

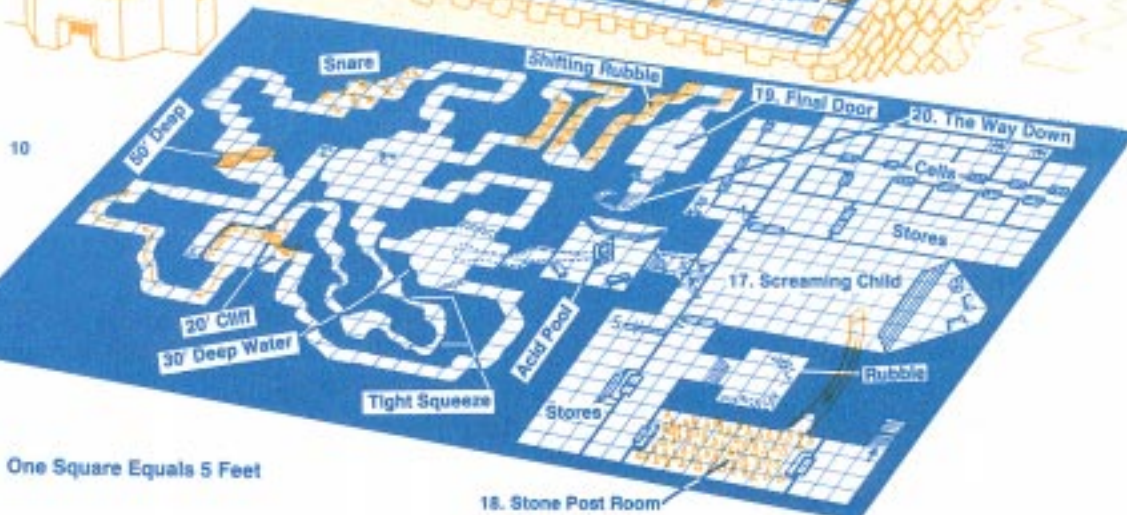
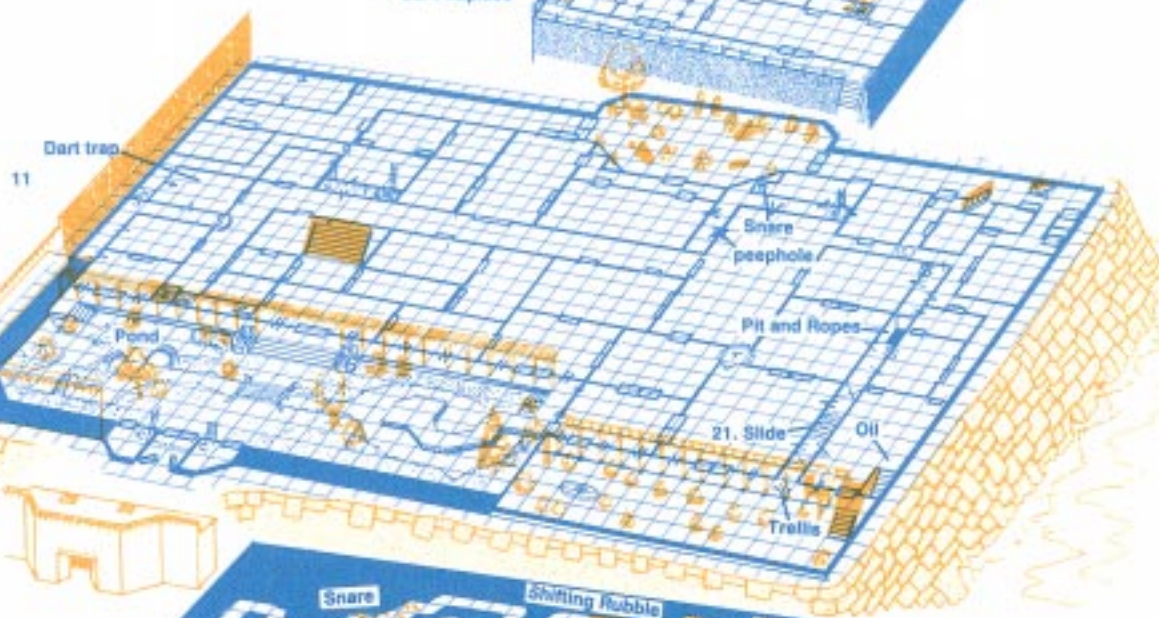
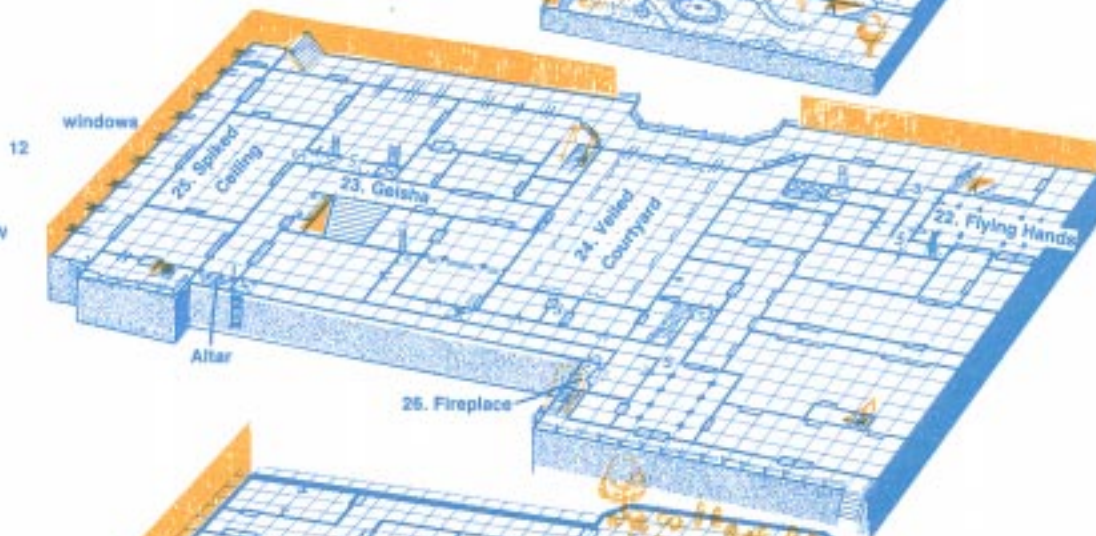
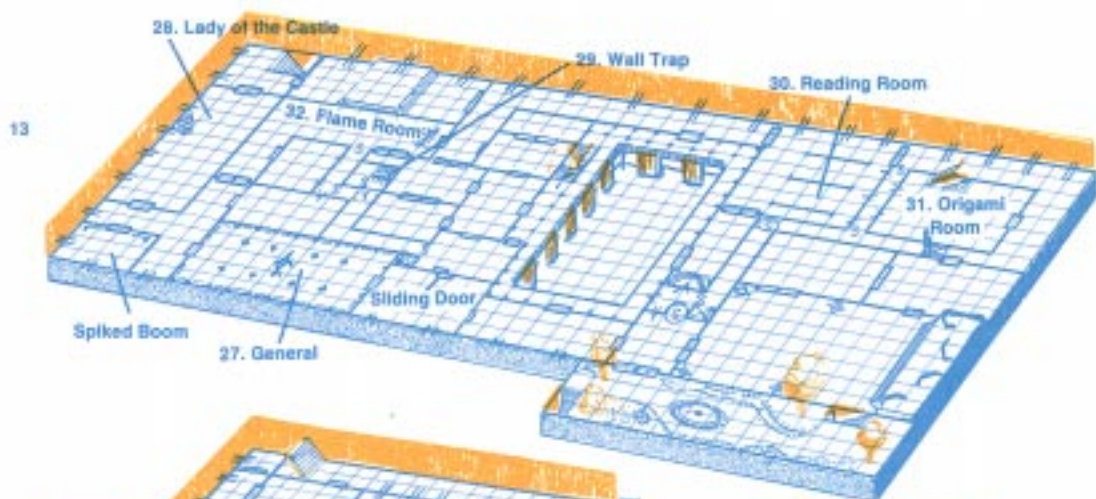
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Oriental Adventures

Night of the Seven Swords

Pickens, Cook, Johnson, Swan, Carmien, and Ritchie

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-  Tapestry/Curtain
-  Statue
-  Trap Door in Ceiling
-  Trap Door in Floor

One Square Equals 5 Feet

18. Stone Post Room

Oriental Adventures

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INTRODUCTION

This module contains an extended adventure in four parts. It is intended for a party of 6-8 characters of level 4-6, about 30-36 levels in all. Players can use their own characters or the pregenerated adventurers in the back of the module booklet. The maps for each section are located on the cover of the module booklet.

Briefly, the players find themselves on a quest for a box of relics of the Seven Swords Clan (the Ito family), which was destroyed centuries ago. They must act swiftly and secretly, for a rival faction is after the same treasure. In the first section, the characters enter a haunted castle in search of the relics. In the second, they discover hidden caverns, also haunted, beneath the castle. After confronting and defeating the guardian, they must then cross miles of hostile territory to a safe haven while avoiding enemy patrols. Finally, they must withstand a last effort by rival forces to steal the relics.

The DM should familiarize himself thoroughly with each section before running the adventure. The sections are intended to be played in the order given, with no time for training between them. The overall atmosphere should be one of haste; the characters are acting under time pressure, but the DM may alter the pacing as needed to allow for additional healing, introduction of new characters, and so on.

The adventure is set in the Kozakuran province of Maeshi, a small northern peninsula on the west coast of the main island of Shinkoku. The brief description of the peninsula's history that follows this introduction should be read before going on to the adventure background material.

A BACKGROUND GUIDE TO MAESHI

Geography

The province of Maeshi forms the least of three peninsulas jutting out of the northern side of Shinkoku — the main island of Kozakura. North of the Jodo Plain, Maeshi is separated from the southern side of

Shinkoku by a steep and rugged range of mountains. To the west is the mouth of the Norikaikyo (Nori Strait) and the Western Sea. To the east is the Sorawan (Sora Bay).

One mountain range, separate from most of the others which lie to the south, branches into the province forming the backbone of the peninsula. Commonly called the Western Sea Mountains, it reaches to the tip of the peninsula. Unlike most on Shinkoku, several peaks at the heart of this range are permanently snow-covered and the highest — Two Peak Mountain — has small glaciers in its narrow cleft valleys. They rise abruptly from the western shoreline and slope only slightly gentler on the eastern side. Hence, most of the life of the province is confined to a small bowl-shaped plain bounded by mountains on the north, west, and south. This area is fed by several shallow, fast-flowing rivers which run rocky courses and empty into the bay. As such, although they provide much-needed water to the thick forests and farmer's fields, they are unsuitable for carrying goods up or down river. Thus, all travel and trading in the province relies on land or water routes.

There is only one principal land route. Leading from the south-western end of the Maeshi valley, it quickly rises and wends through the mountains. Heading generally to the south, it crosses the border into Takako. There it gradually turns southeast, following the boundary of Takako and Hochi provinces before it descends from the mountains onto the upper reaches of the Jodo Plain in Wakinasga province. There it connects with the Imperial Post Road which runs the length of Shinkoku. The route is arduous and filled with hazards. The mountains are the refuge of many bandits, rebels, and runaway apprentices. The dark wooded valleys are home to tengu, hengeyokai, korobokuru, and worse. Natural hazards line the path — flash floods, landslides, chasms, and earthquakes. With all these risks it is almost surprising the land route is used at all!

But it is, for the water route is no better. Only one suitable port exists in the province, on the shores of Sorawan. It is barely

adequate to handle the small amount of shipping that visits the province. Vessels traveling to and from the province must either risk a stormy passage around the northern end of the island or a long and dangerous journey to the south. Sailing north, a captain must ride out unpredictable storms around the northern cape. Barbarian raiders threaten those who stray too close to the wrong coast. Once past the cape, he must still traverse nearly half of the coast to reach suitable ports for trade.

By the southern route, he must pass through the Norikaikyo and into the Inland Sea. Here he must be wary of korobokuru raiders and wanton pirates. Passing through the Inland Sea he must swing about the southern end of Shinkoku where it is closest to Wa. Here the greatest danger lies. Privateers supported by the powerful nobles of Wa freely raid ships and coastal villages, carrying their booty back to their patrons. These men, *wako*, are feared throughout the Celestial Sea for their violence and tenacity. Only then can he land at a southern port to have his goods shipped yet farther overland to the markets of the capital.

History

Maeshi is an isolated province, both geographically and economically. However, it does have a certain strategic value in the control of the northern provinces. For centuries, Maeshi has guarded the entrance to Norikaikyo and the Inland Sea. With a strong fleet, a vigorous warrior could control the movement of ships in and out of the strait, cutting the northern provinces off from many in the south. Such a grip could become like iron if the provinces of Kanahanto and Yokozu were added to the collection. With these three, all communication with the north could be blocked. Thus, the small province of Maeshi has always had some significance to the rulers of the realm.

The timeline of Maeshi given here outlines the early history of the province. This timeline is organized the same as that found in OA1: *Swords of the Daimyo*. Before each entry are two dates. The first is the date by the Kozakuran calendar in 60



year cycles. The number before the slash is the cycle, the number after is the year of the cycle. The second date appears in parentheses. This is cumulative years since year 1 of cycle 1. Year 1 of cycle 1 is the ascension of the first human emperor, Mori. Emperors' names are printed in all capitals. If you have OA1, you can combine this timeline with the one presented there. Events common to the two are given the same date.

Timeline of Maeshi

2/34 (94): Prince Miki organizes an army to drive the korobokuru out of northern Shinkoku.

2/37 (97): Ito no Juro leads a wing of Prince Miki's army through the mountains into present day Maeshi valley. Following several sharp battles with the korobokuru, the hairy men are driven into the Western Mountains. A small palisade is erected on a small island at the mouth of the main river.

2/44 (104): The korobokuru chieftain Inoyep gathers the clans in the mountains south of Maeshi. Ito no Saburo Takanori, brother of Juro, is granted the post of governor of Maeshi and Kanahanto.

2/45 (105): Inoyep leads the united korobokuru clans out of the mountains. Takanori and his troops are driven out of Kanahanto and forced to take refuge in the fort at Maeshi. Further south, Inoyep storms Todaijo, slaying Prince Miki. Takanori finally breaks the siege of his fort by offering his daughter to the local korobokuru chieftain, Akarweop.

2/47 (107): Emperor Itonin's army regains control of Maeshi. Takanori's daughter prevails upon Akarweop to slay Inoyep. She then delivers Akarweop and the other chieftains into Itonin's hands who orders them slain. The confederation is broken.

2/52 (112): DAIGEN

3/13 (133): Chiro no Maasate settles on Tenmei. A branch of Takanori's family accompanies him.

3/30 (150): TENSHO

4/5 (185): OKURI

5/28 (268): KOSHU

5/40 (280): Ito Kajo divides his inheritance — Maeshi and Kanahanto — between his sons Manju and Kunitake.

5/44 (284): Manju arranges for the poisoning of Kunitake and seizes control of Kanahanto. The emperor and his followers strip Manju of his titles and lands. Manju is cut down by Ito Tokiharu, son of Kunitake.

The emperor reassigns Kanahanto to another lord.

7/10 (370): SENTAI

7/25 (385): The majority of the korobokuru leave for Tenmei. Ito Moriyasu refuses to drive those unwilling korobokuru from Maeshi, who then gift him with the Seven Swords. The family mon (seal) is officially changed to that of seven joined swords.

8/26 (446): SHOTOKEN

9/23 (504): JUMEI

10/23 (563): SANOE

11/19 (619): The Ito family divides into two main branches — the Ito and the Nambu. A dispute develops over the possession of the Seven Swords. For the next 17 years a feud rages between the two branches with ambushes, raids, vendettas, and insults.

11/31 (631): TOAKIMI

11/36 (636): The Nambu gain possession of the Seven Swords. The Ito family is driven out of Maeshi province.

11/53 (653): KODAIKU (Empress)

11/54 (654): The Zakura Insurrection begins in the Northern Provinces. Prince Sagi is named the Emperor by a confederation of Northern lords. The Nambu side with Empress Kodaiku. The Ito, seeking to regain their province, side with Prince Sagi. Civil war breaks out in Maeshi as the Nambu struggle to retain their grip on the province. The head of the Nambu family is assassinated, supposedly by Ito ninja. The Nambu are driven from Maeshi by the Ito with support from the Nagano. Emperor Sagi, obeying the wishes of Nagano Toyoo, architect of the Insurrection, awards Kanahanto to the Nagano family as a gift province.

12/46 (706): GOSAGI, Northern Court

12/52 (712): Honda no Okumi is named regent of the southern court. Nambu Akinari marries a daughter of Okumi.

12/53 (713): BIDAMU, Southern Court

12/55 (715): Taking part in the campaign of Honda no Okumi, Nambu Akinari and his retainers cross the mountains into Maeshi. Unable to assail the island fortress of the Ito, Akinari builds the Sun Temple, actually a fortified compound at the western end of the valley.

12/57 (717): The first phase of construction completed at the Sun Temple, Akinari has his son named Chief Abbot. Following his father's plan, Buccho begins gathering a large force of sohei at the temple.

12/59 (719): OUIZU, Northern Court

The Ito attempt a sudden attack on the Sun Temple. Buccho and his sohei defeat them and launch a counter-attack led by Buccho and his father Akinari. The Ito are

beseiged in their island castle, but Akinari is slain. The first of the Seven Swords is lost.

12/60 (720): The Seige of Ito-jo ends in the Night of Burning Flowers. The castle is burned to the ground. All the Ito family and their retainers are slain. However, Buccho dies under mysterious circumstances. The second of the Seven Swords is lost. Maeshi is awarded by Okumi to Akana Samon, retainer of Nambu Akinari. Both the Ito and Nambu branches have been destroyed. The Ito family is officially declared outlawed. The remaining five swords of the Ito are presented to Akana Samon.

13/2 (722): The Zakura Insurrection ends. The Northern Court is destroyed and Emperor Ouizu is banished.

14/58 (838): SUREI

15/44 (884): The impossible happens when the third sword is broken in a duel. The pieces are saved, but are lost over the years. Several shrines now claim to house authentic pieces of the sword. Only four swords remain.

16/16 (916): KOKAN

17/9 (969) SUKO

17/36 (996): Akana Ujisato refuses to send more support to the cause of Honda Mototsune, who is battling invaders from Wa. Mototsune grants Maeshi to the Michimori family. With this charter, they quickly drive out the Akana. In the ensuing confusion the fourth of the Seven Swords is lost.

18/36 (1056): KIMAYAKU

18/42 (1062): SOYOKU (Empress)

18/48 (1068): MURAKAKU

19/28 (1108): The Tenu War begins. Dissatisfied with the treatment under the Imperial regent, the Michimori throw in with the Hojo from the start.

19/30 (1110): SAGO

19/31 (1111): Sanai, leader of the Michimori faction, is killed in a skirmish on the outskirts of Dojyu. The fifth of the Seven Swords is lost. Sanai's son restores honor to the family and the leadership of the clan passes to his uncle. It is reported that Sanai's ghost now wanders about searching for the lost swords.

19/33 (1113): SHOWAJI

19/49 (1119): The Tenu War is for all practical purposes over when Hojo Shinzei is named shogun. Late in the year, stewardship of Maeshi, Kanahanto, and Yokuzo is given to Michimori. A marriage is arranged between the children of the two clans — a Michimori boy and a Hojo girl. The marriage is finalized at the convening of the Bakufu (shogun's headquarter).



ters) the next year. Michimori, as loyal and early allies of the Hojo, are treated with great honor.

19/56 (1136): GOTENSHO

19/57 (1137): The Michimori are named shugo (military governor) of Maeshi.

20/1 (1141): GOSOYOKU (Empress)

20/4 (1144): KAMEDAI. While on his way to the Bakufu, Michimori Yumimaro is seduced by an evil spirit disguised as a noblewoman. Influenced by the creature's charms, he abandons his wife for a year. Realizing he was tricked, he appears before the shogun for punishment. Yokuzo province is stripped from his family and he is confined to his palace for two years. Later it is discovered that the creature had made off with the sixth of the Seven Swords.

20/15 (1155): GOSUKO

20/23 (1163): NIJO

20/50 (1190): GOITONIN

20/51 (1191): The first rumors of ninja in Maeshi come to the attention of the Michimori. Although there is an extensive search, none are ever found.

20/52 (1192): SHUJO. The Michimori issue the first proclamation restricting swords in Maeshi to samurai and licensed swordsmiths. The order is enforced by roving bands of Michimori retainers. The Ninja family begin to train and use exotic weapons in defense.

20/55 (1195): Michimori Joha, then current head of the clan, dies of a mysterious fever. There is strong suspicion of ninja activity.

20/56 (1196): KAMMU

21/14 (1214): A violent earthquake strikes Maeshi, shattering the foundation of the old Ito island castle. The monks of the Sun Temple claim responsibility for averting the main force of the quake with their prayers.

21/28 (1228): TOKURA. On the occasion of Tokura's ascension, the shogun grants special tax immunities to the Sun Temple. Over the years, the wealthy temple becomes dominant in local politics, while the Michimori weaken.

21/42 (1242): IJO

21/44 (1244): GODAIGEN

21/46 (1246): The Reign of Omi begins. A band of oni from the Western Mountains seize an isolated section of Maeshi valley, placing all under their rule. Neither the samurai of Michimori or the sohei of the Sun Temple can exterminate them. Their leader is Omi, most fearsome of their lot.

21/48 (1248): The korobokuru chieftain Okunipe comes out of the Western Moun-

tains seeking the aid of the Michimori against Omi. The samurai Nitta petitions his master to go. Favored of all the Michimori samurai, his petition was granted. Indeed, the head of the household bestowed great honor on him, entrusting the seventh sword to his care. He never returned. The seventh of the Seven Swords is lost.

21/49 (1249): GOMORI

21/55 (1255): Kaijitsu, a counsellor of the Michimori, advises his lord on how to defeat Omi. A sacred rite is held in a shrine near Omi's fortress and several tuns of sake are left as offerings to the gods. Later, when Omi and his hideous followers enter the temple for a drinking party, Kaijitsu, who had hidden in one of the tuns, leaps out and defeats the assembled host. He recovers the seventh of the Seven Swords. The Reign of Omi is ended. In honor of his deed, Kaijitsu is given the seventh sword.

22/25 (1285): ENCHIGO

22/38 (1298): GOSAGO

22/42 (1302): FUKAKUJI

22/52 (1312): GOFUKAKUJI

22/59 (1319): SUTOPEI

23/27 (1347): GOIJO

23/33 (1356): The Korimori family is founded, as a branch of the Hojo. Its home province is Gizan in the south.

23/44 (1364): GOKIMAYAKU (Empress)

23/52 (1372): REIJO

23/55 (1375): The emperor visits the province of Maeshi to inspect the defenses of the strait. During his visit, he is saved from an assassination attempt by the Innkeeper. In honor of his deed, the family is elevated to samurai status and the inn is given special protections.

24/19 (1399): GOBIDAMU

24/26 (1406): GOKAMMU

24/35 (1415): The Hojo War begins. The Michimori family, closely related to the Hojo, immediately supports them. Maeshi province is mobilized in support of the shogun. The Korimori family, still based in Gizan, initially supports the Hojo to which it traces lineage, but is unenthusiastic.

24/38 (1418): The Korimori suddenly finds itself in danger from the Takenaka forces. It defects to their side, joining the battle against the Hojo.

24/41 (1421): The Hojo War ends. The Michimori mediate a peace between the Takenaka forces and the northern lords who have not yet surrendered, saving the house from total destruction.

24/42 (1422): The Korimori are declared shugo-daimyo of Maeshi. The post of mokudai (deputy imperial governor) falls to

the Michimori. However, due to the tardiness of Korimori's defection and the power and influence still retained by the Michimori, control of the province is never firmly secured by the Korimori.

24/45 (1425): GONIJO

24/46 (1426): The uneasy peace is broken by the mysterious death of Sado, son of Michimori Uemon, leader of the family. Uemon's other son is granted permission by the shogun to pursue a vendetta against the Korimori killers. The stalemate has now become a blood feud.

24/50 (1430): The beginning of the Miyama campaign. (OA1: Swords of the Daimyo).

24/53 (1433): The events described in OA2 occur.

DM BACKGROUND

This information fills in the gaps in the official history. The DM can conceal or reveal as much of this information as he wishes to the players; some may never be known. The DM should carefully distinguish which factions know which pieces of information. The factions include the Michimori family, the Korimori family, the Sun Temple sect, a new monster (the krakentua), the Kumi Ono (a yakuza-ninja family), and the player characters (who know least of all!).

The Fall of Ito

The end of the Ito family began with Ito Saburo, who became the head of the family in 12/52 (712) when his father died under mysterious circumstances. Nothing in Saburo's earlier life hinted at what was to come. He immediately surrounded himself with advisors of his own choosing, many of them notorious outlaws. The worst riffraff and bandits in the area became his personal retainers, under the pretext of defending the province. Moderate advisors, and even family members, were ruthlessly weeded out. Some fled, some were banished, and still more died suddenly. The lower classes were forced into miserable labor: expanding Ito Castle, building a fleet, or billeting and serving the undisciplined brigands incorporated into the provincial army.

Saburo's private life became notorious. His greed and cruelty were soon well known, but always, through seemingly supernatural luck, he avoided ruinous scan-



dal. As long-time retainers suffered in silence the later ones followed his example. The peasantry was ruthlessly oppressed and the non-military classes were intimidated and heavily taxed. The temples were suppressed, although shrines were usually left alone.

By 12/55 (715) enough of this had leaked out that Nambu Akinari was confident of a friendly reception when he established the Sun Temple later that year. The move was well-timed. Saburo's excesses had continued unabated, and a mysterious fire had destroyed most of his fleet. Further, the local economy was creaking and the defection of several western villages left him running short of slave labor. This and the pressures of court politics forced an unprepared Saburo to action in that year.

He began his campaign by razing the offending villages and gruesomely executing the survivors. He then marched directly to the fortified temple to seize it by surprise assault. The affair was a disaster. Saburo's half-trained and undisciplined force was no match for the sohei of Akinari — Saburo had allowed the quality of his samurai to decline over the years, and it is suspected that Akinari had been warned as well. Sohei and enraged peasants harried the broken Ito army all the way back to Ito Castle. The death of Akinari broke the first seige, but another seige the next year succeeded when a retainer betrayed the defenses. All Ito family members and their retainers were killed, but the last of the Nambu branch died as well. Enraged at behavior of the Ito family and the end of the Nambu, the Sun Temple sect placed an *ancient curse* upon the site.

The Krakentua

Unknown to all, this powerful demon spirit plays a major role in the history of the castle. Fleeing the more powerful guardian spirits of the deep ocean, the krakentua, a gargantuan humanoid with a kraken-like head, took refuge in the deep caverns below the castle. It was discovered by a wu jen who thought to trick it into serving him by threatening it with the enmity of the Sun Temple sect. The plan backfired, for not only did the krakentua enslave the wu jen, but it set out to destroy the local power of the sect as well. It proceeded by using the wu jen to gain control of Ito Saburo, with disastrous results for all concerned. By the time of the seige, the krakentua had decided to humiliate Saburo by slowly col-

lecting his family's treasured swords. Saburo traded the first one for the death of Akinari, which was accomplished by the wu jen. The krakentua's plan to get the second one was thwarted by the betrayal of the castle (however, the second sword mysteriously vanished after the castle's fall). Although the krakentua remained undiscovered following the fall of the castle, it was trapped there by the wording of by the ancient curse.

Years later, some of the matter was discovered by a powerful wu jen, who was seeking the lost swords. The wu jen discovered enough to determine that a hitherto unknown box of Ito relics existed, their location, and something of the nature of the guardian. He created the *seven-fingered hands* to deal with the guardian, but was slain by the ghosts of the castle before he could find the krakentua's lair.

Since then, the Sun Temple has learned that the castle site is haunted and has occasionally sent shukenja or sohei to investigate it. However, none ever returned and the temple has not sent anyone in more than a generation. The locals know the castle is haunted and stay away, outsiders who go there don't come back. It is considered bad luck to even speak of the castle.

Recently, however, a hint of a rumor about surviving Ito relics in the castle has come to the Temple's attention. Since both warlords, realizing that the support of the temple could be decisive in their struggle for control of the province, have made overtures, the head of the temple seizes the chance to retrieve something of value from the ruins at little cost. Thus, the temple has promised its support to whichever faction can recover the relics from the castle.

In truth, the temple is happy with the current balance of power. If they receive any of the legendary swords, they present them to the emperor, verbally pressing the suit of the successful party, but actually doing little.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure starts at the temple. It is festival time, and many people have gathered here for the celebration. The player characters are the guests of Michimori or one of his retainers, whom they met when they entered the province. At that time, the characters would also have learned some-

thing of the celebrated Doi No Fugu inn (fully detailed in section IV).

The warlords, however, have come to talk seriously with the temple officials. The atmosphere is not precisely tense — all have pledged non-violence for the celebration — but there is an undercurrent of unrest, especially among the younger samurai. For several years there has been a blood feud between the families. Michimori Uemon has decided that the time is inauspicious and has arranged for his son to be absent on a diplomatic mission.

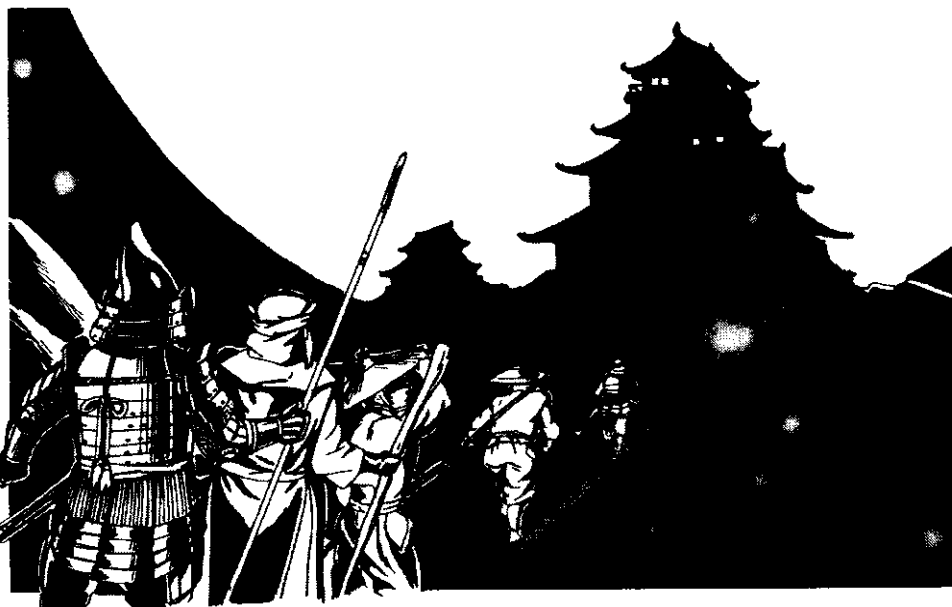
The temple officials make their decision known to the family heads. Michimori seizes the opportunity — the player characters are the strongest adventurers available at the celebration — but he is cautious.

Michimori will present the proposition as a favor to be done the temple, and will minimize his own interests in the matter, other than state that whatever pleases the temple would please him — the shogun's direct representative. Further, the party is to leave immediately in secrecy. Korimori is a personal enemy and may cause embarrassing complications. The route is described and the party urged to set out immediately. They are to bring the relics to the Doi No Fugu inn, where Michimori will meet them. Uemon's goal is the destruction of Korimori power by political means and the reduction of the influence of the Sun Temple.

Korimori has been caught unprepared. As soon as he discovers the party has left, he rides at top speed to his castle, sends out clandestine patrols to stop the party, and organizes a force of samurai to sail down to the castle. The party's speed enables them to evade most of these preparations on their journey to the castle, but they will not be so lucky on the return trip. As a final precaution, he arranges for ninja to intercept the party at Doi No Fugu.

The temple is aware of the stirrings, but not the details of any of these plans. After the party leaves, the head abbot, acting with strict neutrality, orders out sohei patrols to keep the peace. The sohei are instructed to prevent or settle any fights, but not to interfere with the activities of either warlord. Specifically, they are not to escort or follow members of either faction. The sohei patrols know that the characters are allied with Michimori.

