orange floor tile in the Room of Doors (see #15).

g) Violet Cube — heals folk of any physical ill which has not already worked its course (i.e., it cures them of bleeding or a wound not yet healed, but not a disease which has come and gone). It recovers folk suspended by the White Cube.

h) Red Cube — sends user to a red porphyry cell in the Secret Prison under the Garth (see #25).

The other drawers of the desk contain ledgers, ink-horns, quills, a penknife, sealing wax, parchment, and sand for erasing errors, as well as a key-ring with keys to all the conventional doors in the complex.

There is also a small box of opaque black glass, inside of which are 10 Mir-enna berries, 6 doses of Healer's Chamomile, 2 doses of Sweet Sorrel, one Tyr-fira, and two Burstheas. All are perfectly fresh and usable. The box keeps up to fourteen doses of herbs fresh indefinitely.

The Seer's Library is graced by six fine paintings, two of which serve as mystical "windows."

— *Web Painting*: A person can be transferred from the Secret Prison (#25) into the more accessible Basement Prison (#26) by using this enchanted oil rendering. The picture shows a fly caught in a spider's web, but if one wearing the Seer's Ring gazes upon it for three rounds, the painting becomes a window on the Secret Prison (#25). By turning the ring three times upon one's finger, the wearer effects the transfer.

— *Dwarf Painting*: Another picture on the wall shows a Dwarf hammering a golden sword on a silver anvil. By staring at this painting while wearing the Seer's Ring the scene will fade in three rounds, revealing a small compartment containing a ring of six small keys (each of which opens one of the six chests in the Seer's Vault, #27).

There are four other pictures on the wall showing, respectively, an Elf singing songs in the moonlight, a Hobbit eating apples under a tree, a Man counting golden coins, and an Ent standing amidst a grove of Huorns. (The latter is a subtle work and, to the uneducated, may appear like a group of odd trees.)

17. **Seer's Door (shaft-room)**. The "Seer's Door" is actually a circular room in the tower's central support pillar. Normally, however, it appears as part of the spiral stairwell which joins the Tower's various levels. Here, however, the stairs and walls are composed of absolutely fireproof, polished yew wood (an evergreen). Its curved yew door has three handles: the left has a plain round knob; the center has a knob engraved with a bas relief of a cube; and the right is engraved with a pair of crossed flaming swords.

The left knob opens and closes the door normally. When turned left, the center knob sets in motion a series of counterweights which move the surrounding stairs. Those below the door slide up to form a floor, while those above slide into the surrounding wall; thus a room is formed. This room is the Seer's Door, and it is only in this state that it can be used in conjunction with the cubes in the Box of Panes.

The right knob on the door serves as a **magic trap**. If turned, it sets off a 5th lvl *Sword fires* spell: all metal swords within twenty feet (and failing an RR) burst into flame. RR failure of 01-50 results in a dangerous fire, where a victim takes a Heat critical each round he is in contact with a flaming sword (1st rd = "A"; 2nd rd = "B"; 3rd rd = "C"; 4th rd = "D"; 5th rd = "E"; 6th rd = "E" -+ "A"; etc.). A RR failure of 51 + yields an explosive flame, with an accompanying + 50 Fireball attack to all within 5' during the 1st round. It is a routine (+30) maneuver to drop a held sword. If sheathed to the front or side, discarding it is a hard (-10) maneuver; if stored in a pack or slung over the back, ridding it is an extremely hard (-30) maneuver.

18. **Roof observation platform**. The rooftop is a magical place. Although open, it has a white limestone roof with a central chimney (18a) set atop the stairwell. Fires built in the chimney once heated a Rod of Light set above, giving off a fiery signal light. In front of the grated fireplace is a short stair, at the base of which is a yellow limestone square (18b) set in the floor. Here, folk transported to or from the Seer's Door will stand (see #s 16, 17).

An open colonnade surrounds the Tower's top and supports the roof. Here the wind howls through the crenellated battlements. Between each column, on a pedestal overlooking the crenellations, is a small (14" diameter) laen viewing orb. By ascending a pair of stairs and gazing into the orb one can see clearly for thirty leagues (about 90 miles). These magic Seeing-stones afford a spectacular view of anything in the open, regardless of intervening trees, walls, or heights, but darkness shrouds the view and nighttime or clouds obscure sight. Thus, the insides of unlighted caverns or structures cannot be seen. The twelve orbs only permit sight within a 30° arc and each weighs 200 lbs. They are extremely hard (-30) to dislodge and lose their power when separated from their magic pedestals.

Since a user must concentrate and skillfully look through the orbs, only Sunil and Gorghiric have discovered their use. Neither knows of the other's prowess; they can only suspect, always guarding their own secret.

3.33 THE HALLS UNDER THE GARTH

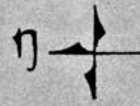
19. **Storeroom**. Used to be a hallway. Most of the original supplies are gone, but the bandits recently added 20 sacks of oats, five barrels of wine, 8 cured hams, a sack of carrots, and 3 bolts of green woolen cloth. There are still some boards, a saw, a hammer, and a cask of nails left over from Niniel's han-dyman.

20. **Gorghiric's room**. For reasons best known to himself, the crazy Cleric wants to live underground, so the bandits let him clear out this former storeroom. He has a pallet in one corner and a primitive altar against the back wall.

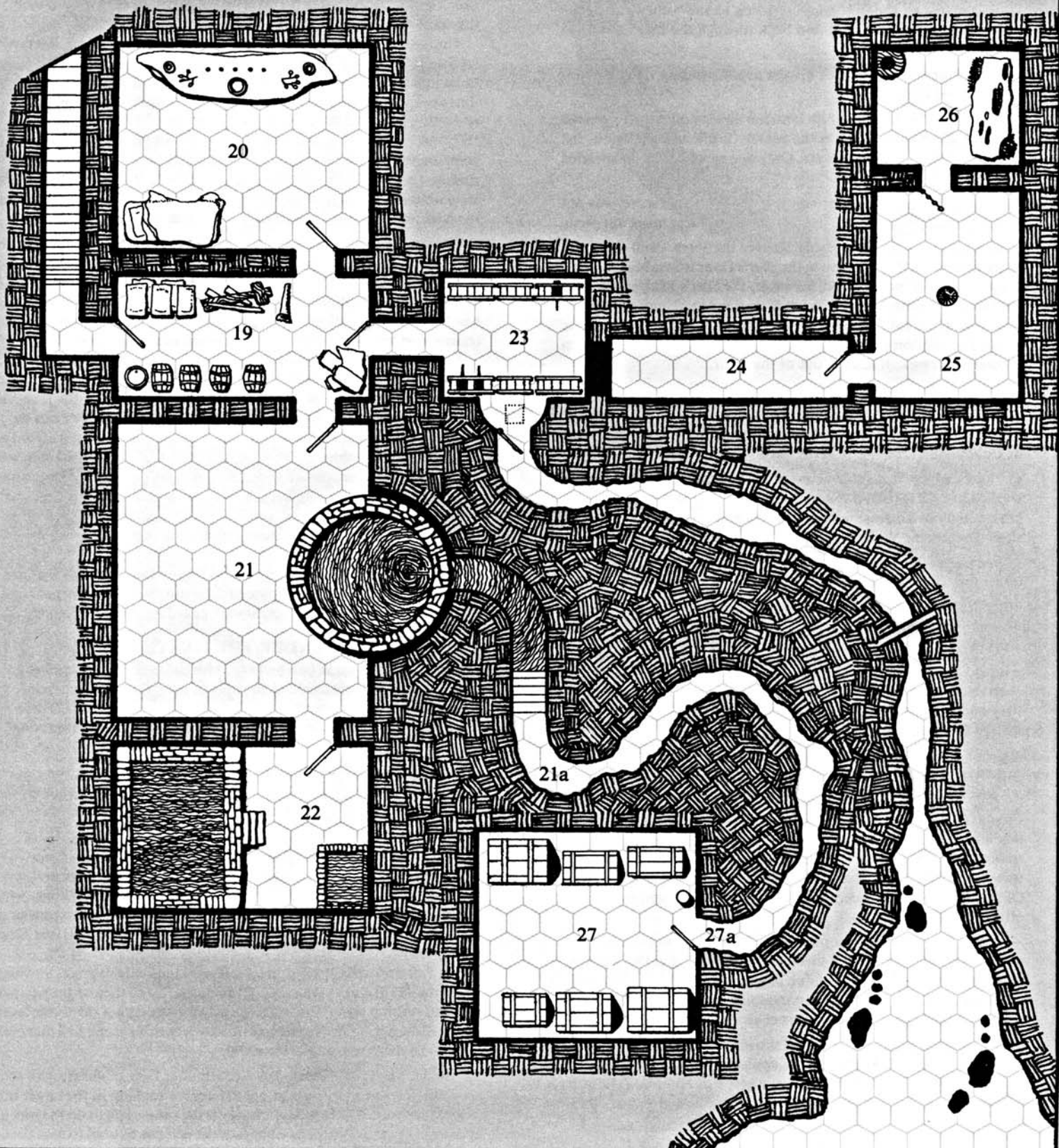
21. **Well room**. The stone basin is filled with pure, clear mountain spring water that flows into it from a spout on the wall at its back and out again through the bottom. Inflowing water is drawn from a spring, while the outflow travels through a watery passage that joins the subterranean stream beneath the Tower; there it continues out over Long-eye Falls (see Trap #1 at #9 above).

Ten feet down the 4' x 4' drain is a water-filled side passage. By swimming down the 45 ° drain (a very hard, -20 maneuver), and then up the side passage, one can reach a stair. Three stairs up and one reaches the water level. The stairwell connects the side passage (2 la) to a twisting secret hall that eventually leads to the Seer's Vault (see #27a).

22. **Baths**. The smaller basin has a continuous flow of water, with soap and scrub brushes nearby to clean oneself before soaking in the larger hot tub. Water is piped to the large tub whenever the simple spigot on the wall behind is turned upward. A fireplace beneath the tub can be used to heat the copper



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basin, a process that takes two hours. The fire can be snuffed out by closing the ventilation grates around the firebox.

23. **Wine cellar.** Niniel was not much of a drinker, so the stock was low anyway, and Coerba and his boys have taken care of most of that.

A yew door leads to an **escape passage** in case of attack or siege; iron-faced, it is hard (-10) to unlock. This door is concealed behind a section of wine racks, which swings open to reveal a small secret hollow and the door. The bandits have not discovered this yet, for it is very hard (-20) to discover.

Within the hollow, between the back of the rack and the door, is a square blue flagstone set in the floor. This square serves as the magic entry and exit point for those transported via the Blue Cube of the Book of Panes (see #16 at c).

24. **Secret passageway.** Leads to the basement prison (#26). It is hard (-10) to find.

25. **Secret prison.** The stone door is locked and very hard (-20) to open. In the center of the floor is an 8" x 8" hole. Above it is a pulley apparatus with chains that allows a small wire basket to be lowered into the hole (for feeding). Through the hole, sixty feet below, is the secret cell.

Intruders entering any of the mist-shrouded doors in the Room of Doors, save 15e, are sent to this cell (see #15). So too are those caught in the Seer's Door (#17) when the Red Cube is placed into the center of the Box of Panes (see #16h). These traps are the only way in. The sole exit is also magical and involves transferral from this cell to the nearby Basement Prison (#26) via the use of the Web Painting in the Seer's Library (see #16).

Presently, the most interesting thing in the cell is the not-quite-entirely-rotted corpse of Craun, Coerba's adventurous gang member. Craun's remains are accompanied by a +5 falchion, an amulet that adds +5 to all RRs vs. Channeling (and, for *RM*, Mentalism), and 26 sp.

26. **Basement prison.** It contains the rotted remains of a straw-filled mattress and a latrine hole. The iron grate door is hanging open, but can be locked; it is hard (-10) to open.

27. **Seer's Vault.** This yew-lined chamber has a hearty aroma. The only ways of entry (short of blasting through at least 30' of solid rock) are (1) by using the magical devices in the library (see #16d), or (2) coming up through a secret stair (#27a) which connects to the drain passages out of the Well Room. The secret stair lies behind a hidden sliding door, which is extremely hard (-30) to find.

The vault contains all of the treasure accumulated by the Seers of Minas Anghen, the wealth of more than 500 years. There are six oak chests on the floor and a +30 oaken quarterstaff leaning in one corner. The chests are of various sizes and are locked (-40) but not trapped.

— *Chest 1 (large):* Contains 360 gp, 12 bags of 30 gp apiece.

— *Chest 2 (medium):* Atop the pile is a pair of green leather slippers, embroidered with gold thread and tiny, pale iridescent, blue-white moonstones (worth 40 gp); they fit a small Mannish woman. The chest also holds an electrum ring set with a huge flawless emerald (worth 530 gp).

Beside it is a white leather Belt of Traceless Passing with a buckle of silver set with a large moss agate (clear with greenish inclusions that look like moss, worth 45 gp); magical, it allows the wearer to move without leaving tracks.

Under the belt is a 7'x3' magical black *Bearing-bag of Breca*, a work of extremely fine silk weighing but four ounces. Any object up to 7 ft long and 350 lbs in weight can be placed inside and will then become one tenth its size and weight, so long as the drawstrings of the bag are pulled tight and knotted. Upon drawing the strings, the bag shrinks to the after-shrunkened length of the longest object it holds. No more than 70 lbs of weight (figured after shrinking; i.e., 700 lbs of real weight) can be carried this way. Any excessive weight will result in the bag's destruction. Items may be extracted by untying the drawstrings, at which point the bag will resume its original size and the objects can be pulled out.

— *Chest 3 (small):* This chest, notable for its silver inlays, holds a pair of black snakeskin archer's wristguards — the *Bracers of Blyga*. When worn, they add +10 to bow attacks and operate as unencumbering arm greaves. They fit any small Man or medium-to-large Mannish woman. Their gold filigree decoration is superb, the gold alone being worth 15 gp.

A necklace formed of finely woven gold and silver chains rests beneath the bracers. Set with a large red hyacinth (which many will think a ruby; worth 70 gp) and four smallish star garnets (20 gp apiece), it is a pretty piece. Actually, however, the necklace is the *Chain of Uncertainty*, an heirloom wrought in the mountains north of Hollin in the late Second Age. When touched and concentrated upon, the necklace enables the wearer to confuse anyone within 50' who fails a RR (vs 7th lvl magic). Confused victims operate at -50 and will not attack anyone who is not speaking to them or touching them, and they will attack friend or foe indiscriminately should the opportunity present itself. Yet, a danger exists; anytime the wearer rolls an 01-05 followed by another roll with the exact same result (e.g., two 02s), the necklace constricts to decapitate the poor soul.

— *Chest 4 (large):* Contains the *Helm of Froeca*, a helmet that allows 270 degree vision and +15 to all RRs. Its surface is of polished silver and gleams like a mirror whenever the wearer so desires, and is studded with six large plaques of red coral (10 gp each). At night the helm turns jet black, adding +5 to nocturnal stalking and hiding maneuvers.

