

THE SWAMPER
PRESENTS

STRANGE HARVEST

FIFTH EDITION

AN INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE FOR THE MOST POPULAR
FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAME OF ALL TIME!



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INTRODUCTION

Strange Harvest takes place in and around the village of Lortan, a small farming community known for their primary crop: apples. Their orchards line the Elling River and are famed throughout the region for producing the largest and most delicious fruit... until recently.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Although this adventure is intended to be used with the most popular of the d20 fantasy role playing systems, it is easily adaptable to almost any other with very little effort.

Keep in mind that the most important aspect of the adventure is the story, so regardless of what mechanics you're using, you should be able to use this adventure to weave a rich narrative to engage the players.

Feel free to adapt this adventure to your own world and mythology, introducing the town of Lortan into your setting wherever it makes sense to do so.

BACKGROUND

The tiny, remote village of Lortan began having serious problems with its crops approximately 5 weeks ago. It started out suddenly, with the apples developing an odd flavor, and over the course of several weeks, it became clear to the locals that their fruit was making some people ill. The illness was not fatal, but it was serious enough to lay the person up for a week or two with vomiting, diarrhea and dizziness. Children and the elderly seemed to be particularly susceptible.

Carda, and a few of the other farmers, blamed a nearby circle of druids, believing that they had somehow cursed the Lortan lands out of fear of competition.

In fact the real reason for the tainted fruit has nothing to do with the druids, but the water. Unbeknownst to the people of Lortan, the Elling river has been tainted by a third party, the Nayla – a tribe of savage creatures that have recently moved into a cave near Mount Taine in the north. The Nayla have erected a small altar right in the path of the river, where they ritualistically gut their prey before feasting. These rituals have gradually tainted the river, and it is this water that is used to irrigate the Lortan's orchards.

Some of the merchants who have purchased Lortan's apples have started to complain of their

strange taste and associated nausea. Although word of this problem hasn't reached many, Carda and Murly are very concerned that if it does, Lortan's reputation for its prized apples will become worthless.

OVERVIEW

The player characters are in the village of Lortan to investigate an illness that has been traced back to tainted apples originating there. Since the town lacks an official town leader, the player characters are seen as authorities of a sort, and have been called upon to help solve the mystery.

The GM can have this happen in several ways (see Adventure Hooks below). Once they begin their investigation, they will likely be directed to speak to Carda at the orchard, a mile east of Lortan.

The PCs may also learn that several of the townsfolk are ill, although none fatally so. In most cases, the illness causes nausea and stomach cramps, but a few are incapacitated with severe dizziness, vomiting, and diarrhea.

At some point while in the village, the party will be approached by Gustano. He tells them that his wife, Orella, is two days overdue from her hunting trip. Since he lost his hand, he stays home and helps raise their two children. He asks that the PCs keep an eye out for her.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The hamlet of Lortan is a tiny place, with its orchards its only notable facet. This adventure is intended to be more of a side trip than a full adventure, though it could certainly be used as a springboard to a series of adventures in the region. There are several ideas for simple plot hooks to get the characters involved in the events taking place in and around Lortan.

Just passing through. The party might stumble across Lortan while traveling from one destination to another, offering to help the locals out after seeing so many sick children and elderly. If the characters are not so generous, the community might offer some of the wealth collected from the villagers which would consist of family heirlooms such as silver cups, bits of jewelry, some coins, and so on, in a small chest. The total value of the payment would be around 250 to 300 gold pieces.

Finding the source. One of the player characters or someone they know has become sick as a result of eating the tainted fruit, and they decide to trace the sickness back to its source, which turns out to be Lortan.

My business is in jeopardy. The party is hired by a merchant who relies heavily on the apples from Lortan for his business. He has started receiving complaints of sickness from his customers, and so far, he has been able to pass it off as an isolated contamination, but people are starting to get suspicious.

KEY LOCATIONS

Lortan. A tiny village in a forested area, in a temperate part of the world. This area can be stand alone or placed into any current game world the GM is already using. Lortan is barely a hamlet, with a population of less than 50, and thus too small to have an official town leader. Lortan's most notable feature is its orchard. It has a small reputation for producing high quality fruit, particularly apples.

Elling River. A key tributary, that provides fresh water and irrigation to the orchards. The river starts less than a day's walk from Lortan at a pond near the top of a small mountain called Mount Taine.

Druid Camp. Called Formir by the druids, this druid commune is about ten miles east of Lortan. Formir is off the main road, and is home to about 30 druid families, all living off the land in home made shelters. The druids keep to themselves, rarely leaving the commune. When they do so, it is to procure supplies, and they earn money to do so by selling a variety of fruits and berries.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

Carda. A human male of 40 years, Carda is a lifelong farmer. He is over six feet tall, and while not herculean, is certainly in good shape from a lifetime of physical chores. He is the head laborer, and is short-tempered, loud and brisk. Carda has a daughter Sina who is one of the children who has become sick.