ITO-JO, THE GHOST CASTLE



INTRODUCTION

This section begins when the PCs adventure overland to the castle. It ends when they reach the submerged cavern below the castle. On the way, they can find information and aid at a magical cherry grove. Once at the castle, the characters have to defeat seven powerful NPCs to assemble a key to reach the lower caverns. The DM should carefully read all sections concerning the medallion and the NPCs before trying to run the adventure.

The Journey to Ito-Jo

The journey overland should be swift and uneventful for the characters if they don't deliberately waste time. They have the jump on the opposition, and Michimori is staging minor diversions to aid them.

There is time to stop at the Doi No Fugu inn if they wish. The general inn details are given with the conclusion of the adventure in Part 4.

The land is gently rolling coastal plain. The PCs pass many small farms, and notice that the land is too stony to produce good crops. After a time, they enter low foothills. In the distance is the village.

Here the players can choose to enter the village or avoid it. If they enter, they find a typical small fishing village. They cannot find any information that is not common knowledge; however, they should be made to feel that their coming has created a major stir, and the locals will be talking about them for weeks.

Continuing on, the PCs find an overgrown trail that leads to an ancient bridge across the river. They cross without incident.

Sometime later, as they continue along the trail, they hear a cry for help from a dense thicket. If they investigate, they find a fox caught in a trap.

This is actually Tai, a fox spirit, who was accidentally caught while hunting. If released, Tai tries to discover the PCs' business and offers a favor: directions to the cherry grove.

The Cherry Grove

If the characters know how to get to the grove, they have no trouble finding it. Otherwise, read the following:

The travel through the wild lands has been tiring. As you approach the coast,

you hear the roar of distant waves crashing. As you continue onward, it seems to sing a sad lament.

Those characters listening closely to the lament (Intelligence save) hear actual crying coming from the hills away from the sea. If any choose to investigate the sound it becomes more distinct as they approach.

A young maiden, sitting on a hilltop beneath an ancient cedar, looks out to sea and weeps. There is something unnatural about the maid, and a garland of cherry blossoms decorates her hair.

The maid is Sei, a lesser nature spirit (cherry tree). She at first seems shy and demure. If questioned about her weeping, she mentions that she mourns the death of her kin and the kidnaping of one of her cousins. If the characters reveal anything of their mission, she offers them aid and invites them to her home. If the characters refuse, she bids them sadly on their way.

The maid's home is an enchanting cherry grove hidden within a tangle of gorse and dogwood. Upon stepping into the clearing, the characters are suddenly surrounded by a dozen spirits stepping from the trees with bows drawn. If the PCs attack instead of showing restraint, the girl intervenes, but she will not later give them the magical cherry pits (following).

The maid introduces the characters to her clan and asks them to explain their mission. The spirits look sad and grimly shake their heads. Seizing the opportunity, the maid again notes that her cousin is held prisoner in the heart of that evil place, and if the characters swear to aid him, she will give them some advice. If the PCs accept, she offers to relate the history of the Seven Swords clan. The DM should briefly recount the known history if the players don't know it.

"If you seek our cousin at the heart of evil, you must know that there were seven champions of the clan who guarded their honor. They may yet remain, discharging their duty. Do not disturb these weapons unless you seek



to confront them! Yet these seven swords may possess the key to the treasure you seek!"

If questioned about these seven guardians, Sei may reveal the following:

First is the steward of the fields, he who harvests men as others harvest wheat. His strength comes from the land.

Second is the daughter of death; her graceful touch is doom, her power a veil of deceit.

Third is their leader, he of the bloody sword. His power lies in his place of rest.

Fourth is the one-who-walks-in-shadow; his might comes from his darkblade, swift and silent.

Fifth is the paper warrior, whose weapon is mightier than the blade. His strength comes from his office of power.

Sixth is the smallest and most dangerous, seen and yet unseen: the screaming child. His strength lies in his hand.

Last is the keeper of the key, whose song brings destruction and whose only foe is silence.

A special note for the DM: each of the seven swords possesses a special weakness. If the characters specifically attack the item or achieve the condition, the weapon master suffers double damage from hits scored and has a -2 on initiative for the next round. The weaknesses are:

Reaper: Loss of contact with the ground (receives increased damage when levitated/falling/thrown etc.).

Veiled Maidens: Their veil (AC 5).

General: The sword rest (AC 8).

Shadow Walker: Kusari-gama (AC 0).

Paper Warrior: His desk (AC 7).

Screaming Child: His rattle (AC 3).

Keeper: The chimes (all hits are doubled when these are silenced).

Sei offers three other warnings:

1. Do not tarry overlong. Lesser evils may be defeated by their own designs.
2. Seek allies. Size is no guide to character.
3. Beware! Sickness and decay pervade all. Evade their grasp or become one with them.

Sei cautions the PCs that there is only one safe way to cross to the island. They must wait till dark and moonrise. Then they must take the path that reveals itself.

For the service to her kin, she provides them with three cherry pits (one of each

and explains how they work (see New Magic). Furthermore, the spirits watch after the PCs' horses and pack animals if they have any.

If the characters ask for protection against disease, Sei admits that her people know of a secret bitter root that can banish disease. It is a guarded treasure of her people and may cause some small harm to those not of the spirit world. She will part with four roots, if the PCs pledge to perform some further service for the grove spirits (she will take up to three such pledges for a total of 12 roots). The roots cure any disease, but inflict 1-6 points of damage in the process.

Sei wishes them well and invokes the name of her clan mother, Ama Kurisuki of the Golden Lotus, she who is also known as the Moon Daughter, to bless their trails. Then she leads them back to their path.

ARRIVING AT ITO-JO

Ito-Jo is located on a rocky island 300 feet from shore. The ancient causeway that once led to it has been destroyed by time and nature. The waters here are turbulent and dangerous — surf smashes ceaselessly against the island and the shore, creating many small treacherous whirlpools.

The PCs can reach the island in the following ways:

By the Ghost Bridge. As darkness falls, a shimmering bridge appears at the site of the ruined causeway. Transparent but solid to the touch, it remains as long as the darkness of night and can be easily crossed by the characters.

By Swimming or Sailing. Every round a swimmer or boat has a 1 in 4 chance of shipping water, taking 1-6 points of damage. Affected characters must make an immediate saving throw vs. strength or be washed back 60 yards. A boat is reduced to half of full movement and sinks in 3 rounds unless bailed. At least one person must bail for each water shipping result. If the boat sinks or is destroyed, the characters must swim. A character or boat landing anywhere but the wharf automatically ships water.

By Air. Flying characters have no trouble by day. By night each flying character is attacked over the island by a *flying spirit*, which has a skull-like head and a fluttering, sheet-like body (AC 5; MV -/15"; HD

2+3; hp 12 each; #AT 2 claws; THACO 16; Dmg 1-4/1-4).

By Sea Spirit Favor. A clamshell washes up onto the beach and grows to giant size. When the PCs enter, it closes and whisks them to a safe landing on the island. When they debark, it shrinks, flips up onto its edge and rolls back into the sea.

Ito-Jo by Day

Should the characters succeed in getting to the island before dark, they find utter desolation and ruin. Nothing remains of the fortifications but ancient fire-blackened timbers and heaps of rubble. Extensive searching and sifting reveal nothing but small vermin. The characters feel uneasy (something is wrong, they are being watched, etc.) as long as they are on the island.

The castle walls still stand. The outer walls are 30 feet high and slick with sea spray (-20% to climb). All walls are treacherous, and the DM should convey this to the players by description. Climbing about should be discouraged with minor falls, shifting rubble, crumbling rock, small creature encounters (wasps, rats, etc.) doing from 1 to 1-6 points of damage at worst. Characters in danger of fatal falls should be allowed several opportunities to save themselves.

Most of the adventures here take place at night. Those that have significant detail for daytime explorations are marked with an asterisk. Unmarked areas contain only desolate open spaces or rubble by day.

Important Note: The two gatehouse encounters can take place at any time.

Ito-Jo by Night

By night, the whole island changes. Ghostly towers and walls rise through the gloom. Many areas take on some semblance of their former appearance and function. The ghost bridge appears, as do certain aerial guardians. These effects remain until first light, and then disappear. Small globes of ghostlight swirl through the air, and the ghostly areas glow a soft green. Characters can dimly distinguish objects within 40', unless otherwise specified. At dawn, all returns to normal. Characters in parts of the castle that don't exist by day find themselves unharmed in the approximate location of the ghost area.



RUNNING ITO-JO

The Ghosts of Ito-jo

Aside from a few creatures that have wandered in, most of the spirits here are bound by the ancient curse on the castle. The ghosts can be defeated by various means, but unless they are permanently laid to rest by specified means, they return to haunt the castle the following night. The spirits of any slain characters whose bodies are abandoned on the island join the ghosts and may be encountered in later adventures. In general, ghosts do not leave their primary areas to pursue PCs.

Phantasms

Phantasms are ghostly phenomena that can be seen, felt, heard, and so on by the entire party unless otherwise specified. They are provided to allow the DM to create an eerie atmosphere and direct the PCs; many of them relate to encounters in this section. The DM may use them at or assign a chance that one be encountered each turn (e.g.: 1 in 4). Generally, cherry tree images are beneficial for the players, though they should not be told this directly.

1. From the end of a darkened passage comes the sound of weeping. A ghostly green-haired maiden on her knees cries before the body of a young man. She looks up at the PCs and, with beseeching eyes, fades.
2. As the PCs enter an empty court or room, ghostly figures slowly form. Voices distant in time softly berate servants for abandoning their posts. The servants hold their arms out and ghostly guards chop their hands off.
3. The delicate bouquet of cherry blossoms wafts toward the PCs from the most advantageous direction.
4. With an electric crackle, a sizzling blue seven-pointed shuriken, made of miniature katanas, whizzes past. (It moves in one of these ways, determined randomly: toward danger, straight ahead, back the way the PCs came, through a wall.)
5. A noble man, his face shadowed by a cane hat, harvests wheat with a scythe, but the wheat bleeds. He looks up at the PCs and grins. (This is the Reaper, 4.)
6. The air is filled with the roar of crackling flames and the odor of burning

cherrywood (danger is near).

7. A green jade chest floats in the center of a swirling mist that whirls it away.
8. A small green plant sprouts suddenly from the ground or floor. Closer examination reveals it to be a cherry tree. (The DM should use this to indicate which direction is most favorable for the party.)
9. The moon breaks through the seething clouds like a well of light from above. Its golden rays form a corridor of light which evil cannot enter, that lasts for 2-5 turns.
10. Above the moaning wind comes the sound of wind chimes from the tallest tower.

Secret Passages in Ito-Jo

There are three types of secret passages in Ito Castle. The *Spy's Walk* connects rooms on a floor, and has spyholes through which a room can be observed. The *Web* is a group of secret connections linking the *Spy's Walk* that require using a second secret door. The *Inner Path* is a vertical shaft leading down into the earth to the hidden door to the caves. Entrances to the *Inner Path* lie through traps in the *Web*. Don't be disappointed if your players miss all this! It's not supposed to be easy.

Throughout the castle are secret doorways to secret passages. Each doorway can be hidden differently; the following list of suggestions might come in handy.

Behind a gong	Beneath a fountain
Within a pillar	Behind a painting
As a giant wall fan	Within a pit
Beneath a firepit	Behind a statue
Behind stairs	Beneath a cabinet

Traps in Ito-Jo

There are several different types of traps noted on the map, and their mechanics include:

1. Pit: Dmg 1d6, door snaps shut.
Darts: 6 darts fire at THAC0 13, Dmg 1-3.
2. Snare: Traps with a Strength of 60.
Flying stones: THAC0 12, Dmg 1-4.
Levitating Flagstones: drop from 20 feet.
Oil Shower: dexterity save at +5 or fall.
Crushing Weight: Dmg 2d8, save vs. petrification
3. Spiked Boom: THAC0 10, Dmg 2d4.

Minor Encounters

Many of the rooms in this castle are not detailed due to the desired pacing of this adventure. The DM may want to add additional details, as long as these do not slow play. To provide the DM with devices to create more atmosphere, a series of phantasms and harmless encounters are given which the DM may use to fill the rooms the characters investigate. Here are some additional encounters.

1. Flickering ghostlight creates a shadow show of an important event in this area.
2. A murmur is heard from a room, but stops when the door is opened.
3. Something is tossed, as if in a strong wind, but the air is still.
4. Out of the corner of one's eye, a shadowy battle is acted out.
5. Ghostly phantasms arise from bones of former inhabitants.
6. As if by magic, scraps of paper form animated origami animals and figures.

Delayed Journey Effects

The players should be kept aware of the time element in the adventure. If they do not complete this adventure by dawn, in addition to the resetting of the castle the following encounter table is used.

Check once every turn; the effect manifests on a one-in-eight chance.

1	2-8 Bushi zombies
2	1 Ninja spirit shadow
3	1-4 Goblin rats
4	1 Giant crab ghost
5	1 Beetle swarm
6	1-4 Ogres
7	2-8 Spirit Samurai
8	1-4 Flying spirits

Bushi zombies: Ito (50%) or drowned Korimori (50%) bushi. Lord Korimori's naval expedition was smashed in the surf.

Ninja spirit shadow: In bright light the ninja exists as a black outline that cannot be attacked or harmed; in shadows it is a corporeal Ninja-Yakuza (Level 3/3; AC 5; hp 15; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-6; SA As character class).

Giant crab ghost: Functions as a giant crab, but is a lesser spirit for purposes of resetting and certain spells.



Beetle swarm: This approaches from the rear at a speed of 60' per round and trails the PCs for a whole turn. The swarm does 1 point of damage per round to each character in a 10' radius. Each character attacking the swarm in melee inflicts 1-2 points of damage (AC 7); the swarm is dispersed after taking 15 points of damage. Fire or smoke disperses the swarm in 1 round.

Spirit Samurai: These are exactly as first level samurai, but are also lesser spirits for purposes of resetting and certain spells.

Flying Spirits: These have skull-like heads and fluttering, sheet-like bodies (AC 5; MV -/15"; HD 2+3; #AT 2 claws; THACO 16; Dmg 1-4/1-4).

ENCOUNTER KEY

* 1. Gardeners' Huts

Crude mud and thatched huts stand among ragged gardens in the wretched soil. Thin plumes of smoke rise from their chimneys and the pungent aroma of burning grass and dung drifts on the breeze.

These miserable huts are shuttered and locked. The ragged peasants who live here claim to be refugees from the mainland. They are a small frightened group, scratching out an existence from the poor soil and meager bounty of the sea. There are a dozen individuals, three old ones, two men, three women and four ragged children. They are wary of strangers and terrified by the castle.

They cower behind locked doors, but timorously answer if hailed. They are not unkind and offer a night's shelter to those in need, provided weapons are set aside. They bar their doors and windows and place prayer sashes over them to keep the evil spirits out at night.

They believe completely that the island is deserted and scoff at the idea of treasure or relics here.

At midnight, they transform into tagamaling buso till dawn, viciously attacking any creature they meet. These are fairly recent newcomers to the castle and are not currently under the curse (see also the tigbanua in area 16).

* 2. The Outer Gate

The outer doors of the gate open wide to the tunnel of the gatehouse. Over the gate is a large bronze disc with the Seven Swords mon carved into it. The far end is blocked by a heavy iron portcullis. Huddled in the shadows to one side of it is a ragged figure. The smell of earth mold is strong.

The grate cannot be opened by magical means, nor is there a lock to pick. It can be lifted with a combined strength of 40, or chopped through (AC 0, hp 50).

The gatekeeper, a *nin-chu-ju-gaki* (starving spirit), does not move or speak unless spoken to or prodded. If disturbed, he raises his head to stare at the characters with the sunken eyes and gaunt face of a starving man. He tells them that they must turn back, their time has not yet come to join the ranks of those within. If pressured, he agrees to open the gates, but only if he is fed. The gaki does not define his price, but only moans that he is hungry—so hungry!

To feed, he lays his hands on one of the characters and removes 3 points from that character's prime requisite. This drain lasts 24 hours and prevents the use of ki power for the duration.

After feeding, the gaki opens the gate with a touch. If the gaki is attacked it falls dead, but in one turn it regenerates, gets up, and shuffles over to sit in its corner.

3. The Night Encounter

The DM must use this nighttime encounter before the PCs meets the Porter in the Inner Courtyard (15). This helps them survive a dangerous encounter and introduces them to the magic carp at 9.

A pale shimmering form wanders as if in search of something. It appears to be a short man, his hair shaved in the fashion of the shukenja of the Turning Wheel.

This lost spirit cannot know final rest until he possesses his prayer beads. He was overcome by the Porter at 15, who threw his body down the well (9) after stripping it of all its symbols of faith. The body was swallowed by the giant carp.

If the PCs investigate, the ghost tells them his story. The porter now carries the beads. If the beads are returned to the

shukenja, his spirit can rest. The shukenja then vanishes, to reappear in the distance, still searching.

If the PCs ignore the spirit, they occasionally see him in the distance. The nearer they get to the Porter, the closer the shukenja comes to them. Just before the PCs encounter the Porter, the shukenja looks directly at them, shakes his head, and turns away.

The PCs should be able to figure out that the best way to defeat the Porter is to maneuver him to the well and push him into it. If they accomplish this, the carp swallows him and the shukenja can be laid to rest. He heals the PCs before he leaves (up to three *cure light wounds*, two *cure disease*, and one *cure serious wounds* spells). Furthermore, they will be in a position to talk with the carp.

4. Reaper

This stone gardener's shack is surrounded by a rusting iron fence whose gate hangs loose and creaking in the wind. The jagged shadow of the fence reminds you of raised spears.

The door of the stone hut stands open, and those who look in see a full backpack in fair condition leaning against a weathered bench. No one seems to be about.

This is the lair of the Reaper, a kensai and first of the seven weapon masters. If the fence or gate is touched in any way, the wind howls, lightning flashes, and the earth trembles. A round later, the earth before the fence mounds and the Reaper erupts from the ground, holding a scythe. Whistling to himself, and with an evil leer, he steps forward to begin his harvest.

His scythe is a special weapon and he is capable of several special actions with it. He reveals one of these maneuvers every time he is pressed or one each round, whichever happens first.

Sweep: The Reaper must hit AC 10. The opponent must make a dexterity save at a +4 penalty to maintain his feet, but loses initiative next round.

Block: The Reaper must hit AC 10. Any of his attacks can be used to parry an incoming blow with the iron haft of his weapon.

Seven Blades: The weapon blade extends like an umbrella into seven separate blades. During the first round, a single *weapon catch* attack can be made. The second and later rounds, the blades are

fully extended, giving a him a total with all his bonuses of +1 to hit and +7 to damage on up to three weapon attacks, plus three free blocks.

Propeller Attack: With the blades extended, he can, as a single action, attack all opponents within five feet in all directions. This maneuver also gives him an AC of 0.

When he is defeated he shrivels up like a dried pod. Around his neck is a chain with a small, katana-shaped charm that fits into one of the seven slots of the medallion.

In the shack is an *everfull grain sack* that refills itself every fortnight. There is also a *watering pot of the kappa*; a plant sprinkled with the pure water from this pot gains a full year's growth in a single turn. The pot refills itself each day.

Reaper: 9th level kensai; AC 2; MV 12"; hp 81; #AT 3; THAC0 9; Dmg 1d8+3; S 15, I 12, W 13, D 18, C 17, Ch 8; Ki: maximum damage on blow.

* 5. Burned Orchard

Here is the ruin of a once lovely cherry orchard. All that remains are a few fire-

blackened skeletons of these graceful trees and the cruelly hacked stumps of their sisters. A sense of loss and mourning pervades the air.

6. The Second Gate

Through the night's darkness you see, sprawled on the flagging of the *masugata* (double gate) of the second gate house, the skeleton of a man. Weeds grow through the bones.

When the PCs approach within 30 feet, a shadowy figure rises from the skeleton and awaits the PCs' approach. This is Goburu Ichi, a late priest of the Sun Temple. He died of the wasting disease of Lady Murasame (area 28), but strangely, he cannot recall the cause of his demise. He recoils from Murasame if he ever confronts her.

His kuei now appears here each night, waiting to possess someone to complete his mission to "open the door." (This is the final door, area 19).

Ichi was a 5th level shukenja, and may pray for spells once he inhabits a body. This should be an NPC if possible; other-

wise have the player involved run the character under your supervision. Ichi finds rest at last once the PCs pass the final door. He uses his remaining spells on them before he leaves.

Ichi only fights the PCs if he is attacked, shrieking "I will open the door" as he does so.

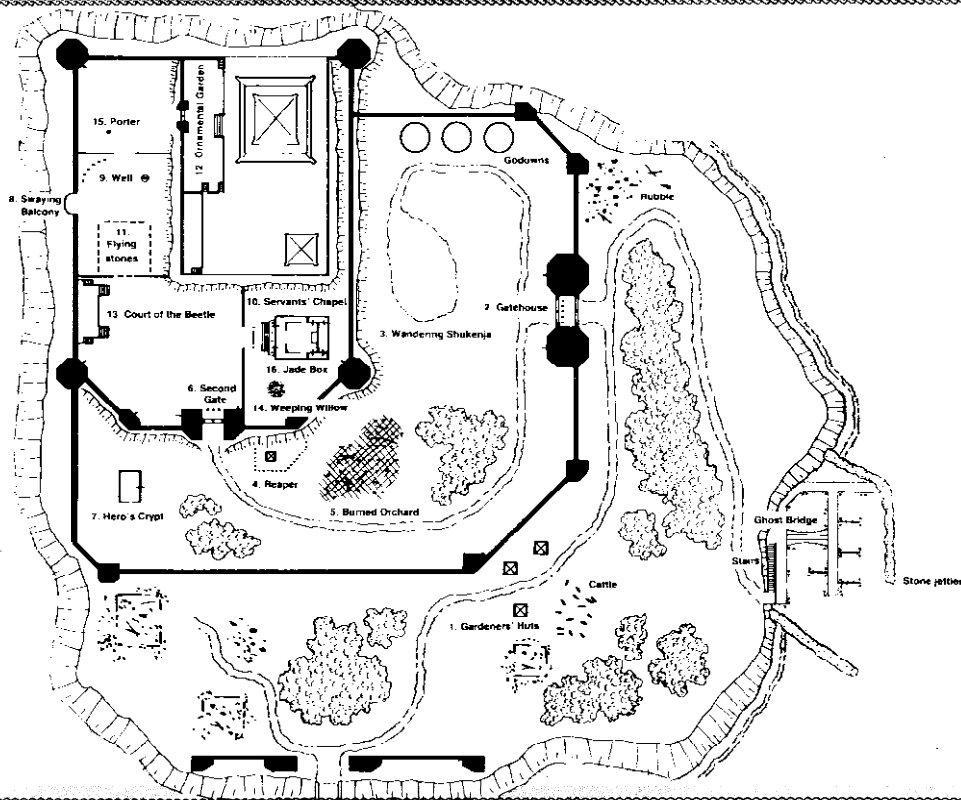
Concealed on his body is a magical medallion. It is a flat disc with seven indentations. It resembles the mon of the Ito clan, except that the swords are missing. Ichi knows that the medallion, if assembled, is supposed to be some sort of guide or key to a great treasure. The PCs must find and use this item to reach the lower caverns. If they miss it here, the Final Door teleports them to this location.

Kuei: AC -4; MV 18"; HD 5; hp 22; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-10; MR 10%

7. Hero's Crypt

The door to this stone crypt is sealed. Inside, the floor has been tunneled by goblin rats. There is no burial box.

The tunnel leads 100 feet to the burrow of eight goblin rats. This is a maze of eight chambers and connecting tunnels. One of





these leads out 80 feet to an exit in a cove on the hillside. There is no treasure. This was the crypt of the *tigbanua buso* (16).

* 8. Swaying Balcony

A ten-foot-wide wooden balcony with balustrade overlooks the surf crashing at the cliff's foot. From its rail flutters a piece of amber-colored cloth with unusual, black embroidery.

It should be extremely difficult to retrieve the cloth without going out on the balcony. The balcony is solid and shows no signs of decay, but the iron footings attaching it to the cliff face are rusted. If a character ventures out onto the balcony, it breaks away from the cliff and begins to sway from side to side on its single piling, 15 feet from the cliff. The character must make a dexterity save to hang onto the railing, or fall over the side and be left hanging from the balcony by his hands. Climbing back into the platform requires a strength save.

Any fall from the platform ends in the crashing waves of the bay 80 feet below. Characters untrained in leaping can leap back to the cliff by making a save vs. petrification. The DM should determine the chances for success of other rescue efforts.

The cloth bears the emblem of the Temple of Ama Kurisuki, the Moon Daughter, and is a prayer cloth. It acts as a scroll of three shukenja spells: *know history*, *cure disease*, and *polymorph self*.

* 9. The Deep Well

This was the court well. Its wall is now cracked and its stones have fallen. Water drawn from this well is bitter and tastes of salt. The well drops 80 feet into a cistern filled with 50 feet of water. The distant sound of pounding waves echoes here. About 20 feet below the surface, a five-foot-wide crack in the south wall leads to the sea.

The tunnel to the sea is the lair of a monstrous carp, who may come to investigate any splashing in the cistern. He is both intelligent and magical. He is neutral toward the PCs, but impressed with good manners. The DM can use him as an interesting NPC with great but nebulous powers as necessary to keep the action going, possibly even bringing a character back into play if the porter takes someone with him. The carp's services are done in re-

turn for magical items, or for the promise of services at a later date.

10. Servants' Chapel

Here is a small servants' chapel, fresh ash of incense still lies upon the altar. Before the altar in attitudes of prayer are half a dozen skeletons, their bones bleached white by time. On closer examination, it is found that they have no hands.

11. Flying Stones

This courtyard is cobbled. A small fountain splashes to one side and the runoff forms a narrow stream across the court to a drain in the wall. Bonsai are planted in wall niches. The walls are pocked and chipped.

As the PCs enter, a moaning wind rises in the court. Those who remain one turn are attacked by cobbles, which animate and fly through the air (#AT 4; THAC0 12; Dmg 1-4 each).

12. Ornamental Garden

A flagstone path winds its way through this ornamental garden's once-beautiful landscape. Now the sculpted hedges are barren, the lantern houses are overturned and the paint flakes from the bridge and walk.

Anyone who steps off the path is swarmed by small beetles, which collectively bite for 1 point of damage per round. Removing the beetles by brushing, swatting, etc. takes 1-6 rounds after leaving the area, during which time they continue to inflict damage.

The flagstones can animate. When three or more are stood on, they levitate upward to 25 feet at 5 feet per segment. They then tip their passengers into the slimy waters of the two-foot deep pool and descend into place.

* 13. Court of the Beetle

A large stone sculpture of a horned beetle in flight dominates the area. Faceted crystals form its eyes and jade inlays comprise the wings.

In the day, the sculpture is ancient and

weatherstained. At night, stormclouds seem to congregate overhead, and the very air feels charged. Once every hour, a bolt of forked lightning (15' radius; 3d6 points) flashes from the statue and it changes its position. The PCs can use this to keep time; the beetle faces north at midnight.

* 14. Weeping Willow

A solitary willow stands in the center of the court, its branches sighing in the wind.

At night, the sound of weeping can be heard, and those who come within a 30' radius of the willow find themselves and all their gear swiftly soaked with salt water, ruining parchment, extinguishing fire sources, etc. The spirit of the willow can speak only if invited to do so.

A kindly maiden haunts the willow. She grieved at the clan's loss of honor when they slew a messenger from the Sun Temple. Her spirit can not rest until the body of the messenger is given a proper burial. The messenger was buried beneath a lightning-blasted cedar in the Court of the Beetle.

If the deed is done, the maiden draws the PCs back here. She and the messenger can at last rest. The willow falls over, uncovering a chest buried beneath its roots. The chest contains 500 silver taels and five pieces of ivory worth 200 tael each.

15. The Porter

A lone lighted lantern swings in the center of the courtyard, as the wind sighs through the brush.

At night, as the PCs approach, the post takes on the appearance of a porter, This is the spirit of the castle's porter. He offers to guide the characters across the *honmaru* (inner courtyard).

If refused, he bows, steps back, and takes on the appearance of the lamp post. He reappears if called.

The porter is a *jiki-ketsu-gaki* (blood drinking spirit). He in fact guides the characters safely to the keep. However, the payment he demands when they arrive is one of the characters! Only +3 or better weapons and magic can harm him. If left in peace with his prey, he drags the victim



to the well, drinks what he wants, and throws the body into the well. See the encounter with the shukenja (3) for more details. Any reasonable plan to knock the gaki down the well should succeed.

16. Jade Box

Resting on a large jade pedestal is a mahogany tabletop. Atop the table, incense sticks burn before a small china bowl and flask and two bronze candlesticks.

The pedestal is a large, smooth, jade box; its lid forms one side of the pedestal. The box contains only a fine layer of soil.

This is the sleeping place of a tigbanua buso. At night, he hides in a niche in the hallway ceiling. As PCs leave the chamber, he drops on the leading PCs with surprise and attacks from the doorway. If he is losing, he slams the door in their faces and flees to the Hero's Crypt. He is currently under the ancient curse.

Tigbanua Buso: AC 0; MV 12"; HD 8+2; hp 49; #AT 3; THAC0 12; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-10; SA fear (paralysis) + disease

17. Screaming Child

This room resembles a large auditorium with a stage at one end. Dim light glows from two braziers before the stage, and two bamboo screens stand at the back of the stage. A short distance inside the room, a piece of white cloth on which rests a pin lies on the floor.

This is the chamber of the sixth weapon master, Ito Gohei, a dwarf wu jen. If the pin is disturbed, or the characters make any loud noise, a wail that sounds like a cross between a bawling child and a braying mule rends the air.

Gohei sits on the stage to the left of the screens. He has cast *chameleon* on himself and is difficult to see. Unless pressed into physical combat, he sits here casting spells and using his weapon to deal with intruders.

Gohei: 9th level Wu Jen, master of air (AC 10 (+1); MV 9"; hp 30; #AT 1(2); THAC0 18; Dmg 2-5 or 2-7; S 8, I 16, W 14, D 15, C 15, Ch 6; ki: +3 to initiative roll, maximum effect of one spell)

The Screaming Child's spells include:

First Level: *chameleon, drowsy insects, elemental burst, magic missile, shield*

Second Level: *smoke shape, stinking cloud, wind breath*

Third Level: *haste, protection from missiles, steam breath*

Fourth Level: *dancing weapon, shout*

Fifth Level: *telekinesis*

Gohei's melee weapon looks like a two-foot long rattle. He has the following special attacks:

Ball: The ball head is snapped up to 30 feet away on its chain, inflicting 2-5 points, then springs back to the haft.

Mace: Besides the normal damage of 2-7 points, he can *hurl* a foe as the martial arts maneuver.

Flash: A single foe within 10' is blinded for 1-4 rounds unless a save vs. spells is made.

When Ito Gohei is defeated he shrivels to nothing with a whimper. In a pouch that remains are two doses of *sand of time* which slows a foe for 2-8 rounds, and a small katana charm pin that fits into the medallion.

18. Stone Post Room

The floor of this room is two feet lower than the entrance and is lined with row on row of rock posts jutting from the sandy floor. From ceiling beams overhead dangle many ropes. Across the room is a door. Before it, standing on two posts, is a robed figure.

In a chattering voice, the figure (the spirit of a hengeyokai mantis monk) challenges the characters to a duel. Those who survive gain his key.

The room can be crossed by stepping from post to post at half normal speed, or by walking between the posts at one quarter normal speed.

Those fighting from the floor suffer a -2 penalty to attacks and lose all dexterity bonuses.

Fighting on the posts, if not trained in leaping and balance, incurs a -4 penalty to attacks. A dexterity save must be made each round at a -2 bonus or the character falls to the floor (1 point of damage). Untrained characters using the ropes or beams attack at a -2 penalty and must make a dexterity save each round or fall to the floor (1d4+1 points).

The hengeyokai monk fights in his humanoid mantis form. He is armed with a three-piece rod and has spurs on his hind legs. He can maintain perfect balance on the posts, and can leap to attack characters on the beams overhead.

