

TOLKIENMOOT XIV: DON'T BE HASTY!

(OR, THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING ENTWIVES AFTER 3000 YEARS ON
MIDDLE-EARTH MILK CARTONS)

AN ADVENTURE FOR TOLKIEN MOOT XIV 2018
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Introduction

The heroes are summoned to Bree by Merry & Pippin to try to find the Ent-wives. They will meet Treebeard, travel across Middle-earth from the Shire to Fangorn, to the distant East & South, and if all goes well, back, traversing much of Middle-earth in so doing.

This adventure covers many months of game time. It was originally written for a convention setting, so a lot of time compression takes place during travel. For those using this adventure for a regular campaign however, you are encouraged to take the time with the travel, and have the heroes deal with the various encounters, fatigue, supplies, and other issues associated with travel.

Summary

Session 1 Summary:

A. The party will be starting at Bree, and they are here because Merry and Pippin want to do their old friend Treebeard a favor. They are sending out a well-funded group of adventurers to find the Entwives, if possible. Merry and Pippin explain the quest to the fellowship and the facts known. They did send out a group last year to explore the lands on the northern edge of the Shire, where rumors said giant tree-men were seen. They returned last fall with no success. The first step will be to interview Treebeard at Orthanc, or Fangorn if he is absent. The Hobbit leaders give the heroes provisions to start with and horses, and a letter of introduction from the King.

B. The heroes set off on the best route to Isengard: the Old South Road. The fellowship passes over the River Greyflood and see that the ruined city of Tharbad is being rebuilt. After weeks of traveling, they arrive at Isengard and find the Old Ent in the Tree-garth near Orthanc. Treebeard is delighted in the quest, but doubtful. He gives ideas where they may be able to find more information: Rhosgobel, Minas Tirith, or the Brown Lands. The heroes debate the benefits of each direction they could go... and choose a course of action. They may go to all three, but their provisions will run out, and they will have to spend valuable time purchasing more food.

C. Time will be compressed traveling between Rhosgobel, the Brown Lands, or Minas Tirith's archives, because they will spend time at each place looking for clues. Whichever places they go, the first session ends with their discovery of all available clues that point toward looking east of the Brown Lands for the Ent-wives... but much is still shrouded in mystery.

Session 2 Summary:

A. The party will be starting at the edge of the Brown Lands, and they are here because they have reason to believe that the Entwives went east to the Celduin or Carnen river valleys, in the vicinity of Dorwinion. They travel through East Rhovanion, the wilds north of Mordor. The fellowship reaches the River Celduin (Running River).

B. Following the Celduin Valley, they enter a Dorwinrim village where a friendly innkeeper offers them wine. They are directed towards the abode of Katun the Seer, a Dorwinion woman whose has knowledge of local farming lore. They travel through the Land of Dorwinion and its fabled vineyards. They find the Seer's house. Katun tells them of a stream nearby with power of the Old Wives. The heroes follow the little river many miles to the south, until the walls of a ravine rise on both sides. They catch an orc-spy tracking them. More orcs are following them a mile downriver. They make it to a hidden valley in the hills... in the center of the little valley they see a structure of earth, stone, and wood in a figure-eight shape about thirty feet tall.

C. The adventurers follow the stream through an archway of two ancient willows. Inside they find an incredible garden of plants and orchard trees, but grown wild. PCs can explore the garden but do not see an Ent-wife. They find a solitary Ent-wife, Wineberry, who is very tree-ish; but she wakes up enough to speak in Westron. She says she is the last of her kind, and that she tends this place in honor of Yavanna. She welcomes them, and goes tree-ish again. The heroes need to choose where to sleep. If they sleep outside the garden, the orcs raid the garden that night. If they sleep inside the garden, the orcs will wait until the next day. They put oil on the Entwife and try to burn her. Players discover the plot. Battle with a dozen hunger-weakened orcs. After they defeat the orcs, Wineberry is distressed at the damage, and changes personality. She seems much clearer, and tells the rest of the truth: she is the last to stay, but the other Entwives went south hundreds of years ago. The heroes learn all they can, then leave for parts South.

Session 3 Summary:

A. The party will be starting at the edge of the Sea of Rhun, and they are here because they have learned that most of the Entwives went south from Dorwinion to be safe from the threat of war. Traveling south from the Sea of Rhun, they search for any clues. They start to notice occasionally that solitary ancient trees dot the landscape in a line going SE, and begin to follow this trail. They pass the land of Mordor on their west, now inhabited by the men of Nurn, former slaves who till the land for themselves now. They encounter a man of Nurn under one of the trees, asleep.

B. The path begins to be harder to follow, as fewer trees survived the years. The fellowship begins to trek through the desert of Khand... rocky arid land at first. The rocky land gives way to sandy dunes. Yet they still find stumps or the skeletons of the trees showing the way. Desert nomads in a caravan meet them and are friendly, pitching their tent and offering to share their food and water. They sneak back at night to steal their horses. The adventurers now find themselves in the middle of a sandy desert and have lost their sense of direction, as no more trees have been seen for two days. Water runs out. On the third day without water, the heroes are really suffering from thirst and heat exhaustion. The heroes find one last desert tree (alive). They sit under its branches for shade. They are delirious. They begin to dream. That night, they feel as if being lifted and floating over the desert floor (dream-like, unreal).

C. The heroes wake up when the next day's sun is setting. They are in a cave with water running out of the wall into a wide stone basin. All of the heroes are lying on Ent-size stone slabs. They walk up stairs and find they're in an oasis with olive trees surrounding a small lake. They find no one in sight... they heal by resting and drinking the water. The stars come out as dusk deepens. After a few days there recuperating, one of 3 things happens:

1) the adventurers dream different fragments of a dream which when compared, tells a message from the Ent-wives who seemingly rescued you (although you can't tell if it was real). The Ent-wives are not ready to be found. There is too much danger. They will have an Ent-moot, but the PCs have done all they can. This dream also hints that there is a road a week's journey to the south that can take them home. Or...

2) the adventurers all rest up, and after another 2 days, they hear the Ent-wives at night visiting the lake. The heroes see the Ent-wives dimly, and speak to them. Most of them turn away and walk to the NE. One stays. It is Fimbrethil. She speaks briefly to them. It is clear the Ent-wives carried them and helped the fellowship. The heroes cannot convince the Ent-wives to return North. She asks them to promise not to tell the secret of the oases to any but the Ents. She tells them that a week's journey to the S brings them to a road that leads west to Harad and Umbar, where they may find a ship to carry them home.

Conclusion: The PCs are able to find habitations and inns in Near Harad to help them on their way to the Great City of Umbar on the coast. They charter a corsair ship to the Grey Havens, Tharbad, or Minas Tirith... and debate how to present their findings. Persistent dreams visit the heroes while sailing (This is the opportunity for them to share with each other the poem lines they heard in their dream... see Sun/Earth/Water song). The Corsair captain is a jolly pirate. Nevertheless he tells them to take dreams seriously. The final dream warns them to tell no one where they are, unless a trusted friend, and of course any Ents may be told. They finally arrive in Bree, and meet the Thain and Master at the Prancing Pony. They tell their story privately to Merry and Pippin, leaving out the exact location of the oasis.

The Hobbits give them a choice for their reward: 1) Go spend time in Fangorn Forest with Treebeard as his guest; 2) the gift of a holding in the new city of Annuminas, with a higher standing among men, serving the King; or 3) joining a new band of warriors called the Troll-beaters, who ride up and down the Trollshaws and Ettenmoors to keep the trolls from growing too bold. Players make their choice, and any points are given by the GM to the players.

Preamble:

Read aloud to players:

It is now the Fourth Age 16. Aragorn rules over a Reunited Realm of Gondor and Arnor as King Elessar. It is almost twenty years since the War of the Ring, and the defeat of Sauron. Middle-Earth has experienced a prosperity and peace unequalled since the days of Elendil. While there are still pockets of darkness and evil, they are few and far between, and the Return of the King has sent orcs and others deep into hiding. One can travel safely on roads from the Grey Havens through Mirkwood to the Iron Hills.

It's no secret that the little people of the Shire played a major part in the end of the Third Age. It's well known that the Shire has fully recovered from the damage done by the wizard Saruman, and in Fourth Age 6 the King issues an edict that Men are not to enter the Drúadan Forest and the Shire, and he makes it a Free Land under the protection of the Northern Sceptre. In FA 11, the hobbit Meriadoc (Merry) becomes Master of Buckland and great gifts are sent to him by King Éomer of Rohan and Lady Éowyn of Ithilien. In FA 13, Peregrin Took (Pippin) becomes the Thain and King Elessar makes the Thain, the Master of Buckland and the Mayor of the Shire to be Counsellors of the North-kingdom. The popular Mayor is none other than Samwise Gamgee.

In FA 15, King Elessar rides north and dwells for a while in the restored northern capital Annúminas, by Lake Evendim. He comes to the Brandywine Bridge, and there spends time with his friends. Also in this year, the famous dwarf Glóin dies, one of the last dwarves from the Quest of Lonely Mountain. The current Dwarf-king Under the mountain is Thorin Stonehelm. Bard II is king over the lands of Dale. Mirkwood has been cleansed of evil, and is now called the Wood of Greenleaves; The elvenking Thranduil rules the northern portion. Galadriel's husband Celeborn rules the southern third of the wood as East Lorien. The wood-men and Beornings freely live along the Anduin Valley and in the Narrows of the Wood of Greenleaves. Every race of Free People has enjoyed peace since Elessar's reign began.

Part #1: Tying Up Loose Ents

(Bree to the Brown Lands)

NPC: MERRY

Race/Culture: Hobbit

Age: 57

Appearance: Head taller than other hobbits.

Demeanor: **Serious and quick-witted, friendly and reserved, lordly and, well... hobbit-like. Speaks thoughtfully and confidently**

Voice/accent:

Description:

Meriadoc Brandybuck is a Hobbit who has enjoyed great renown across Middle-Earth for being one of the Nine Walkers, the Fellowship of the Ring. Locally that was less important than his leadership in the Battle of Bywater against the ruffians who had put the Shire under their thumb. . After the death of his father, Merry became the Master of Buckland, an eastern province of Hobbits across the Shire from the Brandywine River. He has also been named one of the King's Counsellors of the North-Kingdom.

NPC: PIPPIN

Race/Culture: Hobbit

Age: 46

Appearance: A head taller than other hobbits.

Demeanor: Fun-loving personality

Voice/accent:

Description:

Peregrine Took is a Hobbit who has enjoyed great renown across Middle-Earth for being one of the Nine Walkers, the Fellowship of the Ring. Pippin took part in the Battle of Bywater against the ruffians who had controlled the Shire under Sharkey., Pippin exudes a fun-loving personality not dulled by his adult years, and is the foil to Merry, almost 10 years his senior. He sees the cheerful side to everything, but at the same time he shows the maturity that earned him the respect as the new Thain of the Shire. He has also been named one of the King's Counsellors of the North-Kingdom. He speaks casually and interjects his comments occasionally into Merry's tale.

NPC: BARNABAS BUTTERBUR

Race/Culture: Man of Bree

Age:

Demeanor: Speaks quickly with a hint of impatience.

Appearance:

Voice/accent:

Description

The Son of old Barliman Butterbur, Barnabas carries on the family business as the Butterburs have for generations. The difference is that the Prancing Pony Inn in Bree sees even more customers (and more competition from newer inns) since there's more traffic on the crossroads. He seems more flustered than Old Barliman, and has a better memory. He speaks quickly and with a hint of impatience, but upon seeing the heroes are with Merry and Pippin, he changes his tune and shows deference.

Part 1 Introduction

The heroes have each received an invitation from the Thain of the Shire and the Master of Brandybuck to meet them in Bree (hand out letter*).

Letter to the Heroes

Shire Reckoning 1437
Fourth Age 16
1 Lithe--*Midsummer*

Dear ~~Expendable~~ Daring Adventurer,

From the Master of Buckland and Thain of the Shire, erstwhile Squire of Rohan and Guard of the Citadel of Minas Tirith but now Counsellors of King Elessar within the dominion of his North-kingdom, newly established as part of his free and Reunited Kingdom in Middle-Earth,

Greetings.

We are in need of highly qualified heroes for a long-term quest, taking between 3 and 12 months. Pay shall be Very Good. Terms explained upon arrival at the *Prancing Pony Inn, Bree, the Crossroads, Eriador, the North-kingdom.*

It has come to our attention that you possess skills and experience which mopping up stray orcs does not satisfy.

We would like to engage you in a quest worthy of your abilities, valor, and wisdom.

If you accept, please show yourself in person at the above-mentioned Inn on 1 Winterfilth (the first day of Autumn).

Your most grateful servants,

Meriadoc Brandybuck
Peregrin Took

(Session 1 INTRO cont.)

Read aloud to players:

The gates of Bree are wide open these days. As you walk into the town, you see that the New Bree is a bustling place. There are more people on the road, there are many more buildings being raised. It feels optimistic as an important trade center at the Crossroads. The Greenway north of Bree is seeing travel once again to visit the old capital city of the North-kingdom, where Aragorn, now King Elessar, is currently living. The other three gates open to the Old South Road, the East Road towards the Misty Mountains, and the West Road to the Shire.