This grey chest also holds the *Gauntlets of Iorn Fegc*. Made of violet leather and embroidered with platinum wire and tiny amethysts (total raw worth 320 gp), they are one of the great legacies of the ancient Dunmen, the *Daen Coentis*. These great armored gloves serve as arm greaves and permit the wearer to strike with both fists as if using -5 maces.

The accompanying *Axe of Fegc* lies beside the gauntlets. A (6th lvl) +15 throwing weapon, it incurs no penalty when used at ranges of up to 70'. Should the wielder wear the Gauntlets of Iorn Fegc, the axe returns to its owner's hand instantly upon command. Fegc's Axe also "slays armor": anytime it is used and the result is merely hits (no crit), the victim's armor must make a RR or fall apart.

— *Chest 5 (small):* This chest holds a gold and silver *Circlet of Ceun* set with a pink tourmaline and leucosapphires (pale, watery blue; raw worth 95 gp). Magical, the circlet acts as an unencumbering helm and adjusts to fit the head of any wearer.

Beside the circlet sits a brooch of elaborately worked platinum and gold, shaped like an eagle (worth 50 gp).

— *Chest 6 (small):* Contains a silver wine goblet studded with large disks of lapis lazuli (four, 20 gp each). Beneath it, in a small beech box, is the gold *Ring of Stones*, it is set with a large black opal. Magical, the ring provides Darkvision for 30 minutes once per day (enabling the wearer to see as if it is daylight), as long as the wearer is traveling "within stone" (e.g., in a cavern or stone building). The ring also permits the wearer (3x/day; 3 rds/use) to touch a stone and see as if viewing from a point exactly on the other side (regardless of the stone's size).

The quarterstaff was Niniel's, although she hardly ever used it. Aside from its +30 quality, it is a +4 spell adder which allows the holder an awareness of what activities are taking place (i.e., "Presences") within a 300' radius (1 min; 3x/day).

The cache in Chest 1 consists of the money that Niniel had intended to will to the Founding Home in Sarn Erech. When that chest is opened, Niniel's Ghost will start to manifest in the corner by her quarterstaff. If the staff is moved, she will manifest as near to it as possible without being on top of someone. She takes three rounds to coalesce.

3.4 THE TASK

Journeys to Minas Anghen tend to revolve around one of three objectives: (1) to discover the secret of Niniel's Ghost and the nature of her abode; (2) to clear the site of Coerba's band, making trade safe again on the road in the canyon below; or (3) to find and loot the Treasure of the Seers. None of these aims are particularly easy, although the latter is unquestionably the most dangerous (and profitable).

3.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

Minas Anghen is about ten miles (or seven and a half as the Criban flies) east of the village of Cabed Angren, up a twisting mountain road marked by numerous stone bridges and retaining walls. About ten families reside in the village. Adventurers attempting to travel up

to Long-eye Tower invariably pass through this somewhat rude, stone-built village, for any other route requires travel over exceedingly dangerous alpine terrain.

Starting Pregenerated PCs

Should the party be composed of pregenerated characters, it is suggested that they start at the Jugglers' School in Cabed Angren. This hostel serves as the village's sole inn and is a common haunt for travelers. Here jugglers and bards from all over Lamedon gather twice a year (around Midyear and Yearsend), during the Festival of Changes. Since it is one of only three such "colleges" in Gondor (the others are in Pelargir and Osgiliath), it is also a magnet for wilder folk, regardless of season. At least one PC will be associated with the school, so the building is a natural focal point.

Duoervis Cleg is the Master of the Jugglers' School and serves as a leading member of the group of landowners concerned with the recent events that led to the decline in local trade and travel. As the appointed spokesman, he has solicited aid from his trusted pupils, hoping to quietly spread word of the need to investigate Minas Anghen. His goals are simple: first, he hopes to drive Niniel's Ghost away and put an end to her haunting; next, he wishes to rid the region of Coerba's bandits.

Any information regarding the nature of either the brigands or the Ghost will help the landowners. Even a simple description of the operations around Minas Anghen would permit them to assess their plight and arrange for another expedition. Still, the locals need the ruin cleared and that is their ultimate goal.

The Master will gather interested adventurers in his private booth, behind a curtain in the Jugglers' Hall. There, around a table for eight, he will gather the group and discuss the venture, while his students sit at the tables nearby and subtly ward off eavesdroppers.

Other Starting Points

The landowners are not the only folk who wish to put an end to the chicanery surrounding Minas Anghen. A Seer, *Eriel* of Rendul has acquired a book called *The Line of Glirhuin*, which discusses the Seers of Minas Anghen. This tome is a compilation of letters and diaries from various residents of the Long-eye Tower and alludes to the wealth of the Seer's Vault.

Eriel is a quiet woman who has only recently arrived in Cabed Angren. Arriving in the guise of a homeless waif, she has used her wiles to gain the confidence of a local widow (*Maerj*) and has assumed the position of housekeeper. Some nights, Eriel slips off to the Jugglers' School or travels to Sarn Erech twenty miles away, always in search of adventurous souls who might join her service. Her youth (she's only eighteen) and startlingly lovely looks belie her strength and will. She is determined to recover the legacy of the Long-eye Tower, whatever the cost.

Eriel will make contact with a lone adventurer associated with a group she feels is capable of fulfilling her needs. She will request aid and arrange another one-on-one meeting, this time outside of Cabed Angren, in a glade a quarter mile off the Long-eye Road. Then, she will bid farewell, depart briefly, disguise herself, and follow her new compatriot until the time of the next rendezvous. Those she chooses must be on guard, for although she will give adventurers a retainer (an advance fee) of 3 gp, she is capable of double-crossing anyone with whom she deals.

3.42 AIDS

Both Duoervis and Eriel possess rude maps of Minas Anghen. Neither chart documents private chambers, hidden rooms, or traps, so the PCs should not have access to information about rooms #14-27, nor should the maps speak of #4d or the traps in #9. Nonetheless, the charts can prove invaluable.

Duoervis' (1st lvl) pupil *Gaem Wulsen*, a minstrel and apprentice juggler, knows the valley and mountains between Minas Anghen and

Cabed Angren like no other lowlander. He will serve as a guide and, though he will run from any fight, he will deliver messages or calls for help. His aid makes it possible for adventurers to reach the Tower via animal paths or under the cover of bad weather (add +10 to the moving maneuvers of those who follow his lead).

3.43 OBSTACLES

The obstacles guarding Minas Anghen are many. At night, when there is cover for an approach, Niniel is about and the bandits are plying their trade. During the day, when Niniel is at rest and most of Coerba's crew are asleep, a few guards can scan the countryside with stunning effectiveness. Whatever the hour, the terrain is arduous and quite threatening.

The Bandits

Dangers posed by the bandits are limited, particularly if most are sleeping or raiding. They can be tough when defending the gate (#1), the stairs, or the Tower's roof, but most are unseasoned and rather cowardly.

The Traps

The Tower's traps (see #s 9,14,15,16,17) are far more dangerous. This is particularly true of the very tricky magical doors and cubes found in the Room of Doors (#15), the Seer's Library (#16), and the Seer's Door (#17). Since the only non-trapped entry to the Seer's Vault (#27a) is obscured by the capricious waters of the Well Room (21), the route to the Tower's greatest treasure lies guarded by these obstacles. Depending on the nature of the adventuring party, they can be devastating.

The Ways In and Out

Obviously, the Main Gate (#1) or sally ports into the Garth (#2) are the natural routes in and out of Minas Anghen. They are guarded, however, so adventurers may seek other means. One is via the roaring waters of Long-eye Falls, a tenuous plan at best. Another revolves around the escape passage (#23) into the Wine Cellar. This exit is particularly effective if the party commands an understanding of the use of the Blue Cube from the Box of Panes (see #16c). Yet any way out remains dangerous, for that is the nature of the ruined Tower.

3.44 REWARDS

Duoervis offers a 200 gp reward to anyone who can wipe out the brigands. This sum, gathered by Forlong and housed in Forlong's home in Sarn Erech, is in itself a considerable fortune, but the landowners are desperate enough to add any booty recovered from Minas Anghen that cannot be readily identified. A description of Niniel's activities, or those of Coerba's gang, each bring compensation of 50 gp.

Eriel, on the other hand, offers 300 gp (over the retainer) plus all the loot in Minas Anghen, save that found in the Seer's Vault. She cares neither about the robbers nor the dead Niniel. Hers' is a single-purpose plan with a fine reward. Unfortunately, it means the division of other peoples' property and would be considered contemptuous or larcenous by both the landowners and the heirs of Niniel.

3.5 ENCOUNTERS

A) NINIEL'S GHOST

If she realizes she is noticed, Niniel will seem to appear as a normal person, just as she last was while alive (even seeming to possess the items that may have been removed from her skeleton in the library!). She will ask them why they are there by stating:

"What, by Gobha, grants you the right, Who, by Damu, possesses your spirit, And spawns this outrageous trespassing!"

If the adventurers admit to taking the money, Niniel will tell them threateningly that the money must go to the Foundling Home

in Sarn Erech (the nearby town). If they dissemble, she will ask them if they would please take the money there. She will follow the money invisibly to make sure that it goes where it should!

If she receives a firm promise that the money will go to the Foundling Home, she will give the adventurers permission to each take one item from the chests. If they do not so promise or if they try to take more than one item, or if they do any other unpleasant things (and to Niniel, this includes just leaving!), they will face her full wrath as both a high-level Seer and a Ghost!

Trespassers will not have time to play around or test the items once the dead Seer tells them to each take one. Niniel will grow impatient and more eerie-looking and tell them that they are shaming her generous offer for this small service.

B) COERBA AND SUNIL

Murderous Coerba immediately brandishes a broadsword, while Sunil palms her deadly dagger. Holding Coerba back by the edge of his surcoat, Sunil says:

"Wellth, wellth. Whath doo yoo sthink my Ithord? Frwesh fwodder?"

Coerba laughs, saying:

"Abandon your weapons lads; they'll weigh you down on your way home."

Of course, Coerba has no intention of letting anyone go. Hesimply wants an easy fight. The bandit will strike at the first opportunity, calling for his men as he swings. After dispatching the intruders, he will order his men to take any survivors to the Basement Prison (#26).

Sunil prefers a challenge and wants to toy with the intruders. She will toss her fine dagger at the first instance of melee and draw her short sword, but will try to restrain Coerba if the trespassers attempt to negotiate. (Roll Sunil's attempt to persuade, adding her Presence bonus; then roll Coerba's RR, using his Presence/Self Discipline.)

Should Sunil succeed in her attempt, she will advocate that the intruders be brought to the Presence Hall (#9), where they will be faced around the dais (over Trap #1). Sitting in the oak throne, Coerba will interview them, during which time Sunil will stand to his left with her hands on the trap mechanism in the chair's arm. Following some discussion, she will turn the handle and drop the adventurers in the watery pit. ("No mess, no worry," is her motto.)

C) THE BANDIT BAND

The outfitted robber band is ready for a raid. Stunned by the gall exhibited by the intruders, they take time to react. In any case, they cry out.

Make an orientation roll: 01-25 = bandits take 2 rds to prepare; 26-50 = half the bandits take 2 rds to ready, while the others act in a rd; 51-75 = bandits take a rd to prepare; 76-90 = one bandit moves immediately while the others take a rd; 91-100 = the robbers sound a bell alarm and strike, all in the 1st rd.

Half the time (on a roll of 01-50) Hirgon leads the party. Sometimes Sunil (51-60) or Coerba (61-70) takes his place. Occasionally (71-100), however, Coerba and Sunil jointly lead a big raid.

Typically, Vagor (from room #7) is the fiercest and first into the fray (using a mace). Bloody Dirhavel is next, bearing a poleaxe (room #6). (Dirhavel is inebriated on a roll of 01-60 and operates at -11 to -60.) Hirgon (room #12) employs a broadsword and likes to move to the left; he strikes just after Dirhavel (Sunil and/or Coerba may be there in his stead). Dagnir and Gorlim (room #5) follow, longswords in hand, while Pwyll (room #7) is invariably last.

D) COERBA

When caught alone, there is a chance (01-25) that Coerba is drunk and impaired (operating at -1 to -50). Abusive and over-confident, albeit cunning, he will attempt to quietly sound an alarm whenever

confronted with intruders (pull cords in rooms #13 and 14 or behind the oak chair in #9 sound bells atop the Tower).

If he can, Coerba will hide and wait in ambush. If surprised, he will attempt to secure an invisible + 20 throwing-dagger which is slung on his back and can be reached over his neck (in case he must raise his arms). The dagger is coated with a (2nd lvl) dose of *Trusa*, a frog venom which acts in 1-10 rds and can kill (RR failure 1-10 = blind in 1-2 eyes; failure of 11-20 = coma; 21+ = death).

In close quarters, Coerba will employ a + 10 broadsword and a + 5 main gauche (treat as a + 5 dagger which is only -10 against plate and acts as a shield if used defensively in melee). He will parry with the main gauche unless he gets a clean strike and will retreat to a defensive stance if faced by more than one foe.

If he is in his chambers (#14) and the battle goes badly, he will leap out the window, onto an awning 10 feet below. Then he will drop over the edge and swing onto the ground (another 8 ft).

If Coerba prevails, he will have the survivors placed in the Basement Prison (#26).

E) SUNIL

Sunil will fight, but only if she has no better recourse. Always quick with a plan, she prefers to hide, slip away for help, or entice a foe into submission or a compromised position. She will cut the throat of anyone who gets in her way and is foolish enough to be vulnerable, but she will submit to any enemy who clearly has the upper hand. Sunil has few reservations against allying herself with anyone who might save her. (Still, she will attempt to save Coerba as well, or at least give him every opportunity to retain her loyalty.)

F) A PAIR OF BANDITS

The bandits are typically paired: Dagnir and Gorlim; Vagor and Pwyll; or Hirgon and Dirhavel. They rotate duties, although Hirgon has the rights associated with his status as lieutenant. Generally (01-75), the two on guard duty are stationed in the guardhouse (upper level of #1), while those on watch occupy the roof of the tower (#18). The others sleep. There is a chance (76-100) that one or both of a given pair will be tending the Basement Prison or Stables, depending on circumstance.

G) ERIEL

Eriel has little patience with anyone, and even less when confronted with someone she considers an affront or a fool. Never one to subjugate herself, she will take control of any discussion (unless she intends to play another role altogether).

When contracting for aid in acquiring the Treasure of the Seers, Eriel will treat the adventurers as her companions, although her moves will always be clouded with suspicion. She will treat the adventurers' fears carefully, assuring them that Minas Anghen is less dangerous than it really is and prodding them onward.

Once the adventurers acquire the treasure, however, Eriel will take another tack. She will manipulate the adventurers' greed and offer fake gems (unless confronted by an obvious expert) in return for the precious goods. If necessary, she will offer food and drink laced with (3rd lvl) sleep potions (one roll for food, one for drink; unconsciousness lasts 1-5 hrs). Should she recover a healthy share, she will then disguise herself and flee (to Minas Anghen, if the bandits and Niniel have been swept away).

H) GORGHIRIC

Gorghiric spends half his time (01-50) in his room (#20) drinking, brooding, or sleeping. At other times (51-70) he wanders the halls under the Garth (rooms #19-26), browses (71-85) in the Library (#16), or observes (86-100) from the Roof (#18).