Hengeyokai Mantis Monk: 6th level monk (AC 3; MV 20"; hp 33; #AT 3+1/2; Dmg d6+2 each; immune to *haste*, *slow*, and *disease*; ki: 1/2 or no damage from magic; resist ESP 74%; MS 47%; HS 37%; Climb 90%)

Special Maneuvers: missile deflection, leaping, all around sight, backward kick, instant stand, pain touch, perfect balance, weapon catch.

The key doesn't work, nor does it fit the medallion. The lock must be picked or opened magically.

19. The Final Door

A broad archway of cool gray stone stands before you. What lies beyond is hidden behind a curtain of shadow. Above the archway is a disc carved with the Seven Swords clan mon. To either side of the arch, an alcove contains the statue of a guardian dragon: one malevolent violet and one virulent green. The PCs hear a soft hushing sound emanating from behind the arch.

If the PCs do not have the magical medallion, the eyes of the dragons glow with green ghostlight. If a living character goes between the dragons, one breathes. The violet dragon breathes a cloud of flashing purple sparks that erupt in a blinding flash, causing 20 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage) and blindness for 1-6 rounds. The verdant dragon breathes a green cloud that causes 10 points of damage (save as above) and has the effects of a *stinking cloud*. The dragons breathe alternately. The dragons cannot be moved, but they may be physically destroyed (AC 0; hp 150 each; immune to fire, water, and lightning).

No PCs may pass through the archway unmolested unless they display their medallion. If they have not collected all the swords, the missing blades glow on the arch medallion.

Unless the PCs have completed their medallion, stepping into the shadow curtain *teleports* the characters to the next



remaining haunt of the Seven Swords, in this order: Second Gatehouse (if the PCs don't have the medallion, 6) Reaper (4) Veiled Maidens (24), General (27), Shadow Walker (33), Paper Warrior (43), Screaming Child (16) and Keeper (42).

Beyond the arch lie stairs that spiral downward to the submerged caverns within the heart of the rock.

20. The Way Down

Shallow, cold stone stairs wind ever downward into the darkening earth. The salt smell of the sea and the susurration of churning waves fill the air. It feels as if one were descending into the clammy embrace of a watery grave.

The PCs enter the chamber of a large underground lake. This is the beginning of the next part of the adventure. Read the introduction to that material before proceeding.

21. Slide

The corridor is blocked by a concealed trapdoor. Characters who step on it drop into a five-foot-deep pit, as the trapdoor snaps shut. The pit can be pried open with a combined strength of 30, or sprung by a weight of 80 pounds and jammed open. The pit is only five feet wide and easily leaped.

The floor beyond, however, is very smooth and slippery. Anyone walking on it must save vs. petrification or slip and slide forward. Those leaping over the pit must save at -2.

The slick floor beyond the pit drops away into a slide that deposits characters in the Stone Post Room (18).

22. Flying Hands

This room is dingy and filled with the stench of smoke and soot. It may have been a kitchen. Two pairs of severed hands lie folded on the floor here.

The hands seem well preserved. If touched, they fly into the air, clapping. They act as *unseen servants* for the character who activates them. They open doors, hold items, draw characters forward, etc. Their actions do not trigger traps, though they may guide characters towards them and then wring themselves

in despair. If attacked, they are AC 0 and have 6 hit points each. They don't attack, but dodge quickly. When the PCs leave this floor of the castle the hands fly back to their room.

These are the hands of servants who failed to serve their master and now must serve others for eternity.

23. Geisha Girl

At the sound of a small gong, a slight female figure wearing the garb of a geisha materializes from the air and bows.

This is Yushi, spirit of the servant of Ito Tadahiro. Her master had her tongue cut out so she could carry no tales. She seems the perfect geisha. She is completely incorporeal and if any tries to attack her, she smiles enigmatically at the attempts.

She beckons them to follow, leading the way down the hall, passing through doors and then pausing until the characters open them. Her path takes them through the Veiled Courtyard (24) and then to the doors of her master's chambers (27) where she bows and vanishes.

Aside from leading the characters to two of the sword encounters, the geisha can be used to direct the PCs as the DM wishes.

24. Veiled Courtyard

This flagstone courtyard is filled with the flutter of wind-whipped azure banners spaced around the courtyard, with one by each entrance. Each banner bears the graceful T-shaped character for hearth and home.

This is the haunt of the second weapon master of the Seven Swords, the Veiled Maidens. Touching any veil summons this spirit (carelessly walking through the entrances might have this effect). When the spirit is summoned, the wind suddenly dies and the night song of the insects takes on the sound of lyrical lutes.

From the shadowed portico behind the banners step seven beautiful, identical women holding gauzy, azure veils. They speak not a word, but smile and begin to dance, whipping and tossing their veils and turning gracefully.

These are all incarnations of Ito Kiku, devoted daughter to Ito Tadahiro. If the characters allow, the maidens separate and dance around each PC, brushing and gracefully sweeping their veils over the characters' faces, arms, and necks. Suddenly, they attack.

The first round only, the maidens use a special *strangulation* attack if the characters accept the dance passively. The first round of the attack, a successful hit roll means an unwary victim must make a save vs. paralyzation. A victim who fails suffers 1d4 points. Each round thereafter, the victim suffers 1-4 points and must make a constitution save or die. Otherwise the maidens make more conventional attacks.

The Veiled Maidens: 3d level monk (AC 8; MV 17"; hp 18 each; #AT 2; THACO 20; Dmg 1-4 or 1-6; S 15, 18, W 15, D 15, C 16, Ch 16; ki: save for no damage from magic.

They have other special abilities with their veils.

Blinding Feint: A successful feint blinds the opponent for 1d2 rounds.

Entangle Weapon: This is normal entangle attack, but if successful the opponent cannot use his weapon unless he makes a strength save at a +5 penalty to pull it free.

These maidens know a soft martial arts skill using the hands and the following maneuvers: *feint, stun touch, sticking touch, and steel cloth.*

When the maidens are defeated there is a sound of tearing cloth. Each maiden leaves behind a pale golden pearl worth 50 tael each. If a pearl is swallowed, it bestows a magical bonus to the character of +1 to hit and damage which may be included when determining if a character can hit a creature struck only by magical weapons. This effect lasts 1 turn. A prayer box beside the door holds a brooch with a pin that appears to be a small katana that fits into the medallion.

25. Spiked Ceiling

The odor of rotting teak clings to the floor, where the decaying remains of furnishing litter fraying mats. A huge bronze chandelier hangs from the center of the ceiling.

The ceiling is shadowed, but light brought into the room dances off the reflective, or-



nate metal ceiling. Close study of the ceiling reveals spikes all over the plating. At the three points marked on the map, spring platforms fling any character stepping on them fifteen feet to the ceiling, after which he falls to the floor for 3-12 (3d4) points of damage.

Near the far door, hidden beneath the mats, is a ten-foot-wide net held in place by thin bamboo lathing. Anyone walking across the center of the net snaps the lathes and triggers the trap. The heavy chandelier crashes to the floor, hauling those in the net up to the ceiling for 3d4 points of damage.

26. Fireplace

A stone fireplace is ablaze with the light of a dancing crimson fire. The stone is sooty and black lines streak the hearth. There is no breeze from the chimney.

The fire is illusory and gives off no heat. Five feet up the chimney are a series of rungs. The shaft rises 30 feet, ending in a trapdoor bolted from above (in the terrace overhead, the trap door is hidden by a potted shrub). If the seventh rung from the top of the chimney is lifted, the wall opposite opens onto a second passage.

27. General

This seems an endless chamber, with countless ornate mahogany pillars supporting massive crossbeams. The room is lit with a crimson light that dances between the pillars. In the heart of the room is a row of sword rests, each holding a katana in a lacquered red scabbard.

As soon as the PCs enter, they see themselves duplicated many times. The walls of this room are rose-tinted mirrors, between balusters (decorative half-pillars) of polished wood.

In the heart of the room lies the Crimson Katana, prized weapon of the General of the Ito family, Ito Tadashiro.

On the far side of the room is a *byobu* (folding screen). If the PCs try to take the sword, it does any applicable damage and teleports to Tadahihiro's hand. If the PCs investigate the screen they find:

Beyond the screen, directly in front of a door, sits a robed and armored figure,

deep in meditation. A sheathed wakizashi rests in his lap.

This is Ito Tadahihiro, third weapon master of the Seven Swords, a ronin. He acts only if he or the katana is disturbed.

If Tadahihiro is attacked, his superior *ia-jetsu* allows him to strike first with his wakizashi. After the first exchange of blows the katana appears in his hand and he vanishes.

He appears shortly after — all twenty of him! He can create a *mirror image* effect with the room mirrors and his sword. Each time Tadahihiro is hit, roll a six-sided die: 1-2 Tadahihiro is hit, 3 a pillar is hit, 4-6, a mirror is hit. Mirrors can be attacked separately (AC 5; hp 20). The mirrors do not crack, but shatter when destroyed. For every five mirrors destroyed, the chance of hitting Tadahihiro increases by 1 in 6.

Ito Tadahihiro harrasses the characters and attempts to slay all. He is arrogant and unrepentant, brooding over lost battles that cost his samurai status.

When defeated, he and his equipment vanish in a puff of red smoke, and the room turns dark. Hanging from the sword stand is a wrist chain with a tiny katana-shaped charm that fits the medallion.

Ito Tadahihiro: 13th level ronin (AC 2; MV 12"; hp 102; #AT 2; THAC0 6; Dmg 1-10+8 katana, 1-8+8 wakizashi; ki: THAC0 4, Dmg 1-10+11, 1-8+11)

Crimson Katana: *Sword +1, flames to +2*; user can *blink* as blink dog once per level per day; evilly aligned (causing damage to good and neutral characters); *teleports* to user's hand when disturbed.

28. Lady of the Castle

This despoiled room was once the private chamber of a lady. *Now* the *chodai* (curtained sleeping platform) is a rotting heap, the *emakimono* (picture) scrolls hang limply on the walls; benches, chests and table are all broken debris. A tall veiled figure sits in a lone chair sits next to an open window, where the remnants of curtains cling to the wall.

This is the spirit of the lady of the castle, Ito Murasame. She seems deep in thought, and eyes visitors sadly. Murasame is a *shikki-gaki*, a diseased spirit. Beneath her

veil, are rotting flesh and open sores. She sadly welcomes strangers to her home and motions for them to sit on the pieces of broken stools before her, or perhaps on the window sill. She asks if they have come seeking to learn a lesson from the past or to mock the fallen. She says that she does not know the fate of her kin, but her lot is to sit here gazing forlornly and uselessly out the window. She offers to ask a blessing on behalf of their endeavors. If they agree, she bends to kiss them, attacking with surprise. If they are suspicious, she sighs and looks out the window.

Murasame's only treasure is a miniature portrait of her son Sudai, worth 18 tael.

Shikki-Gaki: AC 4; MV 12/6"; HD 5; hp 27; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4/1-4 + disease

29. Wall Trap

At this intersection, the five-square-foot floor panel is a pressure plate. Stepping on it causes a spiked wall to spring out through the false wall and impale a character for 3d6 points of damage. Once the trap is sprung it resets in one turn.

Tugging on the topmost spike causes the the wall of spikes to snap open, revealing another secret passage beyond.

30. The Reading Room

This room is filled with racks and shelves for scrolls and books. Only shreds of parchment and wooden covers remain. On one table in the back recesses of the room, beside a guttering lantern, a white stone and an eating dagger hold open the pages of a book. If the pages are not touched, one can read the history of the last days of the clan. If the pages are touched they crumble and disintegrate.

Out of the corners of their eyes, the characters believe they can detect the presence of other visitors poring over ancient texts and murmuring among themselves.

31. Origami Room

The floor of this chamber is littered with scraps of colorful paper, dust and debris.

As the PCs enter, ghostlights twinkle in the darkened chamber. A sudden gust of wind makes the paper bits fly into the air, folding themselves into origami birds and



butterflies that flit wildly about. The next round, bits of green paper swirl together. By the end of the round, they have become a giant origami mantis. The third round after the PCs react, the mantis, if not destroyed, leaps among the birds and butterflies slashing and shredding them to bits. At the end of the round, the paper drifts back to the floor.

Paper Mantis: AC 8; hp 40; fire-based attacks do +1 per die of damage.

32. Flame Room

The light of a lantern or torch flickers from around the corner ahead.

Beyond the corner is a hall filled with broken benches, beams, and crockery. In the middle of the hall lies a bed of fiery coals.

If the fire is approached within ten feet, a moan fills the room and a fiery human shape rises from the coals. If the PCs flee *immediately*, they can escape.

This is a *shinen-gaki* (flaming spirit). It blocks the PCs' path by igniting the wooden door. Then it steps into the wall, appearing a round later behind the PCs to ignite the debris behind them. It then attacks. Players who search the debris find a few unbroken flasks containing water.

The burning door is AC 5, hp 25; but those attacking it suffer 1-4 points of fire damage per round.

Shinen-gaki: AC 0; MV/18"; HD 4; hp 19; Dmg 1-8; immune to fire and weapons less than +2; suffers +1 point per die of water damage.

33. Shadow Walker

An eerie trail of footprints, left foot pointing forward, right foot backward, either begins or ends here. Starlight streams through a cross-shaped window onto the floor, creating a dagger of light. Shadows hug the corners, avoiding the illuminated area.

The fourth weapon master, Ito Yoichi, a bushi-ninja, awaits intruders here. If a character steps into the dagger of light, or looks out the window, a gust of wind blows up a flurry of dust. The Shadow Walker is near. He does all in his power to stop the characters from proceeding.

This weapon master should be played for effect. He relies on stealth, ambush, and quick fade-outs, plus his unusual mobility. His special abilities include:

Blending: By shutting his eyes and not moving, the Shadow Walker has a 48% chance of becoming effectively *invisible*.

Wall Walking: He can walk on walls and ceilings at half speed.

Shadow Hurling: He can fling actual pieces of shadow; if hit, the victim must save vs. paralyzation or be blinded for 1-4 rounds.

Blur: While in shadow, the first attack of each round against him always misses. The second attack suffers a -2 penalty and all others are made at normal chances.

Yoichi's martial arts special maneuvers are: *push*, *stun touch*, *hurl*, and *all around sight*.

He carries three flash grenades, four large shurikens (dmg 2-5) and 100 lead pellets (when cast on floor, opponents must make a Dexterity save each round to keep their footing; covers a 10-foot-square area).

His main weapon is a black *kusari-gama* +2 that reflects no light (dmg 1-6; save vs. paralyzation or lose 1d4 points of constitution). Lost constitution is recovered at a rate of 1 point per turn. A character reduced to 0 constitution dies. This weapon can also entangle normally, and Yoichi *hurls* such victims into one of the three traps present in the hall as he snaps his weapon free.

Ito Yoichi: 8th level bushi/7th level ninja (AC 0; MV 15"; hp 39; #AT 3/2; THAC0 12; attack from behind at +2 for damage x3; S 16, I 15, W 8, D 17, C 15, CH 14)

When the Shadow Walker is slain, the hall is blanketed by a *silence* spell. His treasure is hidden in the hollow first tread of the stairs: a silvery chain worth 80 tael and a *potion of renewal* (cures 25 points of damage or any one ailment). There is also a ring with a tiny katana that fits into the medallion.

34. Mysterious Trail

A trail of odd footprints leads down the darkened, dusty hall. The left foot points forward, the right foot points back.

At times the trail disappears through the walls and then returns yards further on. At

last they proceed through a door at the end of the corridor. This door's hinges are rusted shut and must be forced open. The door opens 120 feet above the crashing surf!

Characters forcing the door must make a Dexterity check or fall. Characters who fall land on the roof of the third floor 12' below, each taking 1d6 points of damage.

35. Wall Climb

The passage ends on a narrow ledge overlooking the churning sea below. There is no railing. Only narrow windows every fifty feet break the ivy-covered face of this wall. Twenty feet above is a narrow, ornamental ledge.

Hidden in the ivy five feet to the right of the door are narrow handholds leading upwards. The ledge above goes nowhere, but a cornice piece can be twisted to open a small crawlhole into the Inner Path.

36. Grillwork

A damp salty breeze blows in through the eight-foot square wooden grating just ahead.

Beyond the grill is a short, shadowy passage to another grill on the outer wall of the castle. This is obviously a horizontal ventilation shaft. If the first grill is opened and the passage investigated, a narrow passage to the side is discovered.

37. Bookcase Trap

This room contains several benches, a low desk, and an empty bookshelf, all in bad repair.

The bookshelf appears attached to the wall, but can be pulled aside to reveal a three foot deep alcove. Anyone stepping into the alcove is struck by a falling block of stone (dmg 2-8; save vs. petrification for half). The alcove appears to be empty; however, the entire back wall can be pushed inward to reveal a second passage.

38. Wall of Fire

The pungent aroma of burnt cedar wafts through the air. The floor and



walls of this chamber are charred and covered with soot.

When a character steps into this room, a pair of painted paper walls slide across the middle of the chamber, dividing it in half. The wall is painted to represent a stylized bonfire with flaming roses and red plumed birds dancing above it.

The paper walls move toward the characters at ten feet per round. As the wall approaches, the art shifts and shimmers, becoming more and more animated the closer it approaches. At a distance of ten feet, it suddenly resembles a *wall of fire*, except that the exits in the far side of the room can be clearly seen through the flames.

The wall gives off no heat, if anyone asks. Although this might seem like an illusion, the *wall of fire* is real; the hot side is facing away from the PCs. Any character who steps through suffers 2d6+8 points of damage each round from the flame. As soon as the paper wall is broken by any character or object, it consumes itself, burning away completely in four rounds, inflicting its damage normally during that time.

39. Trapped Stairs

This room is empty except for a set of mahogany ladder-stairs and open windows.

An investigation reveals bloody footprints leading from the ladder-stairs to the window sill. The ladder-stair is also bloody.

The center of each stair-rung is trapped; when weight presses down on the topmost stair-rung, spikes spring forth on all of them, impaling the hands and feet of any using them (dmg 1-4 per stair; those injured are crippled until twice the amount of damage suffered is healed: hands, -4 penalty when fighting, climbing or catching; feet, half movement and no dexterity bonus to AC).

Up to three characters climbing the stair at the same time can be trapped.

40. Sliding Wall

This wall is lacquered wood adorned with stylized waves and lotus. With care one of the blossoms may be rotated left and the wall can then be slid to the right to reveal a secret passage. However if the blossom is

then pushed in, the wall also slides to the left and after moving eight feet, reveals the narrow Inner Path.

41. Room of Slashing Walls

A ghastly apparition of a bloody warrior staggers out of the doorway. Pausing as if undecided, he splits in half! One half staggers right, the other left, disappearing through the walls.

This room can be divided into smaller areas by sliding walls. The edges of the walls, though, are razor-sharp blades. A character who crosses one of the indicated sections between pillars must make a successful save vs. petrification or take 1-8 points of damage as the walls slam shut; they reopen after two rounds. The walls can be deliberately triggered by characters using inanimate objects. They are made of paper and can be easily broken through once they stop moving.

42. Keeper

The wind is brisk upon this open walkway. An ornate door, painted the red and gold of the setting sun faces to the west. The door is latched and there is a keyhole.

The door is not locked. Characters looking through the keyhole see a shrine to the dying sun, a cold marble altar before the rear wall. Hanging over the altar is a windchime made of strings of short slender crystals hanging from a teak crossbar.

When the door is opened, the chime rings, and any light dances off the faceted crystals. A character making an intelligence save at a +4 penalty notices that one of the crystals is shaped like a dagger.

This is the lair of the Keeper of the Key, a sohei and the seventh weapon master. If the PCs enter the shrine he materializes behind the altar. If they retreat he materializes before them with the chime in his hand.

The Keeper: 11th level sohei (AC 3; MV 15"; hp 59; #AT 3; THAC0 12; Dmg by weapon +2; S 17, I 10, W 12, D 16, C 15, Ch 11)

He may use his ki once a day for ten rounds, causing him to gain +1 more to hit damage, and saves, an additional at-

tack, an improvement of 1 AC, an increase of 3" to speed and the ability to dodge or deflect missiles on a save vs. breath for no damage, or only suffer half damage. These adjustments are figured into his score and must be subtracted after ten rounds.

He knows the following spells:

First level: *Curse, deflection, cause light wounds*

Second level: *Hold person, obscurement*
Third level: *Cause blindness*

The Keeper is trained in two styles of martial arts weapon fighting and can also perform the following special maneuvers: *concentrated push, prone fighting, incapacitator, blind fighting, and leap.*

His weapon is the windchimes, which serve several functions.

Flail: as flail (dmg 2-7/2-8).

Deflect Attack: He receives only half damage. This only requires an action, no roll is necessary.

Crystal Spike: He can throw up to 20 crystals as spike shurikens, at shuriken rates (dmg 1-4/1-3).

The Keeper tries to separate the PCs, attacking from a different side each round. If he pushes a character off the walk, the character can successfully grab the railing, but must make a Strength save at half his score to climb back up.

When the Keeper is slain he and his equipment dissolve into the wind.

The shrine bears red prayer cloths hanging on the walls, their lettering faded by the sunlight. Upon the marble altar is a small katana-shaped charm which fits into the medallion. The altar has a secret catch on either side that allows it to slide forward.

With two people manipulating the secret catches on either side of the altar, it may be slid forward on the dais. Beneath is a four foot shallow pit. The pit is alive with a swarm of carnivorous beetles.

Sliding back the block immediately cuts off the beetles. Otherwise, they swarm out, attacking characters in a 10' radius for 1-4 points per round. The swarm is AC 7 and has 40 hit points: edged weapons do 1 point, blunt weapons/swatting do 1-4, fire damage is double normal.

Suspended on two cross wires two feet from the base of the pit is a wire basket holding 8 pieces of tarnished jewelry valued at 800 taels.

The base of the pit is a concealed trapdoor that leads to the Inner Path.



43. Paper Warrior

This chamber holds a large mahogany table with moldering cushions to sit on. Upon the table are several sheets of colorful paper, an ink dish, and a 2 foot long white plume, tipped with silver.

This is the den of the fifth weapon master Ito Chomei, a shukenja and steward of the clan. If the papers or the quill pen are disturbed, they are snatched away by an invisible force and the ink flows from the dish forming words on a clean sheet of paper. These words spring from the page and take the form of a tattooed man. With a wave of his hand, the door to the chamber slides shut and bolts.

Ito Chomei: 8th level shukenja (AC 5; MV 9"; hp 36; #AT 2; THACO 16; Dmg 1-4 and special; ki: +3 on saves)

Chomei first acts to protect himself while speaking to the characters about disturbing him, and then seeks to cause confusion.

His spells include:

First Level: *curse, cause light wounds (x4), deflection;*

Second Level: *hold person (x2), obscurement, speak with animals, snake summons;*

Third Level: *cause disease, dispel magic, bestow curse;*

Fourth Level: *tongues (reversed)*

Ito Chomei is known as the Paper Warrior, because he can fold and animate origami weapons. He can fold two per round (four using his special martial arts maneuver *speed*) and can even do so while being attacked. These devices each possess AC 8 and 15 hit points, and suffer double damage from fire. He has 14 pieces of paper. Once an item is folded, his breath enlarges it to double size. The items he can fold are:

Shield Beetle: Absorbs all damage from a single blow. Excess damage is lost.

Bee Warrior: Acts as a second level bushi, but does 1d6 points of damage.

Vipers: These have MV 6"; #AT 1; THACO 18; Dmg 1 + poison; poison damage 2-8, save negates.

Pinwheel: Razor-sharp blades slash at legs as it rolls along the floor (#AT 1; THACO 15; Dmg 2-5).

Leaping Locusts: Distract one foe a round, treat as a *protection from good* (-2 to PCs attacks, +2 to shukenja saves).

Octopus: Attacks one character within 10'. If a save vs. spells is made, the victim takes 1-4 points of damage and the octopus is destroyed. If failed, the victim takes 2-8 the first round and 3-12 in all later rounds.

An effective way to stage this is to have the origami devices coming in from different directions at different heights to create maximum PC confusion.

Chomei's martial arts special maneuvers are: *pain touch, prone fighting, one finger, fall, missile deflection, iron skin and speed.*

Chomei's weapons include a kiseru (iron pipe) and the quill pen. The latter is special.

Quill Pen: Characters struck by the pen do not suffer damage, but must make a save vs. breath weapon or have their perception of reality "rewritten." The DM may choose from the following *confusion* effects: a friend looks like a foe; the victim believes the battle is over; sees the foe as his friend, etc.) This effect lasts for 6 rounds.

When the Paper Warrior is defeated there is the sound of crumpling paper as he collapses into a ball. Within a drawer in his desk there is a prayer cloth with two *cure disease* and three *cure serious wound* spells. There is also a box of eight pen nibs, but one is really a katana charm that fits into the medallion.

NEW MAGIC

Enchanted Cherry Pits: These magical seeds come in three varieties: smooth brown, spiked red, and crescent gold. When the seed is planted and watered, it roots and grows into a mature bonsai cherry tree in 2 rounds, blossoming in the third. Each plant yields 2-8 blossoms, which must be picked for use.

Brown: When the blossom is picked, from it steps a full grown 3rd level Samurai (AC 7; hp 18; #AT 1; THACO 18; Dmg 2-9). He serves for one turn or until slain, then withers away. All samurai from the plant are identical, being facets of the plant's spirit.

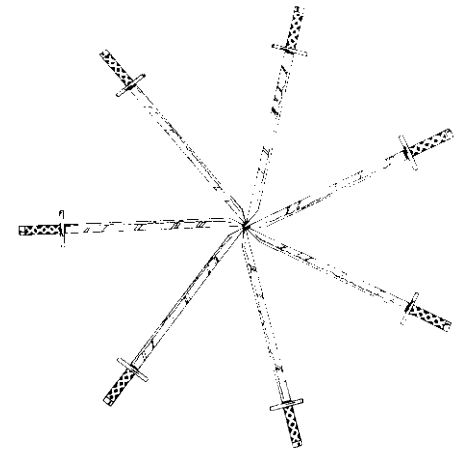
Red: When picked, the blossom turns into a ripe cherry. When thrown, the fruit explodes on impact, causing 2d8 points of fire damage within a 10' radius.

Gold: The 2-8 blossoms shine dimly

with a golden light. When picked, a blossom shine brightly with the light of the full moon in a 10' radius. Those in the area gain +2 to attacks, saves and AC when fighting evil spirits. Lesser evil spirits cannot enter the radius voluntarily. The blossom withers after one turn.

Usually, 1-3 seeds are found.

Potion of Spirit Binding: This potion, when splashed on a noncorporeal spirit, solidifies it, reducing its AC by 5 (if no AC is given, the potion gives it an AC of 5). If the spirit has assumed a physical shape, the potion locks it in that shape for 2-8 turns. If poured on a character taken over by a spirit, the physical body is paralyzed for 2-8 turns and the spirit is imprisoned for that time.



BENEATH THE GHOST CASTLE



The party must now descend into a network of haunted caverns under the castle in search of the relics of the clan. Boiling tides submerge the entrance during daylight — the caverns are accessible only at night. The party must enter the caverns, locate the relics and defeat the powerful creature that guards them.

The caverns are extremely dangerous. As in the castle, former members of the Seven Swords Clan suffer under a variety of curses, and haunt the caverns in their accursed forms. Additional monstrosities also lurk in the caverns, attracted by the evil forces that permeate the area. The strength of these local forces, and the caverns' proximity to the land, prevent the recovery of the relics by the favor of the sea lord (requesting this, however, does not expend the favor).

The relics are hidden in a jade chest located in a subterranean pool protected by a *guardian krakentua* (encounter area 27). The wu-jen in area 26 possesses a powerful magical item, the *seven-fingered hands*, which will greatly assist the party in defeating the krakentua.

This adventure offers the characters many opportunities to gain information about the location of the relics, the curses

on the clan members, and other secrets of the caverns by using shukenja spells such as *know history*, *omen*, *trance*, *commune with lesser spirits*, *dream sight*, and *request*.

GHOSTLY MATTERS

Supernatural phenomena dominate this scenario. Some are recurring themes; others are keyed to specific encounters. Above all, the DM should use these phenomena to maintain an atmosphere of mystery and foreboding throughout the adventure.

Most these phenomena are of evil nature and are generated from the forces present in the caverns. Some, however, emanate from sources which are not strictly evil. Laying tortured spirits to rest stops the phenomena associated with them.

Ghostly phenomena can occur automatically or randomly; some appear at the discretion of the DM. They cover the entire spectrum of senses. They occasionally cause penalties in combat. The DM

should familiarize himself with these effects and their sources. Generally, the closer the party comes to a phenomenon's source, the more likely that phenomenon is to occur (or the better its chance of being revealed through spells), and the more intense and vivid it becomes. Eliminating the source suppresses the associated phenomenon. The DM has the final word on when, where, and how often the phenomena occur.

Visions and Phantasms

Visions are mental pictures or dreams and usually are experienced by a single character at a time, although the DM may make exceptions at his discretion.

Phantasms occur as physical sensations of sight, hearing, taste, touch, or smell and generally are experienced by the entire party (although again, the DM is at liberty to make exceptions as he sees fit).

Not all characters are equally susceptible to visions. In this case, wu jen characters are the most sensitive, followed by shukenjas and sohei. All characters are equally susceptible to phantasms.

Following are lists of the visions and phantasms that can be encountered while adventuring in the caverns. Numbers indicate the phenomena's sources. When the party is in the vicinity of a source, the corresponding phenomenon should be stronger and more frequent. Phenomena with no numbers have no specific source and can appear anywhere in the caverns. Some encounter descriptions specify the occurrence of specific phenomena. Elsewhere, the DM should freely use the phenomena as sources of clues, foreshadowing, and atmosphere.

Although all phenomena, ideally, should be experienced by the characters at least once, the most vivid phenomena, especially those keyed to specific encounters, should stay unrevealed as long as possible to heighten suspense. The DM can also add appropriate phenomena of his own design or use variations of those listed.

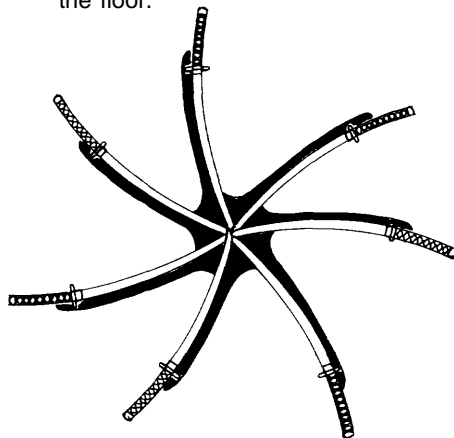


Visions

- A. An emaciated old man in tattered clothes extends a shaky hand as if gesturing for help. Printed words suddenly appear on his skin from head to toe, and he screams in agony. (10)
- B. A man and a woman argue furiously. From out of nowhere, a blade slashes their heads off. (12)
- C. A white butterfly flutters in the night sky. It falls to the ground and is set upon by snakes who tear it apart. (15)
- D. A jade box with seven bronze cranes on the front and sides appears. The box opens. Inside is a fortune in gold pieces. (22)
- E. Seven bushi writhe in agony, groping at their legs. They have no feet. (22)
- F. A handsome young man dressed in fine silks pleads soundlessly for help. White blood oozes from the pores in his skin. (24)
- G. A cherry tree stands under a dark sky. Blood drips from its blossoms. (24)
- H. Blood falls from the sky like rain. It changes to milk when it hits the ground. (24)
- I. Two disembodied hands float in the darkness. The hands wither and three fingers drop off. The fingernails turn silver and grow into foot-long blades. (24)
- J. An octopoid creature with seven wriggling tentacles and bright red eyes hovers in a cloud of red mist. It laughs and slowly disappears inside the mist. (27) (*Note: Don't use this until after the characters have had a chance to experience it in encounter area 10.*)
- K. Seven katanas dance in the air, join together, and then spin through a screaming crowd, slashing them to pieces. (27)
- L. Seven crabs float to the surface in a pool of water. They have human faces on their shells.
- M. Seven fish leap from the water and throw themselves against sharp rocks to die.