The Prancing Pony still has the same sign in front of the inn, but you are impressed by the numbers of people entering and leaving the doors. Inside, there's a long line at the bar for the Pony's famous beer, said to be amazingly better since the days of Barliman. Each of you manages to push your way through the crowd to the private room in the back. As you come in, a tall Bree-man invites you to sit down at the long table with the two hobbits seated on the other side. He takes your orders for wine, beer, cider, or water. Plates of roasted potatoes and mushrooms are on the house.

[This is a good time for the adventurers to introduce their names to each other & other information about themselves].

[GM acts the part of NPC Merry, covering the material below... not all PCs have seen Ents, so Merry might describe them... "you know, those tree-looking giants, about 14 feet tall? They're quite nice, but I wouldn't want to face one in battle."]

[Once everyone has arrived, Merry and Pippin thank the PCs all for coming. Merry explains the quest to the fellowship and the facts known. The quest is to find the legendary Ent-wives, who have not been seen since their gardens in the Brown Lands were destroyed by the forces of Mordor at the end of the Second Age (about 3000 years). While it may seem fruitless to follow a trail that cold, Merry and Pippin heard it from the ancient Ent Treebeard himself, that the Ent-wives are alive but missing. They escaped, but no one knows where. The Ents gave up their search long ago. Treebeard asked the hobbits to look on the borders of the Shire when the hobbits returned, since it's the kind of land Ent-wives would like.

True to their word, Merry and Pippin did send out a group last year to explore the lands

on the northern edge of the Shire, where rumors said giant tree-men were seen. They returned last fall with no sign.

That's why the characters have all been summoned here: to find some clues about the whereabouts of the vanished Ent-wives. Their first mission will be to interview Treebeard or another Old Ent if he cannot be found. He might be found at Isengard, guarding the Orthanc tower, or in the forest of Fangorn. The next part of the quest will be determined by what what is learned from the Ent, and what ideas he may have for searching other places.]

Those adventurers who wish to be so hired will be paid according to the terms of the Contract:

The Contract

Cash on delivery of all intelligence gathered regarding the whereabouts of said Ent-wives (if any); moderate travelling expenses guaranteed in any event (see below); funeral expenses to be defrayed by us or our representatives, if occasion arises and the matter is not otherwise arranged for.

(modified from the text of The Hobbit, by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien)

Confidentiality is of utmost importance and must be strictly maintained at all times. During the course of employment for the Counsellors of the North-kingdom, Adventurer will hear, see, learn, apprehend, comprehend, and, in short, gain knowledge of particular facts, ideas, plans, strategies, theories, geography, cartography, iconography, means, tactics and/or policies, whether actual, tangible, conceptual, historical or fanciful. Adventurer undertakes and agrees to maintain this knowledge in utmost secrecy and confidentiality, and to neither divulge nor make known said knowledge by any means, including but not limited

to speech, writing, demonstration, re-enactment, mime, or storage and retrieval within means or apparatus currently known or unknown or as yet unthought of.
(borrowed from the lengthy replica of the Hobbit contract; Burglar altered to Adventurer)

[The Hobbit leaders give the heroes provisions to start with: 2 weeks food, water skins, rucksacks, 10 gold pieces, a riding horse for any who lack one (rouncy or pony), and a letter of introduction from the King. Any other supplies must be provided by the PCs or bought with the GPs.]

Time for questions?

Travel Part 1

Narration of Adventure:

The heroes set off the next morning, on Midsummer Day, traveling the best route to Isengard, the Old South Road. What order do they travel in/roles (Guide, Scout, etc.)? There are no towns but they pass many travelers who camp near the Road at night. The first few days pass uneventfully.

- Bree to Junction of Shire Road where it turns into the Greenway: 90 miles.
- Junction to new Bridge of Tharbad: 110 miles.

Description of Old Tharbad's history in the late 2nd Age/Early 3rd Age:

“...with long labour a port capable of receiving seagoing vessels had been made at Tharbad, and a fort raised there on great earthworks on both sides of the river, to guard the once famed Bridge of Tharbad.

But later they penetrated northward as far as the beginning of the great fenlands; though it was still long before they had the need or sufficient men to undertake the great works of drainage and dyke-building that made a great port on the site where Tharbad stood in the days of the Two Kingdoms.

...Eenedwaith... belonged to neither kingdom and received no permanent settlements of men of Númenórean origin. But the great North-South Road, which was the chief route of communication between the Two Kingdoms except by sea, ran through it from Tharbad to the Fords of Isen (Ethraid Engrin). Before the decay of the North Kingdom and the disasters that befell Gondor, indeed until the coming of the Great Plague in Third Age 1636, both kingdoms shared an interest in this region, and together built and maintained the Bridge of Tharbad and the long causeways that carried the road to it on either side of the Gwathló and Mitheithel across the fens in the plains of Minhiriath and Eenedwaith. * A considerable garrison of soldiers, mariners and engineers had been kept there until the seventeenth century of the Third Age. But from then onwards the region fell quickly into decay; and long before the time of The Lord of the Rings had gone back into wild fenlands. When Boromir made his great journey from Gondor to Rivendell – the courage and hardihood required is not fully recognized in the narrative—the North-South Road no longer existed except for the crumbling remains of the causeways, by which a hazardous approach to Tharbad might be achieved, only to find ruins on dwindling mounds, and a dangerous ford formed by the ruins of the bridge, impassable if the river had not been there slow and shallow – but wide.’
Unfinished Tales, Part 2, Ch IV, The History of Galadriel and Celeborn, Appendix D, 'The Port Of Lond Daer '''

However, the band of heroes find that by the King's order the causeways and bridge have been rebuilt for easier travel north and south. The fellowship passes over the River Greyflood and notice that the ruined city of Tharbad is also being rebuilt in stone. There are many dwarf masons who the King hired to supervise the construction process.

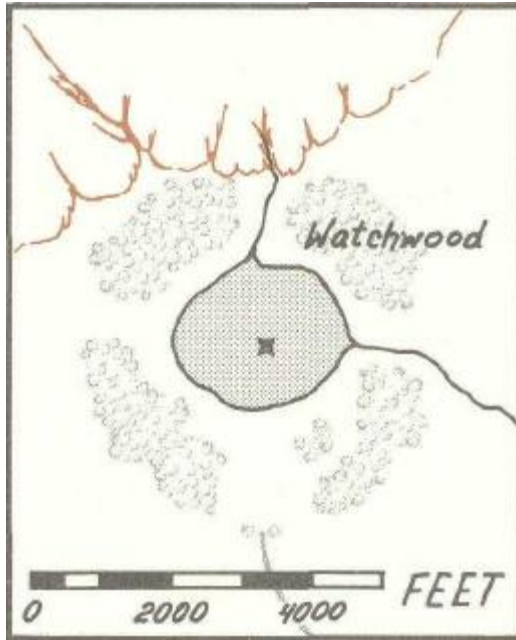
- Bridge of Tharbad to edge of Dunland Fells: 130 miles
- Dunland Fells to Gap of Rohan: 100 miles
- Gap of Rohan to Isengard: 100 miles

Hazard

As the road passes near the Dunland Fells, a thick fog slowly pours down the hills and soon covers the Road. Your Guide will need to make a Test to avoid wandering off the Road.

Once the fog lifts, the heroes are harassed by Crebain birds of Dunland or a pack of wolves from the Fells. Alternatively, they could be accosted by a group of out-of-touch Dunlanders who think that the War of the Ring is still ongoing (they only just came out of hiding). The PCs could try to persuade them that the War is over. (GM options).

After weeks of traveling, they arrive at Isengard, and the Watchwood (now called the Treetgarth of Orthanc).



From Atlas of Middle-Earth, Karen Wynn Fonstad.

Description:

Read Aloud:

As the players ride north up the Isen Valley, they come to the edge of what used to be the Ring of Isengard, earthworks that have now been flattened to make room for the circular Treegarth. In place of the Gate stand two tall trees, through which a green path leads into a garden of woodland and orchard.

Encounter

Read Aloud:

Your party of heroes find a grove of tall rowan trees with red berries, with a tree missing on the south side. As they enter, they see a slender Ent with his arms reaching up to the sky. When he sees the travelers, he welcomes them and says he is Quickbeam. He explains, *"I am Bregalad, that is Quickbeam in your language. Welcome to my grove! **This grove is open to the south to show which direction peace is found**¹. Of course, south for Minas Tirith and the rule of the King! He is a friend to us Ents. But I was hasty and forgot! I am supposed to bring visitors to Treebeard. What are your names?"*

¹

This is an important clue that will help the PCs later in the Brown Lands.

[As an option, the GM can treat this encounter as a moderate difficulty, of how quickly they will gain access to Treebeard.

After hearing their introductions, Quickbeam replies:]

Read aloud:

"Treebeard is here in the summer. You are fortunate to find him here! He returns to Fangorn Forest in the fall. I will bring you to him."

Quickbeam takes all of you to the edge of the lake in the center of the Treegarh. Apple and pear orchards dot the landscape. Treebeard is standing still a few feet into the water, looking at the tower of Orthanc in the middle.

NPC: Treebeard

Race/Culture: Ent

Age: Many thousands of years

Demeanor:

Appearance:

Voice/accent: Deep, rumbling, slow.

Description:

Treebeard is one of the oldest creatures alive in Middle-Earth. His memory goes back to the days when Elves first walked the woods under the Star-light. See description under TOR/AIM).

Handy Ent phrases

(existing Entish is very scarce and is not useful here):

Quenya, such as...

- *Alatúlie* (Welcome)
- *Man esselya ná?* (What is your name?)
- *Vandë omentaina* (Pleased to meet you)
- *Ma istal quet' Eldarin?* (Do you speak Quenya?)
- *Hoom, hom.*

Westron, such as...

- Don't be hasty.
- Well now.
- Root and twig!
- Crack my timbers!

Playing Treebeard as NPC...when being told of their quest and who sent them, he responds:

- *Did the hobbits look in the Shire for the Ent-wives?*
- *I am pleased by your quest, but doubtful. We looked so many times.*
- *How can I be of any help?*

He sings the Song of the Ent and the Entwife (play Hawke's recording)

He answers their questions about the Entwives, telling them what he remembers (clearly it's been a long time, so it's a bit fuzzy in his mind... he may need to lie down to wake up more).

Facts Treebeard shares about the Ent-wives:

- *They liked open places, not forests like we do.*
- *They loved fruit trees, meadows, herbs, grasses in the autumn fields.*
- *They ordered them to grow according to their wishes, and bear leaf and fruit to their liking.*
- *They loved order, and plenty, and peace (everything in its spot).*
- *The Entwives made gardens to live in.*
- *They first made gardens near Fangorn Forest, then they moved across the River.*
- *The Entwives taught their craft to men, who honoured them greatly*
- *There is a Song of the Ents and the Ent-wives I can sing for you...*

Song of the Ents and Ent-wives

Ent:

When Spring unfolds the beechen leaf, and sap is in the bough;
When light is on the wild-wood stream, and wind is on the brow;
When stride is long, and breath is deep, and keen the mountain-air,
Come back to me! Come back to me, and say my land is fair!

Entwife:

When Spring is come to garth and field, and corn is in the blade;
When blossom like a shining snow is on the orchard laid;
When shower and Sun upon the Earth with fragrance fill the air,
I'll linger here, and will not come, because my land is fair.

Ent:

When Summer lies upon the world, and in a noon of gold

Beneath the roof of sleeping leaves the dreams of trees unfold;
When woodland halls are green and cool, and wind is in the West,
Come back to me! Come back to me, and say my land is best!

Entwife:

When Summer warms the hanging fruit and burns the berry brown;
When straw is gold, and ear is white, and harvest comes to town;
When honey spills, and apple swells, though wind be in the West,
I'll linger here beneath the Sun, because my land is best!

Ent:

When Winter comes, the winter wild that hill and wood shall slay;
When trees shall fall and starless night devour the sunless day;
When wind is in the deadly East, then in the bitter rain
I'll look for thee, and call to thee; I'll come to thee again!

Entwife:

When Winter comes, and singing ends; when darkness falls at last;
When broken is the barren bough, and light and labour past;
I'll look for thee, and wait for thee, until we meet again:
Together we will take the road beneath the bitter rain!

Both:

Together we will take the road that leads into the West,
And far away will find a land where both our hearts may rest. '

"But they have not gone west it seems," Treebeard sighs. "Perhaps you should try south or east. There are a few places you might find clues..."

- The Brown Lands (but they probably won't find anything)
- Rhosgobel (but that wizard Radagast is hard to find, not like Gandalf... now he likes trees best);
- *Minas Tirith (the men of Gondor are nice folk, but too hasty. Their archives are not very old, only a few thousand years, and all that paper—too many trees used)*

The heroes debate the benefits of each direction they could go... and choose a course of action. If they ask, they may go to all three, but their provisions will run out, and they will have to spend valuable time purchasing more food.

Treebeard wishes them well. He hesitates... *“If you find them, ask if Fimbrethil still lives. She was... special to me. But I hope you will not be wasting your time. Why not stay here and breathe the air with me for a few weeks?”*

TRAVEL

Part 2

- Isengard to Rhosgobel—580 miles, roughly 4-7 days cross-country.
- Isengard to Minas Tirith—440 miles, roughly 3 days with a good road.
- Isengard to the Brown Lands—350 miles (to S. Undeep ford), 3 days.

They travel either to Rhosgobel, the Brown Lands, or Minas Tirith’s archives. Whichever places they go, the **first session ends with their discovery of all available clues and the beginning of their trip heading east of the Brown Lands...** but it will take some time to uncover clues and put the pieces together. Compress travel time as needed.