Despite his fondness for drink and crazed reputation, Gorghiric is often lucid (01-60); it is only after a particularly bad dream or bout

with the bottle that he is off kilter (61-100). (In such cases, Gorghiric is actually quite maniacal, but operates at -1 to -100.)

While clear-minded Gorghiric is a relatively wise and helpful character with no particular love for the bandits. His reasons for staying are simple: he appreciates the bandits' invitation, he has no other place to go, and he loves the slave-maid Treva (like a daughter) and wishes to protect her from the capricious cruelty of Sunil. Gorghiric also hopes to solve the mysteries of the strange Box of Panes, an item he has discovered but not yet dared to use.

Anyone careful enough to play on Gorghiric's needs and sympathize with his plight may find him a willing ally. If so, he can be of invaluable aid. Otherwise, he can be a zealous foe.

4.0 ADVENTURE AT THE SEVEN STONES (SETMAENEN)

In a high mountain valley — about a mile and a half east of the mining town of *Ossarnen* (*Dn. "Setmaenen"*) — lies the place for which the town was named, a large man-made mound of earth supported and strengthened by stones twice the size of a man. Seven stone pillars, 30' Standing-stones surround the mound, within an age-old ceremonial ring.

Everyone knows that Setmaenen was a holy place of the ancient Daen Coentis, one of their calendar-temples, but no one remembers what festivals were celebrated on its hallowed grounds. Few have gone in there, and those few reported nothing spectacular: old carvings, sacrificial basins of stone. Yet no one has dared desecrate the place, and those who go in report a feeling of being watched that is so strong that they dared do nothing but look about quietly and then leave.

4.1 THE TALE OF THE SEVEN STONES

Setmaenen was once one of the holiest sites of the Daen Coentis, so much so that even in their sad latter days — the Time of the Oathbreaking and the downfall to Darkness — none of the Dark-priests dared to adapt it to their barbaric rituals. Called in the old tongue Setmaenen (which also means "Seven Stones"), it was dedicated to *Fois* (*Este*), Vala of healing of the body and spirit.

At Yearsend, in the darkness before the Yule dawn of the winter solstice, those who still suffered despite the soothing hands of healers, those touched with madness, and those crippled by sorrow, guilt, or other painful emotion would gather in this high valley and listen to the Priests and Priestesses of Foies sing sweet hymns of praise to their gentle Goddess.

No evil thing dared at that time to approach, for all the valley seemed filled with a silvery holy light even before the dawn broke. When the first ray of the new year's sun broke over the horizon, it shone directly into the mound, illuminating the stone slab at the rear and revealing the secrets of the hold. Amidst enchanting fires and lyrical calls the hurt became whole again.

In the time after the Last Alliance of Men and Elves, just following the fall of Sauron of Mordor (early T.A. 1), a Dark-priest called Brues Cuerd broke tradition and entered the Stone Mound. Bearing the stolen holy jewel called the Star of Gobha (*Dn. "Gobha Reui"*) and believing himself protected by its power, he sought healing. He also desired the Treasures of Foies. With three companions — Rec, Urnae, and Guern — he slew the Priestesses who dared refuse his wishes, and vainly searched for a cure to his wound.

His hubris brought his doom, however, as Brues and his bloody

brethren perished mysteriously. Their fate remains unwritten, but it is known that the evil Star of Gobha came to rest in the Stone Mound. From that day forward, the Daen closed Setmaenen and cast spells to protect the spirits of the brave Priestesses of Foies. It is said that the Mound will not open again until the righting of the Oathbreaking.

4.2 THE NPCs

Those who live in the area of the high vale of Setmaenen are rugged individualists, people who, for various reasons, have fled the confines of the civilized lowlands. By chance or choice, they walk the windswept mountain paths where once the noble Daen Coentis ruled. The trails are now the domain of these loners, and beasts, and the Ghosts of those who fell prey to the long, strong Shadow of the Dark Lord.

4.21 HAEDREC

Haedrec is a (4th lvl) Mage who hails from the Tarlang region of Lamedon. The black-haired, grey-eyed offspring of a Dunnish father and a Dunadan mother, his early life was marked by confusion and anxiety. Frequent moves gave him little sense of his roots, while his parentage was the source of ridicule. Haedrec turned to his sister (*Craes*) for support, but she perished in the Plague and he was left isolated.

At the age of fifteen, Haedrec went north. He took with him a book called *The Magic of Maels*, the tome from which he learned his calling while studying under his father's brother. In the isolation of the mountains he practiced his enchantments, but it was not until he found Setmaenen that he achieved any great insight.

Haedrec discovered another book within the bowels of the hallowed mound and, after painful practice, realized he could not move it. So he studied the *Wishes of Woellaebar* where it laid. It brought him power and wisdom, and to this day he guards it jealously.

Living in a high two-chambered cave 300' above the vale of Setmaenen, Haedrec lives a secluded and guarded existence. Each morning he watches the sunrise and dons his only trappings, a burnt-red shirt, orange pants, and red boots. Following a porridge breakfast, he descends to a nearby stream to shave and fish. Then he eats, and by noon he is in the Ring of Setmaenen, watching the Sun's shadows. Soon thereafter he begins reading. Only with the threat of night does he leave, for Ghosts scare him. He abandons his vigil only because those stronger inherit his place each evening. Thus, he sleeps in comfort, knowing his precious book remains undisturbed.

4.22 RUEM LAER

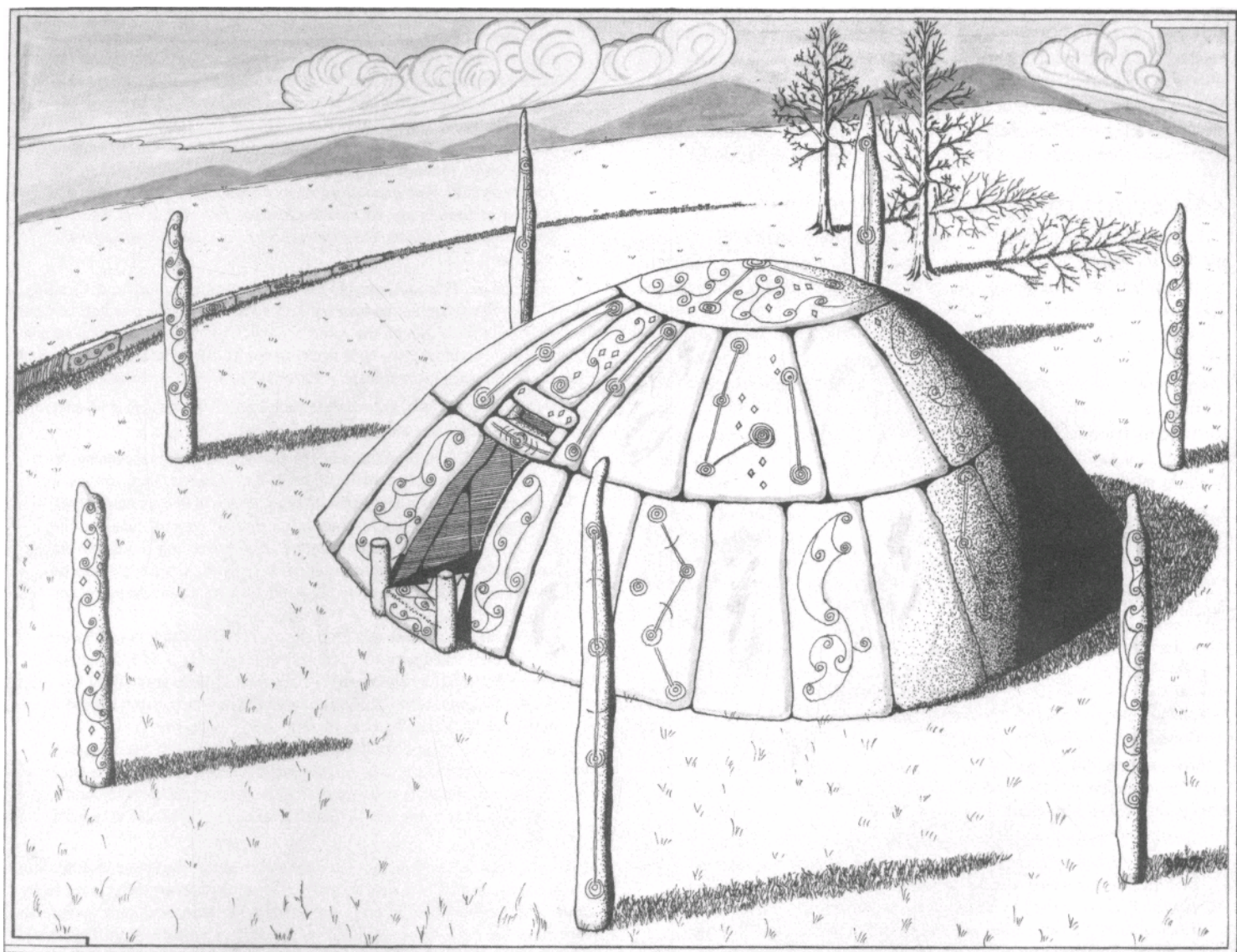
Ruem is a (3rd lvl) Dunlending Bard from the House of Cuerd. Although middle-aged, he possesses a childlike air and dismayingly half-cocked humor which can only be described as twisted but keen. His careful attire and youthful brown hair conceal his long years of wandering. Yet, once he begins to play his lute and recite tales of Dunnish lore he seems like an old sage, learned in the trials of his people and wise to life.

Ruem owns a stone hut set off the rarely-trod trail between the town and the Stone Mound. He trades in town and often sings in its two humble inns. As a guide to hunting, fishing, and mining in the area, he is unexcelled, so he earns a steady income. His frugal lifestyle has allowed him to acquire quite a nest-egg. Although he claims no fondness for gold, he charges a silver piece for each day of service. Dunnish pride prevails.

4.23 JESEC GAEL AND HOEG CUERD

Jesec Cael is a young woman, an artistic thief. (She is a 2nd lvl Scout.) Wanted in Ossarnen for the theft of a fine sword, she has taken refuge in the home of a middle-aged miner named Hoeg Cuerd.

Hoeg's house rests on a ledge overlooking the Vale of Setmaenen, a mile north of the Stone Mound. Beside it is the entry to Hoeg's mine.



setmaenen

This delving is an old iron mine which Hoeg hopes will yield silver. He has found a little, enough to drive his thirst, so he remains at reclusive work. Only the coming of Jesec has stirred him from his singular task.

Jesec's fair skin, raven hair, and bright black eyes remind Hoeg of the pleasures of settled lands he left over a decade ago. He is smitten by her charms. Jesec, on the other hand, is less enthusiastic about her host. His balding head, small steely eyes, and ample girth deflect her desires. Still, she has found need to play upon his emotions. She needs a hideout.

While Hoeg is preoccupied with mining, Jesec has discovered other pastimes. His stories of Setmaenen excited her, and she decided to venture into the Stone Mound. Each time she visited, however, a gaudily dressed hermit (Haedrec) was present. The nimble thief now wants to dispense with the fool and claim the Star of Gobha.

4.24 REC BAERETEN

Rec is a (4th lvl) Daen Coentis warrior whose spirit currently resides in the Pukel-man that guards the Star of Gobha in Setmaenen's Sanctuary. Once a servant of the evil Brues Cuerd, his cursed soul remains beside the spot where he slew two Priestesses of

STATS FOR NPCs AT SETMAENEN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	Mov M	Notes
Haedric	4	32	No/1	20	N	N	20sb	-	10	Mage.
Lesser Dunadan, +2 spell adder, 8 PP, Ring +10 to Runes, 2 Mirennas, +5 da.										
Jesec Cael	2	29	No/1	40	N	N	74bs	59lb	10	Scout/Thief
Urban Female, +15 bs, +10 lb, +10 lockpick, Boots of Silence 2x/day.										
Ruem Laer	3	41	Rl/9	25	Y20	N	53ha	23sb	5	Bard.
Rural Man, +10 ha, +2 adder, 3 PP										
Rec Baeretan	4	80	Ch/13	30	T25	N	90wh	67wh(t)	15	Warrior/Fighter
Pukel-man, +10wh, Gloves of Climbing (+5), 2 Surinie, 1 Zulsendura.										
Hoeg Cuerd	1	23	No/1	20	N	N	30ss	-	10	Warrior Fighter
Mixed Man										

For key abbreviations, see Sec 2.0, PC Stats

Fois in T.A. 1. His horrible transferal resulted from the last enchantments of his victims. Unrepentant and ever-cruel, he is constantly aware of all around him, but he is locked in the magic stone statue until touched or until the Star leaves his sight. (However, he can never leave the Ring of Setmaenen, the boundary marked by the circular depression that holds the Seven Stones and the Stone Mound.)

4.3 LAYOUT OF SETMAENEN

The seven pillars surrounding the Stone Mound form a Ward and mark a boundary few dare cross. This magic circle lies within the mystical Ring of Setmaenen, denoted by a round grassy depression and a row of low stones.

In order to pass beyond the Ward, an adventurer must make a (3rd lvl) RR. Failure of 01-50 results in fearful flight for a number of rounds equal to $\wedge$ of failure; a failure of 51-100 means victim is immobilized for 1-100 minutes; failure of 100 + results in the victim's spirit being transferred into the nearest of the Seven Stones (thereby creating a new inscription). A body separated from its spirit dies (treat as soul departed).

1. The Door. The doorway of the Stone Mound had carved steps of wood in its younger days, but now the doorstep is 3' above ground level. The 12'x15' doorway is flanked by pale gray stone pillars that even to this day are so smooth that they look soft, as if covered with grey satin. One huge block, the doorstep stone is inscribed with lucky carvings alluding to the path of the moon and stars. The lintel stone is carved with a sun-sign, around which lie moon path spirals and symbols representing both clouds and the lunar calendar. There is another opening like a transom above the door, to let in the first light of the New Year's day. Its lintel stone is engraved with star symbols (which look like the four-sided diamond-shaped figures and are often confused as jewels).

2. Entrance hall. Once past the door, one enters a plain hallway lined with large slabs similar to the doorstep stone, but not as elaborately carved. Above, the ceiling is made of plain slabs.

— *Trap #7:* The only elaborate marking faces inward and is set on the inner side of the door lintel. It is a carved **trap**. This (3rd lvl) Symbol of Death is concealed behind two thin, laterally-sliding, obsidian panels. When fifty or more pounds of weight is placed on a 10'x10' floor section 40' down the hall, the obsidian panels slide into the walls on their respective sides, revealing the Symbol (the sliding sound is easy, +20, to hear). Anyone gazing upon the enchanted relief (which is visible up to 50') must resist or die. The panels can only be closed by moving one of the two stone handles concealed at the inside corners of the hallway. These handles are very hard (-20) to detect.

3. Altar of the Moon. The Altar of the Moon lies to the left as one enters the cross-hall. Its basin is meant to be filled with clear water, as are all the other bowls. The "altar" above the white marble basin is just another vertical stone slab, which is carved with the spirals, curves, and loops that symbolize the Moon (Dn. "Gealach"). Foie demands no live sacrifices, so there is no need to have a table-style altar for offerings.