Phantasms

- N. The voice of an old man is heard, shrieking, "Kill me! Please kill me!" (10)
- O. The characters feel a tightening around their necks, as if they were being choked by ropes. Scars appear around their necks. (12)
- P. The muffled sound of counting is heard. The voice is distant and indistinct. The counting stops at seven, pauses, and then repeats. (14)
- Q. A guttural voice is heard reciting a haiku. Translated, it means: "The white butterfly on the pink blossom. Whose soul is this?" (14)
- R. The desperate cries of a young girl are heard: "Please! Help me! Somebody please help me!" (15)
- S. A ghostly butterfly with a wingspan of several feet emerges through a wall, flutters in front of the party, then disappears through another wall. (15)
- T. Seven ghostly bushi stagger towards the party with arms outstretched. They have no feet and are walking on the stumps of their legs. (22)
- U. The characters become aware of the taste of milk in their mouths. (24)
- V. The characters become aware of the taste of milk changing to blood in their mouths. (24)
- W. The characters smell the aroma of cherries. (24)
- X. A cacophony of howls, shouts, gasps, and groans is heard.
- Y. A howling wind is heard, followed by a bone-chilling drop in temperature. The temperature returns to normal when the wind stops.
- Z. The characters smell the odor of dead fish.
- AA. Seven ghostly crabs with human faces on their shells scuttle across the floor.



BEGINNING THE SCENARIO

By this time the characters should be aware that the lower caves can be entered only at night. They can use any intervening time to rest, regain spells and heal themselves.

While resting, three of the player characters doze off and each has a different dream; one dreams of the jade box filled with gold, one dreams of the bleeding man, and a third dreams of the disembodied hands (described as visions D, F, and I in the list on page 19.) The dreams may come to any of the characters, but remember that wu jen, shukenja, and sohei are the most receptive. A character who has demonstrated a tendency to be greedy should experience the jade box dream.

When night falls, the characters can enter the caverns. From this point until they reach area 6, two phenomena can be experienced as a result of a spell casting (such as *omen*). These are visions L and M in the listing. If these are triggered by spell casting, the entire party experiences them as a phantasm.

The system of caverns exists naturally under the castle, although former occupants have modified many of the caves for their own purposes. The passages are twisting and rough-walled, about five to ten feet wide with ceilings averaging about ten feet high. The floors are generally smooth, but there are some rough areas where stalagmites have crumbled or rubble has fallen from the walls. Stalactites and stalagmites are common, and the party may occasionally find an especially large cluster in the deeper recesses of the cavern system.

The atmosphere is clammy and humid, the air stagnant. An icy wind blows through the passages, and the characters smell the fishy odor of sea water. The caverns are generally quiet; the characters hear only the echoes of their own footsteps in most places. However, if they stop and listen closely, they can hear the faint chirps and squeaks of the insects and vermin that inhabit the caverns, along with the distant howls of the haunted souls that also dwell below.

During the day, the caverns completely flood up to the ascending stairways in area 4. The passage directly beyond area 4 is above the high tide mark, so none of the



rest of the cavern system is submerged. However, because of the humidity and seepage from cracks and faults in the walls, virtually all the cavern walls are damp and dripping, and streams, puddles, and pools of water are very common.

Treacherous crevasses and sinkholes can certainly pose a hazard to careless PCs. Characters near the edge of a crevasse or sinkhole without taking precautions (such as holding onto a fellow character) have a 1 in 20 chance of falling in. Sinkholes indicated on the map are about 20 feet deep; characters falling in take 3-18 (3d6) points of damage. Crevasses average 200 feet deep, and falling into them is fatal.

ENCOUNTER KEY

1. Flooded Cavern

The passage opens into a vast cavern containing a natural lake about 130 feet long and 90 feet wide. The 50-foot-high ceiling is dripping with stalactites. The air is humid and heavy with the fishy odor of sea water. The cavern is eerily still; the only sound is that of the water lapping gently against the cavern walls.

The water has receded here, lowering the level of the lake to reveal a narrow stone walkway that winds across the lake to a passage on the opposite side of the cavern. The wet and glistening walkway is about three feet wide and rises just a few inches above the surface of the water.

After the PCs have moved 10 feet along the walkway, they attract the attention of three ningyo hidden just below the water. The ningyo are possessed by evil kuei and are armed with tridents and spears.

They silently stalk the party as it moves along the walkway, waiting to spring their ambush at 1a-b. Between these points, they have secured a heavy fishing net (see map). The net is underwater; only characters specifically looking for traps are able to notice where it is secured. If a character stoops to examine the net at 1a, a ningyo lunges from the water, grabs the character, and pulls him into the water.

When any character reaches 1b, the ningyo toss the net over all characters between 1a and 1b. The PCs must make a successful Dexterity check or be pulled into the water by the net.

Characters fighting in the water (which

is 10 feet deep) attack at -2. Characters making excessive movements on the walkway (such as attempting combat) have a 1 in 6 chance of slipping and falling in the water.

The ningyo, on the other hand, never leave the water completely, and only attack characters who are in the water with them. The ningyo will not negotiate, and fight to the death with any characters in the water, though they may be driven off with missile fire. They make no attempt to move onto the walkway, although they can freely swim under it.

2. Walkway Gap

About halfway across the cavern is a 15-foot gap in the walkway where the stone has collapsed. If the characters choose to swim across the gap, the ningyos from area 1 (if not already defeated) attack the first character to attempt it. If the ningyos have been defeated, there is no danger here.

If the party has not yet experienced vision L (the seven crabs), these crabs accompany the last player character who swims across the gap. If the characters somehow bridge the gap without ever getting in the water, the crabs surface in the gap after the last character has crossed. The crabs vanish at any attempt to touch them.

3. Tiny Fisherman

About 30 feet from the end of the walkway, a tiny man sits fishing. He is dressed like a samurai warrior and is only two inches high. A 1-foot-square bamboo raft is secured to the walkway and floats calmly in the water.

When the party comes within five feet, he drops his fishing pole, startled, and springs to his feet. He draws his sword — a needle — from its sheath, puffs himself up, and announces loudly, "Halt, please, and identify yourselves!" He is trembling.

The tiny man is trying to be brave, but is clearly very frightened. He makes no move to attack the party. If the characters identify themselves and assure the tiny man they intend him no harm, he sheathes his needle-sword and introduces himself as follows:

"Honorable warriors, permit me to humbly introduce myself. My name is

Sunsho Daji, second son of the honorable Sunsho Anteki. I am here at the request of my older brother, Sunsho Miharu, who had business in this place. He has gone ahead into those caves and, as he requested, I am waiting for his return. He has been gone now for three weeks." Daji looks away; he is obviously worried.

"I must warn you — there are many dangers here. If you wish to stay with me, I will do my best to protect you. You are also welcome to share my provisions, if one of you would be so kind as to locate a suitable fishing pole."

If the characters ask how Daji and his brother got into the caverns, he motions to the west side of the cavern and tells them that they came in through a small passage on this raft, adding that his brother is six inches tall; that entry is clearly too small to be of any use to the party.

If asked about the business that brought him and his brother to the caverns, Daji looks uncomfortable and says, "I came to honor my brother's request. To ask more would be improper." If pressed, Daji reluctantly reveals that his brother had heard rumors of great riches in the caverns and intended to plunder them. Daji is concerned that his brother's actions may bring dishonor on their entire family.

If asked about his background or his small size, Daji proudly states that he is a samurai warrior. He explains that after his six-inch brother's birth, his parents prayed for another child, even if he was only as big as a little finger. Their deity took them literally, and Daji was born. As special compensation, the deity later granted Daji the unique ability to jump up to 10 feet in a single bound. Daji demonstrates this ability by jumping up to the shoulder of the nearest character and then back down again.

Daji shows great interest in the party's quest. He gratefully and eagerly accepts an offer from the PCs to join them, particularly if they show any interest in helping him find his brother. If the party is slow to make an offer to Daji to join them, he wistfully remarks what a fine group of adventurers they are, what a noble quest they're undertaking, and what an honor it would indeed be for anyone to be asked to join such an esteemed group. This flattery continues until the party gets the hint.

Daji only agrees to join the group, however, if they swear mutual honor and ac-



cept him as an equal. If Daji loses his life through inaction or carelessness of a character, or if a character violates this oath in any way, the DM may penalize that character up to 4 points of honor.

Sunsho Daji, samurai 1 (AC 1; MV 1"; HD 1; hp 6; #AT 1; THACO 20; Dmg 1; Ki once/day for double damage; AL LG; *do-maru* +1; proficient in weapon, poetry, painting, and fishing)

4. Ascending Stairway

The passage slopes upward. Steps have been chiseled into the rock to create a crude stairway. The stairway is about 40 feet long and continually slopes upward, rising above the high water mark, so no area beyond this point is ever submerged.

5. Crypt

This branch of the passage disappears into a black cavern. From the depths of the cavern drift sounds of agonized howls, animal-like grunts, and splashing water. The stench from the cavern is nauseating.

Closer inspection shows the cavern to be about 40 feet by 60 feet, apparently used as a burial ground. The area is in ruins. Many of the graves have been dug up, and several stones have been knocked down and broken. There are long cracks in the walls, and water steadily drips to the ground. There is about a foot of standing water in which floats all manner of foul material.

In a far corner, bent over an open grave, are two dirty creatures with long necks and bodies. Each has wet curly hair, long claws, and a single yellow eye. They appear to be scavenging for food.

The creatures are *tigbanua buso*, and this crypt is one of their favorite places to feed. They are slow-witted and do not immediately notice the party.

Before the characters can take any actions, Daji (assuming he is with them) jumps into the water and begins swimming toward the *buso* to demonstrate his courage. Unfortunately, Daji can't swim very well and he manages to go about two feet before he stalls and begins to go under. Unless he is rescued by a player character, Daji drowns. After he is rescued, and assuming the characters haven't restrained him, Daji dives in again with the same results. This attempt alerts the *buso*

(assuming they haven't been already) who begin to wade toward the party as fast as they can. If the characters don't restrain Daji after his second attempt or figure out some other way to keep him safe, Daji himself spots a nearby piece of driftwood on which he stays for the duration of the battle, safe from drowning.

The *buso* attack the characters, fighting to the death with their claws and fangs. Not often having access to food this fresh, they pursue the characters who attempt to escape. They ignore Daji.

The party's efforts are complicated by the high level of supernatural activity in the crypt. By the second round of combat, the shrieks of the desecrated dead become more shrill; the violated spirits manifest themselves as streaks of light flashing randomly throughout the crypt, and characters catch glimpses of the spirits swooping in and out of the open graves. These phenomena are not directly harmful, but they are distracting, and cause the PCs to hit at a -1 penalty.

On the third round, the intensity of these phenomena again strengthens, and the DM should increase the chaos by adding one or more of the following phenomena in this and all subsequent rounds: H (blood falling from the sky like rain), K (seven katanas dancing in the air), P (ghostly chanting of the numbers one through seven), R (shrieks of a young girl begging for help), W (the sweet aroma of cherries) and Z (the odor of dead fish) simultaneously, and AA (seven ghostly crabs with human faces on their shells, scuttling up the walls). This distraction gives the characters a penalty of -2 to hit.

If the *buso* are defeated, the supernatural phenomena subside, and the cacophony of howls and wails originally encountered in the crypt by the characters resume. If the characters explore the crypt, they find nothing of particular interest.

6. The Carpet

After descending a long stone stairway, the characters enter a small cavern about 30 feet square. On the floor of the cavern, extending from wall to wall, is what appears to be a carpet of rice paper painted with colorful and intricate geometric patterns. The passage continues on the opposite side of the cavern, but there is no apparent way to reach it without crossing the carpet.

The carpet covers a 20-foot-deep pit, the bottom of which is lined with bamboo spikes. The carpet is indeed made of paper, and only certain areas are supported underneath. There is only one safe route across the supported areas, and the path is very complex, made more difficult by the confusing painted patterns. A character who attempts to walk across the carpet has a 30% chance per 10 feet of falling in and suffering 5-30 (5d6) points of damage.

The cavern walls are slick; climbing chances are halved and must be checked every 10 feet (the sides of the pit are in the same condition). Further, a phantasm of the DM's choice startles the climber at the halfway point of any climb; the climber must make a Dexterity check or fall.

Because he is so light, Daji is able to find the safe route by feeling his way across the carpet. The party must suggest this to Daji; he will not think of it himself. Characters following Daji are able to safely cross the carpet.

7. Lair

Odd bits of cloth are strewn about the floor of this irregularly-shaped cave. The air is heavy with the odor of rotten meat.

In a corner of the cave, a group of rat-like creatures are huddled over a pile of debris. Some of the creatures are cutting up something with knives while the others squeak encouragement.

From the darkness of the cavern, another fearsome creature appears. It is eight feet tall and has a single red eye in its two-horned head. Its body is covered with coarse red hair. In one of its razor-taloned hands it holds a two-handed sword. Seeing you, it smiles and cackles, "Ah! Fresh meat for my slaves!"

The creature is a common *oni* that has taken up residence in the cavern. It takes great delight in watching the unwary attempt to cross the carpet trap. It feasts on the remains of those who fail and drags the ones who succeed into its lair.

The rat-like creatures are nine goblin rats that live here as slaves of the *oni*. Three of them are in their ratman form, carving up the remains of some unrecognizable creature with broken, rusted naginatas. The remaining six are in their giant rat form.

Before either the characters or the mon-



sters can take any action, Daji (assuming he is with the party) leaps past the oni and bounces into the cave, intent on searching for his brother. This action distracts the oni and gives the initiative to the characters. (Daji will not participate in any combat during this encounter, as he continues his search until the party leaves the area or is defeated.) The oni remains facing the party.

The oni relishes combat and first attacks the party with its two-handed sword. It then uses its spells for maximum effect (it likes to run victims into the pit with its *cause fear* ability). The oni is joined by the goblin rats in the third round of combat; those in their ratman form attack with their *naginatas*, the others attempt to bite.

If the creatures are defeated, the party can examine the cave. A careful search of the refuse turns up a few coins — 200 fen, 40 yuan, and 15 tael.

Daji pokes frantically through the pile of remains in which the goblin rats had been feeding. Near the bottom of the pile are the remains of a six-inch human. A blue ring identifiable by Daji as a family heirloom confirms the fate of his brother.

Upon this discovery, Daji is overcome with grief and sobs quietly for ten minutes. When he pulls himself together, he announces, "In the memory of my brother, I would consider it a great privilege to continue with you on your honorable quest if you will have me." If for any reason the characters decline his company, Daji dejectedly retraces his path back to his raft in area 3 and returns home.

8. Storage Cave

This dank, smooth-walled cave appears to once have been a storage area, but now is in disarray. Wooden shelves which once lined the walls have been toppled and broken into splinters. Two empty barrels lie on their sides in one corner, a shattered wooden cabinet is in another. Water drips steadily from a long crack in the 10-foot-high ceiling, collecting in puddles on the floor. Wet paper is strewn about, and a few unidentifiable objects lie half buried in the mud.

Along the east wall is an iron cabinet, about six feet tall and four feet wide. The cabinet has two doors and is covered with rust.

At one time, this cave was used as a *hoden*

(treasure house) for the occupants of the castle, but it has been neglected for years, and anything of real value has been stolen or destroyed.

The iron cabinet is actually a magical *box of years*. A character who opens the left door is enveloped in a cloud of white smoke and instantly becomes 25% younger than his current age. A character who opens the right door is enveloped in a cloud of black smoke and instantly becomes 25% older than his current age. The effects of each door cancel each other out; a character who opens one door after the other regains his current age. A character may experience the effects of each door only once. (Weighing 300 pounds, the box is probably too heavy for the party to take.)

If the PCs search through the debris, they find several unreadable, soaked parchments bearing the mon of the Seven Swords Clan, a cracked jade vase (worth 1 ch'ien), and a small ivory turtle with one leg broken off (worth 2 ch'ien).

9. Descending Passage

A chill wind whistles through this twisting passage as it descends deeper underground. The floor is noticeably rougher with rubble and clusters of stalagmites, making the journey difficult. The air is cold and clammy. Unearthly howls echo from the caverns below.

This passage takes the characters deeper into the cavern system. While they work their way through this passage, they are bombarded with supernatural phenomena. None of these should have direct effects on the characters, but merely keep the players nervous.

About every 10 feet, one or more of the characters (at the DM's discretion) should experience a supernatural phenomenon chosen from the vision and phantasm lists. Suggested phenomena include phantasms Q (the ghostly recitation of the haiku), U (the taste of milk) followed by V (the taste of milk turning to blood), and Y (the howling wind followed by a temperature drop). Final selection of the specific phenomena is left to the DM.

When any character comes within 10 feet of area 10, the entire party experiences phantasm N (the old man's voice begging to be killed).

10. The Pit

A rusted iron grating, just over 3 feet square, is set squarely in the west wall of the passage. The bottom of the grating is just a few inches from the floor. Low moans can be heard coming from behind it.

If the characters listen closely, they hear the voice of an old man groaning, "Kill me! Please kill me!" Any characters who have experienced phantasm N recognize this as the same voice.

The grating is set loosely in the stone wall and can easily be lifted out. If the PCs remove the grating and look inside, read them the following description:

Behind the grating is a dark pit about 20 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep. There appears to be an inch or so of standing water in the bottom. A foul and musty odor drifts upward from the pit.

Huddled against the west wall of the pit, sitting in a puddle with his arms wrapped tightly around his legs, is an emaciated old man in tattered clothes. Words and phrases are written on his skin from head to toe. When he sees the party, he begins to whimper, "No...not again! Please kill me! Please just kill me!"

The old man is Otomo Tahiro, a 3d level shukenja who entered the caverns two months ago intending to rid the area of its evil forces. Although his intentions were noble, Tahiro's mission was hopeless; the forces in the caverns were much too powerful. He was ultimately captured by the wu jen who resides in area 26. The wu jen cruelly used a burning paint to inscribe the fates of other clan members on the shukenja's body. Not only can the damage not be cured, but it proves fatal in a short time.

Tahiro has been kept prisoner in this pit, subsisting on the insects and vermin that find their way in. For the first three months, Tahiro was regularly brought back to the wu jen, but as his physical condition worsened, the wu jen lost interest, and Tahiro has been left alone since then. His mind is virtually gone and he is near death.

As long as the characters remain outside the pit, Tahiro believes he is about to be tortured again and continues to babble,



Statistics for Part 1

NAME	AC	MV	HD	hp	THACO	Dmg	SA	SD	AL
Badger	4	6" (3")	1+2	7	18	1-2/1-2/1-3			N
Buso, Tagamaling	5	12"	2	12	16	1-4/1-4/1-8Q(X)	CE		
Buso, Tigbanua	4	12"	8+2	45	12	1-6/1-6/1-10	Paralyze 10'R		CE
Bushi	6	9"	2	9	20(18)	1-6	Ki +2 levels 1/day		N
Bushi, Captain	5	9"	8	54	14(12)	1-8+2	Ki +2 levels 1/day		N
Carp, Giant	6	//18"	11	48	10	2-20	Swallows on 12 + dmg		N
Cattle	7	15"	3	14	16	1-4			N
Crab, Gt. Ghost	3	9"	3	13	16	2-8/2-8	Startles (-1 init.)		NE
Flying Spirits	4	/15"	2+3	13	16	1-4/1-4			CE
General	2	12"	13	102	6(4)	1-10 or 1-8	+8 dmg	Ki +3/+11	LE
Gaki, Jiki-Ketsu	2	12"/6"	8	36	12	1-3/1-3/1-8	Drain blood (1-10)	+3 to hit	CE
Gaki, Jiki-Niku	6	12"/6"	3	14	16	1-4/1-4/1-8		Regen. 1 turn	CE
Gaki, Nin-chu-ju	8	12"	10	45	10	1-2/1-2/2-5	Drain prime req.	+1 to hit	CE
Gaki, Shikki	4	12"/6"	5	27	15	1-4/1-4	Disease in 2d6 turns	+1 to hit	CE
Gaki, Shinen	0	/18"	4	19	15	1-8	Water double damage	+2 to hit	CE
Geisha Girl	0	9"	3	13					LE
Goblin Rat	7	9"	3	15	16	1-8		Shapechange	LE
Goblin Rat King	4	9"	5	24	15	1-8+2		Shapechange	LE
Goblin Spider	4	18"	7	32	13	1-8/1-8	Illusions	+1 to hit	NE
Gohei (Screaming Child)	10+1	9"	9	30	18	2-5/2-7	Spells	Ki +3 init, max. spells	CE
Keeper	3	15"	11	59	12	as weapon +2	Ki +1 <i>bless</i> & spells		NE
Kuei (Spirit Form)	-4	18"	5	22	15	1-10	Possession	+3 to hit, MR 10%	LN
Mantis Monk	3	20"	6	33	16	1-6+2(x3+1/2)	Ki save vs. spell 1/2		LE
Nature Spirit	7	12"	3	15	16	1-6	Spells		LG
Ninja, shadow	5	12"	6	15	19	1-4/1-4	Regen 1/r in shade	AC0 in light (min. dmg)	N
Ogre	5	9"	4+1	19	15	1-8+1			CE
Paper Warrior	5	9"	8	36	16	1-4 + Special	Spells & Origami	Origami	LE
Rat, Giant	7	12"/6"	1/4	3	20	1-3	5% Disease Lose 1 Prime Req/hr for 1d8 hours		N
Reaper	2	12"	9	81	9	1-8+3(x3)	Ki save vs. spell 1/2	Imm fear & mental	CE
Spider, Giant	4	3"/12"	4+4	22	15	2-8 + poison	Poison (Dmg 12)		CE
Snake, Viper	7	6"	1+2	7	18	1 + poison	Poison (dmg 2/r for 2d4r; save for 0)		N
Tentacles	4	6"	9	16	12	2-8	Tangle (STR 20)		N
Veiled Maidens	8	17"	3	18	20	1-4/1-6	Garrotte	Ki save vs spell 1/2	NE

Note: Paper creations of the Paper Warrior are all AC 8, 15hp.

Statistics for Part 2

NAME	AC	MV	HD	hp	THACO	Dmg	SA	SD	AL
Arms, haunted	4	/24"	4	15	15	1-6/1-6	Nil	Nil	CE
Bakemono	6	6"	1	7	18	1-6	Nil	Nil	CE
Buso, tigbanua	4	12"	9	44	10	1-6/1-6/1-10	fear, disease	Nil	CE
Goblin Rat	7	9"	3	14	16	1-8	Nil	Shapechange	LE
Head, haunted	8	/24"	1	5	18	1	Bite	Nil	NG
Ningyo, haunted	7	/18"	4	20	15	2-7	Spells, trident	Spells	CE
Ninja, haunted	7	18"	5	32	14	1-6/1-6	Three-piece rod	Nil	CE
Ogre mage	4	9"/15"	5	26	14	1-12	Spells	Nil	LE
Oni, common	4	9"	8	41	12	3-10/3-10	Spells	Nil	LE
Rat, giant	7	12"	1	4	18	1-3	Disease	Nil	NE
Samurai, haunted	5	12"	6	35	13	1-10	Katana	Nil	CE
Spectre*	2	6"	6	25	13	1-8	Energy drain	+1 or better to hit	LE
Wererat	6	12"	4	20	15	1-8	Surprise on 1-4	only silver weapons	LE
Wu jen, haunted	9	9"	9	24	11	Access to spells	Spells	Spells	CE
Zombie*	8	6"	2	10	17	1-8	Nil	Nil	NE
Zombie, ju ju	6	9"	7	33	12	3-12	Nil	+1 magic to hit	NE

* Immune to sleep, hold, cold, and charm spells



Statistics for Part 3

NAME	AC	MV	HD	hp	THACO	Dmg	SA	SD	AL
Bandit Extortionist	10	12'	1	4	20	by weapon	Nil	Nil	N
Bandit leaders	7	12'	1	8 each	20	by weapon	Nil	Nil	NE
Bandits	9Q	12'	1	6 each	20	by weapon	Nil	Nil	N
Beggar	10	12'	1	3 each	20	by weapon	Nil	NilQ(X)N	
Enemy Bushi #1	7	12'	1	6 each	20	by weapon	Ki (bushi)	Nil	N
Kiyosu Kuroda	5	12'	4	30	18	1-8+4/arrow+2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LN
Enemy scouts	7	12'	2	12 each	20	1-8	Ki (bushi)	Nil	NE
Scout leader	5	9'	3	20	18	1-8+2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LN
Hill ponies	7	12'	1 + 1	8 each	19	1-2	Nil	NilQ(X)	N
Light warhorses	7	24'	2	14 each	16	1-4/1-4	Nil	Nil	N
Bull	7	15'	4	24	15	1-6/1-6	Charge, 8-12	Nil	N
Ogres	5	9'	4 + 1	26 each	15	1-10	Nil	Nil	CE
Messenger	5	9'	3	16	18	1-8+2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LG
Light warhorse	7	24'	2	16	19	1-4/1-4	Nil	Nil	N
Enemy Bushi #2	7	12'	1	6 each	20	1-8	Ki (bushi)	Nil	N
Okagi	0	6'	8	60	13	1-8+7	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LE
Sakigahara	4	9'	5	34	16	1-8 +2/arrow +2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LE
Reinforcing bushi	5	9'	2	12 each	20	1-8	Ki (bushi)	Nil	LE
Himeji	4	9'	6	42	14	1-8 +7/arrow +2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LE
Friendly Bushi	7	12'	2	14 each	20	1-8	Ki (bushi)	Nil	NG
Shizouka	5	9'	6	38	15	1-8 +3/arrow +2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LG
Friendly reinforcements	7	12'	3	20 each	18	1-8	Ki (bushi)	Nil	NG
Shizadi	6	9'	6	44	16	1-8 +2/arrow +2	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LN
Goblin Rats	7	9'	3	18, 22	16	1-8 or by weapon	Nil	Nil	LE
Enemy horsemen	5	9'	3	18 each	18	1-8	Ki (samurai)	Nil	LE
Medium warhorses	7	18'	2 + 2	16 each	16	1-6/1-6/1-3	Nil	Nil	N
Tsushima	-1	9'	7	50	14	by weapon +3	Ki (samurai)		LE
Asano	10	12'	9	45	16	by weapon	Ki (shukenja)	Nil	LG

Statistics for Part 4

NAME	AC	MV	HD	hp	THACO	Dmg	SA	SD	AL	NOTE
Sumitomo Koi*	10	12"	1	5	20	1-4 (knife)	Nil	Nil	LG	A
Sumitomo Haru*	10	12"	1	4	20	1-4 (hair pins)	Nil	Nil	LG	B
Sumitomo Myoki*										
Sumitomo Miko*										
Sumitomo Skoshi*	8	12"	1	6	20	1-6 (karate)	Nil	Nil	LG	C
Sumitomo Toyo	8	12"	1	9	20	1-6 (karate) or by weapon	Iron fist, Circle kick	Nil	LG	D
Haka Kinnori	4	12"	4	34	18	1-6 (karate) or by weapon	Iron fist, Circle kick	Feint	LG	E
Ono Arieki (Yoichi)**	3	12"	7	35	18	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch,	Nil	LN	F
Unchiku**							Choke hold			
Sabero**	1	9"	3	16	18	1-8 or by weapon	Choke hold	Nil	LN	G
Oshikatsu**	1	9"	3	12	17	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Choke hold	Nil	LN	H
Ono Taneichi**	5	12"	6	12	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Paralyzing touch, Choke hold	Nil	LN	I
Ono Minbu**	3	12"	6	12	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Paralyzing touch	Nil	LN	J
Ono Heishiro**	2	12"	6	6	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Paralyzing touch, Choke hold	Nil	LN	K
Ito Toshiro	8	12"	10	15	20	1-6 (karate) or 1-8 (tae kwon do) or by weapon	(K) Circle kick, Flying kick, Backward kick, Fall (T) Iron fist, Crushing blow, Eagle claw, spells	(T) Feint, spells	CN	L
Ono Motaharu**	4	12"	3	10	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Paralyzing touch, Distance death, Choke Hold	Nil	LN	M



Statistics for Part 4 Continued

NAME	AC	MV	HD	hp	THACO	Dmg	SA	SD	AL	NOTE
Ono Umakai**	4	12"	3	8	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Choke hold	Feint	LN	N
Ono Mitsugaro**										
Ono Arihito**										
Tadahiro**	6	12"	3	10	18	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Weapon catch, Choke hold	Nil	LN	O
Mitsune**										
Ono Chomei**	3	12"	6	24	20	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Stunning touch, Paralyzing touch, Distance Death, Choke hold	Feint	LE	P
Akira**	4	12"	3	12	18	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Weapon catch	Nil	LE	Q
Bando Typhoo	9	12"	1	4	20	1-6 (karate) or 1-8 (tae kwon do) or by weapon	(K) Circle kick, Flying kick, Backward kick (T)Iron Fist	(T) Feint	CN	R
Masaki**	4	9"	2	7	18	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch, Choke hold	Nil	LN	S
Yukinari**										
Chuemon**	4	12"	2	9	18	1-8 or by weapon	Pain touch	Feint	LN	T
Sanakata**										

* Treat these characters as Bushi for purposes of computing saving throws and such. However, they have no ki power and none of the usual Bushi class proficiencies.

** All of these characters are members or permanent hirelings of Ono Kumi and know the Smiling Viper style of martial arts (a hard/soft style whose principal method is the vital area).

- A. Armed with a kitchen knife (treat as dagger).
- B. Still dressed in their formal kimonos. Each has a pair of steel needles in her hair, which can be used as daggers.
- C. Knows karate basics, but no special maneuvers.
- D. Knows karate basics and specials listed on table. Proficient with light crossbow (used in melee).
- E. Proficient with katana and daikyu
- F. Wears leather armor under black fighting clothes; carries unbreakable ninja-to of quality (double proficiency) and manriki-gusari; concealed in clothing are uchi-ne, three star-shaped shurikens, small bag with 10 tetsu-bishi.
- G. Both wear chainmail under black fighting clothes, carry a katana and three spike-shaped shurikens (double proficiency).
- H. Wears chainmail under black fighting clothes; uchi-ne in each sleeve; carries ninja-to (proficiency).
- I. Two dart-shaped shurikens (proficiency) concealed in hair; dagger strapped to right leg under kimono.
- J. Two dart-shaped shurikens (proficiency) in hair; obi clasp is carved ivory metsubishi holding pepper; *biwa of calm* (proficiency).
- K. Two dart-shaped shurikens (proficiency) in hair; concealed in kimono a tiny cushioned box with three dust grenades and three poison gas grenades made from quail eggs.
- L. Carries bo stick and kiseru; concealed dagger in garments; *detect magic, fiery eyes, hypnotism, read magic, spider climb, detect invisibility, knock, wizard lock, disguise, dispel magic, memory, polymorph other, vengeance, fire breath, and passwall*. Taboos: no fermented beverages, cannot harm those with whom he shares food, and cannot sleep under a roof. *Pearl of persuasion*: as shukenja spell *Entrhall*.
- M. Wears leather armor under black fighting clothes; carries ninja-to of quality and hidden kyoketsuogi and three star-shaped shurikens.
- N. All wear leather armor under black fighting clothes; each carries kawanaga and kama in obi; each has two uchi-ne and three star-shaped shurikens concealed in clothing.
- O. Each wears leather armor under black fighting clothes; carries a pair of nekode, nunchaku of quality (proficiency), ninja-to; conceals two uchi-ne and three star-shaped shurikens.
- P. Wears leather armor under black fighting clothes; carries *ninja-to* +1 (double proficiency); manriki-gusari in obi; three dart-shaped shurikens and bag of 10 tetsu-bishi in clothing.
- Q. Wears leather armor under black fighting clothes; ninja-to and kau sin ke (proficiency) in obi; three shaken in other garments.
- R. Jo sticks in obi; dagger in sleeve sheath; *fiery eyes*; Taboo: cannot enter room containing human female.
- S. Wear padded armor under black fighting clothes; carry kumade (proficiency); kusari-gama in obi; two dart-shaped shurikens in topknot.
- T. Wear leather armor under black fighting clothes; carry light crossbows (proficiency) and cases of 20 quarrels; ninja-to and kawanaga in obi; three shaken in other garments.

ENCOUNTER DETERMINATION MATRIX FOR

PART 3

The characters have no choice but to use the road. The time constraints are too stringent to allow them the time to travel the wilds, not to mention the inherent danger of doing so. If the party leaves the road, allow 1-6 turns for wandering about and finding that the movement is too slow.

The encounters listed above start on page 34.