Rhosgobel

The fellowship of adventurers travels through the land of the horse-lords, and is stopped once by some Riders of Rohan to ask their business.

In a non-con setting, the GM could set this up as an Encounter.

However, for the Moot you can compress time and explain that one of the PCs remembers to produce the papers from King Elessar. They then get an armed escort to the Undeeps (Anduin River ford) where the fellowship fords the river (low difficulty) and rides on to the southwest edge of what was formerly known as Mirkwood, but is now the Wood of Greenleaves.

After another day or two, they reach the High Hay, a hedge that encircles the hamlet of Rhosgobel. Scattered, thatched homes of Woodmen lie inside. A path winds its way up to the longhouse where the elders may be found. This great building has its back to the

wood and its face to the Great River, with two doors opening to the north and south.

If asked, the elders will tell the PCs directly where Radagast's house is found... inside the copse of trees at the south end of the enclosure. But if asked if Radagast is there, they shrug and smile, "Are wizards ever predictable?" "If he wants to be, he is!"

PCs walk through the trees on a path of white stones, and will see the Brown Wizard's cottage, a haphazard collection of walls and roof and ivy growing all over the sides. There are mushrooms growing all around the house, and even a few on the roof.

If they go to Rhosgobel first, the cottage is locked and Radagast is not there. They will meet him on their way to the Brown Lands (This is also true if they never go to Rhosgobel).

NPC: Radagast

Race/Culture: Istari (Maiar)

Age: Ageless

Appearance:

Demeanor:

Voice/accent:

Description:

See TOR/AIM description of Radagast as Patron. (TOR Core Rules p. 277)

- Clues he will give--
The Entwives always served the Power called Yavanna Kementari, the one whom Eru gave authority over all plants and animals. She made the Two Trees of Valinor before there was Sun or Moon! An evil Power, Morgoth, and the grandmother of all giant Spiders, Ungoliant, killed the trees and took their light.
- Yavanna loves to make things grow. She even chose me to be one of the Five Wizards to come to Middle-Earth! It was so long ago... All Ents were her concern, because they guard the trees, but Ent-wives are special.

- *I came after their gardens were destroyed millennia ago, but I have never seen one in the lands of Mirkwood or along the Anduin. If they exist, they are hiding well to escape the eyes of my birds..*
- *Wherever they went, you can be sure of this: because Yavanna gave them power to make the land fertile, you should look for any place that is rich in crops, and there perhaps discover their hidden influence. West they have not come². [If asked further, the wizard may suggest several places in the N, S, or E: "The lands northwest of Dale are fertile, as are the lands near the Sea of Nurn, in Outer Mordor, and then there's Ithilien below Minas Tirith, and of course Dorwinion to the East and Far Harad to the South, where fruit grows well. But I know not. You should seek other clues, not only from me!"]*

The Brown Lands

Never have the PCs seen such a barren land... this landscape looks like it *should* support life and a great number of farms and gardens, but long ago it was blasted, burned, salted, and poisoned by Mordor's minions. You wander over the land for a few days before finding a round circle of tree trunks. The tree stumps have somehow been petrified, possibly through being quickly buried in soil after being cut down. The rains have washed away most of the soil from the ring. If PCs are perceptive, they will realize it is similar to the grove they saw in the Treegarth of Orthanc. In addition, there's one trunk missing, in the direction of sunrise (East). The PCs may realize that the Ent-wives were leaving a clue³.

The Warden of Minas Tirith's Archives

The sight of Minas Tirith in the setting sun is awe-inspiring.

Description from RotK:

“For the fashion of Minas Tirith was such that it was built on seven levels, each delved into the hill, and about each was set a wall, and in each wall was a gate. But the gates were not set in a line: the Great Gate in the City Wall was at the east point of the circuit, but the next faced half south, and the third half north, and so to and fro upwards; so that the paved way that climbed towards the Citadel turned first this way and then that across the face of the hill. And each time

² have heard of it.

The first clue: look for fertile lands. This may put Dorwinion into their minds, or at least

³ The East is the place where peace dwells. So, a land east of the Brown Lands.

that it passed the line of the Great Gate it went through an arched tunnel, piercing a vast pier of rock whose huge out-thrust bulk divided in two all the circles of the City save the first. For partly in the primeval shaping of the hill, partly by the mighty craft and labour of old, there stood up from the rear of the wide court behind the Gate a towering bastion of stone, its edge sharp as a ship-keel facing east. Up it rose, even to the level of the topmost circle, and there was crowned by a battlement; so that those in the Citadel might... look from its peak sheer down upon the Gate seven hundred feet below. The entrance to the Citadel also looked eastward, but was delved in the heart of the rock; thence a long lamp-lit slope ran up to the seventh gate. Thus men reached at last the High Court, and the Place of the Fountain before the feet of the White Tower: tall and shapely, fifty fathoms from its base to the pinnacle, where the banner of the Stewards floated a thousand feet above the plain...

In [King Elessar's] time the City was made more fair than it had ever been, even in the days of its first glory; and it was filled with trees and with fountains, and its gates were wrought of mithril and steel, and its streets were paved with white marble; and the Folk of the Mountain laboured in it, and the Folk of the Wood rejoiced to come there; and all was healed and made good, and the houses were filled with men and women and the laughter of children, and no window was blind nor any courtyard empty; and after the ending of the Third Age of the world into the new age it preserved the memory and the glory of the years that were gone."

On the sixth level, the players will find the deep Archives of Gondor and all its collected lore. However, access will be granted depending on the encounter with the cantankerous Warden.

NPC: Warden of the Archives

Despite the joy and goodwill in Minas Tirith in the Fourth Age, the Warden is often cranky. And that's on his good days. It will be quite difficult to gain access, although when seeing the King's letter he will grudgingly allow one of you at a time to look through the tomes and scrolls that may shed light on the Entwives.

What topic would the PC want to search? There is no category for Ent or Entwife. [If the PC chooses Agriculture, Gardens, Brown Lands, Farming, the Valar, or the War of the Last Alliance, they will find this (extended rolls for success):

A single scroll is found, which had fallen behind a stack of books.

The Earth Maidens, or Ent-Women (High Elven: *Enyd Vessë*, translated “Ent Wives”). Lore of Farming gathered in the beginning of King Anorien’s reign, Second Age 3409.

We have found that the Enyd Vessë are remarkable at cultivating the land. They have been tending their gardens on the fertile East Bank of the Anduin River. They have been willing to teach their methods to our people, who seek to plant orchards in the valleys of the White Mountains like those we knew on Numenor. Yet these “Ent-wives” whose husbands are a legend from the First Age are not only master orchardists and grain-planters, but some of them specialize in grape vineyards⁴. They have let us take a few cuttings to see if we can reproduce their stock, but they have failed so far.

Later on the same piece of parchment, hastily written are the words:

T.A. 3. Note: The Earth Maidens’ gardens are now desolate from the power of Sauron which he hath wrought upon the land before the battle of Dagorlad. They are blasted and ruined lands. No sign of the Ent-wives. Who knows what helpful secrets we could have learned to bring life from Arda, and feed our people, and are now lost forever?

The session should end when the PCs have assembled enough clues to commit to where they will look. They should have figured out that they need to go to the stumps and travel due east, through the wilds of East Rhovanion (between Mirkwood and Mordor, roughly towards the Sea of Rhun). Once they are on the right path, the session stops here.

TOLKIENMOOT XIV: DON’T BE HASTY!

SESSION #2: Light at the Ent of the Tunnel (E. Rhovanion to Dorwinion)

INTRO/RECAP

In the last session, the party of adventurers were hired by the famous Hobbits Meriadoc Brandybuck and Peregrin Took to search for the Unsolved Mystery of the Millennia: the missing Ent-wives. Since it’s the

⁴ The next clue: vineyards. This, along with Radagast’s clue, and the stumps in the Brown Lands, should point them to Dorwinion.

Fourth Age, they have the advantage of the King's Peace to look many places. The company traveled to meet the Ent Treebeard, and found him at the Treegarth of Orthanc. After learning all you could, you then looked for clues at _____. These facts led you to believe that the Ent-wives fled the Brown Lands for a secondary location to the east, possibly Dorwinion. You are now traveling on the wide open plains of East Rhovanion in the direction of sunrise.

Confirm traveling roles/any changes.

Note to GMs: TOR/AIM labels "Brown Lands" a much larger area than I believe is necessary. This module assumes that the Brown Lands are about 100 miles wide, and the plains of East Rhovanion are about 350 miles wide (to the "edge" of Dorwinion).

Description of landscape:

The vast plains stretching before you are even larger than Rohan. In fact, the ancestors of the Rohirrim were Northmen of these plains, part of a culture of horse-breeders and confederated clans united under a great chief or king. Those days are long gone, as the Northmen were overrun by the Wainriders and later, the Balchoth. Although their ancient enemies are gone and true peace restored, there are not many subjects of King Elessar left in these windy grasslands, save the rare farmstead with thatched cottage, barn, and cattle.

From the Horse-Lords of Rohan (adapted):

The plains... seem peaceful, slowly rolling in cool breezes that carry the scents of herb and leaf. However, wolves still roam the plains on the prowl. Sharp-eyed travellers can spy countless small animals among the grasses: voles, mice, rabbits, hedgehogs and shrews, with large antlered deer slipping out of small groves that follow the few streams that cross this land. The small creatures are hunted by stoats and swift-moving foxes. The unwary among them are snatched on the wing by eagle-owls and prairie falcons that soar overhead. In the summer, snakes stir and become aggressive on warm days. They prey on small animals, but an unwary traveller could be bitten by stumbling on a serpent's nest.

Emphasize how big the sky feels at sunrise, or at night gazing at stars. Here are some of the constellations the PCs may see at night as they rest from their long day's ride:

TRAVEL:

350 miles—roughly 4-5 days

Normal progression of travel: making camp, setting a watch, fatigue test, etc.

NARRATION:

As you ride through the great grasslands of Rhovanion, you notice that far ahead of you there is a low ridge, a long rise in the ground. As you reach this ridge in the last hours of daylight, you see ahead the copper-colored grass of the plains sloping gently down towards cultivated fields and orchards of Dorwinion on your left, and mountains to your right, hiding the Sea of Rhun from view.

After making camp, the next day you pass by the outlying farms of the Dorwinrim.

Extract from “Men of Dorwinion”, developed by Richard Harrison as a supplement to TOR/AIM races:

“The Men of Dorwinion are a mixed people, descending from Northmen and Easterlings alike. Consequently, they are of average height, often with a darker skin and dark brown or black hairs, very often curly. Men keep well-groomed moustaches and beards. When abroad, their clothes are well-crafted but simple; they are fond of jewellery but tend not to display it outside their own homes. They favour earth-tones, bright tans and orange-yellows contrasted by deep navy, burgundy, brown and green.

The Men of Dorwinion are great traders; their wines in particular are drunk at the high tables across Middle-earth. It is only through their cunning negotiations that their realm, poised precariously between Western and Eastern cultures, was able to survive. Men of Dorwinion are considered a Prosperous folk. Men of Dorwinion generally speak the Common Speech (Westron) as well as their own language. Some are also well versed in Sindarin to aid in their dealings with the elves of The Wood of Greenleaves (Mirkwood).”

Dorwinion and the land around the Sea of Rhun are now the eastern edge of Elessar's Reunited Kingdom.

After another day's riding on a road through vineyards, the adventurers approach the valley of the River Running. Here, the vineyards are thickest, and the smell of the grapes makes their stomachs growl. A village lies ahead, with white houses and red tile roofs. They actually have cobbled streets, and the sound of your steeds' hooves echo off the buildings. Not many people are out at mid-day. There's an inn at the junction of your road and the river road.

NPC: BRODDA THE INNKEEPER

Outside the Inn, there are tables where local villagers are drinking from small clay mugs. A large, fat, moustached man is serving them. As he sees the PCs approach, he greets them. Use a French, Italian, or Slavic accent.

"Greetings, strangers! Please accept the humble hospitality of Brodda. This is my Inn, the Fruitful Flagon. Won't you sit down and sample a cold drink on a hot day?"

Brodda will try to win the PCs as his latest customers by offering them some of their fabled Dorwinion wine, juice, or water if they prefer. He will return with flagons, not clay mugs (for our honored guests!).

- This gives an opportunity for the PCs to make conversation with the locals, and ask them if they have ever heard of Ents. Blank stares is all the PCs will get, until they are described as tall as trees. A quick conversation breaks out between two other Dorwinrim in their language. One of them speaks up, *"Kustig here and I are talking about the old wives' tales we remember as children. He thinks maybe they are true, but I say it's nonsense. Yes, we have heard of these Old Wives. The story is that they came and started the first vineyard along the River."*
- Brodda the Innkeeper comes over to offer more wine. *"You need a storyteller. Go to Katun the Seer. She knows all the old lore about the valley."*
- The wine can have disabling effects if drunk on an empty stomach, too quickly, or in quantities considered moderate for other alcoholic drinks. If a PC consumes a whole flagon of Dorwinion wine, roll for effect. There should be four possibilities: a) **Untouched** ("My fingers are tingling!"), b) **Befuddled**, (fail all Awareness checks) c) **Tipsy**,

(simply walking or sitting on the horse requires an Athletics roll) or d) **Passed Out**. GM discretion how long-lasting the effects are.

- All the locals direct them to find the Seer downriver a day's journey, in a house with flowers in front.