4. Altar of the Stars. A black basalt slab and grey marble basin. The carvings include silver and diamond inlays that represent the Stars, with enclosing curves representing clouds and nebulae.

5. Altar of the Sun. A bronze slab and yellowish marble basin. The inscribed relief is a simple rayed symbol, a flower like Daen Coentis version of the Sun (Dn. "Grian").

NOTE: *On the dawn of the New Year's day, the sun peeks into the Stone Mound through the transom over the doorway, illuminating the back wall, where the Altar of the Stars is carved. The Stars disappear, and Daenaël (Old Dummish) writing appears in their stead. Even one unfamiliar with the runes (as most of the common Daen Coentis were) will perceive their import.*

The runes instruct the pilgrim(s) to fill all three bowls with clear water (they need not be brimming full; a few inches deep will do). Then the pilgrim(s) should empty their minds to Foie's thoughts. At this point, those of faith or good heart will feel calm and expectant, as if something wonderful is going to happen.

Sometime after the appearance of the Daenaël writing, the Sun's rays will strike Foie's Star, at the center of the altar. This causes the slabs before the secret doors to rooms #6 and #9 to slide into the ceiling. (These hidden doors are otherwise very hard, -20, to detect and extremely hard, -30, to open.)

In the time of the Daen, the sick then proceeded through the door to the right, through room #6 and down the stairway (#7) to the Sanctuary (#8). Any presiding Priests or accompanying persons not in need of healing passed into the Resting Room (#6) but went no further. Only the ill and the Priestesses of Foie were permitted in the Sanctuary.

6. Resting room. This cool, marble-faced room was designed for the waiting, those who belonged at Setmaenen but had no need of healing or had no right in the Sanctuary. Although the room is apparently bare, those who remain here and rest (no more than 10% activity) for at least a minute leave feeling full of joy and vigor (operating at +10 for 1-5 rounds and healed of 1-5 hits).

7. Stairway. The smooth, grey marble stair leads downward to the Sanctuary (#8). Twenty-one stairs measure the 14' descent.

— *Trap #2:* The eight, ninth, and tenth stairs, however, are the key to a **trap** which is very hard (-20) to detect. Should forty or more pounds be placed on any on these stairs, they will depress and set off a counterweight system forcing the entire stairway to slide into the wall at the right in less than a round. Anyone trying to get off the stair must make a very hard maneuver, subtracting 5 x # stairs he crosses in the direction of flight (e.g., leaping up six stairs means -30).

Those left in the stairwell after the stairs recede fall into a 40' deep pit, which is filled with 10' of muddy quicksand (a +15 Fall/Crush attack, followed by an extremely hard maneuver to stay on the surface). The quicksand will consume a victim in 2-6 rounds (-1 for victims in chain; -2 for those in plate).

The trap is reset after the slow-swinging, spring-driven counterweights swing back to position (5-6 rds). A secret trap-lock lies concealed in each pillar beside the door at the bottom of the stairs and a third is hidden to the left of the Altar of the Sun. All are very hard (-20) to find.

8. The Sanctuary. The Sanctuary of Foie is the heart of the Stone Mound. The whole room seems filled with a pearly mist, and yet everything is perfectly clear. The marble slabs here are a soft white in color, and arch upward to form a rounded ceiling like the inside of an egg, or an old-fashioned bee-hive.

In the center of the chamber is a pool of clear, still water, and growing from the pool is a silver-green tree. It is both a living tree and a thing of artifice, made by an ancient Daen Coentis artist with the inspiration of the story of the Two Trees that lighted Valinor (Dn. "Naemh"). The Daenaël epics say the artisan worked with the aid of Gobha (Aule), for it was not only the Dwarves who could claim the patronage of the Master of the Earth in those days, before the Darkness came into the hearts of the Daen Coentis.

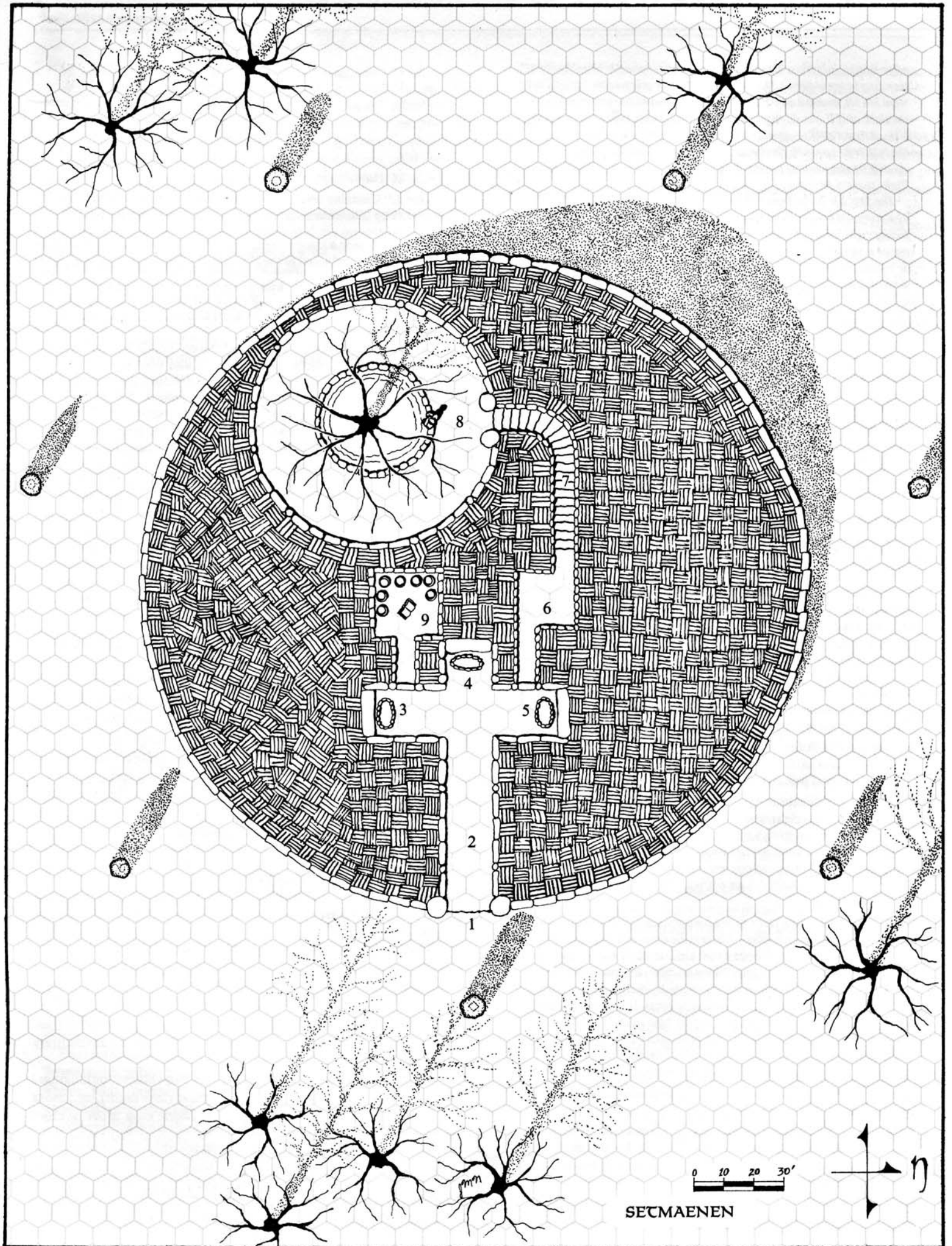
This chamber is a place of healing. Any who have hurts of spirit or heart will gradually find hope and forgiveness here. Those who are mad or ill of mind (e.g., have temporarily reduced mental stats) may become sane (RR failure vs. 10th lvl results in cure in 1-100 minutes). Any with an unhealed injury, or crippled portion, or deformity — whether by injury or from birth — should bathe it in the water of Foie's Pool (RR failure vs. 15th lvl results in cure, in 1-50 minutes).

Those hurt inside (e.g., touched by Ghosts or poisoned) should drink of the water, and they may be restored (RR failure vs. 20th lvl results in cure in 1-10 minutes). Any who have lacked in wit or will or strength from birth shall drink of this water, and they may find themselves augmented. (This only applies to stats below 50. If RR failure vs 20th lvl, add 1-100 points to any one stat below 50.)

NOTE: *The magic waters of Foie's Pool will act once upon a given injury to a given person in a given year (whether they resist or not). Nor will it work if removed from the pool for more than one minute. Should the (30th lvl) Tree die, the waters will cease to function and the magic spring which feeds the water (and the quicksand of Trap*

#2) will dry up.

Unfortunately, the waters will not work until the cursed Star of Gobha is removed from the Pool. This 2¹¹ diameter diamond is worth 4000 gp, but it is a thing of evil. (It found its way into the Pool



after Rec stole it from his master Brues and dropped it when he died standing in the waters.) The Star permits its wearer to operate as if he were 8th Ivl, and is a x4 PP device. It also bestows the power to see in the dark as if it was daylight. Yet, the jewel is evil, and anyone using it must make a RR every day (at midnight, using one's normal Ivl vs. 8th Ivl) or fall prey to Darkness. RR failure results in the attempted slaying of the nearest person (at the time of the roll), followed by flight toward Mordor.

The Star lies in the Pool beneath the watchful eye of a Pukel-man. The stone Pukel-man sits on the Pool's wall, across from the door, facing right as one enters the door from the stairway. Within the statue is the soul of Rec Baereten (see 4.24), and touching the statue or moving the Star from its sight results in the awakening of this weird guardian.

9. Chamber of Mist. This black marble-lined chamber serves as the repository of Fois's Treasure. It is reachable only by way of a 15' long corridor. When its door is open, the room is filled with an enchanted silvery mist which is very hard (-20) to see through; thus its name.

— *Trap #J*: The entry corridor has a rock floor composed of two, smooth obsidian plates which butt at center and create a crack down the middle of the passage. The plates are set on spring-hinges which are fixed beneath, near the walls. The trap is extremely hard (-30) to detect.

Should someone walk along the I* section closest to either wall, the floor will not move. If one places thirty or more pounds on any area of the panel section over 1' from the wall, however, the panel will open downward, dumping its burden into a seventy foot stone pit filled with T of water (a + 70 Fall/Crush attack, followed by possible drowning). Once unburdened, the panel springs back upward. There is no lock.

The pool is occupied by the decayed remains of three Dunlendings, including the dead Priest Brues Cuerd (and his companions Ur-nae and Guern). Brues' bizarrely-preserved face is twisted into a hideous snarl, and he wears an amulet carved from ivory (human bone, actually) in the shape of a skull. The amulet bears his spirit, and should someone touch it, they must make a RR vs. a 5th attack or become possessed by his evil soul. Brues' victim gets one RR a day for 10 days. If he fails all 10, his own soul departs and he "becomes" Brues; if he succeeds even once, Brues' spirit returns to the skull (unless the skull is destroyed).

The **Treasures of Fois** lie in seven stone jars set about the Chamber of Mists. Each obsidian jar is inscribed with a spiral pattern and topped with a cork-edged stopper. Their contents follow:

— *Jar #7*: Contains seven blue-leather bags, each of which holds a magic silver ring which, when worn, cannot be removed (short of severing the finger). Ring 1 is a -3 Spell Adder (subtracts 3 spells/day); Ring 2 is a -1 Spell Adder; Ring 3 does nothing (except negate the effects of any other ring one wears); Ring 4 is a +4 Spell Adder; Ring 5 is a +5 Spell Adder; Ring 6 is a +6 Spell Adder; and Ring 7 is a +7 Spell Adder.

— *Jar #2*: Contains the Daen Star-compass, a silver device weighing 2 lbs which enables the holder to determine time (as a magic sun- and star-dial) or directions without other aids, at any time of day. The Star-compass also enables the holder to redirect any projectile (up to 40 lbs; 3x/day) according to the direction he dials from the North coordinate (which corresponds to the original direction of flight). Thus, he can redirect an arrow flying at him back toward the attacker by dialing South. (The projectile attacks with an add based on the distance between the new target and the original point of departure.)

— *Jar #3*: Holds the mixed ashes of dozens of Daen Coentis Priestesses.

— *Jar #4*: Bears a blue-leather bottle-bag, within which lies a magic blue bottle (Fois' Beaker). This bottle is the only known receptacle which permits one to carry the water of Fois' Pool (one dose for in-gestion or immulsion; see room #8).

— *Jar #5*: Contains the Stone-mace of Setmaenen. The holder resists against symbols in stone as if he was 20th Ivl. Additionally, the holder can turn to stone (1 rd's concentration; 3x/day; for up to 100 rds), and can take on the features of any rock he touches at the time of transformation. As a weapon, it is a +20 mace which slays Ghosts.

— *Jar #6*: Holds the mixed ashes of dozens of Daen Coentis Priests.

— *Jar #7*: Contains seven blue-leather bags, each of which holds seven 20 gp Blue-diamonds.

Beside the jars, atop a stone lectern, lies the book called the *Wishes of Woel Laebur*. The book is attached to the stone upon which it lays by a magic lock and chain.

— **Wishes of Woel Laebur**: The 99 page tome is 3'x3'x9", weighs 27 pounds, and contains three sections: (1) Crafts; (2) Enchantments; and (3) Wishes.

Chapters on crafts cover Caving, Dance, Foraging, Herding, Meditation, Music, Signaling, Star-gazing, and Weather-watching and, when any entry is studied for at least forty hours, the reader can increase the corresponding secondary skill by one rank (see **MERP** at 2.33 or *Character Law* at 14.1).

The portion on enchantments requires four hundred hours of reading. Once studied, however, it enables the reader to cast any spell one round faster than normal (spells that would take one round take but a half round). This magical text is only effective for three readings, and then the words disappear. (Haedrec is the second reader.)

A group of three wishes comprises the final portion of the book. The first concerns Life, the second Living, and the third Death. Each is a wish, to be used only once, which works instantaneously when the book is open and the proper word is spoken. The wish will affect one target within 100'. When the words "give life" are uttered, the speaker can raise one being from the dead (who died within a number of years equal to speaker's Ivl) by restoring his lost soul. Should the speaker say "aid the living," the target receives a +100 bonus for his next three actions (next 3 rolls, including crits against large or super large creatures), so long as they are taken within 3 hrs. If the speaker utters "take life," the target must make a RR vs. a 20th level spell or die.

4.4 THE TASK

The sojourn to Setmaenen is a quest to either (1) cleanse the befouled holy pool or (2) loot the Treasures of Fois. Both of these missions are complicated by the presence of two other explorers — Haedrec and Jesec Cael — who frequent the valley and covet the contents of the eerie Stone Mound.

4.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

Setmaenen is only a mile and a half east of the town of Ossarnen. A paved mountain path connects the town to the valley and serves as the ¹ best access way. This rather dirty village is the natural starting point for those who wish to risk the trials of the haunted vale.