Area	Time	Previous Events	Encounter/Notes
1	any	no effect	Encounter 1: Bandit Extortion
2	any	check Encounter 1	Encounter 2: Bandit Ambush
	hours 1-4	no effect	Encounter 3: Wandering Beggar
	hours 9-12	no effect	Encounter 4: Enemy Bushi Full details are not given for this unlikely situation. If it occurs, the enemy bushi have set up an efficient ambush which surrounds the PCs. The bushi are fully reinforced. It is quite likely at this juncture that the PCs are captured or killed while defending the relics.
3	hours 4-8	no effect	Encounter 5: Enemy Scouts If the PCs successfully evade this encounter, future meetings with enemy bushi can be delayed.
	hours 9-12	no effect	Encounter 4: Enemy Bushi See previous note for Encounter 4.
4	hours 4-12	check Encounter 5	Encounter 4: Enemy Bushi If the PCs did not evade the scouts in Encounter 5, an active pursuit or ambush is in progress. These bushi are not reinforced.
	any	no effect	Encounter 3: Wandering Beggar A different beggar appears each time this encounter occurs.
5	any	no effect	Encounter 6: Running Bull
	hours 5-6	see Encounter 4	Encounter 7: Messenger
6	hours 1-9	do not repeat Encounter 7	Encounter 7: Messenger
	hours 7-9	no effect	Encounter 5: Enemy Scouts The party may be able to evade these scouts. Whether they do so or not affects the encounters in area 7.
	hours 10-12	no effect	Encounter 8: Enemy Bushi If the PCs are slow in moving toward the inn, it is likely they fail. These bushi are reinforced, and set an ambush for the PCs.
7	any	no effect	Encounter 9: The Busy Village
	any	no effect	Encounter 11: The Dynamic Duo
	hour 7	no effect	Encounter 10: Friendly Bushi If the PCs met the messenger in area 5 (Encounter 7) these friendly bushi are reinforced.
	hours 8-12	possible spotting in area 6	Encounter 8: Enemy Bushi If enemy scouts spotted the PCs in area 6, these bushi are reinforced.
8	any	not to be duplicated	Encounter 10: Friendly Bushi If the PCs had Encounter 7: Messenger in area 5, these bushi are reinforced.
	any	if party spotted recently by enemy scouts, these bushi are reinforced	Encounter 8: Enemy Bushi
9	any	possible pursuit from previous area	Encounter 12: Wandering Shukenja
	hours 11-12	possible pursuit from previous area	Encounter 13: Enemy Horsemen
10	hours 11-12	possible pursuit from areas 8, 9	Encounter 13: Enemy Horsemen Do not duplicate

Each encounter happens only once in a given time period in a given area. There can be no duplication of events (except for Encounter 3: Wandering Beggar). For example, if the die roll for area 6 shows that the PCs meet the enemy bushi in hour 10, that encounter cannot be repeated in hour 11. In addition, be aware that Encounter 7 cannot be repeated at all once it has occurred, regardless of time and area.



"Not again! Please! Just kill me!" regardless of what the characters say.

If any of the party members enters the pit and comes within five feet of him, Tahiro stops babbling and stares at the character. As he recognizes that the characters are not his tormentors, he babbles, "You must leave! This is an evil place! You must leave!"

If the PCs attempt to question him, they find that he is all but incoherent. He knows his name but little else and to most questions he shakes his head slowly from side to side and mutters, "I don't know..." If asked what happened to him or how he got there, he babbles, "Not again! Please! Just kill me!"

If asked about the relics, an expression of sheer terror crosses his face, and he gasps, "The creature...the creature..." Tahiro raises his arm and gestures, causing an image of shimmering pink light to appear in the pit. It is an octopoid apparition with seven wriggling tentacles. Each tentacle holds a razor-edged katana. The creature is hovering in a cloud of red mist which gradually envelops it. The creature begins to cackle as it is swallowed in the mist, and the image fades.

This final effort proves to be too much for the old man who dies immediately. Attempts to prevent his death (or to raise him after his death) fail; his Constitution is reduced to zero.

(If the players insist on taking Tahiro with them, the DM should remind them that he is unlikely to get far in this condition.)

If his body is abandoned here, Tahiro becomes a permanent haunt and remains in this area until struck by a silver weapon (a fact his ghost does not know).

While Tahiro is alive, the inscriptions on his body are unreadable, as many of the words have been blurred or smeared by the water in the pit. If the characters attempt to read the inscriptions by using spells (such as *know history*), several phrases on Tahiro's body glow in an eerie blue light. The phrases refer to the fates of several of the clan members and can be read by the entire party:

- (on Tahiro's forehead) "Bickering fools ...two heads are as good as none..."
- (on Tahiro's chest) "He who shames his family with a dishonorable love is no better than vermin...may he walk with the rats for a thousand years..."
- (on Tahiro's right foot) "Traitors!

Cowards! Strike and they never run again!"

If the characters examine Tahiro's body, they find nothing of value, although they discover deep scars on his arms and back.

11. Crevasse

Just beyond a rugged area of jutting stalagmites and low-hanging stalactites is a large crevasse about 40 feet long and 10 feet wide which serves as an escape route for the heads in area 12. Unless the characters are unusually careless, they have no trouble avoiding the crevasse. Foolhardy characters venturing close to the edge of the crevasse have a 1 in 20 chance of taking a fatal fall.

12. Lovers' Chamber

This cave has smooth walls and floors and is about 20 feet wide and 30 feet long. The ceiling is only about eight feet high, and there is a one-and-a-half-foot-wide hole in the southeast corner of the ceiling.

The cave is empty except for the headless bodies of a man and a woman propped up against the south wall. They are dressed in fine clothes, as if outfitted for a fancy party. Both wear sashes bearing the Seven Swords mon.

The bodies belong to Joboji Toyo and his wife Kishi, a married couple who served as chief advisors to the elders of the Seven Swords Clan. Kishi and Toyo's constant bickering made them unable to reach a decision, resulting in inaction that ultimately led to the clan's downfall. Kishi and Toyo were subsequently beheaded and thrown into this cave where their heads live on. When the characters enter this area, the heads are in the cavern above, scrounging for food.

If the characters examine the bodies, they find nothing of interest. There is no blood on the bodies' necks; the wounds are sealed over.

Once inside the cave, the characters can hear the indistinct voices of a man and a woman arguing coming from the hole in the ceiling. If a character peeks into the hole, read the following:

The hole opens into a shallow cavern with a ceiling no more than three feet high. The animated heads of a man

and a woman are rolling around on the ground, feeding on worms and insects. They are constantly quarreling with each other.

"Toyo, give me that worm! Right now!"

"No! I saw it first! Go away!"

"I said give it to me!" The female head rolls into the male head, roughly bumping him.

The male head whines: "Kishi...that's not nice!"

"Quiet, you fathead!"

Kishi then spots the character peering through the hole and shrieks. The heads fly around in panic. Kishi collides with her husband, then berates him. "Watch where you're going, you clumsy fool!" She then glances at the character, shrieks again, and both heads resume flying in circles.

At the first opportunity, the heads swoop into the chamber below and hover protectively over their bodies. They scream at the characters to leave, clacking their teeth and spitting at them. If the characters give the slightest indication of attacking, Kishi shrieks in terror. "Don't hurt me!" "Leave me alone!" Kishi again collides with her husband, and they fall to the floor, momentarily stunned before they resume their nervous hovering.

The characters may engage the heads in conversation, if they first assure them that no harm is meant. (Otherwise, the heads continue to panic as before.) If asked to identify themselves, Toyo says, "This is my beautiful wife, Kishi." Kishi adds, "And this is my sniveling husband, Toyo." Beyond this, the heads have little more to say. Kishi responds to the PCs' questions with a curt "none of your business!" or by spitting and demanding they go away. Although they won't admit it, they will die if their bodies are harmed and are anxious for the party to leave.

If the party insists on information, threatens the heads in any way, or is about to give up and leave, Toyo abruptly says, "There's a big monster that lives in a lake! You've got to kill it!" (Toyo is referring to the krakentua in area 27.) "You idiot!" Kishi says, fearing retribution. "If it finds out, we're dead!" Kishi begins to chase Toyo around the room, eventually chasing him into the open passage. She pursues him into area 11 where they both vanish into the crevasse. The characters have no chance of finding them again once they



leave area 12.

Although there is no real reason to harm them, the party may kill the heads by destroying their bodies (even if the heads have left).

13. Corridor of Echoes

The somber voice of a man echoes through this passage from an indeterminate source. The voice counts slowly to seven, then recites this haiku: "The white butterfly on the pink blossom. Whose soul is this?" The counting and the recitation is endlessly repeated.

The voice is the same as phantasms P and Q. The actual source of the voice is the wererat in area 14.

14. Guarded Room

An eight-foot creature resembling a cross between a man and a rat is slowly pacing back and forth in front of a wooden door set in the west wall of this passage. It is carrying a large katana and is dressed in rags. One of the shreds of cloth hanging from its shoulder bears the mon of the Seven Swords Clan.

Five giant rats silently march along with him.

The rat creature recites aloud the number of steps it takes. When it reaches seven, it stops and recites aloud: "The white butterfly on the pink blossom. Whose soul is this?" It then turns in the opposite direction and repeats the entire process. This sequence of counting, reciting, and turning repeats endlessly.

The creature is a wererat. Its keen hearing allows it to notice even a party exercising caution and taking pains to sneak past it while its back is turned. At the instant the wererat senses the party's presence, it and the rats attack and fight to the death.

Beginning the second round, phantasm S (ghostly butterflies with huge wingspans) causes the party to fight at -1 on all attacks. In the third round, phantasm R (the female voice crying for help) adds to the confusion. These phenomena continue until combat has ended. The wererat and the rats are oblivious to these phenomena.

The wererat was formerly Ajimo Heikaru, the first son of the ruling warlord

of the Seven Swords Clan. Against his family's wishes, Heikaru had been carrying on a love affair with Emi Towiki, a kitchen worker (who now lies in area 15). Because of the affair, Heikaru was negligent in rallying the clan's army when needed, yet another reason for the clan's ultimate downfall. Heikaru was transformed into a wererat and cursed to guard the door to his lover's room for eternity.

15. Maiden's Chamber

The wooden door opens easily into a 20 by 30 foot chamber which has been furnished like a bedroom. In the center of the room, a beautiful young maiden is laid out on a *k'ang* (mat-covered platform). She is dressed in pink and white robes and appears to be dead.

The room is decorated with pink and white silks and *byobu* (folding screens). *Nishiki-e* (colored woodcuts) of pastoral scenes adorn the walls. At the foot of the *k'ang* is a small ivory box decorated with a carving of a white butterfly on a pink blossom.

A disembodied voice echoes throughout the room: "Help me! Somebody please help me!"

The maiden is Towiki, Heikaru's lover. Her soul is trapped in the form of a butterfly, kept in the ivory box. Until her soul is freed, she remains suspended between life and death. She appears to be dead to the characters, and they are unable to get a reaction of any kind from her.

If the box is opened, a single white butterfly flies out and into her mouth. She then opens her eyes and sits up. "Thank you," she says to the party. "You have freed my soul so that I may rest in peace. I haven't much time, but I will help you if I can."

Towiki has much information she shares with the PCs, providing they ask the right questions. She knows who she is and why she is there, although she is too embarrassed to reveal many details. More importantly, she confirms the existence of the relics they are seeking and knows that they are kept in a jade box. She knows nothing of the box, save that it is guarded by a horrible creature with tentacles like an octopus. She knows of a powerful weapon that can help defeat the creature, described only as "hands with seven fingers," and knows it is in the possession of "an evil one-eyed man" (the *wu jen* in

area 26.) She warns the PCs not to touch the hands until absolutely necessary.

After Towiki has answered three questions from the group, she announces that it is time for her to go, but that she has a final gift for them. She then gives the butterfly box to the group. After explaining its use, she lies back on the *k'ang*, closes her eyes, and passes away.

The box is a magical *box of sleeping butterflies*. The box has three charges. When it is opened, a butterfly flies into the mouth of a human or demi-human (as directed by the user) and has the same effect as a *death's door* spell.

16. Corridor of Howls

The passage twists and turns, sloping downward. The walls are rough; the floor is pitted and strewn with rubble, making movement difficult.

Piercing screeches and wails of agony can be heard coming from the south.

The source of the sounds is the group of spectres in area 15.

17. Haunted Passage

Rounding the corner, you are confronted by seven translucent warriors crawling across the floor of the passage, heading west. They resemble bushi. None of them has feet, and all grasp at stones and cracks to drag themselves along.

This passage is five feet wide and ten feet high.

The ghostly figures are spectres. They originate from the bodies buried in the mud pit in area 22 and continually crawl throughout the caverns.

The spectres pursue the PCs as soon as they see them, attempting to attack with their energy drain.

The spectres are very powerful, but the characters have a number of advantages in dealing with them. Since these spirits are effectively crippled, they can move only half as fast as ordinary spectres. They must stay on the ground and can only reach up a distance of four feet. Finally, if the party can get past them, the spectres cannot turn and follow them, as they are compelled to continue in the direction they were originally headed.



18. Blocked Passage

This section of the passage, which is about eight feet wide, is blocked by a rigid human arm which extends from the left wall about five feet from the floor. The arm is immobile and is sheathed in black silk. A short, gleaming katana is gripped tightly in the fist. The arm and the katana extend from wall to wall.

This is the arm of a ninja, a former clan member who tried to escape the caverns by passing through the wall but didn't make it. The ninja is dead, but his haunted arm lives on and guards the passage.

As soon as any character touches the arm or attempts to pass under or over it, the arm comes to life and attacks the party with the skill of a 12th level ninja. After two rounds of combat, the arm detaches itself from the wall and flies.

The arm is very quick; it has +2 on initiative rolls and can make 3 attacks per round. If it is disarmed, it loses a round while it recovers its weapon. The arm fights until it is physically destroyed, at which time the characters may take the katana as a prize.

19. Battle Room

At the end of this passage is a wooden door with a 6-inch-square hole in the center. The sounds of clanking metal can be heard coming from behind the door.

If a character looks through the hole, read the following description:

This cavern is 30 feet long and 40 feet wide. The walls are smooth, and there is a closed wooden door in the center of the east wall. Tatami (woven mats) cover the floor from wall to wall. This door is unlocked.

Two warriors are engaged in combat. One is dressed in do-maru armor and wields a katana; the other is dressed from head to toe in black cloth and is armed with a three-piece-rod. Their clothes are in shreds. Both are wearing iron masks which completely cover their faces. Except for thin eye slits, the masks are featureless.

Both fight skillfully. When one manages to strike the other with his weapon, no blood is drawn.

This is a practice room where clan warriors were sent to sharpen their skills in isolation. The two men (samurai 6, ninja 5) were high-ranking officers in service of the Seven Swords Clan who on occasion would secretly sneak down to the practice room to drink sake. They were inebriated when the clan met their final fate.

They are now cursed to battle each other here for all time. The magical iron masks prevent them from taking any damage from their wounds. They are compelled to keep the masks on.

They do not speak to the party, and under no circumstances do they leave the room. If the party enters the room, the two turn on the characters and fight until they leave the room or die. If the party leaves the room, the haunted warriors resume their endless contest.

Sabesada and Yehira fight with the skill appropriate to their character classes, but they take no damage from the attacks of the party. (The DM should not tell the party directly; if a character strikes Yehira with a katana, for instance, the DM should tell the player that his enemy's flesh has been cut, but there is no blood.)

If the iron mask of either slips or falls off for any reason, the two stop fighting for one round while it is put back on. If a mask is off for three consecutive rounds, the owner instantly dies (all his accumulated wounds open at once). This is the only way they can be destroyed. (If the characters are slow to realize this, the DM should have Yehira's mask slip. They stop fighting for a round so he can readjust it.

If Sabesada and Yehira are destroyed, the characters may take their weapons as prizes. The iron masks do not function in any way once Sabesada and Yehira are destroyed. There is nothing else of interest in this room.

20. Barracks

The door opens easily into a sparsely furnished room about 20 feet long and 20 feet wide. There are two k'ang (sleeping mats) on the floor with stone pillows. A small wooden chest is at the foot of each k'ang. Against the north

wall are a barren wooden table and two wooden benches. A closed door is in the center of the east wall.

This room served as temporary quarters for fighters using the practice room in area 19. In the first chest, the PCs find a suit of black clothing (similar to what the ninja was wearing in the practice room), three seven-pointed shurikens, and a silver medallion bearing the symbol of seven joined katanas (value 30 gp). The second chest holds two stone bowls, two crystal glasses, five copper pieces, and a dark glass bottle. This is a *bottle of endless sake*, a magical item the characters may take. If the bottle is shaken, it works like an *everproducing rice mortar*, but creates sake.

21. Blocked Stairway

The door is unlocked and opens to an ascending stone stairway. The stairway is completely blocked with rubble.

This stairway was used as a secret passage from the castle to the practice area, but the intense supernatural activity in the caverns caused the ceiling of the passage to collapse, filling it with rubble. The stairway is impassable.

22. Mud Pit

As the party approaches the intersection at 22a, the DM should read the following boxed description to the character who had the dream of the fade box filled with gold at the beginning of the scenario:

As you approach this intersection, your skin tingles, and you suddenly experience a very vivid mental image of a jade chest decorated with seven bronze cranes. The box opens. Inside is a fortune in gold pieces.

Tell the character that the vision seems to be coming from the passage heading east. If the party continues east, read them the following description when they come within 10 feet of the mud pit (area 20b):

This circular cavern, about 40 feet in diameter, is completely filled with soupy black mud. The ceiling is only about



four feet above the surface of the mud. On the far east side of the pit, half buried in the mud, is a jade chest decorated with bronze cranes.

The mud is only about two feet deep. The chest is securely imbedded in the mud and placed against the east wall. (It would be virtually impossible, for instance, for a player character to lasso it and haul it across the mud.)

Beneath the surface of the mud are seven zombies, former members of the Seven Swords Clan. Their feet have been cut off, and their spirits haunt the corridors of area 17 as crawling spectres.

A character wading across the mud pit (or the character in the lead if more than one attempt to cross) feels bony fingers grasping his leg upon crossing halfway. The zombie's head then surfaces, and the zombie attacks the character. Two more zombies surface and attack in the following round, two more attack in round three, and the final two join the attack in round four. The zombies randomly attack any characters in the mud pit, but they never leave the mud pit themselves. The zombies move slowly, as they have no feet and must move by crawling on their hands and knees. They attack until they are destroyed. Because of the cramped conditions and the soupy mud, player characters fighting in the mud pit attack at -1 and initiative is rolled normally.

If the characters manage to reach the chest without entering the mud (and thus alerting the zombies), all of the zombies surface at the same time and attack any player characters in the pit as soon as a character attempts to open the chest.

The chest opens easily. Inside is what appears to be a fortune in gold pieces. This, however, is only an illusion. As soon as a character tries to touch the gold, the illusion disappears and reveals the true contents of the chest: the decomposed feet of the zombies. (If the characters make this discovery while any of the zombies are still active, and think to give the feet back to their rightful owners, the zombies cease to attack and quietly resubmerge forever. If the zombies are not laid to rest in this way, all seven reappear each time the party enters this area anew.)

23. Apparition

The translucent image of a strikingly handsome young man blocks this inter-

section. He is wearing flowing pink robes and is floating a foot off the ground. He opens his arms to you. "Please," he pleads. "I beg of you to help me. They are torturing me and I don't know how much longer I can stand it. In the name of all that is good, I beg you to help me." Cuts and scratches appear all over his body, and he begins to bleed. The blood turns white. The apparition drifts past you and vanishes into the passage east of this intersection.

This is the nature spirit from the cherry tree in area 24. If the party ignores his pleas, the spirit reappears after they have traveled another 10 feet. The spirit begs them for help again, adding this time that he can help them in their quest if they rescue him. The spirit again vanishes down the eastern passage. (If the characters ignore the pleas this time, the spirit curses them, and their pores continuously ooze white blood. The curse is lifted automatically once the party reaches area 24. If the party refuses to help the spirit once there, the curse reappears.)

24. Garden

This cavern has a 40-foot ceiling and is unusually bright, illuminated by a glowing white globe about five feet in diameter imbedded in the east wall about thirty feet from the ground. This area was once a garden, but is now overgrown with weeds. The rich black soil covering the floor is littered with rotted flowers, and there are many varieties of dead and withered plants and trees throughout the room. The single healthy-looking plant is an eight-foot cherry tree located in the center of the cavern.

Three ugly creatures with deep blue skin, hunched bodies, and small stunted wings are hovering near the tree. One of these creatures has a blade with which he is cutting the blossoms. Rich white milk drips from the blossoms into ivory bowls held by the other two creatures. Standing a few feet off to the north side of the tree and keeping a watchful eye on the proceedings is another creature, ten feet tall with a single horn, brown skin, and brightly colored clothes.

The garden was originally used by the clan to grow ceremonial herbs and exotic flowers. The globe is a magical *sun stone* used to nourish the plants. If the characters try to dislodge the globe, it shatters, laying the nature spirit to rest.

The hunched blue creatures are bakemono, who are being supervised by an ogre mage. They collect cherry blossom milk for the krakentua to drink in area 27. The translucent man seen in area 23 is the nature spirit of this cherry tree. When the milk doesn't drip fast enough, the ogre mage violently shakes the branches, and the bakemono cuts the blossoms with the blade. This is agonizing for the nature spirit, and his screams can be plainly heard.

When the creatures see the party, they attack immediately. The bakemono all carry short katanas and attack with them. The ogre mage turns invisible and attacks the party with the spear he carries. The nature spirit is too weak to participate in the battle.

If the characters defeat the creatures, the nature spirit reappears and thanks them profusely. The spirit has much information that he eagerly shares. He tells them that the relics they seek are in a cavern to the north, which contains a vast lake. He says that the relics are guarded by a monstrous creature with many tentacles. More importantly, he tells them that a magical weapon exists that can help them conquer the creature — a pair of hands with seven fingers, kept in a silver bag by an evil sorcerer with a single eye. He warns the party not to touch the hands or take them out of the bag until they absolutely have to, as they are very powerful. (If laid to rest, the spirit volunteers this information before he leaves.)

This is the extent of the spirit's knowledge. If asked to accompany the party, the spirit declines, preferring to stay with his tree. As a final gesture of thanks before the party leaves, the spirit blesses them. This adds +1 to attacks and saving throws for all members of the party.

25. An Invitation

When the party is ten feet from the door to area 26, read the following description to the character most susceptible to receiving visions (in order: wu jen, shukenja and sohei):

Your skin prickles and you feel a dull throb in your head. You hear the voice



of an old man whispering, "I might have information you would find most helpful. Please come in."

Tell the player source of the phenomena is the door just ahead.

26. Laboratory

The unlocked wooden door opens into a 40 by 40 foot cavern heavy with the smell of cherries. The room is illuminated by flickering torches in rusted metal holders attached to every wall. Along the south wall is a long table filled with bottles, flasks, and other crude laboratory equipment. Three humanoid creatures with fiery eyes and gray, leathery skin are working at the table; one is grinding a mortar and pestle, one is heating a flask of red liquid over a small lamp, and the third is stirring a bowl of red liquid with a thin stick. In the southwest corner of the room are four large wooden barrels.

On the north side of the room is a withered old man resting on silken cushions. He is wearing a silver eye patch and a purple robe bearing the mon of the Seven Swords Clan. Thin wisps of gray smoke rise from a brazier on the floor beside him. Behind the old man on a low wooden shelf are an assortment of small unidentifiable items. A closed crate stands next to the shelf.

The old man looks towards the party, smiles, and beckons to the character who received his mental invitation. "Come in," he says. "I invite you to join me in a friendly contest of wills. Sit here." He gestures to a mat in front of him.

The old man is Ungu Yakana, a 12th level wu jen formerly in the service of the Seven Swords Clan. Although he feigned allegiance to the clan, he secretly engaged in magical research for the clan's enemies for which he was handsomely paid. He was detained while selling his latest discovery to another clan, and was unavailable when the Seven Swords Clan needed him. He is now cursed to serve the krakentua in area 27 by supplying it with its favorite cherry incense. He intends to use any characters he can capture in the process.

He controls the three ju ju zombies who are working at the lab table.

Yakana asks the characters to close the

door so they won't be disturbed; he is very insistent about this point. If the indicated character resists joining him on the mat, Yakana smiles and says, "Please honor the request of an old man. I merely ask you to participate in a friendly contest. If you humor me in this way, I will reward you with great knowledge." Yakana politely but firmly refuses all other questions, saying that he will tell the PCs anything they wish to know when the contest has been completed. If the characters refuse to cooperate or attack Yakana or the ju ju zombies, Yakana attacks as outlined below.

If the characters agree to cooperate, Yakana motions for the indicated character to sit on the mat before him for a "friendly duel of the minds." Yakana then requests that the character give him a moment to focus his concentration. Yakana then shuts his eyes and remains motionless. This entire procedure is a sham, and Yakana has no intention of fighting a mental duel of any kind. His purpose is merely to stall the party for the equivalent of five combat rounds so that the room fills with the smoke from the brazier next to him. The fumes have a drugging effect on all player characters in the room, and they attack at -2 and make their initiative rolls at -2 as long as they remain in the room. If the door is opened or the air is cleared in any way, the effects fade after five rounds. (Note that if the characters don't initially shut the door as asked, the fumes won't affect them at all. Note also that even if they refuse to cooperate with the wu jen's request for a mental duel, they are still affected by the fumes after five rounds of combat if the door is closed.)

When Yakana is satisfied that sufficient time has passed, he opens his eyes and commands the ju ju zombies to kill the PCs. The ju ju zombies attack the nearest player characters with their energy drain touch.

Yakana also attacks. He has the following spells at his disposal: *drowsy insects*, *fiery eyes*, *hail of stones*, *magic missile*, *whip*, *wind breath*, *stinking cloud*, *hypnotic pattern*, *hold person*, *fire rain*, *steam breath*, *levitate*, *polymorph self*, *wall of fire*, *sword of deception*, *fire breath*, *pain*, and *withering palm*.

Yakana levitates off the floor in the first combat round, and then attacks the characters with his spells, beginning with *pain*, *fire rain*, and *fire breath*. His overall strategy is to get near enough to a character to use his *withering palm* spell. If he is reduced to less than 10 hit points or if the ju

ju zombies are destroyed, he uses his *polymorph* spell to change into a worm. He escapes through a crack in the floor in one round unless the party stops him.

If the characters examine the room, they find nothing of interest in the south end of the room, except for cherry blossom petals, flasks of pink powder (the cherry incense), and barrels of dried blood. The shelf behind Yakana contains a variety of items used by him in his research, among them a glass tube, a small wooden rod, the petrified head of a snake, and a handful of blue pebbles. None of these items is usable by the party.

There is a silver sack inside the crate. Inside the sack are two oversized withered hands. Three of the fingers have been cut off. The remaining seven fingers end in foot long, razor-edged fingernails. These are the magical items the party needs to defeat the krakentua in area 27. The hands are only usable in the presence of the krakentua.

27. Guardian's Cavern

The winding passage ends in a vast natural cavern. The cavern is roughly circular, nearly 120 feet in diameter and with a ceiling over 100 feet high. Most of the cavern is filled with a natural lake. The air is thick with the smell of cherries. The surface of the lake is still.

Surrounding the lake are dozens of brass braziers. Clouds of pink smoke rise from the braziers, drifting upwards and forming thin pink clouds near the cavern's ceiling. Beside each brazier is an ivory bowl filled with a milky liquid. In the center of the lake, a cloud of pink mist hovers just above the surface of the water. Floating in the mist is a jade chest bearing the symbol of seven joined katanas.

The chest contains the relics sought by the party. The braziers are burning the incense prepared in area 26, and the bowls contain the cherry milk taken from the tree in area 24.

As soon as a character or any object disturbs the cloud supporting the chest or if a player character touches the water in the lake, the chest drops into the lake. Then read the following boxed description:

After the chest falls in the lake, ripples spread silently across its surface, and



then all is still again. A rumble is heard from deep beneath the lake which begins to shake the entire cavern. The lake begins to boil and bubble. Seven gleaming katanas shoot from the lake and fly into the air, giving off flashes of bright green light. The katanas join at the tips and then spin crazily around the cavern, swooping just over your heads and then away again. The katanas plunge into the lake and all is silent.

A few moments pass and the rumbling begins again. As the lake boils and bubbles, a giant kraken surfaces, waving a katana in each of its seven 30 foot long tentacles. It swims to the edge of the lake closest to you, tentacles writhing. The rumbling and the boiling stop and the kraken speaks. "I'm so glad you're finally here," it says in a low, watery voice. "I've been waiting for you. Now...tell me how I may serve you."

This is the krakentua, guardian of the relic chest. Initially, only its head can be seen by the characters. This likely leads them to believe that they are dealing with an ordinary kraken (although alert player characters may wonder how the kraken is supporting it-

self, as all seven tentacles are in clear sight).

The krakentua, of course, has no intention of helping the characters and is merely toying with them before it finishes them off. At first it pretends to be helpful and charmingly pleads ignorance to any question the characters ask. If they ask about the chest, it denies it exists. If they ask about the lake or make a move towards it, the krakentua lies and says that the lake is boiling hot. It denies knowledge of the clan or the caverns and even denies that it is a kraken, insisting instead that it is "a mighty warrior not unlike yourselves." If the characters initiate combat, the krakentua attacks as outlined below.

If the characters persist with questions, after the third question the krakentua picks up a bowl of milk, drinks from it, and then spits it on the nearest character. The player character must make a saving throw vs. poison or remain blinded for 2-12 (2d6) segments. If this doesn't goad the party into attacking, the krakentua tolerates one more question before it initiates combat itself.

The characters stand the best chance of defeating the creature by using the hands with seven fingers (from area 24). If the hands are taken out of the bag in the krakentua's presence and tossed at it, the hands glow and then fly at the krakentua and im-

mediately burrow into its body. The krakentua obviously is in pain, but continues to fight. Three rounds later, the krakentua suddenly collapses into the lake and sinks out of sight.

When the krakentua is defeated, the characters can recover the chest, lodged in a rocky ledge just ten feet below the surface of the lake.

When the battle is over, the surviving party members are able to find an opening in the southeast wall from which a fresh breeze can be felt. This is the exit out the cavern system.

Name: Krakentua
 Frequency: Very rare
 AC: 4
 Move: 18"/12" (Tentacles 12")
 Hit Dice: 50
 Hit points: 220
 #AT: 7 (tentacles), 2 (fists)
 Damage per attack: Tentacle strike 1-4 (x7); Katana 1-10 (x7); Fists 4-40 (x2)
 Special Attack/Defense: see below
 Magic resistance: Standard
 Intelligence: High
 Size: L (80')
 Psionic Ability: Nil
 Alignment: Chaotic Evil
 Level/XP value: 23,000 + 35/hp

The krakentua normally attacks with seven katanas, one in each tentacle. If disarmed, it attacks by striking with its tentacles. It can also attack with its fists for 4d10 points of damage each and, if able, can trample any who fall underfoot for 1-100 points of damage. Finally, the krakentua can attack by spitting the cherry milk (save vs. poison or be blinded for 2-12 segments) and by belching a foul red mist (save vs. poison or take 1 point of damage). The krakentua uses either the milk or the mist attack once per round in addition to its other attacks.

NPC LEADERS FOR PART 3

Kuroda Kiyosu, samurai 5 (AC 5/10; MV 12"; hp 30; #AT 3/2 with katana, 2/1 with bow; THAC0 16; Dmg with katana 1d8+4, with bow per arrow type +2; AL LN; Ki 5 times/day raises Strength to 18/00) S 16; I 14; W 13; D 16; Co 13; Ch 15
 Additional Information: carries two *potions of healing* in his pack; wears *hara-ate* and *kode*; bears a katana and *daikyu* (great bow); has eight standard arrows and four leaf head arrows.

Ogaki, samurai 8 (AC 0/3; MV 6"; hp 60; #AT 2; THAC0 14; Dmg with katana 1d8 +7, with bow per arrow type +5; AL LE) S 18/02; I 16; W 14; D 17; Co 16; Ch 16
 Additional Information: Unlikely to be met by player characters; carries *katana* +2.

Sakigahara, samurai 5 (AC 4; MV 9"; hp 34; #AT 3/2 with katana, 2/1 with *daikyu*; THAC0 16; Dmg with katana 1d8+2, with *daikyu* per arrow type +2; AL LE) S 13; I 15; W 15; D 16; Co 14; Ch 17
 Additional Information: Wears *do-maru*, *kode* +1, bears katana and *daikyu*, standard arrows; secret enemy of Himeji.