As the PCs follow the Running River, they find they are enjoying Dorwinion and its fabled vineyards. It is a beautiful, warm place. The sides of the brown valley are covered with vineyards, and three or four small rivers trace their way through the sun-parched grasses to the wide River Running. As the sun is setting, they pass by another Inn, with a sign of a wheelbarrow (name: The Haunted Wheelbarrow).

If they don't camp by the riverbank, they might stay the night at the Inn. Flodda the Innkeeper is Brodda's cousin, and Flodda claims his wine is sweeter, trying to push his vintage. "Ah, this is laid aside from Third Age 3019—the Year of Victory! You must try some, please!"

The next morning (assuming the PCs have been wise not to drink much of Flodda's Dorwinion wine), the band all resume their journey. This area is more rural and quiet. Soon the PCs draw near a solitary, disheveled home with flowers growing in window-boxes, in the whole front yard, and even in between the tiles. The door is hanging on one hinge. This must be the Seer's place.

The PCs walk through the house... no one answers their call. The back door is open also, and they find themselves in a half-enclosed courtyard with a very lush vegetable garden. Half a dozen wind chimes hang from the eaves, and the wind gently blows on them. They see a woman in a green robe weeding in the garden with a hoe.

NPC: KATUN THE SEER

Katun has long black hair, worn in a single braid, and her skin is deeply tanned. She doesn't look old, or young. Perhaps in her late 30's. Katun tells the group that she was expecting them, because she saw them in a dream. However, she has no idea why they've come. "*Being a Seer doesn't mean I know everything,*" she grins.

Play Katun as a wise, perceptive person who weighs every word the PCs say. She often answers questions with questions of her own:

- Why do you seek stories of the Old Wives?
- Why don't the Tree-men come find them?
- Of what benefit will it to be to them if you tell others where they are?

Eventually Katun walks over to a basin of water and washes her hands. She dries her hands and turns to them. *"You seem trustworthy. I cannot tell you much. I have never seen these Ent-wives, but the stories of our people are true. In the beginning, they say, they came from the west, and settled among our people. We were like children. We only hunted and raised animals, but we knew nothing about tilling the land. Then the Old Ones taught the Dorwinrim long ago how to plant the grapevine, how to prune it, how to fertilize the land, how to grow the wheat. We have many wheatfields near the Sea of Rhun. Then, once our people were skilled in this lore, they left."*

(Pause for questions from PCs.)

"The reason I know this is no fable is because the stories say the water jars of the Wives were magic... the water could heal barren land, or a barren woman. From mother to daughter, over many generations, my family has carried our water from a stream near here which is like the Old Wives' healing draughts. But if I show you, you must promise not to tell others of this, because it would cause fights over the land. I use the water to help some people when they are sick, or their vines are blighted. They think it is me. But I am only a servant of a greater Power."

Katun covers her head with a yellow headscarf and leads the company down the road to another small river on the right hand side. She points up the arid hillside. They see a thin green ribbon descending from the mountains above, snaking its way through miles of open land.

"This water has the touch of the Old Ones on it. Perhaps if you follow the stream, you will find the answers you seek, or answers you were not looking for."

(GM discretion: the Seer looks at one of the PCs and looks lost in thought for a moment, and gives a cryptic prophecy about him or her... "Harm will befall you, but the Sun will light your path where others cannot see.")

NARRATION:

The heroes follow the little river up until the walls of a canyon rise above them. They are in a green ravine, whose sides bear trees of remarkable health and fruit. The water tastes pure. The sun is going behind the mountains in front of them... there are several hours of daylight left, but the PCs are in shadow now.

The climb was easy at first, but now it is becoming harder (Moderate difficulty). Awareness check: one of them hears something stealthy following behind them a little ways... great success = only 1 thing following them.

If the PCs choose to set an ambush, it's fairly easy to do. They catch an orc-spy following them (a small, skinny orc). See if any of the PCs has Orc-lore. If not, they do not realize this is a tracker.

NPC: SNAGA TRACKER

A smaller breed of orc gifted with wide, snuffling nostrils, able to catch the scent of enemies from a distance, even after a prolonged period of time has passed. Trackers are a weak and lazy lot, but quick and clever. (Stats for Snaga in TOR Core Rules: p. 238).

The Snaga is a sorry excuse for an orc and poses no threat. He has a rusty dagger but makes no attempt to fight the obviously superior PCs. He grovels like Gollum and pleads and whines that he is *"all alone, poor Kurzhlug, and hungry. Kurzhlug starves under the Yellow Face and has no bread. Please no kill Kurzhlug! Please give a scrap of food, and Kurzhlug will go away!"*

What do the PCs decide to do? If they suggest killing him without provocation or in self-defense, warn them that is a Misdeed, and will earn Shadow Points.

They could tie him up or knock him out, or take him along.

They don't know that more starving orcs are following them a mile downriver, although if they realize this is a Tracker, they will be alert. There's about 4 hours of daylight left before it gets truly dark. The orcs behind are ill-equipped to win a fight. They would gang up on one, but in the face of bad odds they choose to follow the heroes to see if they can

steal their food. The PCs may attempt to ambush the orcs here or simply put distance between them.

If the PCs keep going, they travel up further near the source, and begin to feel sleepy. If any can shake off the sleepiness, they finally emerge from the canyon into a small, hidden valley. The hills surround this place and protect it from view... in the center of the little valley they see a curious structure of earth, stone, and wood. Great sloping earthworks curve around to make a figure-eight shape about thirty feet tall, supported with rocks at its base, with tree trunks interwoven in an intricate design.

Access is through an archway of two ancient willow trees, from which the stream flows out. Inside they find an incredible garden of plants and orchard trees, but grown wild and untamed as if abandoned. Birds sing in the branches and along the walls. The stream begins in a spring at the back of the enclosure. Awareness check... it feels like a holy place.

(PCs can explore the garden, but at first find no sign of an Entwife.)

As it grows darker, they hear mumbling in a sing-song voice:

“A-lalla-lalla-rumba-kamanda-lindor-burúme...”

Laurelin-dórenan lindelor-endor malinor-nélión orne-malin...

NPC: WINEBERRY

In the shadows behind the brambles you see a legend... a giant thing bent over and browner than Treebeard; her viny hair parched by the sun to the hue of ripe corn and her skin rough like woody grapevines. Yet her eyes, like the Ents, are wise, deep green eyes like twin wells of sorrow and joy. They find a solitary Ent-wife, Wineberry, who is very tree-ish; but she wakes up enough to speak in Westron (wise, patient, full of pauses).

“Hoom, visitors. I am Wineberry, the Entwife. I am... the last of my kind...

This is Tarwa Aldalómë, the Garden of the Tree-Twilight. I protect the spring from enemies who would foul it.” She yawns... *“Are you enemies?”*

Once she is satisfied they are friends, she welcomes them, closes her eyes, goes tree-ish again, and does not reply.

The heroes need to choose where to sleep. If they sleep outside the garden, the starving orcs raid the garden that night. If they sleep inside the garden, the orcs will wait until the next day, 5 mins. after the heroes leave.

The orcs try to sneak into the garden. The willows (semi-awake trees) will try to grab orcs as they come past, but the orcs partly succeed in pouring oil on the Entwife and are trying to set fire to her. They succeed in setting the brambles partly on fire, clearing a path to her.

At this point the players notice and spring into action. Battle with a dozen orcs. The orcs are famished but desperate and strong. The Entwife is quite awake during the melee, and throws Orcs over the high wall.

After the PCs defeat the orcs, Wineberry is distressed at the damage, especially if they are dead things in her garden. The only thing that will console her is removing the dead bodies and seeking to clean what has been defiled.

Finally she is ready to speak again. Her personality has totally changed. She seems much clearer, and tells the rest of the truth (still wise, slow, patient, but alert now):

“Thank you for protecting this sacred spring from these burarum. I am awake now. What are you?”

PCs can interact with Wineberry, tell her their quest. She is interested in where each of them is from. It has been long since she got any news from outside.

“I am the last to stay, but there are others. We came here from the Brown Lands long ago. We blessed the land, and taught the people. This hidden valley was our sanctuary. Then evil Men from the East were fighting in Dorwinion many years ago, and we held a Moot. East was no longer where Peace dwells. All but I chose to leave after the Long Winter. I stayed to preserve our work among Men, though they no longer believe in us. My sisters went south of the Sea to the Hot Lands where the Sun lives. That is their hope, but I have not seen them again. I wish I could teach you a song of earth, wind, and water, that you could bring back to that land, the Shire. I would like that land. But Wineberry stays. The others can teach you. I forgot the words. I am so tired. My roots drink deep to Ulmo, and my

branches stretch to Manwe, and I sing with Yavanna... to Eru Illuvatar, to He Who is Alone, to the Father of All.

That reminds me of a Song we used to sing, that would be very nice for you to learn. It begins, "O Sun which rises in the east, and sails across the sky: Final fruit of the Golden Tree, and sign of hope nearby..." Oh dear, I have forgotten the rest. But maybe you will learn it from the others. I wish you well, but I am going treeish again. I must rest."

She yawns again, and is getting sleepy. The heroes learn all they can, then the Ent-wife offers them to take from the food of the garden and the water of the spring for their trip.

The company leaves for parts south after sunrise. As they begin the climb down the canyon, they hear behind them the sound of rocks falling... Wineberry has closed the gate with solid earth, and the stream now comes out of a tunnel from her garden.

TOLKIENMOOT XIV: DON'T BE HASTY!

(OR, THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING ENTWIVES)

SESSION 3: All's Well That Ent's Well (Dorwinion to Khand)

INTRO/RECAP

In the last session, you had gathered enough clues to give you a direction to seek the Entwives' cold trail, from the Brown Lands east. You journeyed on horseback across the primeval plains of East Rhovanion, and grassy prairies made way for the orchards and grape vineyards of Dorwinion, lately added to the great Reunited Kingdom of King Elessar. You learned clues at a village that the Dorwinrim did know stories about the Ent-wives, but only as fireside tales. However, they directed you to the Seer Katun, who could tell you more of that lore. Katun was wary of you at first, but showed her faith that the Wives existed, though she had never seen them. For generations her family drew water from a local stream thought to be blessed by the Old Ones. You followed this stream up into the hills and through a narrow canyon until you found a sheltered valley in which a hidden garden had been delved and protected by earthen walls and a

single Entwife inside. Despite an attack by homeless vagrant orcs on the garden, you learned that Wineberry was not the last of the Entwives, but that the rest went south a few hundred years ago.

TRAVEL OUTLINE:

270 miles from the Hidden Valley to the NE edge of Mordor (abt. 11 days)

200 miles across the Eastern Waste (10 days)

160 miles across the desert of Khand to the Nomad Attack (18 days)

20 miles on foot through sand dunes to the Last Tree (5 days)

The Oasis

30 miles across daunting terrain (by foot) to the desert road (8 days)

700 miles by road to the port of Umbar (about 3 weeks by foot, or less if they find mounts)

NARRATION: The company travels south from the foothills of Dorwinion. What clues do they think they should look for?

On the fourth day of making camp, they find a perfect campsite under an old apple tree just as a huge rainstorm finally downpours. It must be 40 feet tall and over 3 feet wide. Its wide branches easily protect the horses and riders from getting soaked.

On the eighth day, they see far ahead on the plain another single tree, and beyond it, the eastern end of Ered Lithui, the Ash Mountains, stretching off to the right. That night, if they aimed for the tree, they find another very old fruit tree, a pear.

A lore roll (or any man of Gondor) would reveal that this type of pear is common to the valleys of the White Mountains, and you have seen no other fruit trees alone like this.

They start to notice occasionally that single, ancient trees dot the landscape in a line S/SE, and begin to follow this trail of trees...

After you pass the northern fence of Mordor, you enter into the Eastern Waste, formerly a blighted place, although now somewhat gentler and hospitable to sagebrush, grass, and high desert animals such as snakes, scorpions, hares and wild dogs, smaller than wolves. The Ash Plain of Lithlad and the inland Sea of Nurnen is to their west.

The path begins to be harder to follow, as fewer signal trees survived the years, or were used by passing armies for firewood. Moderate challenge to pick up the trail. They find every few days a pine, a cypress tree, the stump of a willow, and an olive tree.

Under the olive tree, they see a man asleep, his legs sprawled out.

NPC: MAN OF NURN

This sad-eyed man wakes up when the PCs arrive under the tree. He's only in his thirties but his hair is completely white. He jumps to his feet, clearly afraid. His eyes look a little crazed (PTSD).

["Are you coming to take me to the Tower? I... I've worked hard. Nobody in Nurn worked harder than Jinn."]

Play him as nervous, a little paranoid, but harmless. After the PCs ask him some more questions, he starts to slowly relax. Maybe a nervous tic starts to fade.

["I'm a farmer in Nurn. Do you know where that is? We were all slaves for Him, long ago. I was a boy, taken from my parents and sold to work in the fields of South Nurn. The Sea of Nurnen gives us plenty of water, and... and the ash from the Smoking Mountain made the soil fertile there. But it was horrible. We had quotas. Cut the wheat, they said. With what blade? Ours have rusted. With your hands or teeth, or else you're meat for the pot, manflesh! And then they'd laugh, that horrible chuckling sound."]

["But then... everything changed when I was a lad of ten. Suddenly all our foremen ran away. No one to force us to work the land... because now the King says that it's our land. Did you hear that? Our land to work, and make better. To feed our families, not his armies."]