Twenty families, mostly miners and their lot, make up the bulk of Ossarnen's population. Although curious and suspicious, they generally keep to themselves. Travelers are rare, but few folk are outgoing enough to approach them or even inquire as to their business in the area. Ossarnen is a parochial place where adventurers stand out; yet they remain safe.

Once in town, the adventurers have only two choices for lodgings. The Stone Crow is the larger, more expensive (2cp/night), and more sumptuous of the inns, while the Old Black Dog affords more privacy.

Ruem Laer's Plan

The Dunnish Bard Ruem Laer frequents both of the inns, particularly in mid-week, when he sings and tells tales after dinner. During his breaks, he likes to drink with strangers or flirt with the (Old Black Dog) innkeeper's young daughter Paedy. Ruem is always on the watch for travelers in need of a guide and knows much of Setmaenen. No one knows the Tale of the Seven Stones like the local Bard.

The Treasures of Fois have long fascinated Ruem, and as of late he decided to venture into the Stone Mound if the opportunity presents itself. All he needs are a few companions for protection. Ruem will offer his services for one silver piece a day, plus an equal share of the loot. His preferences for books and musical instruments will no doubt please the greedy souls who seek little more than cash and weaponry.

Should a likely group present itself, Ruem will invariably sing a badly insulting song directed at one of the party members. He likes a stir and is quick to offer a drink to those who take offense. Assuming no fight ensues, he will sit with the strangers, feel them out, and propose his plan. Then he will leave for home, a half mile up the paved trail, making sure that any gathering of adventurers takes place on his premises. Ruem knows much about nosey townfolk.

4.42 AIDS

No maps exist of the Stone Mound, for Dunlending history is an oral tradition. A map of the surrounding valley, however, can be obtained in Ossarnen. The local miners possess rough charts of all the nearby mountains and vales.

Ruem Laer, of course, is a well versed fellow. Besides being a guide (add + 5 to all outside moving maneuvers for those that follow him), he knows many of the old Dunnish tales and can describe both the Stone Mound and the evil jewel that is reputed to have caused its closing. The Bard's version of the story is not without error, but he is by far the best source of information, assuming the adventurer can weather his passion for song and dance, and for strange tricks that defy reason.

4.43 OBSTACLES

Setmaenen is guarded by only a few means, yet each presents quite a challenge. While Haedrec and Jesecc Cael are the only visitors to or around the Stone Mound, they can both be possessive and dangerous adversaries. Each favors the daylight, although Jesecc is considering a nocturnal visit. Jesecc is a woman who is quick to ambush the lone or unwary prey, while Haedrec will react violently to anyone who might threaten his place of study.

Traps

Three traps lie within the Stone Mound. Together with the Ward spaced thirty to forty feet around the structure, they compose the ancient defense. Once past the Ward, an adventurer may well get into the heart of Setmaenen, but from that point things become tricky. The outer trap (#1) is designed to keep intruders in by slaying them as they leave. Folk unfortunate enough to step on the floor panel that reveals the inward-facing Symbol of Death must rely on finding the handles that control the trap, lest they suffer the risk of a mystical demise.

The two inner traps guard the Sanctuary and the Chamber of Mist, Setmaenen's holiest halls. Each is designed to drop intruders into pits where, while unconscious, they will suffocate (in quicksand and water, respectively). The corridor trap (#3) obstructing entry into the Chamber of Mists is the most dangerous, for it cannot be locked and is always active. Like the stair trap (#2), it closes over its victims.

The Pukel-man

The cursed Pukel-man stands watch over the Star of Gobha and the holy pool the stone befools. His destruction is key to removal of

the jewel and the use of the pool. Since he will awaken upon touch, adventurers will have to make their first attack effective.

4.44 REWARDS

No one offers any set rewards for going to Setmaenen, although Ruem is willing to split its wealth with any adventurers who might accompany him. Instead, the Stone Mound itself offers the only prospect of treasure. The jars in the Chamber of Mist are valuable, yielding artifacts and gems alike. Even better is the book, so the adventurers must be wary of giving it to Ruem (since he seeks books and musical devices).

Fois' Pool is also a treasure. It will heal the wounded and, when used to fill Fois' Beaker (the magic blue beaker found in Jar #4), it can provide a powerful, portable potion. Such a tool cannot be overstated, for life is more important than any coin or crossbow.

4.5 SETMAENEN ENCOUNTERS

A) HAEDREC

Haedrec is easily startled. He likes to be alone and, unless trapped, he will normally try to hide or flee. If encountered away from the Stone Mound and waylaid, he will act civilly and attempt to break off the conversation as soon as possible. Any inquiries about Setmaenen will be met with concerned warnings. Haedrec will speak of numerous Ghosts and foul legends, hoping that adventurers will stay away from the holy site.

While in Setmaenen, however, Haedrec will react differently. He knows the Mound well and will use his skills to protect his book. Hiding, he will avoid contact with intruders if at all possible. Should he be discovered, he will placate the adventurers and direct them into the stair trap (#2) leading to the Sanctuary. Haedrec will not lead the way, nor will he reveal the Chamber of Mist; but if caught in the Chamber of Mist he will resort to his favorite ploy and invite the intruders down the corridor. (The Mage will always run, given the opportunity.)

B) JESECC CAEL

Jesecc stalks and hides well, like a hunter. She will rarely be caught off-guard and is not above striking a lone traveler. Provided an opening, she will usually (01-80) observe him until she is sure he is alone and not too dangerous. Then she will send an arrow from her (+10) long bow as a greeting (aimed at the traveler's head). Once she has felled or wounded her victim, she will pounce upon him with her drawn (+15) sword. Jesecc is rarely charitable. Sometimes (81-100), though, Jesecc will follow a lone traveler for a while, breaking off when she discovers his business or destination.

Groups of two or more bother Jesecc. She tracks them with caution and will not attack unless there is no recourse. Her aim is to find someone who might aid her with her plan to loot the Stone Mound or help her find a better refuge than Hoeg's house.

C) REC BAERETEN

Encounters with the Pukel-man result in avoidance or a fight. Normally he appears as a rough statue, but if he is touched or the Star of Gobha is moved, Rec will spring into combat, brandishing a deadly (+10) ten pound stone war hammer. Then he will fight until destroyed. Never speaking, he is an odd and unentertaining foe.

NOTE: *Pukel-creatures are unaffected by bleeding or temperature damage, although their bodies bear the scars of "cuts" and "burns." All other critical strikes are treated as one severity level lower than usual (e.g., an "E" result = a "D" critical). Otherwise, they fight as living beasts. Rec cannot leave Setmaenen's Ring (the area marked by the grass depression) and will return to repose in an hour unless destroyed or unless he recovers the Star of Gobha and places it back in its appointed resting place.*

5.0 ADVENTURE AT HOGO TAROSVAN

In the mountains north of Tarlang's Neck, there is a steep butte of blue granite which shines at dusk and glows in the moonlight. It lies in a remote valley, a forested bowl surrounded by bare slopes and sharply rising cliffs. Here, atop the butte, the Daen Coentis buried the dead that were cursed in life — the infirm, the insane, the stillborn — and here no one trod on a dark night.

Yet this area is still spoken of by the hunters and herbalists of nearby villages. The wildflowers that grow amidst the Standing Stones which litter the windswept burial field are unsurpassed in beauty or potency and it's said that they are given life by the spirits of the deceased. Still, no one bothers them. Deer and mountain sheep cluster in the fields and crevices of the butte, but few dare stalk them, for people are known to disappear near the cave mouths the Dunlendings call Hogo Tarosvan — the "Phantom Doors".

There are seven cave mouths in the blue cliff. Little streams spew from their maws, flowing down the cliff and forming a stream that flows down into the valley and joins the River Ciril. Strangely, although the mouths appear as gates and are called doors, no one remembers that there was, and is, an old cave village within the butte; nor does anyone remember that Hogo Tarosvan was once the site of a bitter and deadly feud between two orders of Dunlending Priests.

5.1 THE TALE OF HOGO TAROSVAN

*"Behind seven gates He sits Upon
the Dog-throne. Eating the Souls
of Men."*

Far below the Blue Butte is a lovely natural cavern where the Daen Coentis erected an altar to *Gobha* (the *Vala.Aule*). Beside it, stretching throughout the honeycomb of caves behind the cliff, the Daen built a refuge, a village. Those that settled it were a rugged lot, proud of their sacred cavern. Working their modest mines and reaping the offerings of the families of the cursed dead who they tended and prayed for, the villagers grew rich. They created fine works as they prospered, but never numbered more than a few score.

After the Oathbreaking (S.A. 3434), these folk declined rapidly, like the others of their race. This was only the beginning of their plight, however. Hardly a hundred years passed when seven powerful, tainted Priests — servants of the Lord of the Rings — arrived in the village. The Dark-priests desired to erect an altar here to their master Sauron. In the bitter fight that ensued, the most powerful of the evil Seven was slain, upon the very altar that he had hoped to dedicate to the Lord of Gifts. His brethren fled.

Another century passed and the village was deserted. Then one day, some Dunnish tribesmen came to bury their dead atop the Blue Butte and worship the Old Man of the Mountains (as they now called the god Gobha). There upon his altar was a shadowy figure. They thought it was Gobha himself and so they fell upon their face and worshipped him.

Actually, the Old Man was the Ghost of the slain evil Priest. He was disoriented and at first he could not stay visible very long, but he sensed some of his past and recognized the Dunlendings' pleas for protection. The fervor of the worshippers (and the small amounts of energy he was draining from them) helped him to coalesce his Undead spirit. Eventually, the Ghost-priest also believed that he was indeed their god, the Old Man of the Mountain.

Soon, however, the Ghost-priest was in a quandry. He realized that he was weakening his people by being near them; yet he needed their energy. Seeking other sources of strength, he resolved a new course. Mesmerizing his followers into blind obedience, the Old Man



THE DOORS TO HOGO TAROSVAN

sent the villagers hunting for human sacrifices. The Ghost-priest received his nourishment and, in time, believed that this was the way that he had always been worshipped.

The Dunlendings came to call the Old Man by the name *Shoglic*, as was Gobha's alter ego. Demanding yet beneficent, their god could heal the sick and injured, and protect them from the ravages of intruders. Like many powerful Undead, Shoglic retained most of his living powers. Still, the Ghost-priest had to prevent his people from having much contact with other tribes and villages, for he somehow feared the unintelligible truth.

Hogo Tarosvan's remote location made it relatively easy to maintain this isolation, but it led to other problems. After 200 years or so, Shoglic feared that his people were becoming too inbred. Thus developed the custom of "searching for new initiates." Where before the victims were quickly drained of energy until they died, they were now led before the Ghost-priest for "testing." Shoglic would attempt to mesmerize them and, if he was successful, they were inducted into the tribe. If they proved unworthy they perished, robbed of their life's spirit.

Shoglic has been Lord of Hogo Tarosvan for as long the Bardic Tales can remember. Every year he claims four or five victims, but only one in fifteen is "accepted." The others are drained, and their bodies carried off into the wilds for the beasts to eat. Any of their possessions that might be of use to the tribe are kept.

The surrounding lands are now full of the bones of Men (particularly the heights where the burial grounds lay). With each passing day it becomes harder to find prey, so the tribesmen of the Phantom Doors must search farther abroad.

5.2 THE NPCs

The residents of Hogo Tarosvan are tough Dunlending people, with brown hair, ruddy skin, and medium to stocky frames. Fine mountaineers and boisterous story-tellers, they are oriented toward a physical life. With the exception of the Priest Orvig, none read.

5.2.1 SHOGLIC

Shoglic is a Ghost, an (8th lvl; **RM** Class V) Undead Animist. Centuries of worship and living sacrifices have made Shoglic a God in all but fact.

The Ghost-priests specific powers are legion. Capable of moving anywhere within his cavern in 2 rounds, the Ghost-priest can use any of his clerical spells as if he were 14th level (although, since he has learned no spells since his death, Shoglic knows no spells higher than 10th level). Since he is a spirit and without physical substance, he can become visible and invisible at will (with 1 rd's concentration); yet he can pick up objects (via telekinesis) as heavy as 50 lbs weight.



the throne of shoglic

The Lord of Hogo Tarosvan is a formidable presence. While he is visible, all those within ten feet must make a RR or fall into an incapacitating trance (for 1-100 rds). Then Shoglic can drain up to five of the victim's Constitution points each round. By staring (and concentrating) into the eyes of a foe, the Ghost-priest can control (01-100 RR failure) or even fell (101 + RR failure) his victim.

Shoglic can also alter his size (between 5 and 9 feet in height). He usually manifests as a seven foot tall Daen Coentis of noble features, dressed in a blue robe which mimics the color of the butte in which he resides. A crown of glasmain adorns his head, a naked skull. When aroused, he grows to a height of nine feet and his magic crown becomes a fiery helm. He ignores stunning or bleeding damage, regardless of his disposition.

Shoglic bears a flaming (+15) axe and a glowing (+15) shield of glasmain. These he wields with the fluid grace befitting a powerful Ghost. He also carries a dagger and mace (both of which slay Elves and Ores). Even when isolated from these weapons (up to fifteen miles), he can summon the magical essence and strike with these properties as if holding the items themselves (e.g., although the physical weapon is elsewhere and he cannot strike with the blade, he can use the axe's enchanted fire).

Despite his great power, Shoglic has absolutely no idea of his origins. His memories are forever lost in the shadowy mists of the past. He remains, in his own mind, a God and master of the folk behind the Phantom Doors.

5.22 ORVIG THE HIGH PRIEST

Orvig can see his God anytime he wants to. What more could a Priest ask? A (6th lvl) Animist, Orvig and his second, Scoel, are so inspired by the presence of their God that they will ignore pain (stun results) if fighting within sight of Shoglic.

Orvig is one of the oldest of Hogo Tarosvan's inhabitants and serves as High Priest of the Cult of Shoglic. He wears clothes suited to his station: long, dark blue wool robes trimmed with grey leather, a black and blue plaid cloak, and fine calfskin shoes. His fully tattooed skin shows hues of blues and green, colors which darken in the folds and wrinkles of his weathered face. Like his ancestors, he bleaches his hair with a lye mix, making it stand on end. This gives him the illusion of greater height (6'2" although he really stands 5'9").

Orvig carries a bone-handled (+10) war hammer and a matching (+10) dagger, both of which he throws well. On the hunt he bears a (+5) longbow, the finest bow weapon in use among the villagers. He is getting old, however, and prefers to stay within the reaches of the Blue Butte except during seasonal ceremonies.

Orvig married in his youth but his wife died in childbirth. Her legacy was three daughters and the magic ring *Claenadh*. The ring has but two powers, but they are truly awesome. A wearer can be invisible seven times a day (for up to seven total minutes). Three times a day (for up to three rounds and never less than one round a use), the wearer can become as a Ghost, without substance or fear from harm by solid objects. Both these powers work instantly upon command, and Orvig has used them to great effect.

5.23 SCOEL

Scoel is a one-armed Dunman of exceptional size (5'11") and strength. A (4th lvl) Warrior, he is the overseer of arms and lieutenant to Orvig. Ruthless, he angers easily and toys with the sick, infirm, or incapacitated. Scoel believes others should overcome their problems as he has done, and suffers no pangs of concern.