Himeji, samurai 6 (AC 4; MV 9"; hp 42; #AT 3/2 with katana, 2/1 with *daikyu*; THAC0 16; Dmg with katana 1d8+7, with *daikyu* per arrow type +2; AL LE) S 18/77; I 14; W 13; D 17; Co 13; Ch 14
 Additional Information: Enemy of Sakigahara; wears *do-maru*; carries *katana* +1

Shizouka, samurai 6 (AC 5; MV 9"; hp 38; #AT 3/2 with katana, 2/1 with *daikyu*; THAC0 16; Dmg with katana 1d8+3, with *daikyu* per arrow type; AL LG; Ki 18/00 Strength six times/day) S 16; I 17; W 16; D 15; Co 15; Ch 16
 Additional Information: Carries several

humming bulb arrows tuned to different pitches, used to communicate with brother on battlefield.

Shizadi, samurai 6 (AC 6; MV 9"; hp 44; #AT 3/2 with katana, 2/1 with *daikyu*; THAC0 16; Dmg with katana 1d8+2, with *daikyu* per arrow type; AL LN; Ki 18/00 Strength six times/day) S 14; I 15; W 16; D 14; Co 18; Ch 15
 Additional Information: Wears *do-maru* and *kode*; carries family katana; carries several humming bulb arrows tuned to different pitches, used to communicate with brother on battlefield.

Tsushima, samurai 7 (AC -1; MV 8"; hp 50; #AT 2/1 with katana or *daikyu*; Dmg by weapon type +3; AL LE; Ki 18/00 Strength seven times/day) S 14; I 14; W 13; D 16; Co 16; Ch 14
 Additional Information: Desires only self-advancement and personal gain in battle; wears *o-yoroi* +2, wields *naginata* from horseback in addition to carrying katana and *daikyu*; main weakness is impulsiveness.

A DAY IN THE COUNTRY



By now the characters have acquired the box of relics. They stand on the road to the shrine, which is a two-day journey. Halfway is an inn under imperial protection where the PCs can spend the night, if they can avoid the Korimori patrols.

Determine who has the box of relics, and how the box is being carried. The box is too large to fit in a pack or a large sack, though one character can carry it. The box, while not delicate, should be handled with care and respect. Opening the box is dangerous. (See Part Two for the effects of doing so.)

OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

Having recovered the box of relics from the castle, the party should concentrate on moving quickly throughout the day. Minions of Korimori will try to get the relics from the party. In this section, some encounters happen automatically; others occur only if the party moves slowly or is delayed. The longer the forces of Korimori have to consolidate and locate the characters, the weaker the party's position is. In general, encourage the party to continue

moving; make it clear that the inn is a haven, if only they can reach it.

THE PURSUIT

Encounters in this section are based on the party's location, on the time of day, and on the results of previous encounters. There are no random encounters. Instead, the planned encounters occur at one-hour intervals, if the party's location matches that of an encounter. The encounter descriptions are ordered by location.

The DM must keep careful track of time. The party should reach the inn before nightfall. Each travel day is divided into twelve 1-hour periods, while the terrain the party must cover is broken into ten areas. Each area takes the party one hour to traverse. Generally speaking, a conversation takes a turn (10 rounds) or longer, while a combat takes the number of rounds of combat (round up to the nearest turn) plus one turn to bandage wounds, gather equipment and so on before resuming travel. Gathering information or loot takes an additional turn.

To keep track of time, mark off turns and hours, noting whenever a new hour begins. Consult the geographical location of

the characters when an hour passes; more than one encounter can occur in a single location, if the party is not moving. Make sure to record time spent conversing; if, in the DM's opinion, a conversation lasts for a period of time longer than or less than a turn, time may be recorded in smaller increments.

To determine encounters use the table on page 26, cross-referencing the time of day with the area to determine if a listed encounter occurs. Each encounter occurs only once. If the party goes quickly and without interruptions, the characters may avoid some of the worst encounters. Likewise, should they move too slowly, the characters may be captured or killed by the enemy.

THE ENCOUNTERS

Encounter 1: Bandit Extortion

A group of bandits has set up operations in the hill areas outside.

As you travel along the road, a man steps out in front of you. He is unshaven and unwashed. He bears no arms, yet walks as if he were armed to the teeth. Arrogantly, he speaks.

"A pleasant morning, travelers! You travel the hill road today? There is a fee... for bandits infest the hills, and it takes men like me to keep folk like you from harm. Alas, farming won't pay for protection, so I must ask for five yuan from each of you, so we may eat and be strong to protect the likes of you. If you don't pay? Well, your safety relies on a signal given only to those generous travelers." He clears his throat and waits quietly.

If the characters pay, he gives them a pennant and tells them to attach it to the longest weapon in the party. That done, he steps aside and bows deeply in farewell. If the characters walk a safe distance away without attacking him, he yells: "Dip the pennant three times when asked, fine travelers, dip three times or the pennant is worthless to you!"

If attacked, he flees. Should he be killed or chased away, the party is ambushed later.

Encounter 2: Bandit Ambush

As you enter the hills you see a rough-hewn board with letters crudely cut into it lying on the road ahead.

It reads "Show signal." The bandits are ringed around the area in carefully prepared blinds and hideaways, bows ready.

If the signal is given, nothing happens. If the signal is not given, the bandits open fire with their bows. The bandits only harass and insult the characters from a distance to teach them a lesson in etiquette. Any bandit retreats if attacked directly. The bandits do not pursue.

There are 26 bandits here plus four leaders. Each bandit is equipped with a short bow, normal arrows, and a small

hand weapon. The bandit's camp is a few hours away in the hills. Characters searching for it fail and are captured or killed by enemy bushi sometime later in the day.

Encounter 3: Wandering Beggar

By the side of the road stands a stranger dressed in rags, looking thin and ill fed. He...or perhaps she? steps toward you holding out a supplicative hand.

The characters may either give him some small coins, speak to him, or ignore him. Merely tossing coins and continuing costs no time. Talking with the beggar is a time waster, as the beggar knows nothing and answers meekly in a poor accent.

Encounter 4: Enemy Scouts

Mounted cavalry scouts sent by Korimori comb the hills for the characters. They keep a careful watch on the road, and only a well prepared and lucky party spots them first. They communicate by messenger with whatever bushi they precede. This encounter is divided into three segments. The first covers the initial observation of the scouts. The second describes how to handle evasion. The third segment describes how searches are conducted. This encounter can occur twice during the day. Certain details vary between the two encounters (see below).

In the hills the enemy scouts are mounted on hardy mountain ponies, while on the plain they are mounted on light war-horses. Their orders are to find and shadow the party, while coordinating an ambush or a pursuit with the bushi.

Before the party is spotted, the scouts cover the road and the road side area, spread 50-100 yards apart and keeping to cover. Moving occasionally to keep ahead of the bushi behind them, they keep a sharp eye on the road and the terrain around them.

When the party enters the scouts' range of sight (20-120 yards), the scouts get a *spotting check*. Roll 1d10, subtracting 1 for each party member in sight.

Roll	Result
1 or less	Party spotted, bushi unseen
2-6	Party spotted, bushi spotted only on successful check
7-9	Neither group spots the other

Party members may receive a spotting check from the above result. The player must roll less than his Intelligence plus his Wisdom, divided by four (yakuza's divide by two) on 1d20. A successful roll means that character spots movement within sight range.

If spotted, the party may try to evade the enemy. Simply stating "we evade the enemy" is not sufficient. Most methods are likely to fail, as the party must stick mainly to the road. However, the DM should allow a good plan to work. Good plans generally make use of the surrounding area. The information below describes the immediate environment.

Hills: Sight in hilly terrain is limited to 120 yards at best. Atop a hill, sight is 500 yds though underbrush, intervening hills, and the rough terrain make for good cover beyond 240 yards. A concerted search amongst the rocks may reveal a small cave. Various small streams wind their way through the hills, and it is possible a small waterfall could hide characters from enemy eyes. Fallen trees and areas overgrown with brambles can provide cover as well. Actually climbing the trees is an option that can prove successful. Note, however, that if the characters hide while under close observation, their efforts are wasted!

Plains: While not perfectly flat, the plains area has fewer terrain advantages than the hills. When not in other cover, line of sight is around 500 yards or so, the normal limit of human vision to distinguish useful details beyond movement. Where there are no farms or rice paddies, the grasses are long, and simply lying down can provide some cover. If the river is nearby, characters who do not mind mud can hide by the banks. In some few places there are reeds which might be breathed through. So few trees are present that searchers are bound to concentrate on them.



To determine whether or not the characters successfully evade the enemy scouts requires that you make several careful judgments. Decide if the characters are doing something obvious which the scouts could easily expect. If the characters are devious enough to give misleading impressions to the enemy scouts, be sure to consider the information with the enemy scout's point of view foremost in your mind. Finally, remember that if the enemy scouts lose track of the characters, they attempt to find the party once again.

To resolve the success of a search, find how closely the searchers wish to peruse the terrain. For the enemy scouts, decide how sure they are as to the general whereabouts of the missing party. If the scouts think the party is in one locale, they search that area very closely. If the scouts think the party could be in a wide area, they do their best to search the entire area. Assign a modifier of your choice depending on how well you think the PCs have hidden themselves. A close search begins with a base success rate of 40% per round of search, while a search spread over a wide area has a base success rate of but 15%. Your modifiers should range between -20% to +20% (a negative modifier being good in this case) with the extremes being extremely well (or poorly) hidden, etc. Depending on the urgency of the situation from the enemy scout's point of view, any particular area is searched for 1-3 rounds before they move on to another area. Of course, if the scouts search where the party is not, then they have no chance of finding them.

The hill scouts are led by Hakata, a minor lieutenant of Korimori. He is a wily cavalry leader well satisfied with the dangerous duty of scout. A samurai of relatively low rank, he is, of course, concerned primarily with honor. His orders are to establish contact with the party carrying the relics and communicate their position to the ground troops he is scouting for. To achieve greater honor, he also plans to participate in any combat that takes place between the bushi and the player characters. His determination is such that if he believes the party to be hiding in any one area he searches it at length, possibly allowing the characters to slip away while doing so...unless Hakata is correct! If the party attempts to fight Hakata's force, he retreats without loss of honor, as it is not his duty to throw his small force against the player characters.

The plains scouts are led by Takasaki,

whose rank is above that of Hakata. Hence, he goes even further to preserve his honor. His orders are similar to Hakata's, given above, but he is impatient, and so if forced to search he spends much less time in any one area before moving on. He, too, will join in an attack on the player characters; but unlike Hakata, Takasaki harries the party ceaselessly, and if the party turns to fight him may charge rashly into combat with them.

The statistics of the enemy scouts are given once on page 24; both groups are identical except for their mounts (hill ponies in the hills, light warhorses on the plains) and the leader's personalities, given above. A good deal of space has been given to these relatively unimportant scouts; the intent of this encounter is to provide drama, and a chance for characters to use their brains rather than their swords to succeed. In both cases, avoiding these scouts completely practically guarantees success later. To make this encounter as dramatic as possible keep a careful track of time and recall that good pacing is one of the keys to an exciting game session.

Encounter 5: Enemy Bushi

This encounter can have three different beginnings depending on the results of Encounter 4, Enemy Scouts in Area 3. If the scouts have reported the party's location, the bushi prepare an ambush. If the scouts have stayed in contact with the party, the bushi attack. If the party has lost the scouts, they meet the bushi on the march.

Ambush: An ambush takes place somewhere along the road ahead of the party. The enemy bushi are concealed within 10'-40' of the road. Any character coming within 30' of a hidden bushi has a 1 in 4 chance of spotting something suspicious. Once the bushi have been spotted or the characters draw near, the bushi attack, using their ki immediately.

Kiyosu Kuroda, leader of these bushi, is a wise sergeant who wishes to fulfill his orders honorably... but keep his force, which is made up of young, inexperienced men, intact. If four or more of his men fall, he calls for a strategic withdrawal unless two or more characters have fallen (or appeared to) as well. Otherwise, he fights honorably and tenaciously. His goal is to capture the relics if possible, or harry and weaken the characters in any case. If the characters flee, he pursues with his re-

maining forces.

Attack: If the scouts give the party's location to the bushi, Kiyosu positions his men between the characters and the inn before attacking head on. The bushi advance, taking advantage of terrain, avoiding missile fire if possible. The mounted scouts move in from the rear to pin the characters in one spot. Kiyosu's goals and combat preferences are given above.

Meeting: If the characters avoid the scouts, the bushi are met on the road, marching two abreast with Kiyosu in the lead. Roll for surprise normally; if no surprise, then the distance is 20'-120' due to the rolling hills and the twisting road. Kiyosu attacks head on, and the bushi use their ki shout as they enter battle.

Encounter 6: The Running Bull

You march along quickly, aware that time is passing with every step. Suddenly, over the crest of the hill ahead you hear a rhythmic clapping, almost like that of a horse...no time to evade! A bull comes into view, flecked with sweat and wild-eyed. Seeing you, it tosses its wicked-looking horns and stops. In the background, you hear running footsteps approaching.

This is a comic encounter. The bull was kept by a hamlet down the road for ploughing and other labors. Three ogres tried to steal it by offering it sweetgrass and leading it away. Unfortunately for the ogres, the bull finished the grass and escaped, goring one ogre in the leg and bowling over the other two. They have chased it for almost three hours.

Over the hill on the path of the bull come three huge people, breathing heavily, dressed in skins and carrying huge clubs. They don't see you at first. At the crest of the hill, however, they look around.

These ogres mean no harm, merely being hungry for the "cow" they've stolen. If the party attacks them, they fight back but surrender if given the chance. If the party parleys with them, they demand "their cow" immediately. They can be bartered with, if the party wants to save the bull, with rations or food of any sort. If the party frightens them sufficiently they may flee immediately into the wilderness, uttering



high pitched yowls of dismay. They have no treasure.

Encounter 7: Messenger

Michimori Uemon has sent bushi of his own to help the party. A messenger is dispatched to find the characters and tell them of this new development.

On the road ahead a lone mounted warrior approaches at a canter. A banner flutters above him, bearing the symbol of Michimori.

This is a vital encounter for the party. If the party members rudely refuse to listen to the messenger, however, problems arise in future encounters.

Once close enough to communicate, the messenger tells his tale. His horse is cut along the flanks, while the messenger himself nurses a wounded arm. An odd basket-like contrivance is strapped to the horseman's back; from it protrudes an arrow. Read the following to the party:

"Hail, noble adventurers! I bring a message from Lord Michimori! War is near. Korimori has sent out his samurai in search of what you bear. Lord Michimori has sent troops as well, and you are not to lose heart. Make for the Inn of the Globefish, and avoid all conflict. I am to send a bird to my master, that he may know I have spoken to you..." the messenger carefully reaches around to the basket on his back. His eyes open wide with horror as he sees the arrow piercing the basket and he moans upon opening it. "Oh, my bird! It is shot! Am I to be successful, yet to fail?"

The messenger can only cradle his wounded pigeon gently in his hands. The bird lives, barely, and cannot fly. The obvious solution is magical curing. If a potion is used, the amount drunk by the pigeon is insignificant. In any event, the messenger leaves the party after delivering the message, to find Michimori's men.

Encounter 8: The Busy Village

At a time when the characters are not dodging enemy scouts or combating enemy bushi, they come across a small group of huts surrounded by rice paddies and small plots of cultivated land.

If the characters merely move through the village, they note that it is a busy place,

with villagers all a-chatter and scurrying hither and thither.

If the characters are leading the bull from encounter 7, the villagers stream out of the huts, yelling with happiness and glee. Their plowing bull has been saved from the ogres!

If the characters return the bull or present a large bribe and ask for aid, a grizzled old man steps forward. He knows of a small ravine that provides relatively unseen movement into the next area. Otherwise, the villagers can report what they have seen...fragmented and vague reports of armed men moving here and there that are of little use to the characters.

Encounter 9: Enemy Bushi

This encounter can occur in one of several areas. Encounter 10 (Friendly Bushi) can be used here also at the DM's discretion. Depending on past encounters these bushi may or may not be reinforced.

Area 6: If the party is moving this slowly, the enemy bushi are reinforced, raising their number to 40. The plains scouts participate in the attack as well. The party is very likely to be defeated, captured, or killed in the defense of the relics.

Area 7 (the most likely result): The enemy bushi may plan an ambush or pursue directly. The enemy bushi are reinforced, and the characters find it impossible to evade the enemy bushi in the grasslands. If this battle becomes long and drawn out, consider having the friendly bushi arrive to save the day, as the battle could be a deadly one for the party. The scouts do not participate in the battle, as they are strung out and scattered from watching the party's movements.

Area 8: If the characters are moving quickly and doing well, they meet the enemy bushi in Area 8 at the same time as their friendly bushi arrive. A battle ensues, with the party as the prize. If the party met the messenger, the friendly troops are reinforced...if not, the friendly troops are outnumbered, and the party may have to make a choice: run for the inn, and allow the friendly bushi to be massacred, or make a stand with the troops.

Twenty-five troops are commanded by Ogaki, second in command to Lord Korimori. He is a powerful fighter, but is careful of his safety, as he plans to receive the keep of Michimori when Lord Korimori triumphs over him. Accordingly, he leads through Sakigahara, an able lieutenant,

and stays far from the battle. It is likely the most the characters see of Ogaki is a distant stand of colored cloths. The fifteen bushi reinforcements are led by another of Korimori's captains, Himeji. While all are on foot, the contingent does have at its disposal several horsemen for use as messengers should the need arise.

Himeji is no friend of Sakigahara, which is unfortunate for Korimori. If victorious, all anticipate Ogaki to be gifted with Michimori's keep, leaving his position open. Like children counting their apples before they are picked, Himeji and Sakigahara both count themselves as being the best to take over the position of second in command for Korimori. Consequently, neither goes out of his way to aid the other unless ordered to...and if possible, each would gladly do harm unto the other, if it could be done without loss of honor. Another result of this conflict of interest between Himeji and Sakigahara is that should battle be joined between the troops of Michimori and Korimori, each fights fiercely, even unwisely, in an attempt to be the first to win the prize of the relics.

In general, the enemy bushi attempt to surround the characters, to keep them from running away, before moving in slowly and carefully. While the relics are the primary goal, Korimori would not mind capturing some of Michimori's trusted adventurers for use in future political maneuvers.

If Michimori bushi arrive, Ogaki's tactics change drastically. The party is attacked by a mass charge immediately while a screening force attempts to block the advance of the friendly bushi. If the party flees, Ogaki orders only a small number of men to pursue...but the feuding lieutenants both send men in pursuit, quite probably assigning too many to assure victory against the friendly bushi.

Note: None of the enemy bushi in this encounter has used his ki power yet in this day. Both lieutenants scheme to give that order when it will benefit them personally... not necessarily when it is best for the whole of their force.

This is a delicate situation to judge, and will no doubt require a major portion of a gaming session. Do your best to impress upon the players that standing and fighting is at best a poor idea; the forces arrayed against them are overwhelming. If various factors have combined to pit a reinforced enemy force against a weaker friendly force (with the characters in the balance) then heroism could very well be



called for...but, as described in Encounter 10, Friendly Bushi, the characters duty, first and foremost, is to deliver the relics to the shrine, with the inn as the immediate goal.

Encounter 10: Friendly Bushi

It is possible that the characters meet with these friendly bushi before meeting any enemy bushi. More likely, the characters are facing many enemy bushi when these friendly soldiers arrive.

The initial force of friendly bushi numbers 20; the reinforcement contingent numbers 10. Note the reinforcing troops' statistics: they are veterans, more experienced than any other foot soldiers on the field. Shizuoka commands the first force, while his younger brother Shizadai commands the elite reinforcement.

Their orders are to protect the party. Shizuoka and Shizadai command the characters to make for the inn.

They block attacking forces from reaching the party (if possible). If the path to the inn is blocked, they make a sweeping attack to allow the characters to pass through the disrupted enemy. Otherwise, their stance is defensive throughout. If the party makes for the inn immediately, the battle does not have to be played out completely.

These bushi should be run with care. (They can be the "cavalry" coming in the nick of time.) Play them as dedicated soldiers who value their honor; they are led by samurai even the characters know.

Note that this small skirmish could easily be adapted into the BATTLESYSTEM™ rules for tabletop warfare. Also note that on the enemy side, the plains scouts could participate in a battle.

Encounter 11: The Dynamic Duo

Two goblin rats lurk beside the road, hidden in the deep grass. They attempt to lure a lone character into the grasses by using verbal taunts and teases. If they are successful, they attack in concert. If more than one person leaves the road, they lie motionless, fleeing if spotted.

Their initial taunts are given below. If the characters pause on the road, they continue in the same vein. Feel free to make up material as you see fit, but remember these goblin rats know nothing of the characters...except, perhaps, what they can deduce. For example, they may tease the samurai about fleeing the battle, as

they have seen the troop movements in the area and can put two and two together to get five, in a raucous sort of way. Have fun with this encounter: it should not prove dangerous to a normal party.

You are marching along, listening to the winds rustle the grasses beside the cart track some might call a road. A voice surprises you from the right side of the road! "Ey, look! Monstrous creatures, walkin' and talkin' like lords! Scabrous! Scabrous! it cannot be borne, oh the arrogance! Why, look! is one o' em a swords master? A board's plaster, more like, ey?" A brief pause precedes the next voice. You all recognize the local accents salting the words spoken in the common tongue. "By rights, me pal, you're right! It's a board plaster saint, if I can be so witty!" A high pitched twitter sets your teeth to grinding before the second voice continues. "Oi, ey, he looks to be a fine one, underneath all the wear and treachery what glistens on the outside!" More high pitched twittering ends their dialogue.

The goblin rats are in ratman form, and are well hidden in the grasses they have placed carefully around themselves. Each bears a rough spear, with which they attempt to trip up any investigator before failing on him for a quick kill. If they can, the goblin rats stun or kill a sole investigator, then drag him or her off as quickly as possible to a small underground den nearby. If they make it, the party will be forced to either dig or smoke out the goblin rats, as the entrance is a crawlway. These goblin rats are outcasts from their forest brothers (their raucous sense of humor, no doubt) and have no treasure to speak of...metal points for their spears and a few lonely fen scattered on the floor of their den is all they have.

Remember to count off time for any conversations that take place, as well as anything else the party takes time to do.

Encounter 12: Wandering Shukenja

By the side of the road stands a stranger dressed in rags, looking thin and ill fed He or perhaps she? steps toward you, spreading his hands before him in a benedictory fashion.

if ignored, Asano continues on as before, in the opposite direction the party is traveling. It is not his responsibility to seek out those to help.

Asano is a shukenja from a nearby shrine who, concerned about the violence coming to a head in the province, has walked forth to give healing to any who recognize both their needs and his simple identity.

The characters see a man late in his life, skin drawn and parchment like, with eyes that are the clearest they have ever seen. He catches each character's eye in turn. Player character shukenjas immediately recognize a kindred spirit in this man. If they ask him for aid, he agrees to cure them, if he can, but will not travel with them. His price: an absolute trust of spirit in any character he aids.

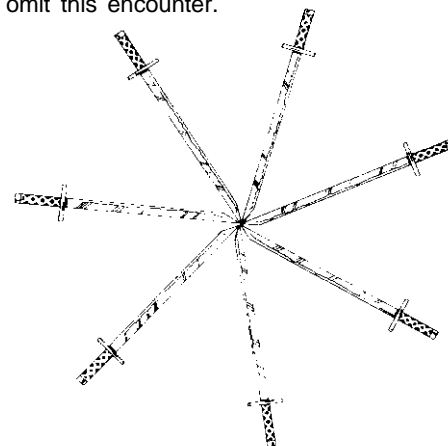
Any character who fails to set his or her spirit at ease is not cured. Any character who takes a precaution against Asano (moving to his rear, holding a weapon ready, etc.) receives no curing. Any who hold unseen suspicions also receive no curing.

Encounter 13: Enemy Horsemen

Different from Encounter 5, Enemy Scouts, this encounter is with a small force of cavalry sent as a failsafe measure by Korimori.

Their orders are to attack without hesitation: charge, and charge again if necessary, riding down the characters with the sheer mass of their horses. Led by Tsushima, a simple, brutal man known for his particular lack of mercy and fondness for exterminating suspect villages, the horsemen are a cruel and arrogant lot who count themselves to be the elite of the elite.

These men are not discouraged easily, but if Tsushima is slain they are likely to flee. If the party is moving very quickly, or has suffered much damage, the DM can omit this encounter.



YAKUZA'S HONOR



INTRODUCTION

Having evaded Korimori's patrols, the party reaches the only safe place between the seacoast and their lord's castle. Located in the center of the province's coastal plain, *Doi No Fugu* (The Inn of the Globefish) has always been safe and neutral ground. There, the party can rest without fear, one day's journey from Michimori's castle.

Korimori, however, has no intention of letting the precious relics slip from his hands over a question of mere custom. Fearing that the party might evade his patrols and knowing that they will almost certainly spend one night at the inn, he decides to violate the sanctuary of *Doi No Fugu* in order to wrest the prize from his unsuspecting foes. Since he doesn't dare do so openly, he must bring in outsiders for the task — men who are not connected with him — men unafraid to risk the consequences of such an act. There is but one source for such men — the Ono Kumi — the much-feared clan of yakuza ninja.

This section is designed to challenge the Dungeon Master as well as the party. As

deadly ninja converge on the player characters at the inn of *Doi No Fugu*, the DM must carefully tailor the climax of the adventure to the party's current strength.

This adventure is organized into five parts. **The Background** explains the history and past actions of the important NPCs. **Setting the Stage** describes the general layout of the inn. **Planning the Climax** covers the plans of the NPCs and options for taking the adventure in unexpected directions. **Running the Adventure** outlines the basic course of events leading to the climax. This section details the routine of a high quality inn in Kozakura as well. Finally, the **Key to the Inn** provides short detailed room and area descriptions for reference during play.

The "Planning" section should be read carefully. The flow of the action should be worked out and the direction of the DM-selected plot twists carefully considered before play begins. The twists will interact, both with the pre-made plans of several NPC groups and with the party's own actions, to create a complex interplay of events that should be kept moving quickly. One key to smooth play is to make sure the players always know exactly where

their characters are and what their options are when it is time for them to act.

BACKGROUND

The Reward of Tomy

There is a saying in Kozakura: "*Fugu wa kuitashii, inochi wa oshishii.*" Translated into the tongue of the barbarous Gajin, it means "I would like to eat fugu, but I would like to live."

Long considered a delicacy among Kozakurans, the *fugu*, or globefish, contains a deadly poison in its liver. When properly prepared, just enough of this toxin remains to make the diner's mouth slightly numb, giving the eating of the dish an aura of adventure. When too much poison remains, the result is invariably the death of the unwary eater. Knowledge of *fugu* preparation is an ancient and jealously guarded secret, and scores of Kozakurans die each year when chefs untrained in the art attempt to prepare this dangerous dish.

The founder of the Akimatsu Dynasty, the semi-legendary Akimatsu Mori, was once nearly killed by a dish of improperly prepared globefish. While staying at the famous inn *Nami No Hana* (Crest of the Wave) after the battle of Kyoki, Mori was served the house specialty: a dish of raw tiger fugu and daikon radish sculpted into the shape of a flying crane. The dish served to the new self-styled emperor was prepared by the inn's master chef, a man whose brother had died fighting against Mori in the recent battle. To avenge his revered brother's death, the man made a slight alteration in the dish sent to Mori's table at the victory celebration: he chopped up the poisonous *fugu* liver and mixed it with the radish sauce used to sculpt the crane's crest.

Fortunately for the future of Kozakura, a sharp-eyed apprentice chef named Sumitomo Tomy noticed something wrong with the dish just as it was carried out of the kitchen. Racing after the departing tray, he was able to break past the imperial guards and grab Mori's hand just as the emperor was raising to his lips a strip of *fugu* liberally coated with the toxic radish



sauce. Thus was the life of the emperor saved; thus was history altered.

To show his gratitude (and in recognition of the young man's courage), the emperor wanted to enoble the apprentice, but Sumitomo Tomy would have none of that. For generations, his family had been master chefs. To change his status would dishonor the sacred memory of countless Sumitomos who had gone before. While thanking the emperor for his kindness, Tomy insisted on finishing his studies. Someday, it seemed, he hoped to realize the dream cherished by his family's founder that one of his descendants would one day own his own kitchen. So instead of becoming a great daimyo, Tomy went on to finish his training and became one of Kozakura's great chefs.

Unable to enoble his rescuer, Mori, who felt his land would be better off with more cooks and fewer daimyos anyway, granted him a different boon instead. On the day that Tomy finished his apprenticeship, he was arrested by a company of imperial troops and escorted to his native province far to the north. There, he found much changed. By imperial decree, two new roads had been built, and at their junction stood a great new inn — an inn built not of common wood, but of expensive stone. There, the soldiers stopped. As the bemused Tomy stood before the inn gate and wondered who could afford to build such a magnificent edifice in these wilds and where the innkeeper could have gotten to, the company's captain approached and handed him a ring of keys. The inn was his, a gift from the emperor for Kozakura's newest master chef. Moreover, with the keys came an imperial writ of protection, making any who violated the hospitality of the inn or harmed its owner outlaws under permanent imperial sentence of death.

Thus was founded the great inn of the Sumitomos. In remembrance of the event that earned the emperor's gratitude, Tomy named his new establishment *Doi No Fugu* (Inn of the Globefish). During his lifetime, he worked hard to build his inn's reputation as an island of gentility in the rough north, and it is said that Tomy's fame became so great that nobles of the court sometimes journeyed all the way from the capital just to taste his cooking. On at least one memorable occasion, the emperor, himself, is known to have made the journey. On the anniversary of the battle of Kyoki, he went to visit the man who saved his life — and to eat fugu.

Oh, yes. On the night of the battle of Kyoki, the master chef who tried to poison Akimatsu Mori was made an honored guest at the emperor's table. In recognition of the splendid banquet prepared by his hand, the emperor personally fed him his own cooking.

The Dream of Yoichi

For many years after the death of Sumitomo Tomy, his descendants passed ownership of Doi No Fugu from father to eldest son. The other family members lived and worked in the inn during all or part of their lives. Freed by the emperor from paying taxes and guarded by the imperial writ against the depredations of ail but the most foolish criminals and lords, the inn and its owners prospered through war and unrest. Few daimyos wanted to risk the wrath of the emperor and his shogun by trying to loot this rich prize. Most robbers gave it a wide berth as well. Such trouble as did knock at the gates of Doi No Fugu could usually be handled without much difficulty by a single ronin retained by the family during the worst times.

Thus it had been for generations, when Sumitomo Koji — eldest son of an eldest son — had his own son, a child named Yoichi. He was a strange boy, this Yoichi. Full of dreams of glory and stories of great deeds done by men with swords. Though he loved his parents, he did not love their life. Though he was devoted to his younger sisters and to his brother, he always seemed apart from them. But he was a good boy, strong and willing. Koji told himself that the dreams would pass—that the boy would settle down with age.

Finally the great day came when Sumitomo Koji and his wife Haru sent their son away to the city to learn his trade, just as the eldest male Sumitomo had done for untold generations. The family law established by Sumitomo Tomy was that a child who would become a chef must serve his apprenticeship away from home. In this way, new culinary techniques would become part of the family knowledge, and the cooking at Doi No Fugu would always be fresh and modern.

Yoichi never returned. It was as if the earth had swallowed him up.

One day, seven years later and far to the south, Noburo, head of the ninja clan Ono Kumi called one of his lieutenants into his office. Ono Noburo had received a plea from one of the lords of the city. This lord had a brother-in-law, a daimyo in the rustic

province of Maeshi. The daimyo needed help that only the Ono Kumi could give.

It seemed that the daimyo was seeking a rare artifact, an item sought also by those in service to a rival daimyo. There was a chance that his rival's men should be the ones to obtain it. Should this happen, the consequences would be most terrible. Therefore, the lord of the city quietly but most earnestly sought the aid of the Kumi Ono, the yakuza ninja clan that controlled the cities of northern Kozakura.