["Sometimes, I feel like I'll wake up one day, and we'll all be slaves again. You... you'll take me back, and chain me up! You're here to take me to the Black Tower, to Barad-Dur!"]

After freaking out the company, the Man from Nurn suddenly puts his hand over his eyes, and says, *["Forgive me. It comes on me at times. I will be all right. I must return to my fields west of here. I come here to think. Goodbye."]*

Unless the PCs want to engage him more in conversation, the Man of Nurn leaves. PCs come across a stream here, going west. Water sources getting rare; the adventurers take stock of what they have, and plunge on.

Soon the adventurers come upon the road linking East Mordor to Khand, going south. They find after another few days a tree several miles from the west side of the road. It's another huge apple tree, but this one looks like it is dying.

The next tree is SW of the last one, about 20 miles away. It's an ancient oak tree that is about 15 feet wide and hollow inside.

NARRATION: The fellowship begins to trek through the desert of Khand... rocky arid land at first. Bones of horses and men lay bleached on the ground. The rocky land gives way to sandy dunes. Yet they still find stumps or the skeletons of the trees showing the way (fig, cypress, olive, thorn tree). Water is getting scarce. Several days later, they discover the withered remains of an Entwife, sitting on a large rock. Her arms reach out to the south, frozen in a mute appeal to the sun. It is a tragic sight.

Finding good places to camp means out of the wind. There is no further sign of trees. Camp, set watch, etc.

After several days in the dunes heading due south, they are still low on water. In the hottest part of the day, they see ahead a caravan of about a dozen desert nomads with loaded camels.

NPC: NOMAD OF KHAND

["Shade and sweet water, my friend. Are you lost? We are a caravan bound for the city of Khand to the Northeast of here. Come, let us share bread together. We have plenty of water."]

Do they accept?

The nomad's name is Ghoff. He is olive-skinned and friendly. All of his people smile and freely offer their flat bread and skins of water, and offer to water their horses. After some time, he politely thanks them and wishes the heroes well. They leave, going NE.

The PCs travel due south for several more hours, then make a camp (watch for scorpions before you lay down). As the stars come out, you

realize that you don't recognize half of them anymore... there are new, bright and strange stars here. Watch order, etc.

Six nomads return at night and use stealth to steal their horses. Awareness check. If they are discovered, they will fight viciously with curved swords in both hands. These are seasoned desert bandits who will not give up easily unless one of them gets wounded.

If the horses have not been stolen by the nomads, they were spooked and ran away. Searching for them proves fruitless.

The adventurers now find themselves in the middle of a sandy desert and have lost their sense of where they are, as no more trees have been seen for two days. The PCs drink the last of the water. On the third day without water, the heroes are really suffering from thirst and heat exhaustion. Losing Endurance Pts or HP.

One blazing afternoon, when the PCs are starting to drop in the sand, the scout sees a tree on the horizon. Is it a mirage? After a few more hours, the heroes finally find a huge scrubby desert tree, alive. They sit under its branches for shade. They are delirious. They begin to dream. That night, there are faint flashes of a feeling of being lifted and floating swiftly over the desert floor, disoriented, and dream-like.

NPC: FIMBRETHIL

Fimbrelthil means "slender birch". It's hard to see her at night, but she is hunched over. Her voice is hesitant, but gentle and old, like a grandmother version of an Ent.

The heroes encounter the Entwives. There's several ways this could be handled (GM discretion, see below). But in every case, the setting is the same: The heroes wake up oddly all at the same time. The next day's sun is setting. They are in a cave with water running out of the wall into a wide stone basin, then curving away into another very small tunnel. All of the heroes are lying on long stone slabs. They walk up stairs and find they're on the side of an oasis with an amazing variety of trees, gardens, flowers, and several storage sheds made from desert rock and desert driftwood, containing stone jars with seeds. All this surrounds a small lake. (see map). They find no one in sight... they heal by resting and drinking the water, which is slightly sweet. The stars come out as dusk deepens. They feel refreshed.

- Option 1: WAS IT JUST A DREAM? The PCs wake up at the oasis. After they explore their surroundings, they gather around to talk. They each remember bits and pieces of a dream (hand out notes with part that each PC remembers). As each PC shares, it all comes together that the Entwives seem to have spoken to them in their dreams: giving them a message that they do not wish to be found yet, until they can hold a Moot. They know what the adventurers are trying to do, and understand. But the PCs must go back. The Ents must wait until the Wives are ready to come. They don't want any more Ent-wives to suffer. That night, the PCs receive a new message: walk one week south and you will reach a road that will lead you west to a faraway harbor with a ship.

Option 2: ENCOUNTER AT OASIS... The PCs wake up at the oasis, and explore their surroundings. That night, under a moonlit sky, they hear the sound of large creatures wading in the middle of the lake. The heroes see silhouettes of trees moving dimly [the Ent-wives]. One of them walks towards you, while the others turn away and walk over the hill. One stays. She introduces herself as Fimbrelthil. She speaks hesitantly, as though it's been a long time since speaking Westron. She shows a deep sense of compassion and thankfulness for the lengths the company went to find them. But her leadership compels her to preserve the lives of her sisters. She explains that they have built a network of secret oases in the desert, "where at last we have been safe from war". In Fimbrelthil's conversation with the PCs, they learn... the Ent-wives carried them to the oasis. The heroes cannot convince the Ent-wives to return North. She asks them not to tell the secret of the oases to any but the Ents. She tells them that a week's journey to the south brings them to a road that leads west to Harad and the port of Umbar, where they may find a ship to carry them home. Fimbrelthil gives them a message for Treebeard,

["Tell him I'll come, like in the song. But I cannot tell you all I would say unless we could speak in Old Entish, and you can't speak it. Poor hasty things."]

She offers them two parting gifts—a box with a special apple seed to plant at a crossroads of Middle-Earth, and the life-giving Song of Yavanna and the Golden Tree, in three parts: Sun and Earth and Water. This will come in your dreams. (Later on board ship she gives to each member one part of

the song in his or her dreams). She waves a mournful farewell as the sun rises over her shoulders... it has taken her all night to speak with them.

Either way, the heroes take plenty of water, and after a week's journey find the road just as the Ent-wives said. However, they don't think they could find the oasis again.

Compressed travel: The PCs are able to find habitations and inns in Near Harad to help them purchase horses to ride many miles to the Great City of Umbar on the coast (now under Gondor's rule).

They charter a (reformed) corsair ship to the Grey Havens.

- They recall that Fimbrelthil warned them to tell no one where they the Ent-wives are exactly, although Ents may be told.
- Persistent dreams visit the heroes while sailing. They realize that the Entwives are giving them each lines of a song that will bring a blessing back to the lands of the West, if those who till the earth speak it each spring.
- Give the lines out to each player to see if they can assemble it together. Encourage one of them to read it out loud.
- While on board, PCs should debate how to present their findings to Merry and Pippin.
- They also enjoy the company of the Corsair captain, a jolly fellow with a patch over his eye and a wooden leg.
- Optional ending for GMs: A stormcloud appears from the horizon, and the waves get rougher and rougher. A bad spring storm sinks the ship. Each player gets a chance to survive (or TPK = that's why no one knows what happened to the Entwives!). The seed from Fimbrelthil in its box washes up on the shore and is found by Elves of Farlindon.

Their Corsair ship is an unlikely sight, sailing into the Grey Havens. If only the Elves could have seen it, but there are few of the Old Ones left, and Cirdan is gone. Only the Silvan Elves have chosen to stay.

Renting horses from the edge of the Shire, they give that land a wide berth, remembering that it is illegal for Big Folk to enter the Shire. The heroes ride along the edge of the Southfarthing, cross the Brandywine at Sarn Ford, and cut across to the Greenway, where they first traveled many months ago. Along the way, they see the signs of Spring—many flowers blooming, and some trees blooming.

They finally arrive in Bree, and meet the Thain and Master at the Prancing Pony, with the Mayor of Hobbiton, Samwise Gardner. They tell their story in the Back Room (GM discretion) and the hobbits praise them with great praise. If the heroes remember to share the Song of Yavanna and the Golden Tree, it's written down by Sam, and passed on to help many folk.

The players can also plant the apple seed at the Crossroads of Bree. Barnabas Butterbur promises to have it protected.

For their reward, Merry and Pippin give each of them a chest of silver worth 10 Treasure Points, and an opportunity: 1) Go spend time in Fangorn Forest with Treebeard as his guest; 2) the gift of a holding in the new city of Annuminas, earning a higher standing among men, serving King Elessar; or 3) joining a new band of warriors called the Troll-beaters, who ride up and down the Trollshaws and Ettenmoors to keep the trolls from growing too bold.

EPILOGUE:

Each hero describes what they do with the opportunity given them by Merry and Pippin. GM awards Advancement Points and Experience Points.

POEM

The Song of Yavanna and the Golden Tree

O Sun which rises in the east, and sails across the sky:
Final fruit of the Golden Tree, and sign of hope nearby.
To west, O west, it draws our hearts, and with it, travel high,
To Kementari's pastures growing gold till death may die.

The sun, in blessing Arda, spends her strength to make it warm...
For trees and fields of Middle-earth, for crops of wheat and corn,
All fruit that swells on bough and vine, let songs our hearths adorn.

Those who love the Sun do love the Tree from which 'twas born.

Earth! O Middle-earth, whose soil so long the Wise defended
By quiet care, its gifts to share, its wounds we've kindly mended,
Though trouble stirs in evil's acre, gardens we have tended,
That from these labors, all may find the Golden Tree befriended.

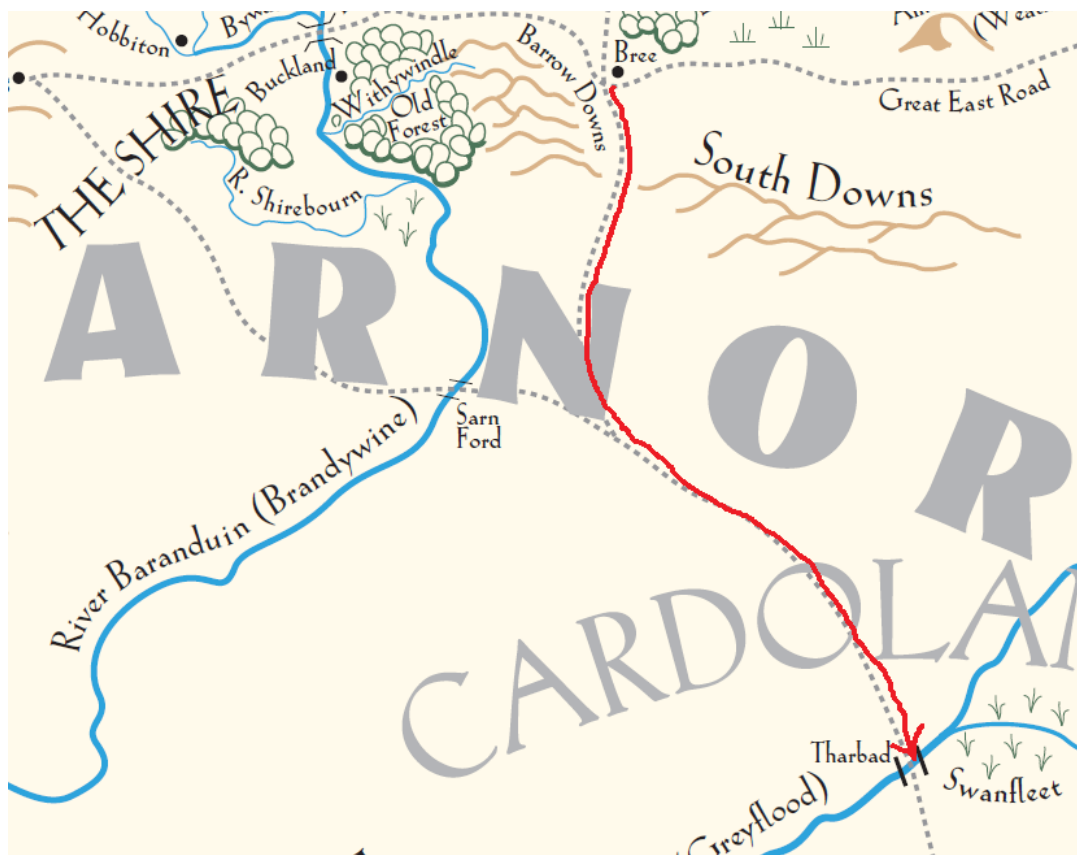
The beauty of water quenches the thirst of the verdant vine and hops,
And the laughter of streams and the sweat of men produce abundant crops.
O Kementari, bless these fields and orchards with many raindrops
That the Golden Tree may grow from sea to misty mountaintops.