Scoel's handicap never bothers him. He wields a spear without problem and even possesses a modified shortbow, which he works with his arm, arm-stump, and teeth. His ability to throw weapons is uncanny and, even in water or broken terrain, he is a dangerous foe. Scoel always wears black.

5.24 THEBO THE CHIEFTAIN

Thebo is Scoel's flamboyant adversary and Chief of the Dunmen of Hogo Tarosvan. Given to wearing bright green plaid leggings and an orange hair shirt, he is unmistakable. One of the few of this little backwoods tribe who is any sort of a Warrior, Thebo is filled with the pride of any mortal man who knows that all his actions are personally sanctioned by his God. Experienced (4th lvl) in the ways of warcraft, he leads sorties out into the nearby countryside.

These chores satisfy his bloodlust, but Thebo aspires to a higher position. The Warrior has no doubt that he is the best available Man to lead the villagers and desires to be both Chieftain and High Priest. He believes Scoel to be too old and crippled to properly serve Shoglic and, as for Orvig, Thebo has little use for Priestly antics when his God is present. For the last year he has quietly plotted the downfall of his rivals and he will use any pretext, any upheaval, as a means to cover his plot.

5.25 DERVORIN

This (2nd lvl) Ranger is a new resident of Hogo Tarosvan. He is a 6'2" Dunadan who was overwhelmed (it took four captors) and brought in four months ago. His wife, father, and son were killed in the fray that ensued, angering Shoglic (who demands live prisoners). Dervorin never realized the fate of his family and was taken, unconscious, before the Old Man of the Butte. He passed the test and already Dervorin looks a little haggard and his eyes shine with the religious fervor of the folk of Shoglic.

Dervorin's mother Tarien escaped capture, along with her infant grandson. She seeks word of her son.

5.26 CELEBRIEL

This young (1st lvl) Dunadan Healer (Animist) was taken while gathering herbs near the burial fields atop the Blue Butte, just above the seven mouths of Hogo Tarosvan. Inquisitive and rebellious, she ignored the warnings of her aunt and brother, slipping into the cool night mists. She will be "tested" in a week or so.

Celebriel has tawny brown hair, grey eyes and a star-shaped scar on her left cheek. Her lace-trimmed skirt, golden cloak, and lyrical speech bespeak a special sense of impracticality. Not particularly reliable, she is unique and curiously endearing.

5.27 SUBUDWOED COELMUN CAERE'S SON

Coelmun is a (1st lvl) Scout currently entrusted to guard prisoners. He is rather bright, but stutters and has a pronounced twitch. His short stature (54") and odd dress make him the subject of considerable mockery. Scoel frequently abuses him.

Coelmun wears yellow pants and a purple shirt, both decorated with brown leather spirals. With a bright red leather shield (shaped like a coiled snake) slung over his back, he creates quite a sight.

Coelmun has become enamored of Celebriel, although the feelings are apparently not reciprocal.



THE VALE ABOVE HOGO TAROSVAN

5.3 THE LAYOUT OF HOGO TAROSVAN

1. Cavern. This empty cavern is constantly refurbished by the tribe to make it look as if someone lives here. New tracks are made, new scraps of food are brought in, the bedding in the drier branch is shaken out and replaced as needed. Their ruse is very hard (-20) to uncover. A small rivulet issues from a spring in the cavern's northwest corner and falls over the cliff at the entry.

2. Cave. The opening to this cave is only 4' in height and, on the west side, partially filled with a T deep stream. Inside the ceiling rises to 15'. The cave is home to a flock of 20 hunting bats, who hang between the stalactites in the ceiling during the day — looking like bundles of dead leaves and hard (-10) to distinguish. At dusk, the bats fly out looking for a dinner of insects.

3. Crevice. This narrow crevice is empty. Unsteady soil and a 30° slope make it a natural trap. Should someone disturb the walls or floor, there is a 25% chance a rock slide will be set in motion, carrying the unfortunate victims out the cave and over a sixty foot drop (a +60 Fall/Crush attack). (It is a very hard maneuver to avoid the slide, should an adventurer be in the cave at the time.)

4. Fox den. A low (2') opening, it is partially filled with a tangle of bushes. A family of foxes used to live here, and the remains of their bedding is still in the hole.

5. Cavelet. This fairly extensive cavelet has been "sweetened" with tantalizing clues. A few human bones lies near the outer entrance. A fire has been lit periodically inside, near the point where the cavern splits in two.

Chamber #5a opens from the left (northwest); a few glittering objects litter the floor near the back wall. The adventurer who picks them up may have just enough time to examine the items — two red-glass studded brass bangles and a polished copper pot (2 quart capacity) — before the dirt-covered, thin wood floor collapses beneath him.

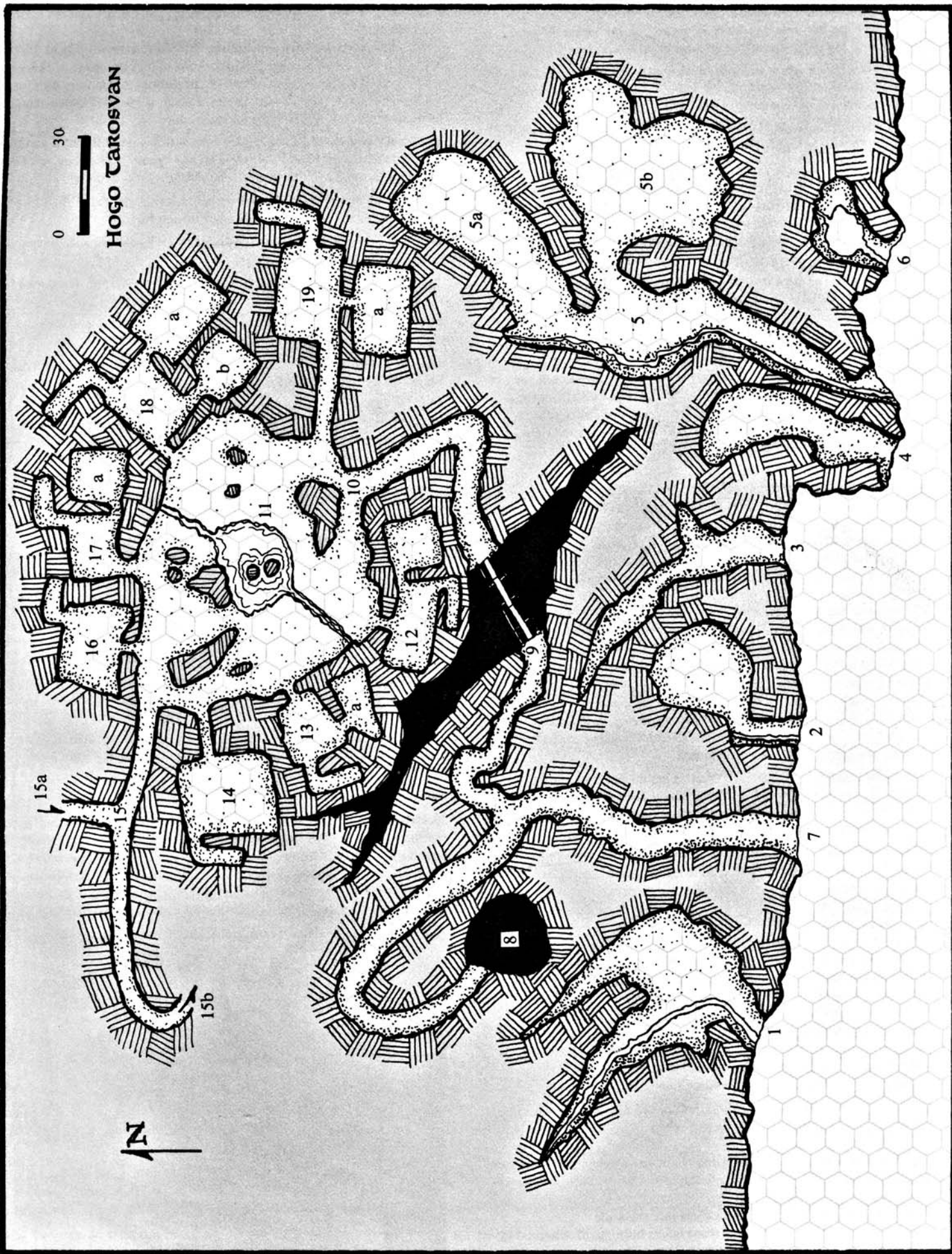
— *Trap #7.* This floor trap is hard (-10) to discover and, once over the floor, extremely hard to avoid. The fall sends the victim plunging into a vicious nest of highly irate cliff hornets (who enter and leave through a tiny hole farther down the cliff). The fall is only 20' (Fall/Crush +20), but the cliff hornets are invariably impatient with uninvited guests. The hornets deliver 2-20 (Medium Horn/ Stinger attacks) to each victim.

Chamber #5b is noted for some intriguing Daen Coentis symbols, which mark the walls and date from the days when pilgrims to Aule's altar would fast and pray here before going on to the holy place. These have been left as they are. If someone in the party can read the inscription (which is in Daenael or Old Dunael), they will be found to say:

STATS FOR NPCs AT HOGO TAROSVAN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	Mov M	Notes
Shoglic	8	81	No/1	60	Y40	N	70ha	-	40	Undead Animist/Evil Cleric
Dunlending, +15 axe, +15 shield, Crown 30% negates head crit., 24 PP										
Thebo	4	72	CH/14	30	Y30	N	90wh	79wh(t)	20	Warrior/Fighter
Dunlending, +10 wh, +5 shield										
Orvig	6	32	RL/9	10	N	N	34wh	46lb	5	Animist/Cleric
Dunlending, +10 wh, +5 lb, +2 adder, 6 PP										
Scoel	4	78	CH/13	10	N	N	81sp	69sb	5	Warrior/Fighter
Dervorin	2	40	No/1	10	N	N	47bs	-	5	Ranger
Celebriel	1	29	No/1	5	N	N	20ss	-	10	Animist/Healer
Lesser Dunadan, prisoner, no items, 1 PP										
Coelmun	1	30	SL/6	30	N	N	47bs	10sb	15	Scout/Thief
Adult Villager	1	20	No/1	20	N	N	20cl	15rock	10	Warrior/Fighter
Young Villager	1	15	No/1	15	N	N	15cl	15rock	15	Warrior/Fighter
Old Villager	½	10	No/1	10	N	N	10cl	-	5	Warrior/Fighter
Child Villager	½	10	No/1	15	N	N	10cl	10rock	20	Warrior/Fighter

For key abbreviations, see Sec. 2.0, PC Stats.



"Oh, Lord of the Treasures of the Earth, accept this, my plea. Do not lead me not into the ways of greed for the riches of your kingdom, but only toward the worship of your wonders."

"Here is the place where you wait for the call of the Lord of the Dark Places. Cleanse your heart, purify your soul, and open your mind, and then you may be worthy to heed his voice."

6. Water basin. A tiny waterfall spills out of the spring into a 4' deep natural basin here. The water is pure and fresh.

7. Great entry. This is the actual entrance to the Caverns of Hogo Tarosvan. The main passage bends to the left (toward #8) at the point where the Village Door joins the entryway to the tunnel (#9) to the right. The tunnel is the real access way to the main caverns, but is very hard (-20) to find. This opening is obscured, for not only is it hidden in a double hairpin bend, but its floor is 3 feet off the ground, making it seem like a mere hole.

8. Branched cave. The more inviting left-hand branch drops off sharply after doubling back to the left. There slime covers the floor and moisture from tiny cracks in the walls and ceiling flows along the corridor. A pit lies at the end of the cave.

- *Trap #2.* Once on the slime, it is a very hard maneuver to avoid slipping, and any fall invariably results in a slide. If this occurs, the victim is carried into the 40' deep pit. The pit is filled with three feet of caustic water, so the victim merely receives a -t- 25 Fall/Crush attack. The water, however, yields a +0 Fireball attack each round (maximum crit severity is "B").

9. Entry tunnel. This narrow, elevated tunnel with its double hairpin twists is tough to negotiate for large or encumbered folk. Those who stand 6' or weigh more than 180 lbs must make an easy moving maneuver or become stuck. Those 6'2" or weighing 200-220 lbs must make a light maneuver, while those 6'4" or weighing 221-250 lbs must make a medium maneuver. Heavier or taller folk must make a hard maneuver. Chain armor or a backpack makes the maneuver one category harder (cumulative); plate increases the difficulty by two categories.

Shortly after the bend, the corridor widens in all directions to a more reasonable size (8' x 7'). Then it opens onto a swaying footbridge of rough planks and rope over an extremely deep (about 150' deep) crevasse (a fall yields a +150 Fall/Crush attack).

The bridge has rope railings and is sturdier than it looks, but to those unaccustomed to such surfaces, it is still a medium maneuver just to cross it at a walking pace. A trot would raise it to a hard maneuver, and a run to a very hard maneuver. Once over the bridge, the corridor begins again. Here it is fairly wide and routine or easy to negotiate.

10. Inner gate to the cave village. This opening has no real door. Those entering, however, have their view obscured by a huge rock pillar directly facing the gate. A guard is always posted in the niche on the opposite side of the pillar (facing the common, room #11, and away from the gate).

11. Village common. This area is pretty, in an eerie sort of way. The room's colors are those of the semi-precious stone agate: cream, russet, gold, and warm brown. Torches burn near the doors of the "houses." A stream trickles in from the south (to the left), forms a pool in the middle, and drains away on the north side.

Pillars of rock are scattered throughout the area and a pair of islands peek from the pool. The prisoner Celebriel is chained to one of the pool stones. Her shackles are hard (-10) to unlock and she is guarded most of the day. (Coelmun guards her for twelve hours, while others split the chores of watching her at other times.)

Sometimes children frolic in the common, or adults talk or play knuckle bones. Usually, though it gets too cold and damp, or too full of smoke from the adjoining rooms, so most folk socialize in their cozy cave homes. (Visibility in the common is -35 at mealtime.)

12-14, 16-19. Individual Houses. These homes are all basically the same, although they differ in size and number of rooms. The doorways are hung with skin curtains.

The outer chamber serves as the living room and kitchen (and in a few cases, also the bedroom). It contains a fireplace and privy. There is always a set of shelves or a sort of cabinet ingeniously constructed of slabs of rock. Other storage places consist of niches carved into the walls.

Lighting is provided by torches and stone lamps burning oil or animal fat

(depending on how the raiding **has been lately**) **that has been picked up** from roadside altars.

The back rooms are used as bedrooms in multi-roomed residences. If there are beds, they consist of rough boards or slabs of rock propped up to keep out drafts, forming a sort of low box, with the floor as the bottom. This box is filled with dry leaves and/or grass, animal skins, and stolen clothing (especially cloaks). Blankets are spread on top.

12. ScooPs household. Scoel resides here with his wife Brunwen and their 7-year-old daughter Haega. Dervorin is their "guest" at this time, until he is safe enough to marry off to one of the village's young women.

13. Goewin's household. Goewin lives here with his wife Brem, their 16-year-old daughter Hescen, and their 11-year-old son Pwedh.