To honor the request was risky — even for the Ono Kumi. To send a band of his faceless ninja to attack in secret would be no problem; and would gain the Ono Kumi the undying gratitude of both his minor north-country daimyo and his powerful in-law. But to invade an inn under the emperor's protection and violate a writ that had stood for centuries could not be done without thought. If the Ono Kumi were to attack at Doi No Fugu, it would require absolute secrecy to avoid dire consequences for the clan. A special man would be needed to plan and lead the operation. Ono Noburo had just such a man.

The man's yakuza name was Arieki. Like all members of the feared Ono Kumi, he had taken the name of the clan as his family name, calling himself Ono Arieki. His real name was Sumitomo Yoichi, and he knew the inside of Doi No Fugu as well as any man alive. For two decades, he had lived with his parents under its roof. But now he had another family. Seven years ago, he walked out of the town inn where he was apprenticed and entered the halls of the Ono Kumi in search of the adventure of which he dreamed. Since then, he had risen high in the service of his *obayun*, becoming a trusted henchman.

Now his master had an important mission for him. Yoichi paled as Noburo told him what that mission was — to lead a team that would take control of his old home. Once in control, Yoichi and his men would await the arrival of a party of travelers bearing certain relics. The party would certainly stop at the inn. When they did, Yoichi must call in a second team that would be waiting nearby. Together, the two ninja teams would attack the travelers and take the relics. As always, the fewer deaths the better. Under no circumstances must any of the Sumitomos be killed. This would only increase the diligence with which the emperor's agents would try to find those who violated the decree protecting the inn. Did Yoichi understand?



Yoichi did indeed understand. And, despite a queer feeling in his stomach, he would obey. After all, the Ono Kumi was his “family” now. The others were but a memory. In any case, none but those with the relics would be killed — Yoichi would see to that.

Unbeknownst to Yoichi, Noburo secretly instructed Chomei, Yoichi’s lieutenant, differently. Unsure of Yoichi’s willingness to murder his family, Noburo pretended that the Sumitomos would be spared. Noburo intended that everyone in the inn die so there would be no witnesses. If Yoichi objects, Chomei has orders to kill him along with the rest.

The Story of Toyo and Skoshi

To Sumitomo Toyo and his sister Skoshi, Doi no Fugu was a magical place, with its great stone walls framed by the green of the surrounding orchards and set against the blue of the *doi-ike*, the inn pond. In summer, the inn buzzed with the talk of exotic guests, some noble, many from far places. Often, the two youngsters would disobey their mother’s stern orders and sneak up to the windows of the sitting rooms to peek at the elegant lords and ladies in their bright gowns. Sometimes, a traveler would take time from a walk in a cool garden to talk with the small children and them a story.

It was their brother Yoichi who collected these stories like a miser. Then, in winter when there were few travelers and the inn was quiet, he would draw them from the closets of his mind and retell them, often embroidered, to his younger brother and sister. The older girls, Miko and Myoki, were too occupied with learning the art of the geisha to pay much attention to Yoichi’s rough tales of warriors and battles. But the two youngest children loved their brother’s stories, and would listen to them for hours on end. A special bond was forged between the brothers and their sister during those long winter nights.

And then the bond was broken. Yoichi left to be apprenticed to a great chef in a far city. Their parents thought he would be gone five years, but Toyo and Skoshi knew better. Neither could say how they knew, but both were certain that, once gone, their brother would never return to the serenity of Doi No Fugu. The night Yoichi left, both children wept in secret. Six months later, his letters stopped. The chef to whom he was apprenticed reported him missing. He was never heard

of again.

Years passed. Toyo took Yoichi’s place. He did not, however, leave the inn. He was needed at home. The threat of war hung over the land, and even Doi No Fugu felt its touch. With things unsettled, Toyo could not leave.

Then one day, when the *doi-ike* was sheeted with ice and the first snow blanketed Doi No Fugu in a shroud of white, a man pulled the bell at the inn gate. He was tall and grim and rode a magnificent white warhorse that he called Tandai. He wore no armor, but thrust into his white obi were the matched katana and wakizashi of the samurai. The man called himself Haka Kinnori and declared himself a masterless man who sought the master of the inn. Kinnori spoke privately with Sumitomo Koji while Toyo unloaded marvelous boxes from his pack mule. At his father’s order, Toyo placed the boxes in the front sleeping room. The ronin moved in. Like so many heads of the Sumitomo family before him, Koji had at last felt the need to have a defender for his house.

Thereafter, each morning while Toyo tended the livestock and Skoshi cleaned the sitting rooms, the two children would see the ronin — their ronin — go out into the orchard to practice with his weapons. The more they watched, the more they remembered their brother Yoichi going off to practice with a wooden katana he that had secretly fashioned during his tenth summer. Perhaps the memory made them bold. One day, they followed, intending only to beg a story, they ended by asking for knowledge of a kind not commonly imparted to the children of innkeepers. At first the ronin was scandalized — then amused. A female and an innkeeper’s son learn the arts of war? But why not? Not the katana, of course. The sword was sacred. That they could not touch. But what harm in teaching what could be learned without arms?

Thus, the ronin taught the children the art of karate and told them stories of great deeds and glory. Almost, it was like having their brother back. Almost, it was like having the broken bond renewed. Seven months passed. The chill of winter gave way to spring. The plum trees in the orchard began to bud, then the white flowers opened and began to fall. The first fruit appeared. It was almost summer. The children were happy as they had not been since Yoichi disappeared. And perhaps 14-year old Skoshi was happy in a way different from before. But the ronin never

spoke of himself — and he never let them touch his sword.

The Travail of Haru

They came in summer, when the trees were green with new life and the cattails along the banks of the *doi-ike* made a gentle shushing sound that punctuated sleep with delightful rhythmic dreams. There were seven men. The leader, cloaked and masked, claimed to be a merchant. Afflicted with a cold, and indisposed, he affected the mask out of consideration for his hosts. The others were his retainers, his guards and servants. They needed a room for the night — and a meal with companions.

That evening, Sumitomo Haru and her eldest daughters Miko and Myoki, served their new guests. Dressed in their brightest summer kimonos and wearing the heavy white makeup of the geisha, the women practiced gentle arts learned by Haru when she was a young girl in a city far to the south — arts full of grace and beauty to delight the senses and renew the soul. It was a jolly party, and the guests seemed happy — all except the masked leader, who walked like no merchant and whose eyes seemed so familiar. His distance from the festivities troubled Haru, who prided herself on keeping a gracious house. Crossing to his side, she bent to top his already brimming sake cup just as a practiced hand closed over her mouth.

In seconds, Haru and both of her daughters were bound and gagged by the merchant’s six companions. Then they were quietly hustled into the kitchen, where Koji was expertly rendered unconscious before he could raise an alarm. Who would have heard it, anyway? The ronin was still at his evening practice — or, more likely, telling tales to Skoshi and Toyo.

Without even pausing in his headlong charge, one of the kidnappers pressed the hidden stud activating a secret door leading to the cellar. Downstairs, the same man pressed another stud opening a secret door giving access to a hidden room. Inside, the women were gently deposited on the room’s straw pallets. Bending over each in turn, the masked merchant cut their bonds and in a harsh whisper assured them that they would not be harmed. Then he left, posting a guard in the passage leading out of the hidden room and into the main cellar.

What was startling about the entire affair was not so much the kidnapping itself



as the routine way in which it was accomplished — as if the men knew exactly what they were doing and had rehearsed it beforehand. Most surprising of all was their knowledge of the secret doors leading into the hidden room. This was the family's final refuge, a bolthole to which they could retreat in the event some dared defy the imperial decree and attack the inn. Only the family and the inn's original builder knew about the existence of the cellar; only the family knew about the secret room that was added later. How could these strangers know? Haru thought she knew.

The Tears of Koji

When Koji awoke, he was sitting on Toyo's bed in the children's quarters across the hallway from the kitchen. The masked figure before him spoke quietly but rapidly in a grating whisper. The man and his companions meant the Sumitomos no harm, but needed to use the inn for a few days. When their task was done, they would leave and all would be as it was. Until then, Koji's wife and two daughters would be held in an unnamed place. If Koji helped the men do what they must do and kept his other children and the ronin from making trouble, all would go well. Otherwise, death would touch his family. The masked man would say no more, but insisted that Koji pledge his cooperation. Weeping with anger, Koji agreed.

The masked man gave instructions for the reordering of the inn. First, Skoshi and the ronin must remain in their quarters. Second, Koji and Toyo must go about their business as if nothing had happened. Third, Koji must alter the *charm of protection from theft* attached to the front door of the inn house.

SETTING THE STAGE

The Characters

All NPCs are listed on the Inn NPC Roster. The entries opposite each character show his or her location at the moment of the ninja attack, general statistics and special notes. Note that the locations of some characters might change, depending on which plot options the Dungeon Master selects.

The Inn Grounds

The land near the inn and crossroads is rolling and dotted with low brush (sufficient to hide a crawling man, but otherwise offering no cover). Scattered tree groves and bamboo thickets provide some shade, though none are closer than 120 yards to the inn or roads.

The inn grounds contain four buildings: the inn house, the stable, the Master's House, and the *izumi-dono* (pavilion). The inn house and stable are constructed almost entirely of stone. The master's house and the *izumi-dono* are constructed of wood. All buildings are roofed with red clay tiles. Interior ceilings are all ten feet high; except the stable, which is fifteen feet high. None of the buildings have locks or bars except the inn house.

The inn house, the stable, and the master's house are linked by a dressed limestone curtain wall ten feet high and two feet thick. The exterior of the north, west, and east walls is bordered by a thick hedge of yew. The exterior of the south wall is bordered by individual shrubs.

The wall is pierced by the inn gate (1) and the small orchard gate between the stable and the master's house. The inn gate has both a lock and a padlocked chain. The orchard gate has a lock. The gates are kept locked at all times. The stone wall does not entirely surround the inn; at the inn pond the wall ends with three-foot thick stone pillars.

The grounds inside the walls are studied with statues, flower beds, trees and shrubs. Each statue or tree bole can conceal one crouching man; each shrub can conceal two.

The *izumi-dono* is built on foot-thick wooden pylons driven into the bed of the pond. It is linked to the inn house by a covered way, also built on pylons. The tile roofs of both structures are supported by foot-thick wooden pillars resting on the pylons.

In addition to the covered way and the porch surrounding the *doi-ike*, the inn has four open verandas. Those attached to the inn house and master's house are raised about 18 inches from the ground by pylons. The area under each veranda is screened by latticework panels (which can be removed). The veranda along the west wall is an earthen bank raised five feet above the yard. The veranda walkway is paved with flagstones, while its sloped banks are set with jade plants that provide no cover.

The inn house is the most elaborate building of the group and should be the focus for much of the action. Its three exterior doors have no locks, but can be barred. A small delivery window in the north wall of the Kitchen (20) is heavily shuttered, barred, chained and padlocked. Unless otherwise noted, all interior floors are spread with brown *tatami* (straw mats) which absorb almost all sound. Unless otherwise noted, all sliding walls and doors are made of laquered double-walled balsa wood screens that are sturdy but light. Any character can punch, kick run through such screens without taking any damage; the screens are destroyed. Permanent walls are made of maple paneling and cannot be destroyed as easily. The interior sides of all stone walls are paneled in maple unless noted otherwise (closets, however, are paneled in camphor).

The inn house has a number of sitting rooms (8, 9, 10, 11) and sleeping chambers (28, 29, 30, 34, 37, 38, 40), a bath (19) and large reception area with a shrine (6). The kitchen (20) leads to the main cellar via a hidden stairway. Off the main cellar is the hidden room where Haru, Miko and Myoki are imprisoned. Finally a staircase in another room (32) leads to an attic, where Yoichi's team has made its headquarters.

PLANNING THE CLIMAX

This section outlines the climax of the adventure. The DM should be completely familiar with the details of this section before trying to run the adventure. The details of play leading up the climax is covered in the next section: this is a broad view.

The Ninja Plan

Yoichi has seven ninja inside the inn and fourteen outside. The inside group is divided as follows: one man (Oshikatsu) guards the hostages in the cellar; Yoichi and two others (Unchiku and Sabero) hide in the attic; and the other three disguise themselves as the captured women and greet the party (Taneichi as Haru, Minbu as Miko, and Heishiro as Myoki). The party will be settled in the "Blue Serenity" Room (10), where they can be trapped against the pond. Once the party arrives, the outside team will prepare their assault.



First, the wu jen (Ito Toshiro) will enter the inn disguised as a shukenja with his apprentice (Bando Typhoo) in cat form. The wu jen will confirm that the outside team is in position and Yoichi will set the time for the attack. As Toshiro is introduced to the party by one of the disguised ninja, the apprentice will secretly slip out to Ono Chomei, leader of the outside force, telling him when to strike. Toshiro, meanwhile, will spin a tale designed to lull the party's suspicions. If all goes as planned, Toshiro and the party will dine together in the "Blue Serenity" Room (see *Running the Adventure* for a detailed description of these events).

Yoichi, Unchiku, and Sabero will move into position outside the "Blue Serenity" Room. When the disguised ninja inside the room explode their grenades, the three will burst in and help cut down the party. Meanwhile, the second team converges on the inn from all sides to block any escape.

The outside group leader, Chomei, has secret orders to kill all witnesses, and Yoichi too, if he protests. The outside group is divided into three groups to carry out its mission (numbered Groups 2, 3 and 4), while the inside group (Group 1) attacks the party.

Group 2 blocks any southern escape. One man (Motaharu) uses his ki power to cross the pond to the covered way (to stop retreats to the izumi-dono), the other three (Arihito, Mitsugoro, and Umakai) will go over the south wall east of the master's house, blocking any escape from the inn house along the doi-ike's west bank.

Meanwhile, Group 3 (Tadahiro and Mitsune) climb the orchard gate. Tadahiro enters the stable, Mitsune enters the master's house. They have orders to kill anyone they find there.

The main outside attack (Chomei, Akira, Bando Typhoo, Masaki, Yukinari, Chuemon and Sanekata) goes over the north wall. Chuemon and Sanekata will move onto the west terrace and cover the yard with their crossbows. The others enter the inn house by the main (west) door and methodically sweep the building, killing everyone who is not Ono Kumi (and Yoichi too, if he objects).

The Battle

Unless some of the plot twists in the next section are used, the general flow of the action follows these lines:

Once the ninja attack, Koji, Toyo and Kinnori enter the Main Corridor to see what's going on (Skoshi is in the master's house). Kinnori is armed and armored, Koji has a knife, Toyo is unarmed. Once they realize the party is being attacked, they will come to its aid. By this time, however, Chomei's group will be crashing through the west door of the Inn House. Kinnori's first priority is the survival of Skoshi and Toyo; if they are in danger, he will stop what he is doing and go to their aid.

Of the outside group, only Chomei, Akira, Bando Typhoo, Masaki, and Yukinari enter the inn at first. The other members of the team perform their assigned missions. Beginning with the fourth round of the attack, each member of the outside team who has not joined the fight has a 50% chance of doing so each round. However, if Skoshi comes out of the master's house, any ninja within 25 feet of her who sees her will move to intercept and attack her. Chuemon and Sanekata will use their crossbows against anyone they see who is not a member of the Ono Kumi.

No NPCs inside the inn will quit fighting until everyone on the other side is dead; no morale checks are made during combat.

General Notes: Remember the lighting conditions; chances are the fighting will be taking place at night in dim light (the *charm of protection vs. fire* will protect the inn house against fires from light sources). The weather is damp or perhaps rainy, exterior surfaces could be slick and footing treacherous. Use the yakuza/ninja ki abilities as needed for balance.

Yoichi's Crisis: Each round that Yoichi is forced to fight one of his family or sees one of his family attacked, he suffers a crisis of honor. He has a 25% chance to change sides each time he suffers a crisis of honor. The knowledge of the death of a family member increases this chance by 25%. If Yoichi changes sides, Chomei will immediately seek him out and initiate individual combat.

Shocks and Surprises

If executed as planned, Yoichi's attack can be lethal. The plot twists from this section can keep the action going, plant ideas in the player's heads, and give intelligent players a chance to survive the assault. An average party in this adventure, somewhat weak-

ened from previous adventures, should need at least two of these. A particularly strong or magic-laden party may need less. (One rough balance check, if the party composition is known ahead of time, is to run a general melee solo, using the player characters.) The plot twists are given in a rough chronological order; use whichever ones seem most appropriate.

1. Small Clues: The DM works small clues into his descriptions that aren't individually alarming, but add up to big trouble. First, both Koji and Toyo exhibit nervousness, sorrow or fear, especially in the presence of the inn's geisha. Second, after the party meets Toshiro, but before the banquet, Toshiro is seen strolling along the covered way with a strange-looking man with cat-like features. Third, hint to the party what is happening when the *pearl of persuasion* and the *biwa of calm* are used on them: hint that their moods and decisions have been warped by magic, but the source isn't clear. None of these clues is sufficient in itself to justify an attack or other uncivilized behavior; if the players decide to attack with insufficient reason, suggest that heavy honor penalties will be imposed if the players act hastily and guess wrong. (Here the party must be right for the right reason: the noise from a hasty attack will spark an immediate assault by both ninja groups.)

Important Note: This twist should be used only if you can distinguish between random party mayhem, which should be penalized, and intelligent deduction from clues, which should not.

2. Cryptic Warning: Violation of hospitality by either host or guest is a serious breach of honor in Kozakura. By the start of the banquet, Koji figures out that the party is being set up. He can't warn them directly without endangering his family, so he slips a note under a plate. Prepare a note ahead of time to give to one of the players. The note informs the player that he has found a piece of paper beneath his rice and fish with the single ideogram for "treachery" inked upon it. If the player does not react too strongly the ninja won't notice. If his reaction is blatantly obvious (blurting out his discovery to the rest of the party, for example), the ninja attack immediately.



- 3. Bad Ninja Disguises:** When the party arrives, they are too tired to notice much. Later, they are more alert, and may begin to notice that the three ladies entertaining them are “different” from other geisha. At the start of the banquet and at the end of the noh play, check to see if the ninja disguises are successful (one check for each ninja). In addition, whenever during the banquet a player asks a question that shows he is suspicious of a geisha, make a check to see if that ninja’s disguise holds up. If a disguise fails, tell the player that the character notices something odd about the geisha (heavy calluses, masculine walk, shuriken in hair, etc.) and let him figure it out from there. If players want to immediately attack the geisha without any proof, let them reconsider: the same general guidelines as in plot twist #1 apply.
- 4. Premature Attack:** In the middle of Minbu’s number (and before Heishiro reenters the room with his grenades), there is a splintering crash from the Master’s House, followed by a loud splash. Tadahiro and Mitsune have climbed the orchard gate too soon. Tadahiro has found no one in the stable, but Mitsune has found more than he bargained for in the master’s house, where Sokoshi has been confined by her father. Mitsune tried to attack the girl, only to get a taste of Kinnori’s expert training in karate. Sokoshi has sent the ninja flying through the east door of the building and into the pond!
- 5. Last Minute Escape:** Haru and her two daughters lure Oshikatsu into the secret room. Once there, the hapless guard lets them ply him with the sake stored on the room’s shelves. He passes out just as the banquet reaches full swing, and the women sneak up to the kitchen where they meet Koji. Haru, who has been thinking, tells her husband where they were hidden and that she thinks the masked leader might be Yoichi. Koji arms them with *sashimi* (kitchen knives, treat as daggers), hides them in the Pantry (21), and goes looking for Yoichi. Just as the ninja are about to burst in on the party, Koji startles everyone (including the party) by walking up behind Yoichi and loudly calling his name. As the masked leader turns around, his father rips the mask from his face!

- 6. Imperial Intervention:** By the banquet’s start, Toyo has figured out the situation. He goes to the ronin — who is not a ronin at all. Unbeknownst to anyone at the inn, he is a samurai sent by the emperor to protect Doi No Fugu during the current troubles. He is extremely well-armed and trained, and has no intention of obeying Koji’s order to stay in his quarters. Instead, once Toyo fills him in, Kinnori, decides to take a hand in things and sneaks out of the inn house after dark. When the ninja strike, he is hiding on the East Terrace. He leaps through the window into room 8 to attack them. Although the players will have no idea who he is, most should will accept the unexpected alliance easily.
- 7. Sibling Confrontation:** Toyo has a crossbow hidden in the base of the globefish sculpture in room 6. Guessing the plot (and perhaps after warning the ronin), Toyo gets this weapon and hides in room 6. When the attack starts, he races down the hall toward where Yoichi and his companions are crashing through the door of room 10. Of course, the players don’t know that Toyo is on their side, and Toyo doesn’t know that the ninja leader standing in the doorway to room 10 is Yoichi.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The following descriptions assume the party spent most of a day dodging hostile patrols, arriving at Doi No Fugu late in the evening. If they arrive at some other time, adjust the descriptions accordingly. The final confrontation will take place very late at night after an evening banquet.

Note: In the following descriptions, instances of improper social behavior are noted. The decision to impose honor penalties, and to what degree, is generally left to the DM. Players should be warned when in danger of incurring honor penalties, and attempts to follow cultural norms should be encouraged.

The Arrival

1. Entering the Inn

The characters arrive at Doi No Ichi, exhausted from a day of dodging the patrols of Korimori. The inn gate (1) is locked.

They must ring the bell to gain entrance. Toyo will let them in, taking charge of their horses and baggage as “Haru” (Taneishi) greets them from the Main Terrace (5). *Remember to give clues here if appropriate.* Haru takes them to the Receiving Room (5), where they shed their footgear. “Miko” (Minbu) and “Myoki” (Heishiro) assist them and provide each character with a pair of soft *tabi* for his feet. It is improper social behavior to wear outdoor footgear in any building except the stable. Persons of culture wear *tabi*.

2. The Hospitality Ritual

“Haru” then guides the party to the “Place of Bountiful Welcome” (8) where “Miko” and “Myoki” serve small ritual cups of tea. Drinking these shows acceptance of the inn’s hospitality. Refusal to do so is improper social behavior.

3. Settling In

After tea, Haru informs the party that a bath has been prepared and leads them to the Changing Room (18), where they must doff their clothes before entering the Bath (19). Characters can bathe in shifts to guard their possessions, but failure to bathe is improper social behavior. The bath itself consists of a short scrub while standing beside one of the tubs, followed by a long, luxurious soak in the tub’s steaming hot, perfumed water. When each bather finishes, he will find that his clothes have been neatly folded and that a bright, fresh kimono has been provided. The kimonos are provided for use during the character’s stay at the inn and failure to wear them is a breach of social behavior.

4. Breakfast

Bathed and refreshed, the characters are led to the “Blue Serenity” Room, where a breakfast is laid out on a low table surrounded by cushions. The breakfast includes a pot of strong green tea, a large serving bowl of cold *umeboshi* (sour pickled plums), bowls of rice and sheets of *nori* (dried seaweed to be crumbled into the rice or used as a wrapper into which rice is stuffed).

5. The Sleeping Room

After breakfast, Haru, Miko, and Myoki remove the dishes, move the table and cushions to one side, and pull *futons* (small couches) and sleeping silks from a



hidden cabinet built into one wall. Having made up beds for all, they depart, leaving the characters to their rest.

Ito Toshiro and his brown tabby cat (Typhoo) arrive while the party rests. They take Room 38. *More clues can be given at this time.*

So exhausted are the characters that they sleep until shortly after sundown. By that time, a light summer rain is falling and thunder rumbles ominously in the distance. As the evening progresses, the thunder moves closer and the rain starts to come down harder, making travel uncertain. If the players wish to press on quickly, introduce Toshiro at this time.

When the characters awaken, they may want to do some exploring. This should be discouraged; a Kozakuran inn is not a dungeon. The grounds are public areas; the buildings (other than the stable) are not. Poking into private rooms is improper social behavior (-2 points from honor if caught). If a player insists, the DM can either stop him before the snooping becomes blatant by introducing a disguised ninja or member of the household to divert the character, or impose the penalty. No matter how blatantly the player character is caught, the NPC will pretend to assume that the character is lost and guide him back to his own quarters. Failure to play along with this fiction is also improper social behavior and results in an additional honor loss of 2 points.

It is unlikely the player characters will want to explore the countryside around the inn, given their circumstances and mission. If this is allowed at all, they will in no case find the outside ninja group.

The Banquet

After the party awakens, "Miko" and "Myoki" replace the futons and sleeping silks, arranging the room for eating. "Haru" enters and tells the party a new guest has arrived and wishes to speak with them. As the women spread a banquet, Toshiro will join the party for a sumptuous feast. He is dressed in rich and foreign silks, in his left ear is a black pearl and in his arms is a gorgeous brown tabby cat. He might be a shukenja.

If some players resist his presence, hint at his unusually high charisma and the urgency of his message, gently overriding player objections by adding the weight of the NPCs and as many players characters as are curious about this exotic NPC. Note that characters who wear armor and

weapons openly to a meal at an inn of this quality are guilty of improper social behavior.

Toshiro sits at the north end of the table, and accepts a cup of tea as the meal begins. The women bring a succession of small dishes, served individually. Clam soup with mushrooms, deep-fried shrimp coated with rice, duck steamed in sake. Small bowls of ginko nuts and quails eggs are placed in easy reach. More tea is kept warm on a brazier at the south end of the table.

If the players observe Toshiro closely, they notice he takes neither food nor strong drink. If anyone calls attention to it, Toshiro will claim to be fasting to allay their suspicions. He will not speak about himself during the meal.

During the meal, the geisha continually refill your cups with sake, and the appetizer bowls with nuts and quail eggs, leaving and returning with ever more delicate dishes. Toshiro sparingly sips tea as he waits for you to finish.

When finally cajoled into imparting his "information" he says:

"Know then that I have seen you in my dreams. Mighty warriors are you who have found for your lord a great gift. This I know. But I tell you now that your task is not yet through. For in my dreams I have seen you leave the safety of this place and ride into great danger. Your enemies I have seen with my mind's eye. They lie in ambush but a few hour's toward the setting sun.

"It troubles me to tell you this. I am not involved in such matters, and I did not seek knowledge of you. Yet, knowing what is planned, I would not see you murdered. I ask only this one thing in exchange for my warning. Do not use the information I have given you as a means of killing your enemies. Instead, avoid them so that I might not have saved your lives at the expense of theirs."

If questioned further about the the nature or number of those who lie in ambush, Toshiro lies shamelessly, telling the party that they face a band of two dozen bushi and a dozen samurai waiting to ambush

them *after* they have left the inn.

When Toshiro has finished, the geisha put on a stylized *noh* play based on the legend of The Reward of Tomy. You can narrate the play by reading the appropriate background section, if the players are not already familiar with it.

After the play, "Miko" (Minbu) gets his *biwa of calm*, sits on a cushion in the room's northeast corner and begins to play, thus signalling the attack. The ninjas' "perfect plan" follows:

"Haru" (Taneichi) moves around the table pouring sake, making sure to finish beside Toshiro (and as far from the brazier as possible). "Myoki" (Heishiuro) leaves the room, returning in a moment with a fresh bowl of quail eggs. In the bowl are three poison gas grenades made from quail eggs; he has also palmed three dust grenades.

When "Miko" (Minbu) finishes her tune, Heishiuro throws the bowl of quail eggs into the brazier at the end of the table. They explode, causing all within range to save vs. poison for each grenade. As soon as the poison grenades are gone, Heishiuro will toss the dust grenades at the characters at the other end of the table. The other two "geisha" hurl shurikens, while Toshiro begins casting and Sabero and Unchiku burst through the door with drawn swords to join the attack. Yoichi positions himself in the doorway to block escape that way. The bushes outside the window are trapped with 30 tetsubishi.

Play the ninja assault to conclusion.

The Demands of Honor

If Yoichi is alive at the end of the battle, he has a 30% of killing himself to atone for the dishonor that he has brought on his family. If he changes sides, the chance goes up 10% for each member of the household or party killed during the battle. He will make sure that the hostages have been released and will make a speech confessing his dishonor (and filling the party in as to what has been going on).

If Yoichi is mortally wounded, he lives long enough to call over one of the party, confess his ties to both the Ono Kumi and the Sumitomos, reveal the location of the hostages, and ask that the apologies of a dying ninja be conveyed to his family.

If Kinnori is alive at the end of the battle and any member of the family (except Yoichi) is dead, there is a 10% chance that he will kill himself. The chance increases



by 20% if Toyo is dead and by 40% if Skoshi is dead. If this happens, Kinnori, like Yoichi, will make a speech confessing his dishonor (in this case, not protecting the family, especially the children, the way he should have).

If any members of the Sumitomo family survive the battle, they offer the party whatever atonement they can for allowing this attack to take place. This includes the possessions of any ninja not killed by the ronin, plus free hospitality in perpetuity. It may also, at the DM's discretion, include part or all of the family savings. The possessions of ninja killed by the ronin go to him if he is alive. If he is dead, they go the emperor, along with his other possessions.

The Rewards of Service

After the battle, the characters are free to examine the possessions of the ninja. These include 24 light horses (20 with saddles) tethered to trees in the orchard. The packs on the horses hold a variety of clothing, provisions, and miscellaneous equipment (80% chance of finding 1-4 of any item from the miscellaneous equipment, clothing, and provisions lists in the *ORIENTAL ADVENTURES* Rulebook. In addition, the characters find nine strings of 50 fen, eight strings of 100 yuan, two strings of 100 tael and a paper wallet containing 100 ch'ao. If Yoichi is still alive, one horse, one string of 100 tael and the 100 ch'ao are his. The ronin claims a percentage of loot equal to the percentage of ninja he killed.

Even if all the Sumitomos are dead, the inn is still under imperial protection. Any looting of household possessions or savings by any member of the party will eventually result in all party members being accused of the crime, at a penalty of -4 honor points. The penalty for conviction or refusal to be tried is death. The same applies to looting the property or spoils of the ronin.

At dawn, if the characters have survived, a strong patrol sent by Michimori arrives at the inn. After cleaning up the carnage, they escort the party back to Michimori's castle, where the party receives its reward for delivering the relics.

KEY TO THE INN

The following passages briefly describe the contents of the rooms of the inn. Areas (such

as verandas) described elsewhere are merely keyed in numerically for reference.

1. The Inn Gate

Just south of the crossroads is the walled compound of Doi No Fugu, the Inn of the Globefish. The main gate is a stout affair of iron bars set into two huge wooden baulks, which are mortared into the ends of a ten-foot high limestone wall. Both the gate and the baulks are painted a bright red, and to the right baulk is bolted a golden bell. On either side of the gate are pasted a variety of charms.

The charms are for *protection from fire, disease, spirits, and theft*. At Yoichi's order the *charm of protection from theft* has been altered to destroy its effect. At this point the adventure begins (**see Running the Adventure**).

2. Inn Yard

The broad yard is 30 feet wide and 40 feet long in the immediate area. To the south is a large stable. To the west is a pleasant flagged terrace backed with a bed of jade plants. To the east is the front of the Inn House with its broad porch. To the right of the porch is a statue of the Emperor Mori; to the left is a tinkling fountain. Everywhere there are flowers and shrubs. Neat paths of crushed stone crisscross the inn yard.

See Running the Adventure for play notes.

3. Shed

The shed contains all manner of gardening tools, but nothing else of interest.

4. West Terrace

5. Open Porch

6. Receiving Room

Against the north wall is a small straw mat upon which rest half a dozen pairs of men's and women's sandals.

The characters should leave their footwear on the mat with the other outdoor shoes. Resting in the corner behind the statue is a stout wooden bar that can be used to bar the main door to the inn house

from the inside. The sculpture pivots to reveal a small receptacle in its base that holds Toyo's crossbow and a box of 20 quarrels.

7. Main Corridor

8. "Place of Bountiful Welcome"

This sitting room is paneled in gleaming cherry wood. A low inlaid cherry table in the center of the room is surrounded by eight cushions. A second, smaller table to the south contains all the implements necessary to perform the tea ceremony.

The ritual drink of welcome is offered here. Among the tools on the second table are a brazier, kettle and tea caddy. The latter is a family heirloom, an antique worth three ch'ien as a work of art.

9. "Green Rushes" Room

Part of the west wall is a screen of black laquered wood and bright yellow rice paper.

The screen can be slid aside to reveal an empty storage area (51).

10. "Blue Serenity" Room

The south wall has a latticework screen that has been pulled aside to reveal a wooden party pavilion set on pylons in a large pond. Against the west wall rests a pair of blue and silver laquered cabinets.