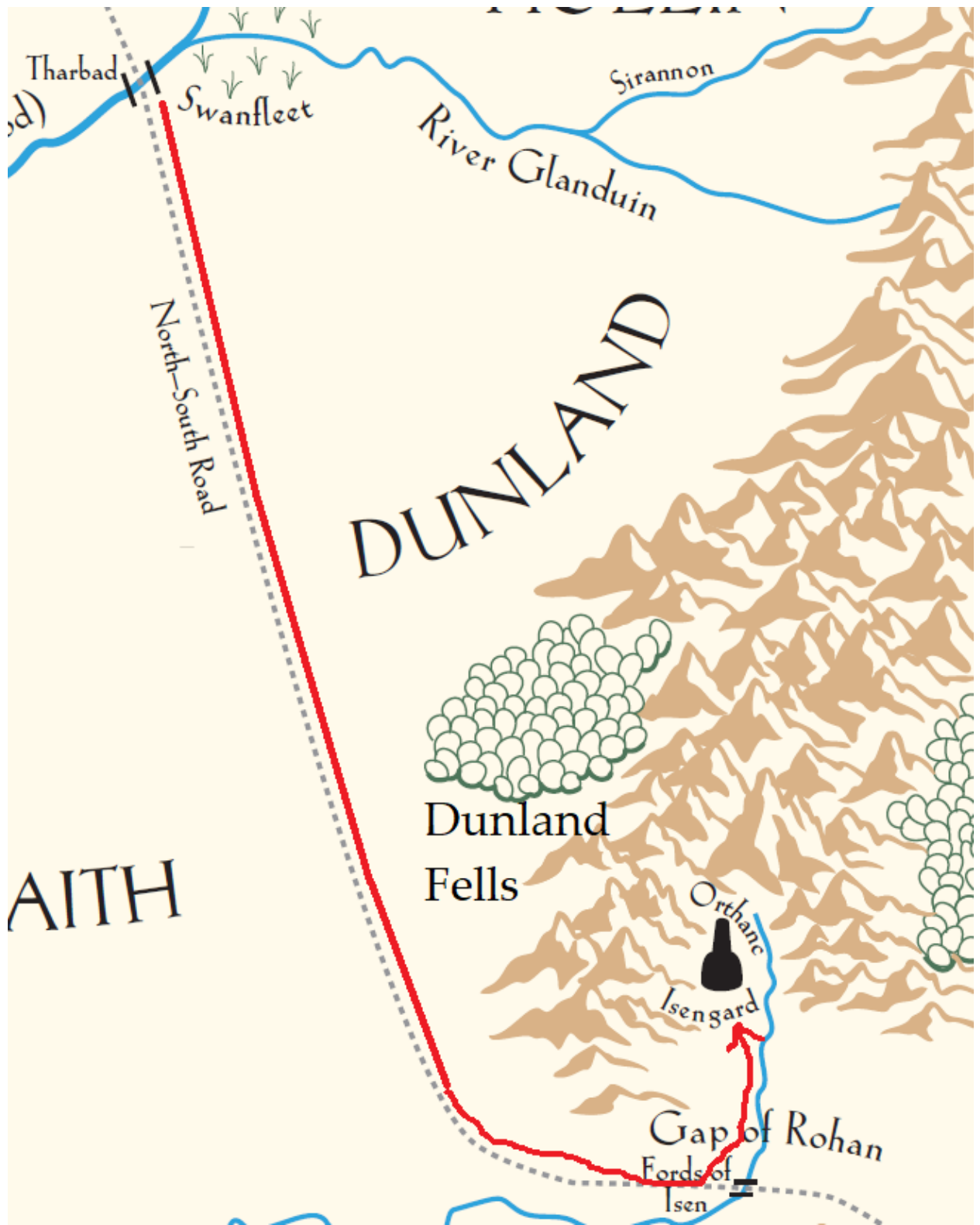
O Golden Tree! Yavanna sang you, shaped you, mourned your dying;
Rejoicéd when its scion, Sun, shone Light (the Dark defying);
She likewise saw the fruit of the Sun was to all Men satisfying,
And looks for fruit of gratitude, rising to Lands Undying.

ENEMIES

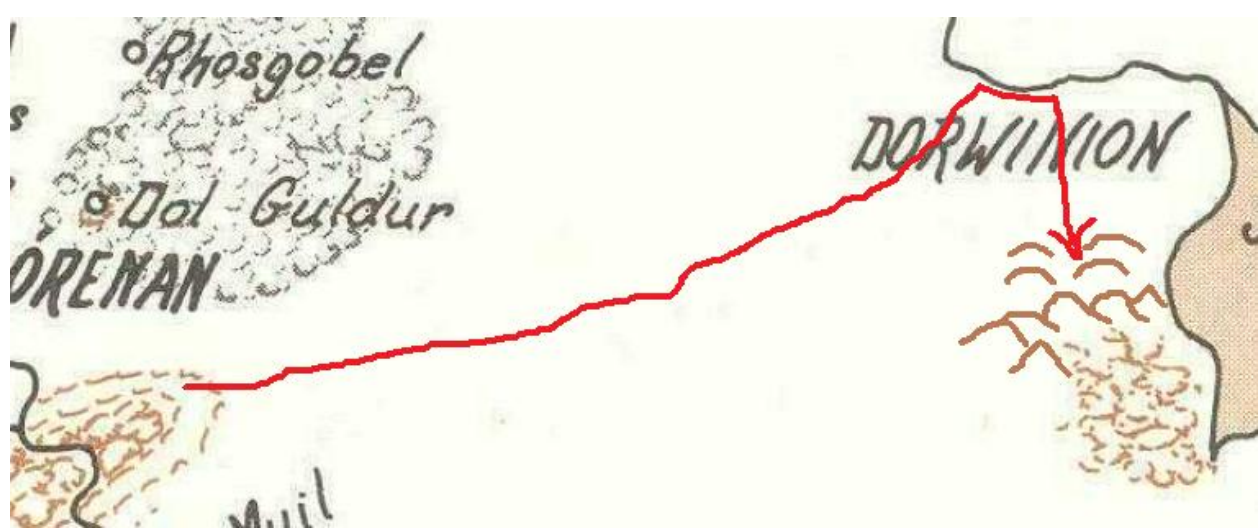
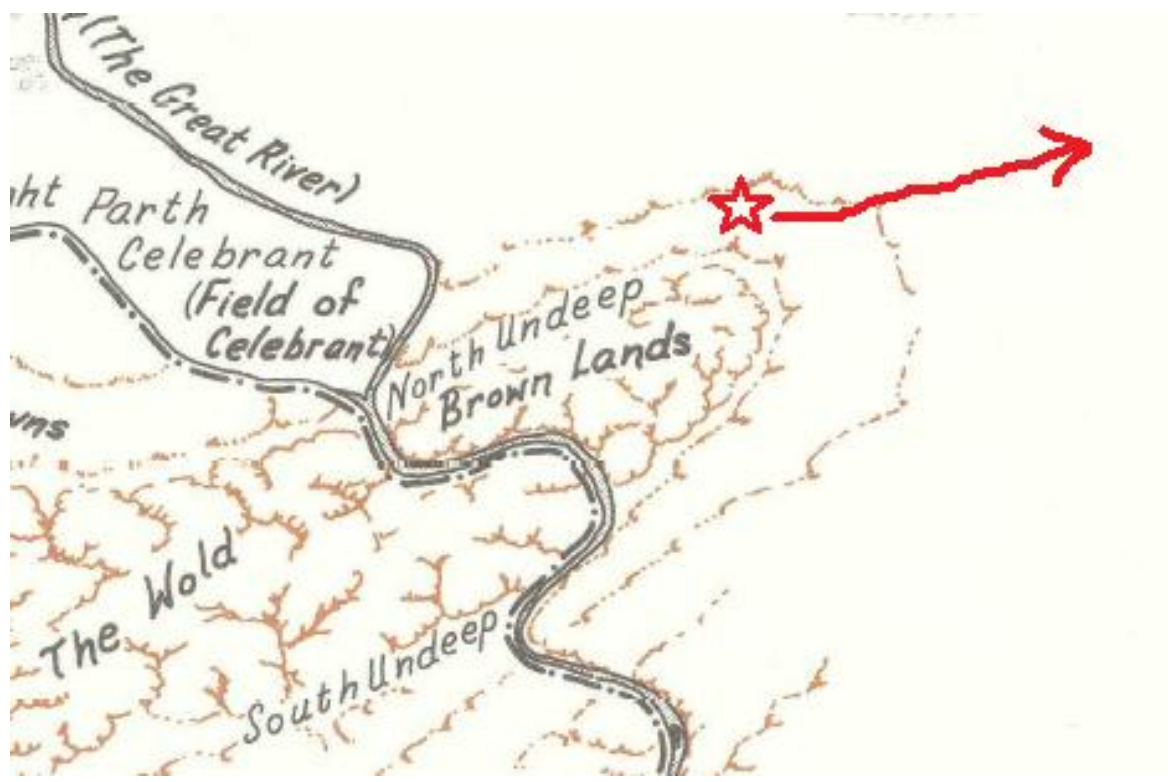
Hill-man Warrior- Desert Nomad

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL	
4	
ENDURANCE	HATE
16	3
PARRY	ARMOUR
5	2d
SKILLS	
Personality, 1	Survival, 3
Movement, 3	Custom, 2
Perception, 2	Vocation, 2
WEAPON SKILLS	
Spear	2
Curved Short sword (2)	2
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Strike fear	Fear of fire
Running Away (Burst of Speed)	

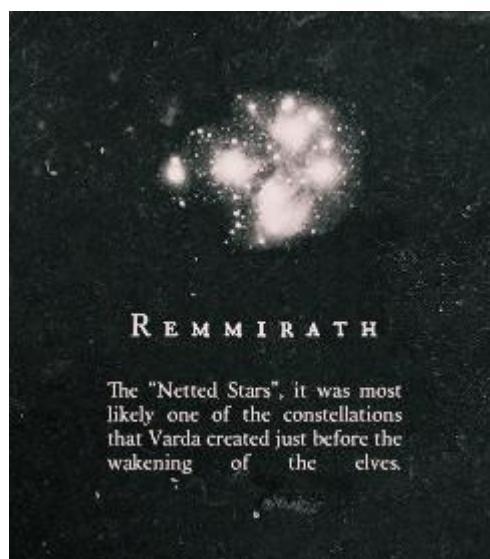
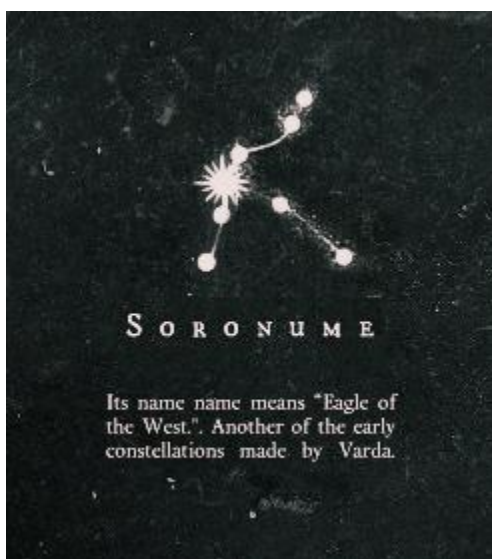
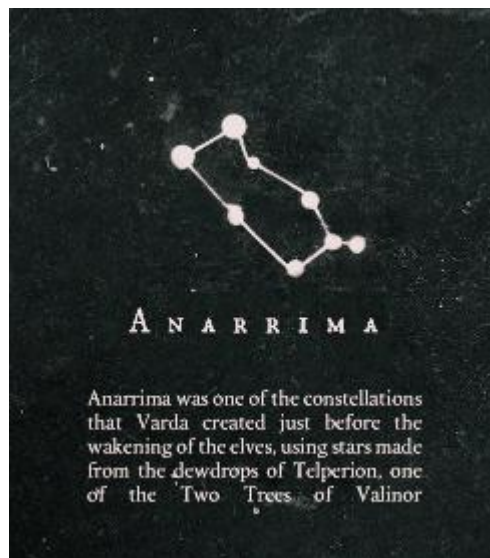
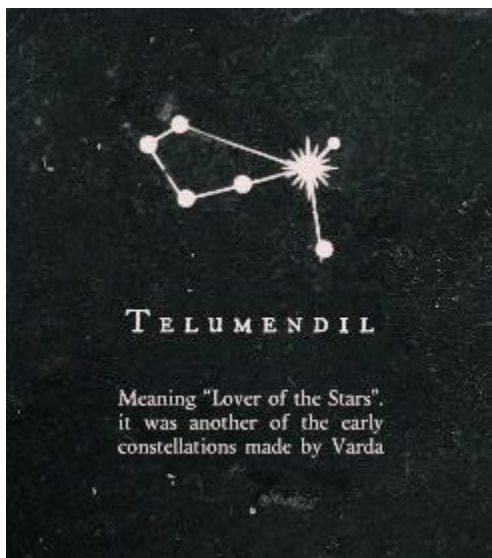
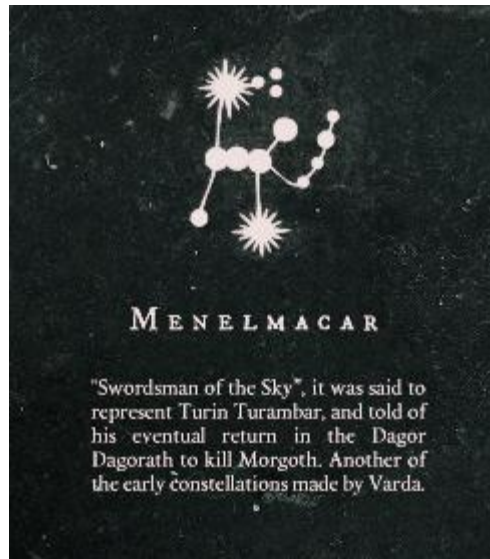
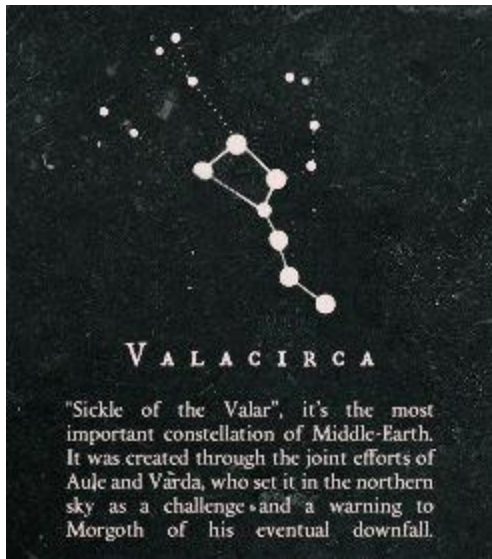