14. Leu's household. Leu, his wife Hwen, their 9-year-old son Braega, and 6-year-old daughter Cigfa.

15. Passageway. It leads to stairs up (#15a) and down (#15b). The doorway is covered with a curtain, just like the entries to the "houses".

16. Teycor household. Teycor the Priest, his wife Wydan, and their 4-year-old twin sons (Orden and Gwawl).

17. Miren's household. Miren resides here. She is a widowed woman who has her eye on Dervorin. Miren's elderly father Caradog and mother Geymun live with her.

18. Sisia the Priestess' household. Sisia the Priestess, her husband Shauc, and their 12-year-old daughter Gwydeth make this three chamber cave their home. Sisia and Shauc sleep in #18a, while Gwydeth makes #18b her room. Sisia intends that Gwydeth marry the captured Dervorin (see room #12).

19. Is Coed's household. Is Coed, his wife Briannon, and their 14-year-old daughter Emaka live here.

Upper Level

20. Upper courtyard. The sloping passage (#15a) from the main level enters through the west wall. A small natural spring in the northwest corner sits over a basin; it forms a pool before draining away into the floor. A secret door (#20a) beside the basin leads to an escape route (#20b) which exits the butte through a ceremonial mound (#23) located on the summit. It lies behind a rotating slab of rock which is very hard (-20) to find.

21. Orvig's household. Orvig the Priest lives here with his wife Dian, his 18-year-old daughter Usha (the Priestess), his 16-year-old son Kollan, and the wife's old father Baen Naeld.

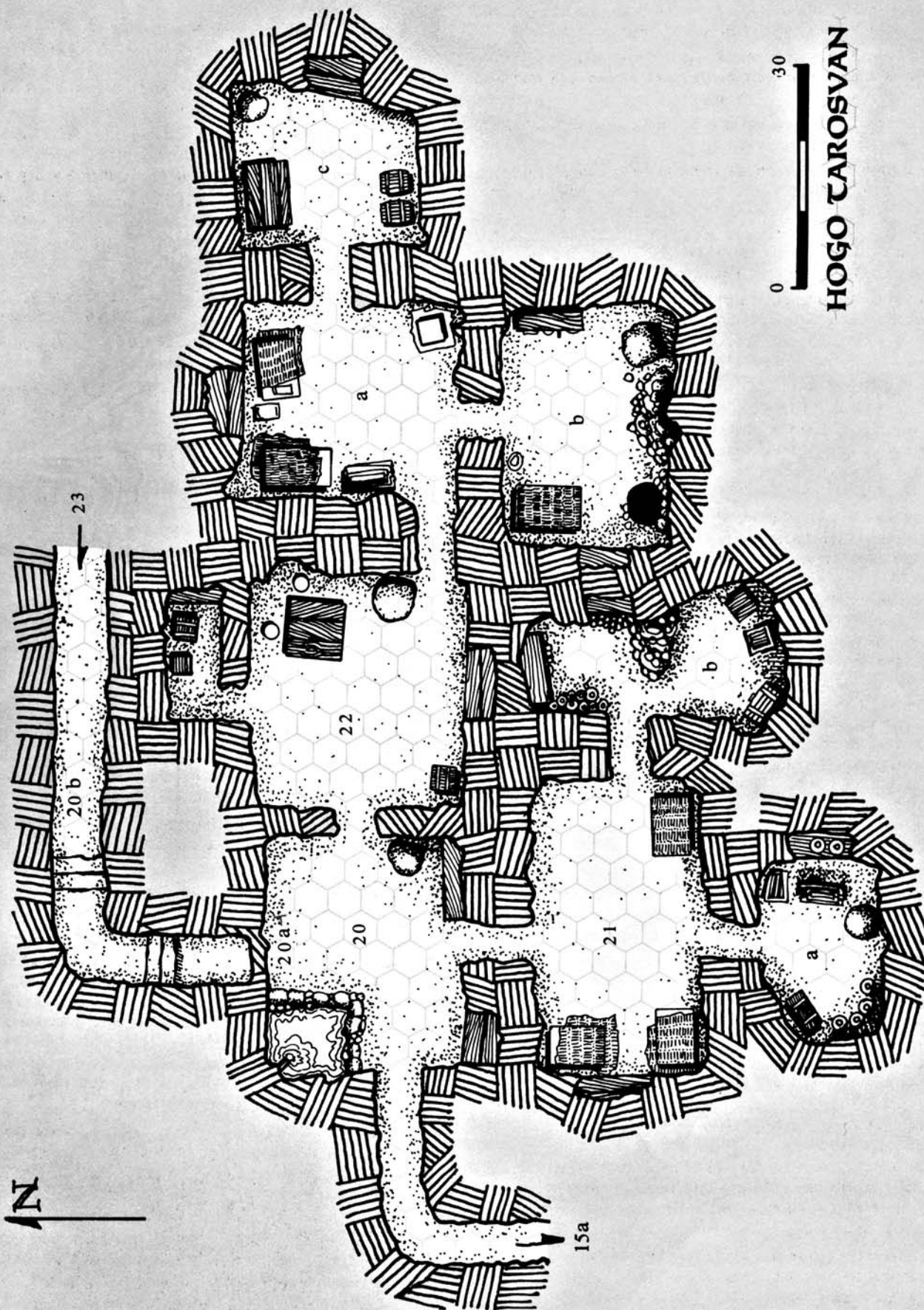
22. Thebo's household. Thebo resides here with his wife, their 17-year-old son Pesc, their 12-year-old daughter Mey, their 9-year-old son Chaen, and Thebo's old mother Gwun.

Surface

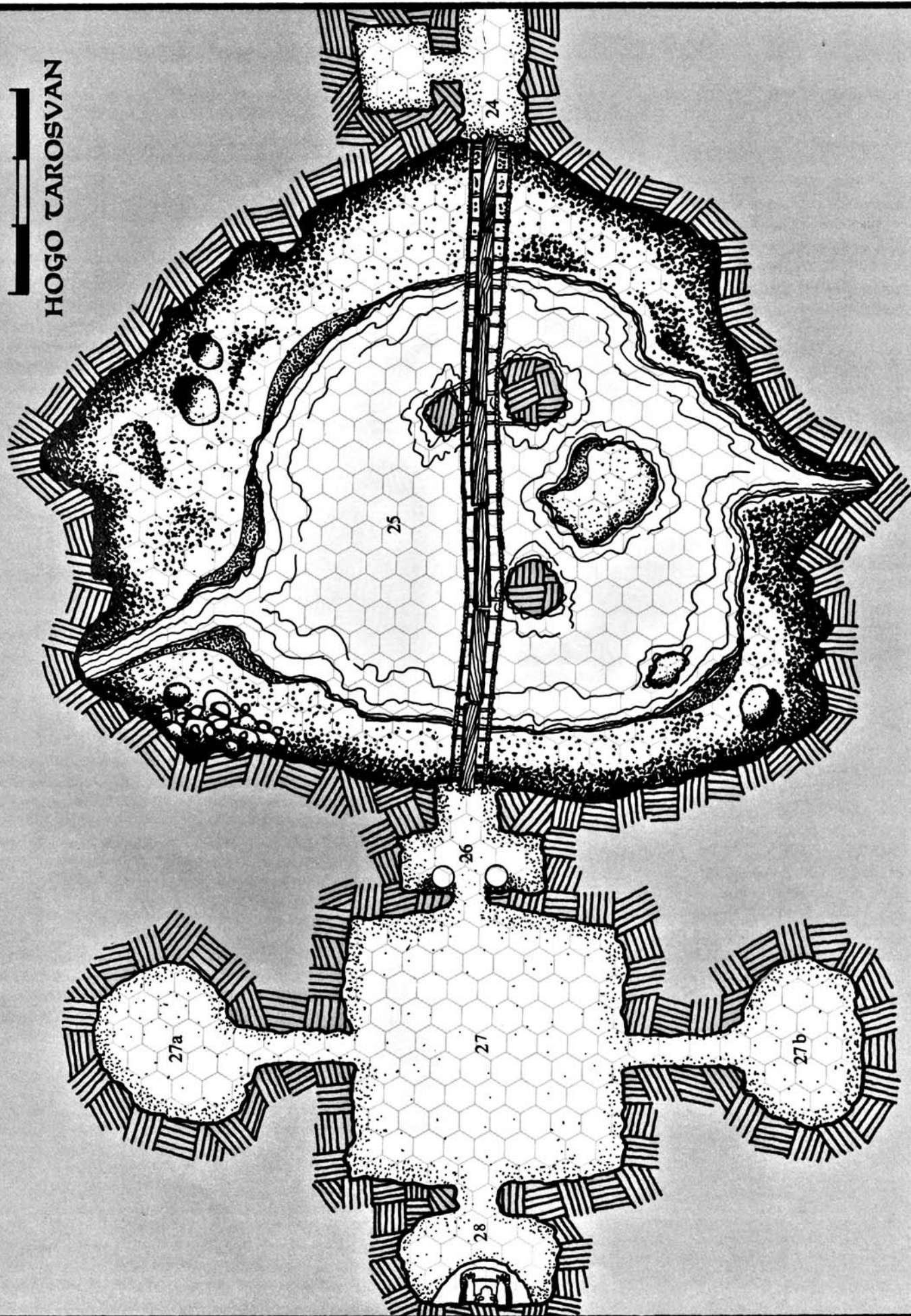
23. Ceremonial mound. This structure (see accompanying illustration) lies on the summit of the Blue Butte, at the center of the burial field. It masks the opening of the tribe's secret escape route (#20b), which they have only had to use once. In each case, the God eventually did away with the fierce intruders. The mound is a one-chamber affair, covered with a facing of grey granite. An old Daen Coentis shrine, it was used to make seasonal offerings to the



HOGO TAROSVAN CEREMONIAL MOUND (SEE #23/)



0 30
HOGO TAROSVAN



Gods *Gaoth* (the Vala Manwe), Lord of the Air, and *Mairb* (the Vala Namo), the Master of the Dead.

The mound is a 250' climb up rough stone stairs from the cave village. On the dawn of the winter solstice, a beam of light will illuminate a specific spot on the back wall magically causing an inset jewel to glow, illuminating the two Standing Stones that jut from the top of the structure.

Lower Level.

24. Lower entry. A hallway and stairs (# 15b) to the upper level enters from the east. The guard post lies to right (north) as one enters the lower level.

25. Holy cavern. This massive and beautiful natural cathedral structure gave birth to Hogo Tarosvan. It serves as the exalted focus of the site and was the reason that the Blue Butte was chosen as a holy place.

The cavern is 120' in height from the floor above the pool to the carved roof. The passageway enters 60' above the floor and crosses on a rope bridge like #9 upstairs, except that this one is built in sections and anchored at several points. Natural stone columns and pillars support the bridge.

The pool under the bridge is 57' below, a scant 3' down from the rocky cavern floor. It is fed and drained near the bottom by natural waterways (including seven small springs), so the water is constantly renewed. At the middle it is 15' deep.

Worshippers throw lesser items of nonperishable booty from their captives and failed initiates into this pool. A powerful, penetrating light will reveal a shine on the pool's bed akin to the glitter of a dragon's hoard. This shiny debris consists of literally tons of glass beads, colored stones (most valueless but pretty), cheap brass, bronze, and copper jewelry such as bangles and clasps, coins of those metals, and a very few gold and silver coins and items (about 10 gp worth of coins in the 14,000 + items littering the bottom).

26. Antechamber to the Holy Place. This is part of the original structure. Two flawless pillars of grey marble veined with red flank the doors of carved grey stone. The doors sit on massive hidden hinges of magically-enhanced stone and are extremely hard (-30) to unlock. Once unlocked, they swing open (outward) with a light pull. Shoglic can just waft through them, of course, should he so desire. A pair of guards are usually stationed in this chamber.

27. Outer Sanctum. This roughly square meeting hall once served as a gathering place for those who wished to hear Gobha's Priestesses. Now it serves as the repository for Shoglic's Treasure. Its blue walls are engraved with thousands of spiral patterns.

—Shoglic's Treasure:

- *Weapons*, two + 5 daggers; a +10 warhammer; four +10 short swords; seven +5 slings; a +15 dagger; two +5 falchions; three +10 maces; a +5 longsword; three +10 broadswords; one +10 two-hand sword; seven +10 shortbows; three +10 long bows; and a +5 composite bow.

- *Armor*, a set of + 5 plate (AT 19) ideal for a slim dwarf, tall hob-bit, or small woman; a +10 target shield; two sets of +5 leather coats ideal for a small man or medium-sized woman; + 5 plate helm fitted for a large man or very large woman; a blue- grey steel helm which gives a + 15 RR bonus vs Essence spells; a mithril chain shirt (+ 20; AT 17); and a 3rd lvl Shield of Reflections which reflects the effects of directed spells (if the spell fails a RR).

- *Jewels*, ten arabesques, each worth 5 gp; thirty sapphires, each worth 15 gp; an emerald (raw worth 50 gp) that adds +10 to Mage/alchemical spells of non-directed nature; an amulet of white jade carved as a crescent moon which serves as a + 3 Animist/cleric spell adder; and an opal and silver necklace that provides a +15 RR bonus vs. Channeling spells.

- *Pony statuette*. Carved in ivory, it becomes a real pony with strength of medium horse when tapped on ground three times (it reverts to statue state upon command or after 3 hours; works 2x/day).

- *Elect rum necklace*. Inlaid with small diamonds, rubies, and a large star sapphire, it is worth 650 gp. It enables the wearer to "Long Door" once a day (see Mage list *Lofty Bridge*).

- *Mithril brooch*. This fine craftwork is inset with black pearls and looks like bird's nest with six eggs and is worth 250 gp. Each egg can

"capture" a spell cast against its wearer (attacking spell must make a RR vs 4th lvl brooch).

—*Lockpick kit*. +15 to picking locks, including eyepiece that adds +15 to detection and removal of traps.

—*Circlet of silver moonstones*. The moonstones yield a blue-white iridescence. On a roll of 01-25 wearer ignores a given head crit. Provides wearer with 2x normal PP (Channeling).

—*Brooch of gold and green garnets*. Allows "Blur" upon command (10 rds; 1x/day).

—*Pole*: Made of strange reddish wood, it is 4' long. It expands to two other lengths upon command: at 6' long it acts as a +10 quarterstaff. At 20' it can support 300 lbs dead weight hung from center (or 200 lbs moving across it).

When all this stuff is removed, the original floor carvings of miners, worshippers, and craftsmen are visible. Furs, some rotting with age, cover the remainder of the floor (about 12 recoverable pelts worth about 5 gp each.).

27a. Ceremonial robing room. This chamber was used for Gobha's Priestesses. The robes have long since rotted away, and the small stones and metallic wire with which they were embroidered have long since joined the gaudy rubbish in the pool.

27b. Worshippers' robing room. It is now empty, devoid of its once fine wooden furniture.

28. Shoglic's throne room. This chamber lies behind a white fur curtain. When drawn back, it reveals a huge dog-shaped throne carved from single huge chunk of glasmain (see illustration). The throne is still attached to the wall from which it was carved. The stone behind the throne is beautifully worked and resembles swaths of suspended cloth, ropes, and chains (each link separate and actually linked to the next). The throne is of greater-than-human proportions, just right for Shoglic (in his 7' incarnation).