The cabinets are unlocked. They contain more cushions, futons, and sleeping silks. Hidden in the bushes outside the window are 30 tetsu-bishi scattered by Yoichi's men to hinder escape. Treat these as a trap.

11. "Dancing Light" Room

The east corner of the south wall has a single tall, narrow window whose latticework screen is shut.

The cabinet contains six futons, a dozen cushions and some sleeping silks. In the left side is a tall forked stick that is used to slide back a roof panel in fair weather, exposing the southern third of the room to the open sky.



12. Alcove

There is a stout maple door in the south wall. The east and west walls are lined with shelves holding a variety of plants.

Resting on one of the shelves is a bar that can be used to bar the door from the inside.

13. Covered Way

This covered walkway rests on wooden pylons driven into the pond. The pylons in turn support small wooden pillars that hold up the tiled roof.

14. Pavilion Party Room

In the center of the room rests a low black lacquered table surrounded by six black silk cushions. A large balsa wood screen obscures most of the north wall.

The balsa panels slide open to give a view of the pond.

15. Serving Area

A counter runs the length of the north wall of this serving area. Beneath the counter are three shelves piled high with serving trays, crocks, dishes and bottles of condiments.

A jug in the northwest corner contains four quarts of oil. In a box on the counter are half a dozen sashimi knives. Treat these as the equivalent of daggers.

16. The Doi-Ike

The pond is lined with cattails and dotted with lily pads. It is about four feet deep within five feet of the shore line. After that, it drops off to an eight-foot depth.

17. Privy

18. Changing Room

The east and west walls of this room are lined with five-foot benches. Large towels are piled on each bench.

19. Bath

The room is dominated by two huge wooden tubs full of steaming, scented water.

20. Kitchen

The center of the room is dominated by a pair of large chopping blocks flanking a stone fire pit. A pair of cabinets flank the entrance.

The door leads to the Pantry (21). Twisting a pot hook set into the east wall causes a section of the wall to roll back, revealing a secret passage (22) leading to the Main Cellar (23). The cabinets are filled with cooking utensils and crocks full of spices.

21. Pantry

The north and south walls of this room are lined with built-in shelves and cabinets. The shelves contain sealed crocks of various sizes.

The cabinets contain bins full of barley, millet, rice and various dried fruits. The crocks contain condiments. If Haru and her daughters have escaped their guard, they will be hiding in this room.

22. Secret Passage

A flight of dry stone stairs leads downward into a cellar of some sort. The flickering of a lamp can be seen from somewhere down below.

23. Main Cellar

The room is lit by a lantern resting on a barrel. The north wall is stacked high with barrels and against the east wall are three great casks. The gravel floor is dry and even.

The casks contain beer. The barrels contain various types of sake and plum wines. Depressing a catch in the east wall causes part of the wall to swing inward, giving access to the tunnel (25).

24. Privy Catch Chamber

A small stone hatch at waist level swings inward to give access to the catch chamber below the main privy for cleaning. It is possible for a man to climb into this chamber through the hatch and reach the main floor by climbing the uneven walls of the privy.

25. Tunnel

The tunnel is lined with rough brick. It leads to the family bolthole (26). If Haru has not escaped, Oshikatsu is waiting in this room. He will attack ferociously as soon as he realizes the people who opened the secret door are not members of the Ono Kumi. If the women are here, the door in the east wall leading to the bolthole is locked by a crude and recently installed deadbolt.

26. Bolthole

This room, much cruder than the cellar, is built of rough brick. Against the north and east walls rest low three-foot wide platforms covered by straw pallets. The west wall has shelves holding sealed crocks. A barrel and a wooden chest rest against the south wall.

The crocks contain all manner of preserved food, the barrel contains drinking water and the unlocked chest contains sleeping silks. If Haru has escaped, Oshikatsu is unconscious on a pallet against the east wall.

27. Children's Room

A wooden chest rests against the south wall. The west wall is constructed of lacquered balsa wall panels.

The chest contains children's clothing and old toys. The panels in the west wall move aside to give access to the sleeping chambers.

28-30. Sleeping Chambers

Toyo sleeps in 28; Miko sleeps in 29; Myoko sleeps in 30. Each chamber has a small platform with a futon, cushions and sleeping silks. A large drawer beneath the platform pulls out to provide storage for personal possessions. All have spare clothing and foot gear. Miko's and Myoki's drawers also have makeup cases, combs, pins and wigs.

31. North Passage

32. Attic Staircase



33. Attic

This small attic is a jumble of chests and lacquered boxes, old furniture worn tatami and cracked wall screens, most covered with a thick layer of dust.

This is the headquarters for the ninja. If examined closely, there is a 75% chance the jumble will yield a usable sample of any common household item or article of clothing that the players want. In one corner, hidden under some old silks, is locked leather traveling chest belonging to Yoichi's team. Any improper attempt to open the chest sends a poisoned needle arcing toward the hand of the offender, who must save vs. poison. Inside the chest are three black ninja outfits, three nija-to, two kawanaga, half a dozen uchi-ne, a kusari-gama, nuchaku and kyoketsuogi, a box of two dozen assorted shuriken and a lacquered box containing a half dozen flash powder grenades.

34. Empty Sleeping Chamber

35. Empty Closet (camphor paneling)

36. Empty Closet

37. Empty Sleeping Chamber

38. Toshiro's Sleeping Chamber

This chamber contains the usual collection of futons, cushions and silks. Toshiro's bo stick is leaning against the west wall.

39. Toshiro's Closet

This closet contains a waterproofed silk traveling bag. The bag contains silk traveling clothes, a paper wallet containing 50 ch'ao, a string of 50 tael, a string of 50 fen and a metal box. The box has a special puzzle lock consisting of four separate locks nested one inside the other. Each lock is picked by aligning small metal cubes in a certain way. As each lock is picked, it opens to reveal another lock inside. When the fourth lock is picked, the box opens. Inside the box are three books on magical arts, a treatise on constructive

nihilism, and five scrolls, each explaining all the spells of a given level known by Toshiro. Concealed in a secret lining of the the bag is a black ninja fighting garment. With it is a note in the secret language of the ninja and is sealed with the seal of the Ono Kumi. It is from Ono Noburo, and solicits Toshiro's aid in a dangerous mission on behalf of Korimori. The letter offers the wu jen 100 ch'ao for his aid (half up front and half later).

40. Kinnori's Sleeping Chamber

This sleeping chamber contains the usual trappings. Kinnori's unstrung daiyku and two lacquered quivers each containing 12 leaf head arrows, 4 humming bulb arrows, 3 frog crotch arrows and 5 armor piercer arrows rest on a long low table against the south wall. Against the north wall is a weapon stand for a katana and wakizashi.

41. Kinnori's Closet

This closet contains half a dozen lacquered traveling boxes of various sizes. Two are empty. Three contain the pieces for a complete o-yoroi of quality except for the do-maru and kabuto. One box contains good quality traveling clothes in fair condition. In the bottom of this box is a scroll with the imperial seal. It contains orders from the emperor for Kinnori to disguise himself as a ronin and to discretely obtain a position at Doi No Fugu. The scroll charges Kinnori with defending the inn and its occupants with his life. In addition, Kinnori is to use the inn as a listening post to monitor the situation in Maeshi.

42. Stable

In addition to the party's animals, at the time of the attack the stable contains two light horses belonging to the Sumitomos, a light horse and mule belonging to Toshiro, and Kinnori's warhorse, Tandai, and pack mule. Some of the animals share stalls. Each animal's tack is thrown over the side of its stall. Ten feet above the earthen floor is an open loft still partly filled with last summer's hay.

43. Tack Room

Any type of riding or hitching equipment the characters might look for can be found here. A small forge, suitable only for minor harness repairs, stands in one corner of the room.

44. Master's House Living Room

This is the family's main dwelling place.

45. Master's House Bedroom

This room is dominated by a platform bed strewn with sleeping silks. Against the west wall is a heavy lacquered cabinet.

The cabinet's double doors are locked. Inside are Haru and Koji's personal effects. Hidden under some old sandals in a corner of the cabinet is a ring attached to the floor panel. When pulled, it lifts the false bottom of the cabinet. Inside is a locked cash box containing the family savings: 200 ch'ao, 10 ch'ien and two strings of 100 fen.

46. Privy

47. Family Shrine

The front of the altar's base slides back to reveal dozens of urns stored on the shelves underneath. Each urn contains the ashes of a departed family member.

48. Empty Closet

49. Master Terrace

50. East Terrace

51. Empty Closet

52. Orchard

The orchard is reached by the orchard gate between the master's house and the stable. It contains dozens of fruit trees of various types. All are too small to bear a concealed man, although one man might hide behind a tree bole. The grass in the orchard is too short to offer concealment.

53. Privy



Name: Maruyama Ichiro
 Cl./Lvl.: Samurai 8
 AC: 5/5
 S 17 I 15 hp: 36
 D 10 Co 17 W 13 Hr.: 55 (36)
 Ch 13 Cm 13
 Race/Sex: Human M
 Birth: 8th rank samurai, alliance, ancestral feud, famous general, land (modest farm)

Ki: 18/00 one round, once/level
 Armor: *do-maru +1*, kote, suneate
 Weapons: *katana +1**, daikyu, wakizashi*
 Magical Items: *potion of healing*; 6 *armor-piercing arrows +1*
 Proficiencies: Weapons, calligraphy, horsemanship, painting
 Lineage: Fourth son of second son of second son
 Languages: Kozakuran, Trade, Tengu
 Birthright: *wakizashi +1*, two 50-string yuan, 10 100-string fen

Name: Ch'ai-Li-No-Hiwasa
 Cl./Lvl.: Bushi 5
 AC: 5/9 hp: 30
 S 16 I 13 W 12 Hr.: 30 (10)
 D 16 Co 12 Ch 17 Cm 15
 Race/Sex: Sea Spirit F
 Birth: Middle class, land (small town)
 Birthright: 30% of property
 Lineage: Third child of third son of third son

Ki: +2 levels, once/day
 Armor: hara-ate-gawa, haidate
 Weapons: daikyu +*, *naginata-staff +1*
 Magical Items: 12 *frog-crotch arrows +1*, *potion of healing*
 Proficiencies: Weapons, heraldry, sailing craft
Naginata-staff +1: Appears as staff. On command projects naginata blade. Another extends length to 12'. Third returns to normal. Detect *magic* reveals alteration.
 Languages: Court, Spirit folk, Trade

Name: Harada
 Cl./Lvl.: Bushi 5
 AC: 5/6 hp: 35
 S 18/80 I 11 W 8 Hr.: 34 (13)
 D 14 Co 15 Ch 10 Cm 9
 Race/Sex: Human M
 Lineage: Fifth son of fifth son of head of household
 Languages: Kozakuran, Trade
 Birthright: None

Ki: +2 levels, one turn, once/day
 Armor: harimaki-do+, sode+, haidate
 Weapons: *spear* +1*, uchi-ne
 Magical Items: *potion of heroism*; 2 *uchi-ne of lightning* (as javelin, dmg 1d4+10 electrical, range 4", stroke length 1")
 Proficiencies: Weapons, horsemanship, gaming, reading/writing (Kozakuran)
 Birth: Middle class, modest farm

Name: Michio
 Cl./Lvl.: Shukenja 5
 AC: 7 hp: 30
 S 10 I 12 W 17 Hr.: 39 (21)
 D 9 Co 16 Ch 12 Cm 13
 Race/Sex: Human M
 Birth: Abandoned
 Birthright: Given away
 Special Maneuvers:
 Languages: Kozakuran, Trade Lock 1*, 2*, 3; Weapon 1*, 2; Movement 4, 5; Mental 3

Ki: +3 on saves, once/level
 Armor: Studded leather
 Weapons: Sai, martial arts (only . are known)
 Magical Items: Scroll — *know history, obscurement, dispel magic; ordinary rice mortar*
 Spells: 5, 4
 Proficiencies: Weapon, religion, calligraphy, singing, Lock 1, Lock 2, Weapon 1
 Lineage: Abandoned
 Martial arts: Kung sai (#AT 2/1, Dmg 1-4/1-2, AC 7, principal attack hand and arm)

Name: Yoke-Tai
 Cl./Lvl.: Sohei/Ninja 4/2
 AC: 6/8 hp: 23
 S 13 I 15 W 12 Hr.: None
 D 16 Co 16 Ch 14 Cm 12
 Race/Sex: Human F
 Lineage: Unknown
 Family: Seventh position of fifth son of third son in clan
 Proficiencies: Weapons, noh, dance, small watercraft, swimming
 Languages: Kozakuran, Trade, Ninja
 Ninja Skills: PP 35, HS 15, MS 21, F/RT 25, CW 86, DS 24, OL 29, TW 25, PV 9, F 0, ES 18, BS x2

Ki: Berserk one turn, once/day (+3 MV, +1 AC, hit/dmg +1/+1, save +1, one additional attack/round, dodge missiles on save vs. breath weapon); hold breath two minutes beyond normal
 Weapons: Crossbow (choice), black *ninja-to +1* (casts no light), small shuriken
 Armor: Leather
 Magical Items: *potion of invisibility* (half gone); *fabi of springing and leaping* (as boots)
 Birth: Adopted
 Birthright: None

Name: Wutambi
 Cl./Lvl.: Wu jen 4
 AC: 10 hp: 16
 S 14 I 15 W 11 Hr.: 32 (15)
 D 14 Co 17 Ch 10 Cm 8
 Race/Sex: Korobokuru M
 Birth: Lower middle class
 Birthright: None
 Languages: Korobokuru, Trade, Spirit folk, Hengeyokai, Oni, Tengu

Ki: +3 init. once/day; cast 1st level spell for max. effect once/day
 Armor: None
 Weapons: Blowpipe (choice), short sword
 Magical Items: *Wondrous writing* set (3 pages); six doses paralytic poison for blowpipe; scroll—shield, *enchanted blade, omen*
 Spells: 3, 2
 Mastery: Fire, Earth/metal
 Lineage: Third son of first son of head of family

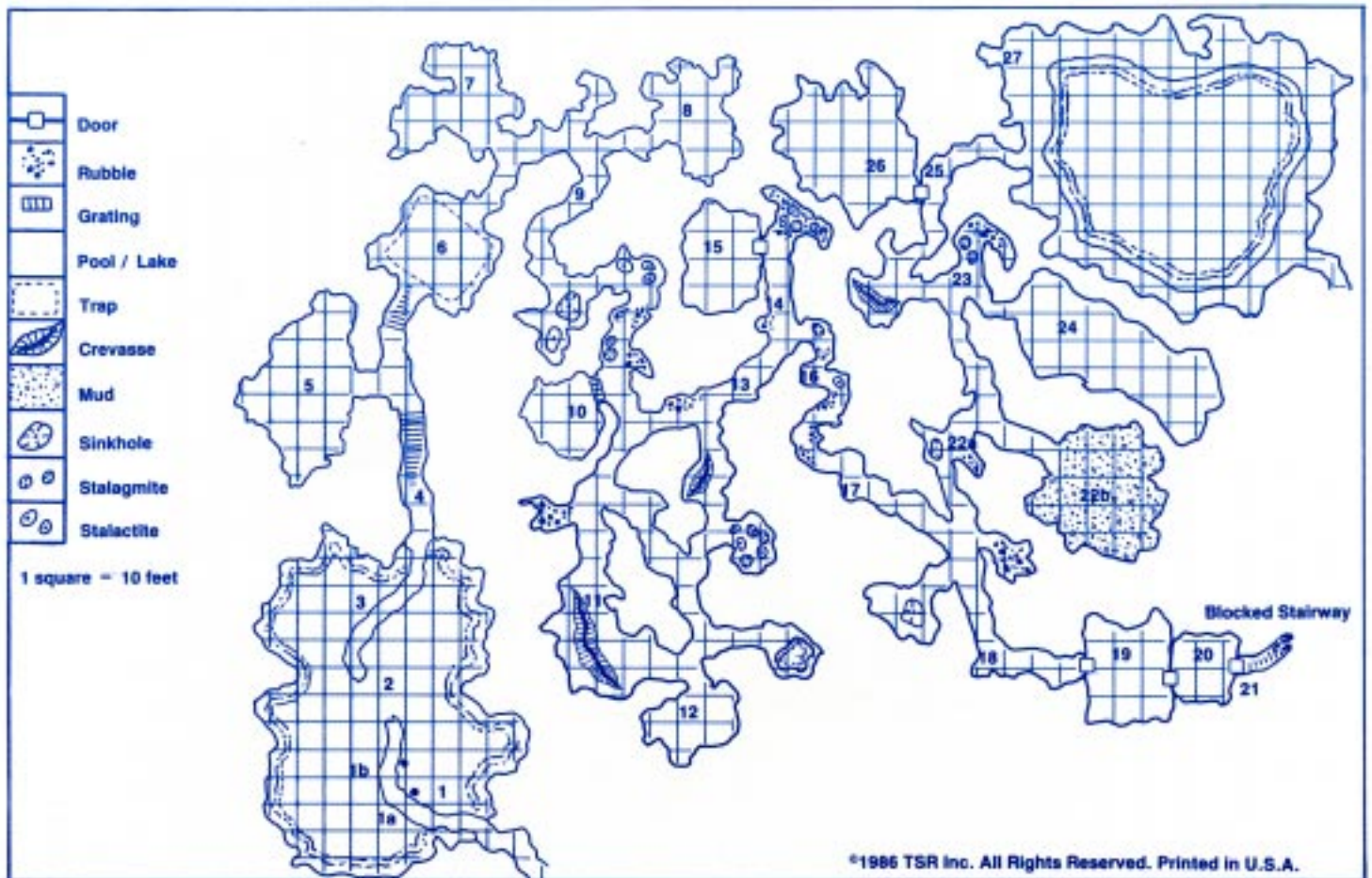
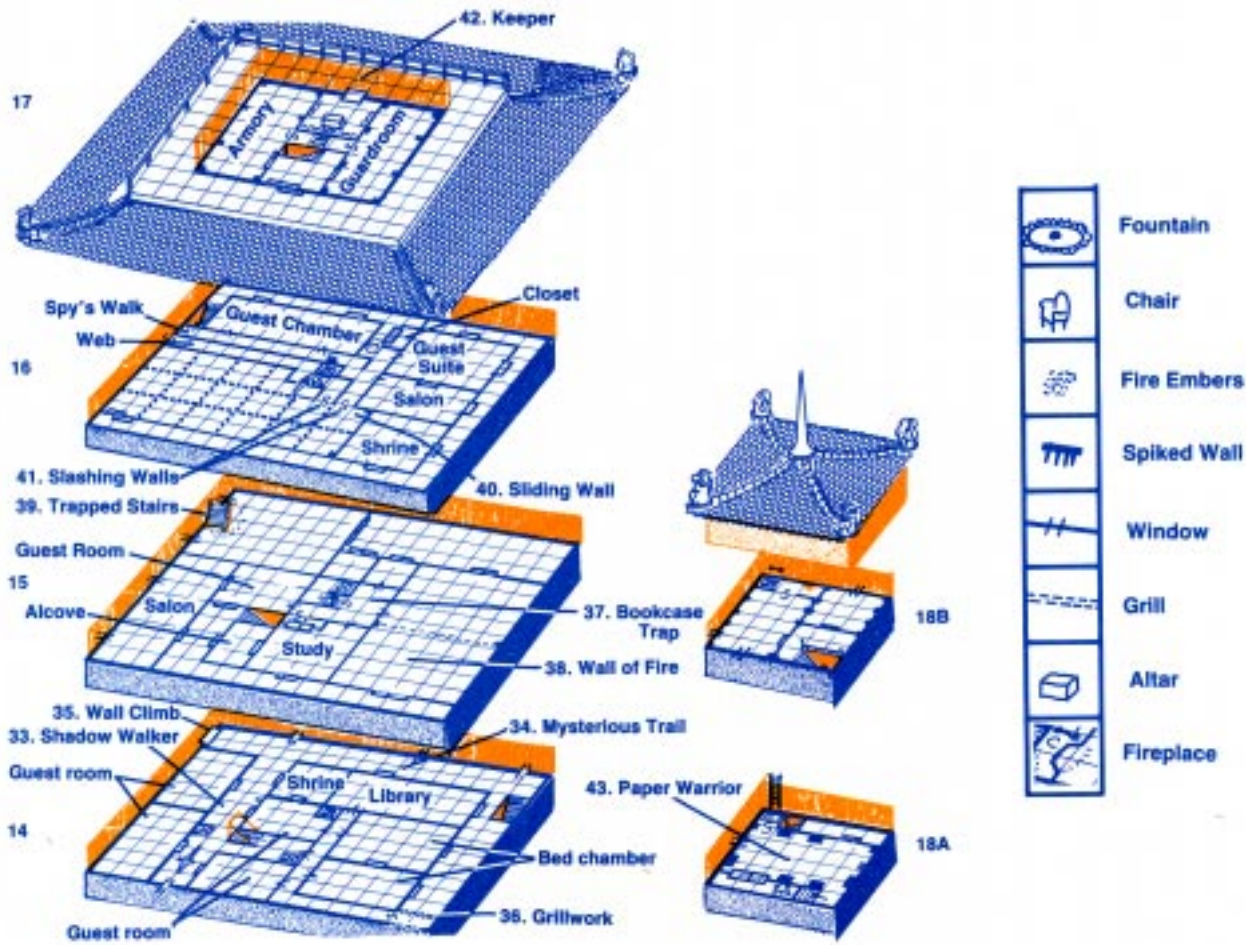
Spell Books:

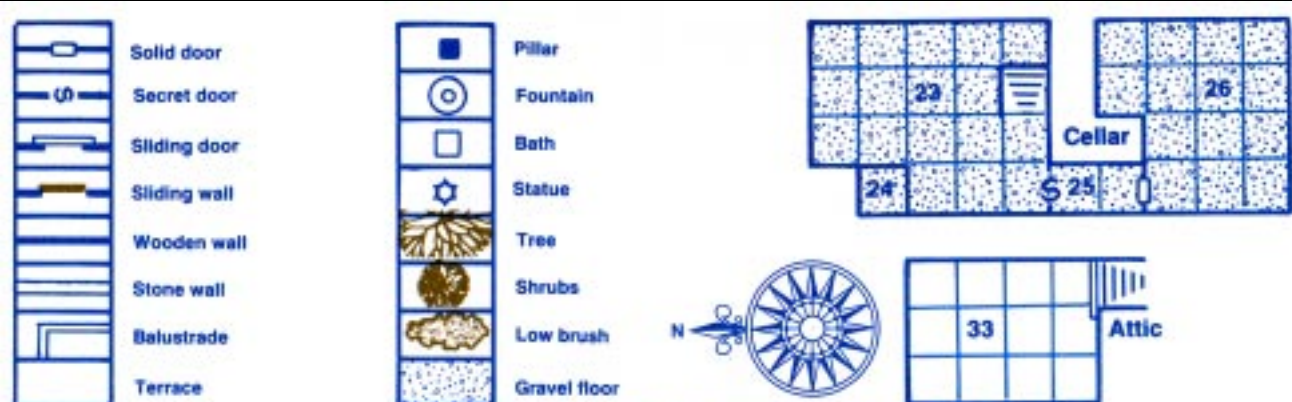
- I. *chameleon, elemental burst*, fiery eyes*, ghost light, hail of stone*, hypnosis, me/t, read magic, secret signs, unseen servant*
- II. *detect invisibility, enchanted blade, fire shuriken*, hypnotic pattern, invisibility, knock, pyrotechnics**

* = fire/earth spells

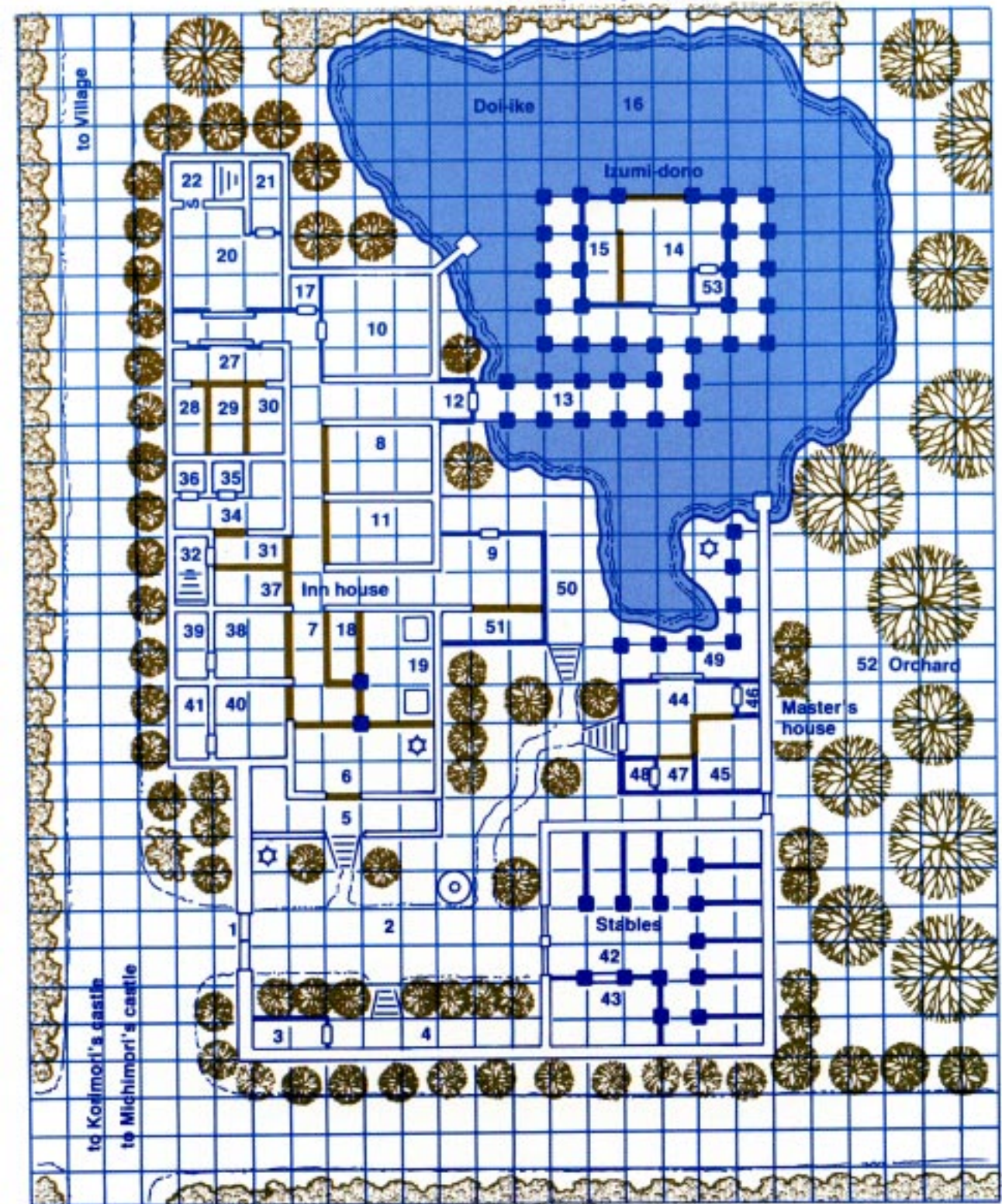
Proficiencies: Weapons, fishing, herbalist, juggling, poetry, reading/writing (Kozakuran), swimming

* = specialization + = quality Hr. = Honor

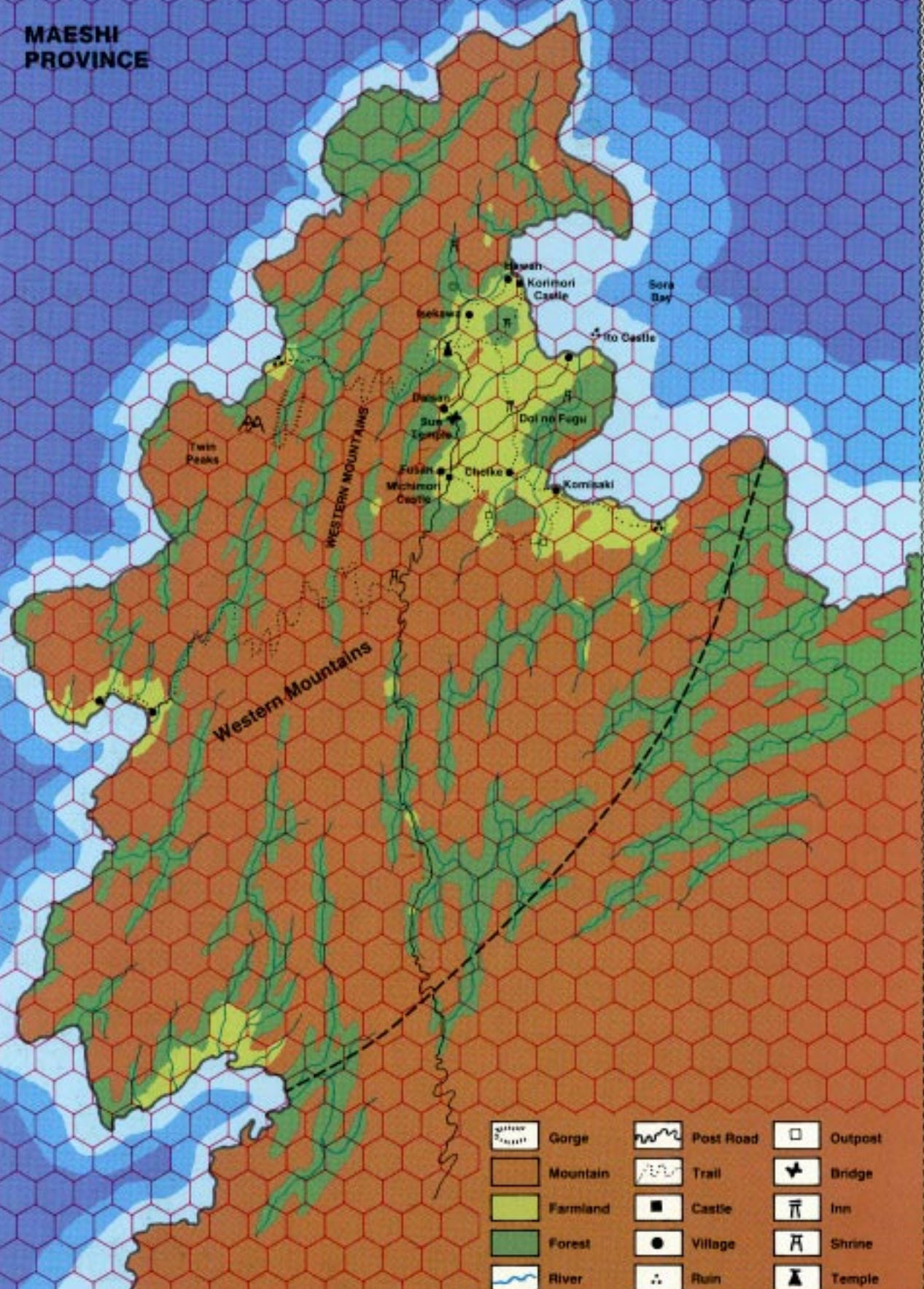




One Square Equals 5 Feet



MAESHI PROVINCE



- | | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|-----------|--|---------|
| | Gorge | | Post Road | | Outpost |
| | Mountain | | Trail | | Bridge |
| | Farmland | | Castle | | Inn |
| | Forest | | Village | | Shrine |
| | River | | Ruin | | Temple |

one hex equals 4 miles
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While Maeshi province revels in the festival spirit, clouds gather over the political scene. Two warlords are vying for control of this otherwise peaceful place, and you are guests of one of them. Sun Temple officials have offered complete support to the faction which successfully travels to Ito-jo Castle (said to hold relics of great importance to the Sun Temple), brings them back safely, and returns them to the Inn of the Globefish.

The plan is laid before you. You are to leave immediately under secrecy for the castle of the Ito clan, also known as the Seven Swords clan. Find the relics, and return them to the renowned inn Doi no Fugu. Extreme caution is needed here, for your warlord's rival must not hear of this!

Is the castle really haunted? What lies in the caverns beneath it? Will Korimori's troops discover your plan and try to wrest the relics from you, should you even get that far? What will you find at the Inn of the Globefish?

Come, honorable stranger—the Seven Swords await!

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