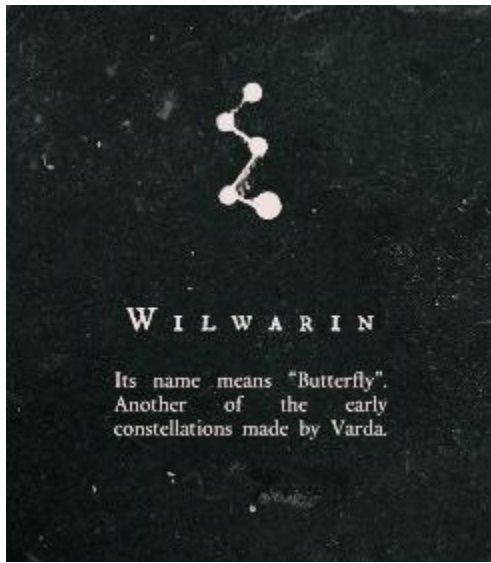




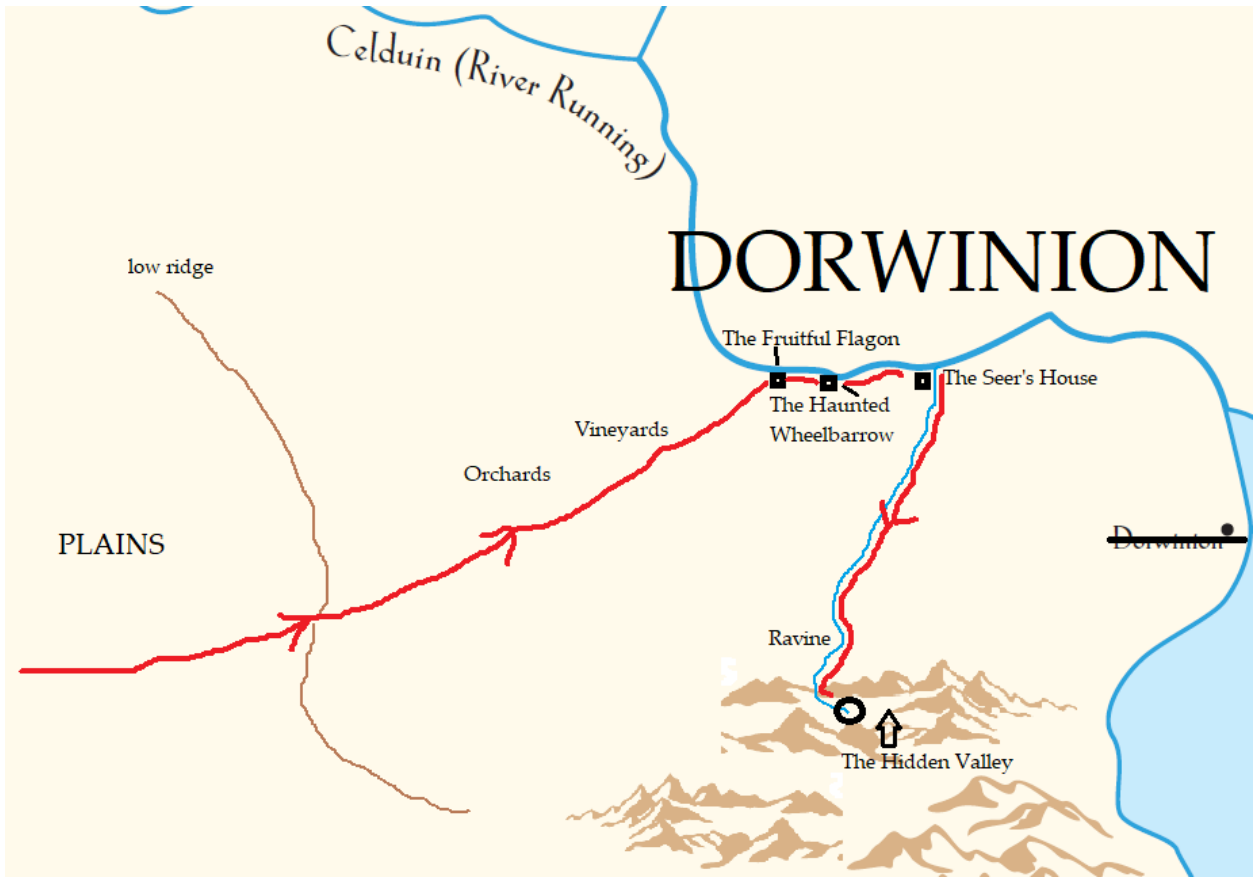


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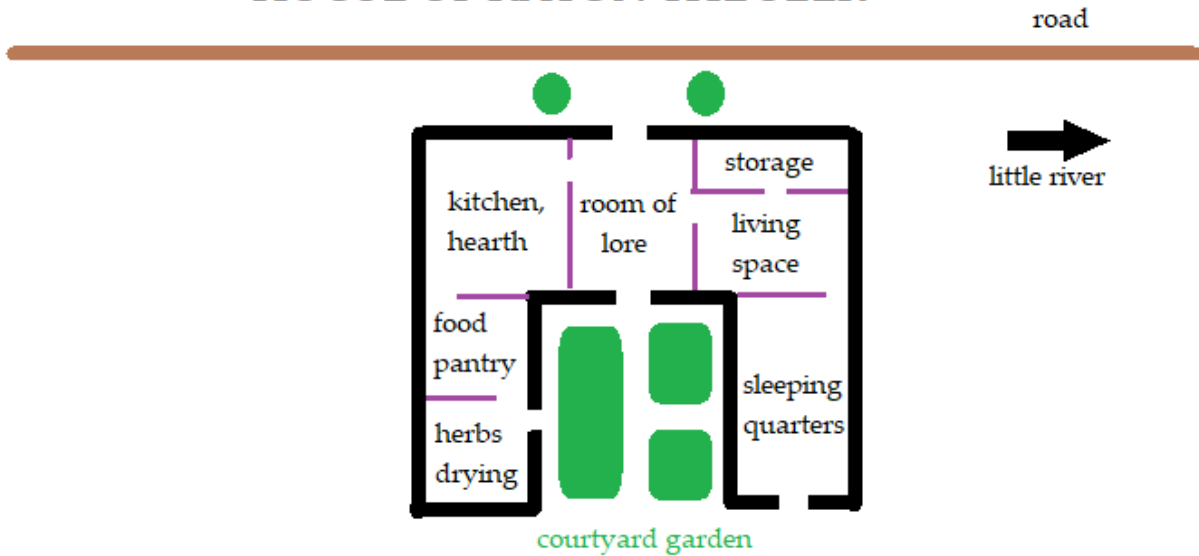




Source: <https://areddhels.tumblr.com/> (I suggest we can print out for use if desired, but leave out of the final copy so that we don't run into publishing issues)