5.4 THE TASK

Adventures into Hogo Tarosvan are typically missions of (1) rescue; (2) looting; or (3) slaughter. Those related to the kidnapped prey of Shoglic's followers often seek the return of their loved ones and undoubtedly want revenge. Many, particularly the local authorities, wish to put an end to the bizarre disappearances that have occurred near the Phantom Doors. The rewards for such a venture are great, but so are the dangers.

5.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

Hogo Tarosvan is five miles north of Greenwater Pass (*S. "Cirth Calenen"*). There, the stream formed from the cave village's waterfalls crosses a mountain ridge by way of an underground tunnel. Some say the tunnel was built as an aqueduct by the Daen Coentis, but there are no records of such a feat. Whatever its origins, however, it provides a sheltered route through the otherwise rugged pass.

A hunting lodge lies two miles beyond the pass. This stately stone structure is owned by a wealthy Diinadan family (the Rocu), one remotely related to the captured Dervorin. Called Bar Rocu, it is the nearest settlement to Hogo Tarosvan.

Tarien's Plan

Adventurers could, of course, be attracted to the area by rumors, searching for the ancient hoard of the Old Man of the Butte. Dunnish tales tell much of the ceremonial centers of the region, particularly the burial fields atop the Blue Butte. One of these legends speaks of the Gobha's Treasure, although no mention is made of the Phantom Doors. Locals, however, frequently remark about the strange lights peeking from the side of the bluish cliffs, and many wonder about the eerie mount.

Tarien, mother of the captured Dervorin (see 5.25), has no doubt about the butte. She is firmly convinced that her son lies in its bowels. Bent on recovering Dervorin and avenging the death of her husband, grandson, and daughter-in-law, she has taken refuge with her uncle Lomros, in the lodge.

Through Lomros' friends, Tarien has put out a quiet word for adventurers who might save her son, or at least exact revenge. She of-

fers any group 5 gp to come to Bar Rocii and listen to her plan. Those who undertake the mission can expect twice that amount before setting out, and an additional 20 gp upon their return. Better yet, Tarien promises them all of the loot they can recover.

5.42 AIDS

The Rocu are a powerful family and adventurers seeking to cross Tarien should beware. She has many friends. Unfortunately, the family is widespread and believes Tarien to be mistaken about her son's location. The Rocu will only provide passive help. Lomros possesses a rough map of the region, one free to adventurers, and he has six horses for the journey. The mounts, together with the map and one week's rations, are all the old hunter can give.

Tarien, however, can provide another aid. This is a pair of snippets from an old Dunlending yarn. One consists of three lines regarding a Ghost-lord said to haunt the blue butte (see 5.1 above). The other tells of a reputed way to the treasure:

"Seven ghostly doors, but only two ways in. One low one high, one through one down. Look to the second and follow the favored hand, Or take the stair beneath the stone ears."

5.43 OBSTACLES

Terrain, the villagers, and Shoglic are the three greatest dangers around Hogo Tarosvan. Aside from six false doors, there are but two traps. The ascent up the butte and the route past the narrow entries are far greater obstacles.

The Terrain

Climbing around Hogo Tarosvan is difficult. The south side of the Blue Butte is the gentlest grade, yet it only affords hard maneuvering. Scaling the northern cliffs is extremely hard, while the east and west faces are very hard climbs. Once atop the butte, however, the grass-and heather-covered summit field is flat or rolling and quite safe.

The Villagers

Hogo Tarosvan's field expeditions now range as far as ten miles. If some adventurer carelessly wanders off alone, he is in danger of being captured. Those who are waylaid, though, are probably safe from immediate harm, for Shoglic is in need of energy and his followers remember the anger the Ghost-priest exhibited when they carelessly killed Dervorin's companions.

The villagers will hold a captive for 1-10 days before he is "tested." Following this point, the prisoner is drained of his life's spirit or, if accepted, becomes a part of the cave community. Thus, an adventurer could be on the side of the defenders when his comrades come to rescue him!

Since the cave-folk have only been attacked in their home twice in the last fifteen or more centuries, they do not post sentries. Prime raiding and regular hunting times are dawn and sunset; at other times they will be sleeping, eating, loafing, or worshipping Shoglic. Major festivals are the full moons nearest the solstices and equinoxes, while minor festivals correspond with every full moon.

Shoglic

Shoglic is almost never alone: someone is always worshipping him. Every person in the tribe goes down to his chambers (^26- 28) at least once a day. Should an intruder enter this area, he is in imminent danger of discovery. Shoglic is perceptive (-/+ 100) and is usually instantly aware of any strangers or uninvited guests who pass through the doors into the holy antechamber (#26). Invisibility is of little help against the Ghost-priest, but flight may be. The foul God cannot leave the cavern and go upstairs because his very essence is tied to the halls of Hago Tarosvan's lower level.

5.44 REWARDS

The rewards for assailing Hogo Tarosvan are simple. Shoglic's Treasure (see 5.3, #27) is rich in jewels, weaponry, armor, and magic

devices. In addition, by uncovering the evil of the Phantom Doors, the adventurers will solve a long-standing mystery — one which has bothered the locals for centuries.

The slaying of Shoglic will free the Dunnish villagers, thus endearing the adventurers to the pitiful cave people and exacting revenge upon the Ghost-priest. Freed prisoners may bring further rewards (such as that offered by Tarien). In any case, the sojourn is worthwhile, assuming the party is willing to run the risks.

5.5 ENCOUNTERS AT HOGO TAROSVAN

A) VILLAGERS

The village folk of Hogo Tarosvan are constantly filled with fanatic fervor and love for their God. All but the smallest children and oldest adults will fight like maniacs to defend the holy place. This is primarily because of tradition, but it is also due to the mesmerizing power of Shoglic. Without this, they might realize that this way of life is not all that they thought it was (or then again, they might not: old ways die hard).

There are thirty-five villagers, of which twenty-one are able-bodied adults (aged 16-59). The fifteen (1st-2nd lvl) adult residents of the Main Level provide the bulk of the heavy chores and make up six of the seven members of any kidnapping sortie into the nearby countryside. Anyone captured on such a raid is taken immediately to the cave village and chained to one of the two rocks that jut from the pool in the village common (see 5.3, ^11). They remain there until tested by Shoglic. Prisoners who come under Shoglic's sway and join the village are assigned to a household that has space and need for an extra pair of hands.

While inside Hogo Tarosvan, the villagers defend themselves along with the other members of their household, be they common folk or high servants of Shoglic.

B) SHOGLIC

If threatened, Shoglic takes on a fierce visage and slays intruders. He mesmerizes and drains weaker opponents, and often commands a controlled foe to fight the foe's companions.

Shoglic tests prisoners by attempting to control them. Should the captive resist (succeed with a RR), he will drain them until they die.

C) ORVIG

Orvig likes to trick or stalk his foes, using his powerful ring to conceal his actions. He tolerates no intruders and will not negotiate, but he generally wields his weapon to stun or knock out assailants. The Priest only kills if there is no recourse, for Shoglic demands prisoners.

D) SCOEL

Scoel is an over-confident but dangerous psychopath. His thirst for death is well known and the villagers fear him. Never parrying and always on the attack, Scoel loves a good battle and has yet to lose one.

E) THEBO

Thebo is the arch-enemy of Scoel and Orvig, although the others do not realize his deep hatred. Given these feelings, he is prone to ignore their needs when he can escape notice. He might even kill one of his rivals in a fray against intruders, if he thinks the defense will still prevail. Thebo is known to talk to prisoners and might aid those who would help him, but he will invariably turn on a companion at first opportunity.

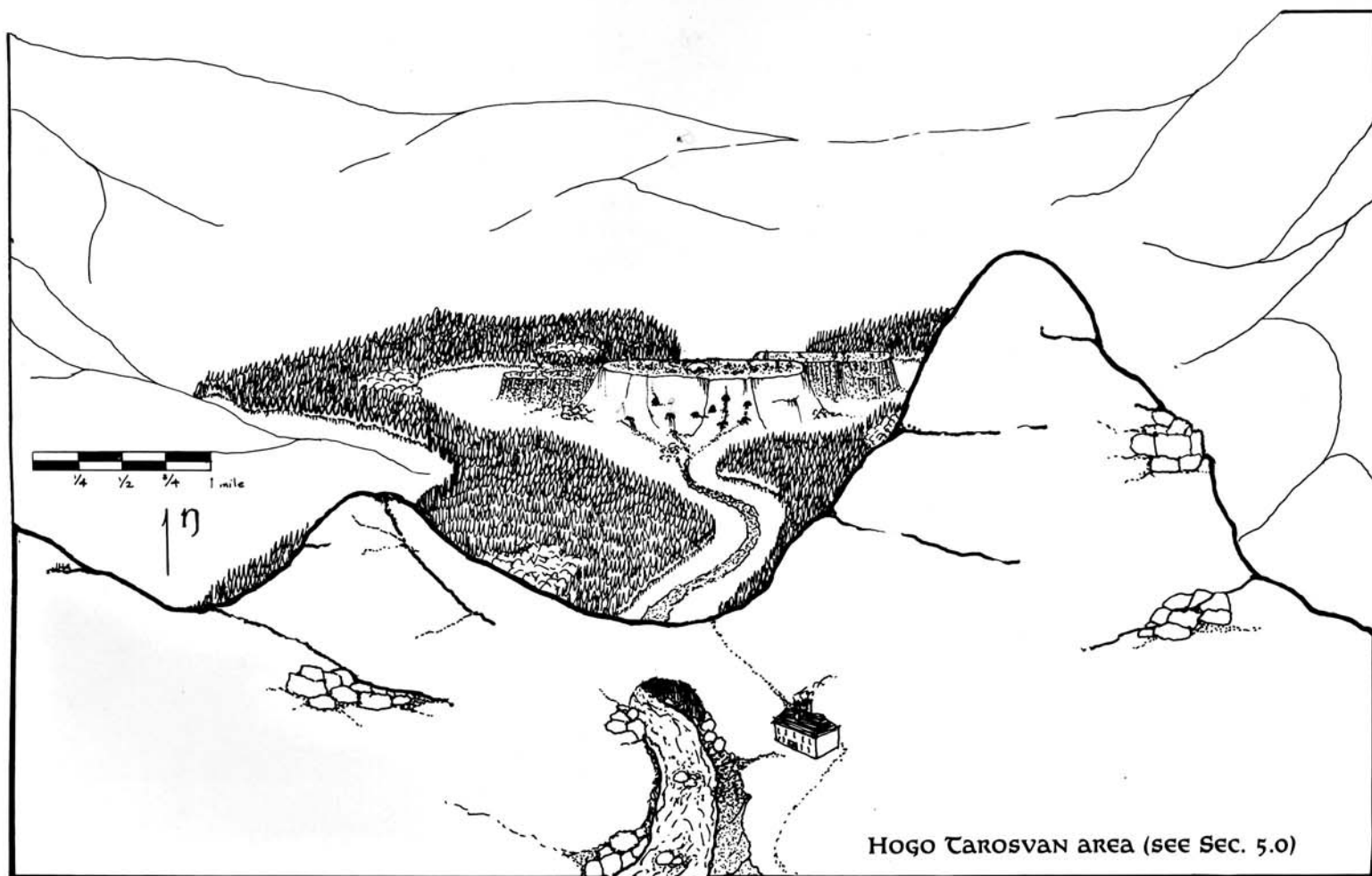
F) DERVORIN

Dervorin would undoubtedly revert to his old self within 48 hours or so if he was kept away from Shoglic's influence (say, 100 yards away). This is always true of new "initiates," so they spend most of their time near the Ghost-priest, guarding the holy place. Dervorin frequently serves this duty, which means walking the lower bridge

Coelmun guards Celebriel twelve hours a day and often watches her for four more. He is in love and often lectures her about the glories of Shoglic, hoping that she will join the village. Suspicious of those who approach Celebriel, Coelmun makes a fine keeper.

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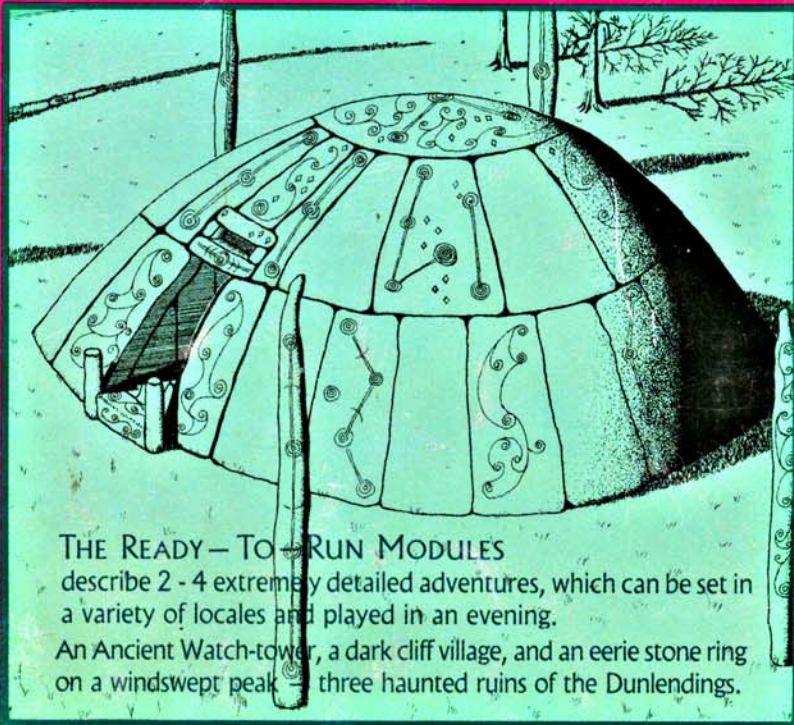
Setmaenen area (see Sec. 4.0)



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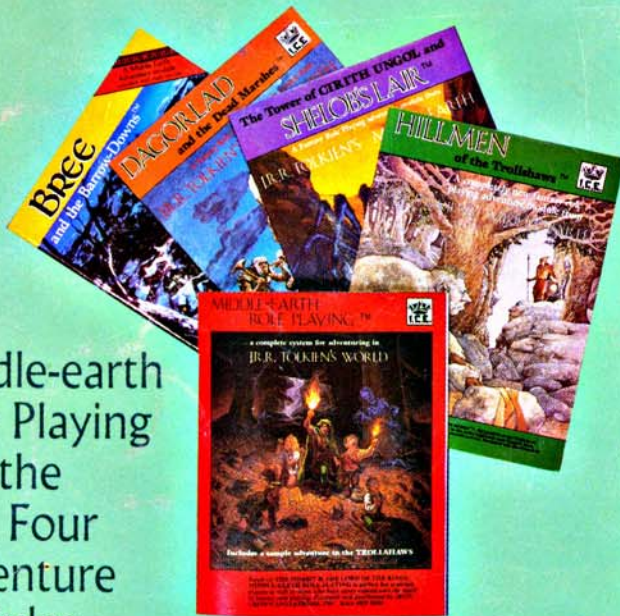
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