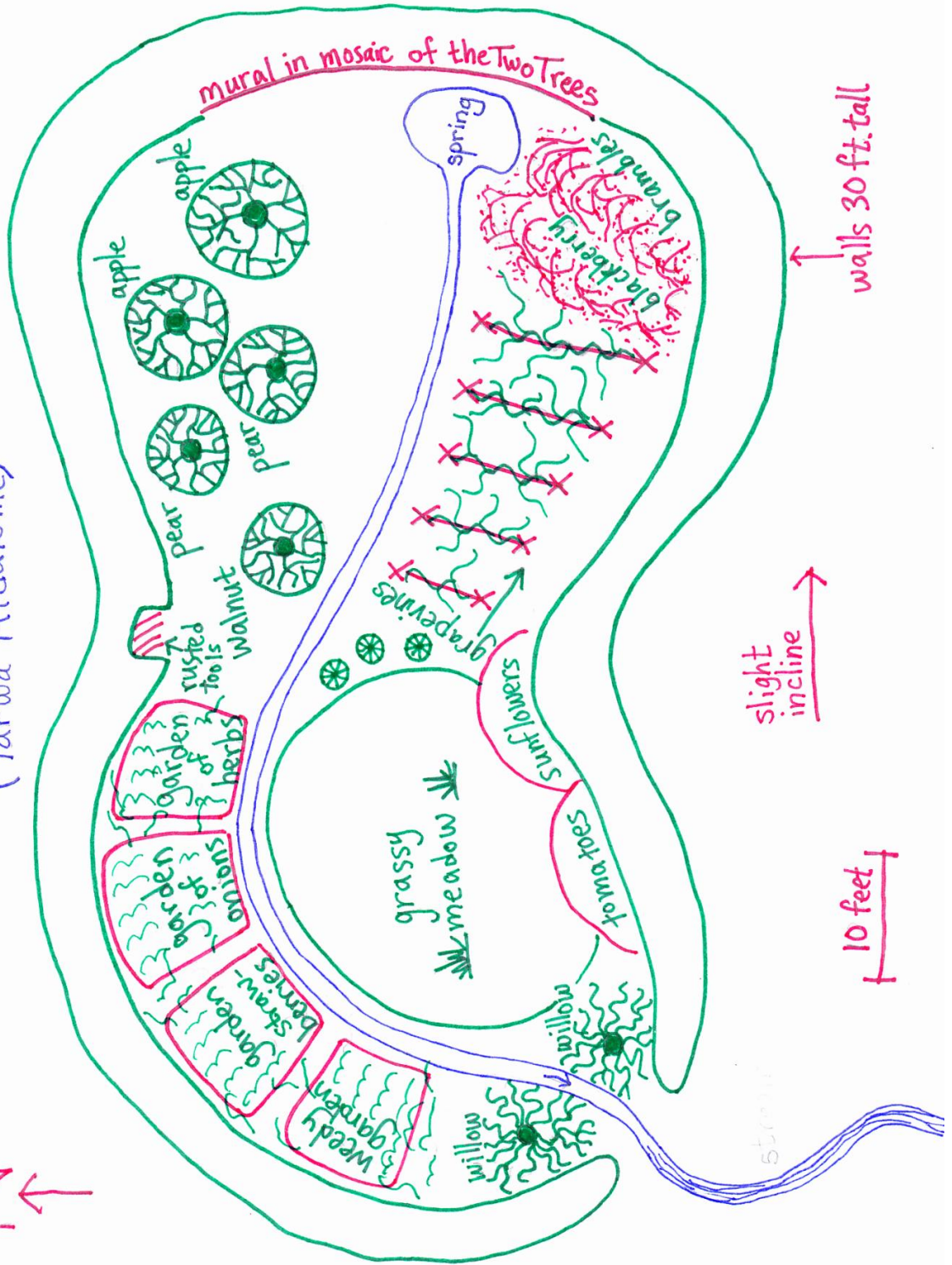


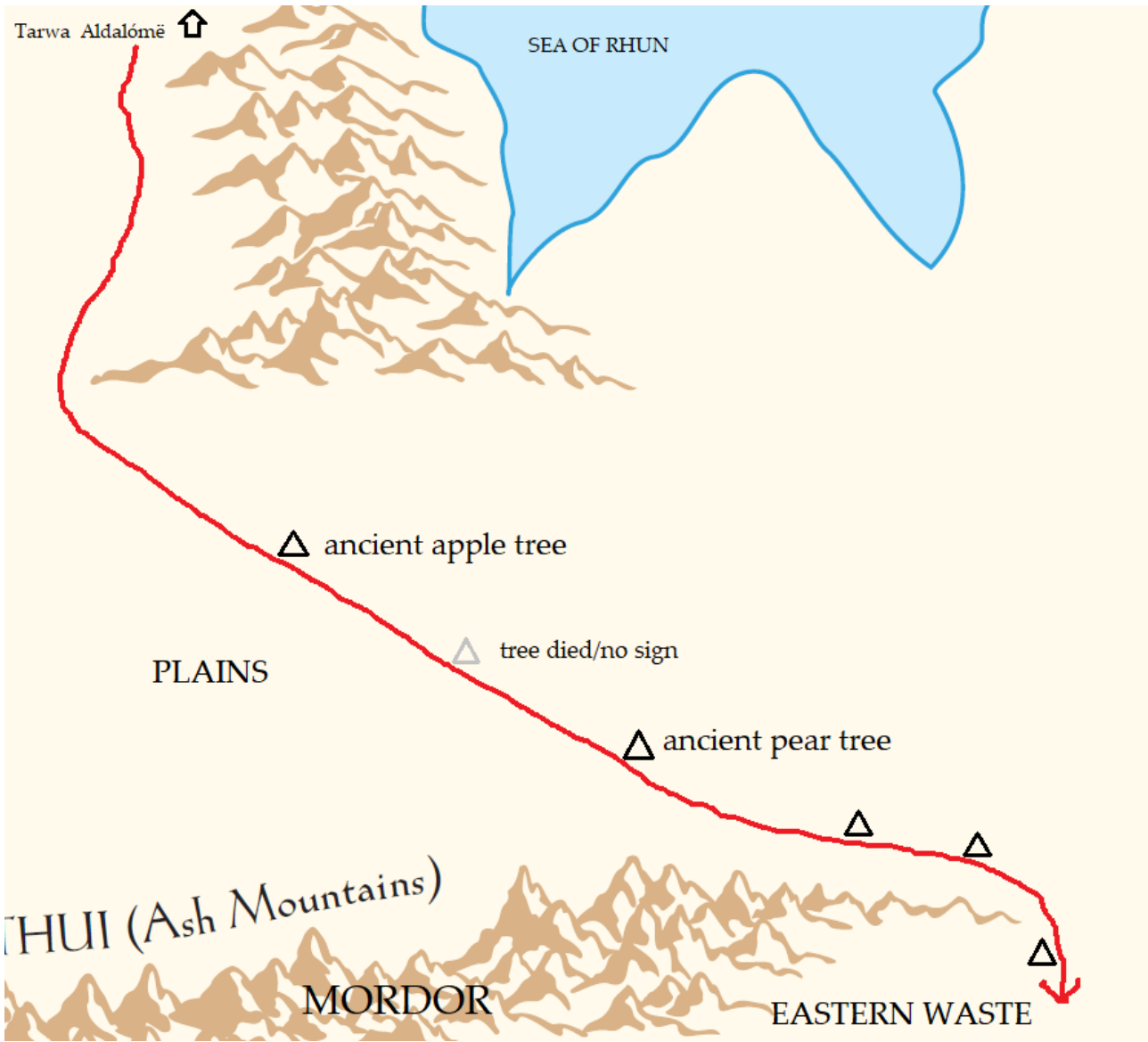
HOUSE OF KATUN THE SEER

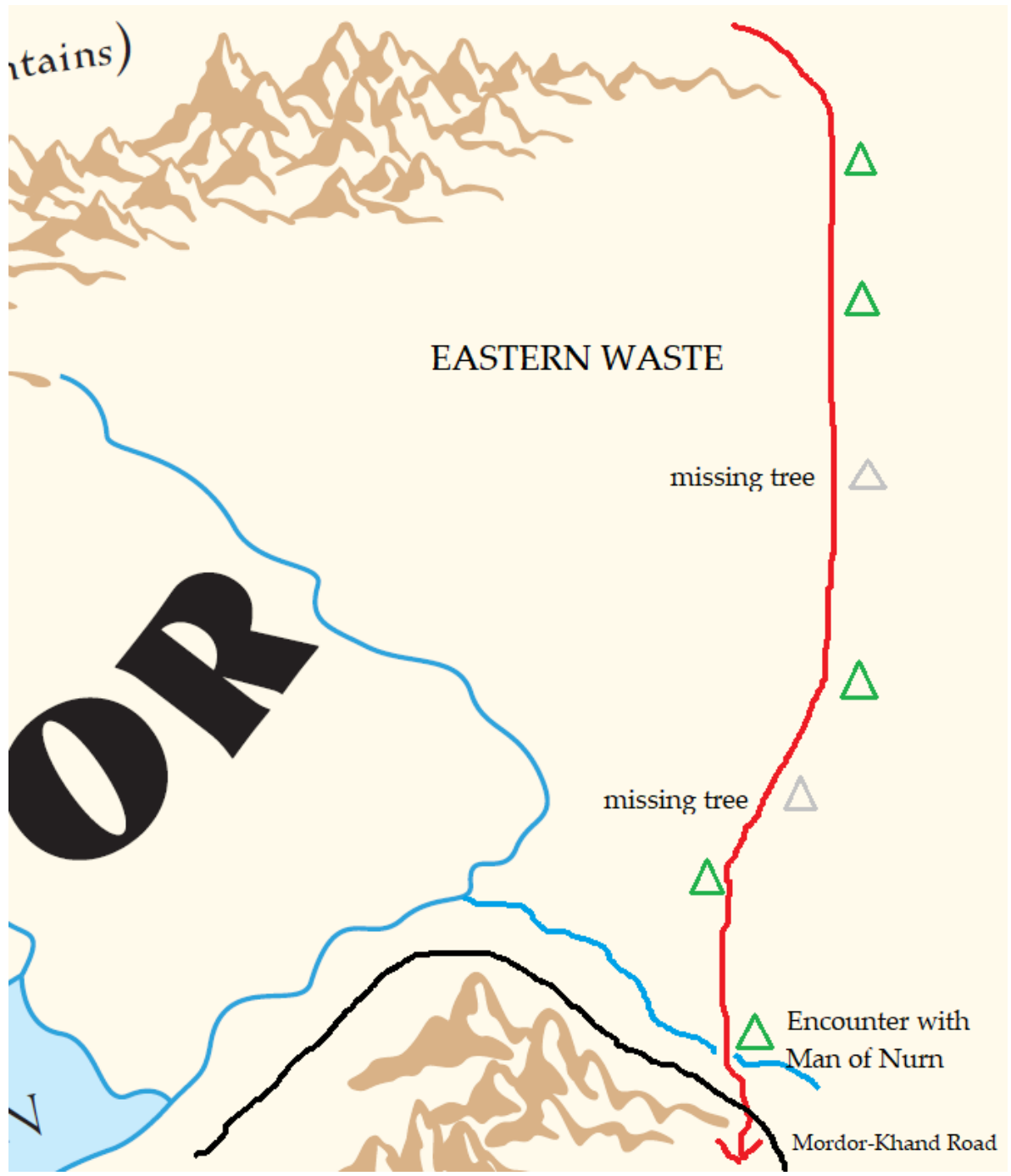


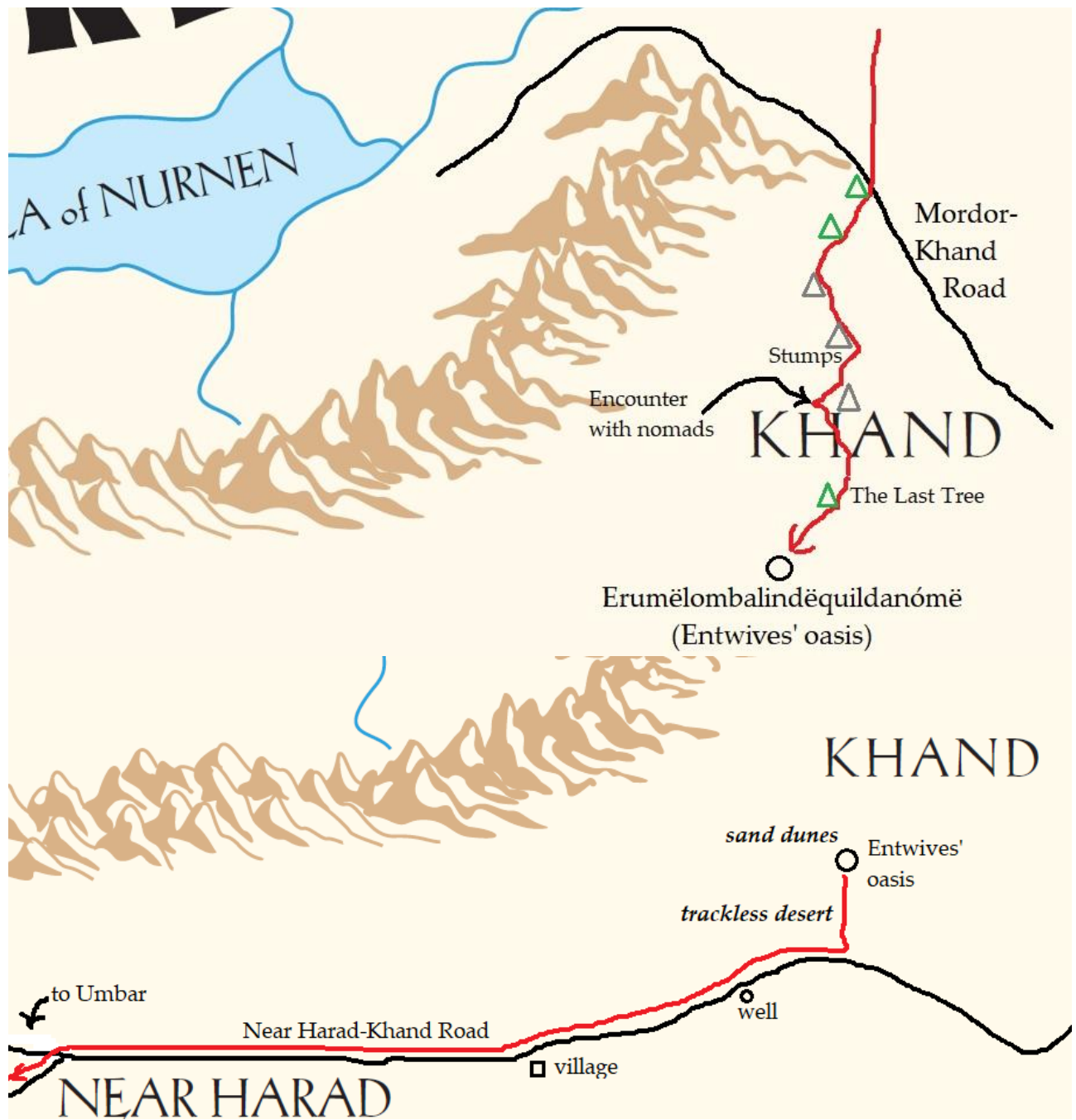
GARDEN OF THE TREE-TWILIGHT

(Tarwa Aldalómé)

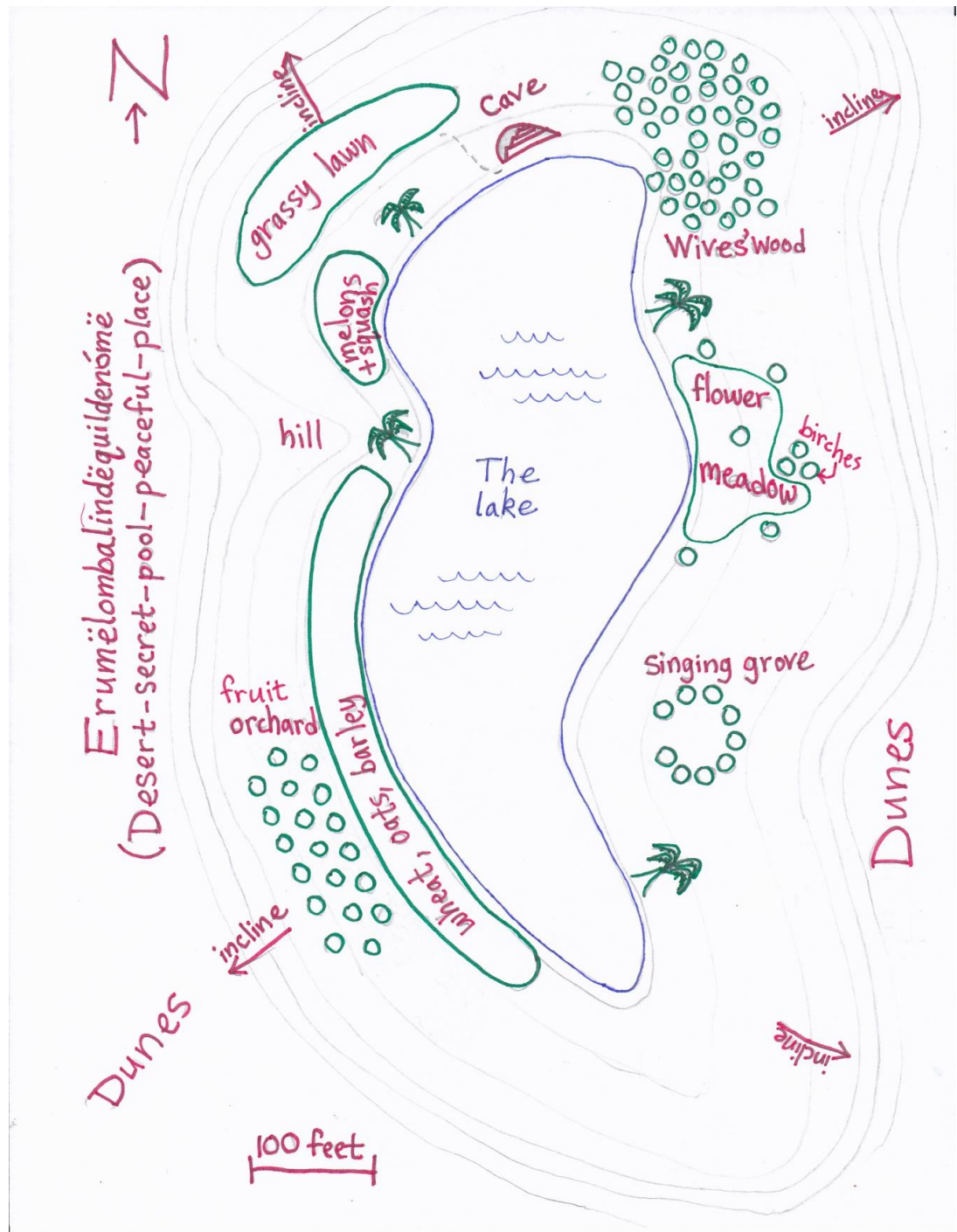








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Erümëlbaldinëquidenómë
 (Desert-secret-pool-peaceful-place)