Murly. A human male of 34 years, Murly is a farmer as well. He's not as tall or big as Carda, but lean and healthy. He is more even tempered than his boss, but is also clearly quite upset at recent events. Like everyone else, he is worried for the people of Lortan.

Gustano. A human male of 28 years and a resident of Lortan. He is beside himself with worry about his missing wife, Orella.

Ducell. A half-elven druid who stands at just under six feet, but carries himself with a commanding grace. To outsiders he is usually polite though perhaps seems a bit cold, with a faint hint of arrogance. He does a fair job concealing his xenophobia, though it will come out more readily when under great stress.

ENTERING LORTAN

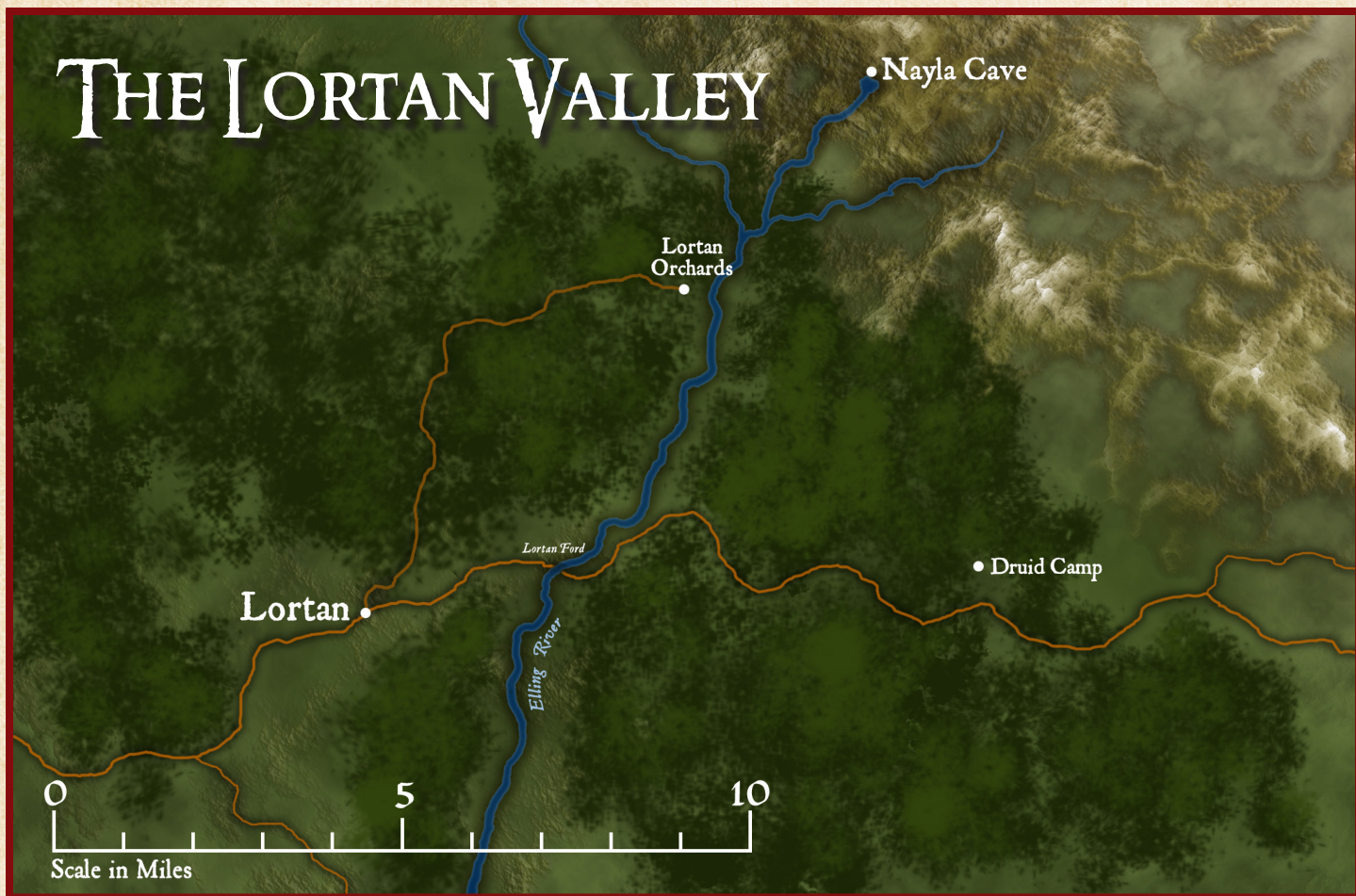
"It is a bright mid-morning and the forest is warm and pleasant as summer gives way to fall. The road you travel on is a wide dirt path, hard-packed, with faint wagon trails visible. The sounds of birds and the occasional small mammal can be heard coming from the fir and spruce trees to your left and right, as you proceed east.

Up ahead, you see some breaks in the trees as the hamlet of Lortan slowly comes into view. To call it a town would be generous, as it seems to be little more than a single dust-covered road, with small houses located in an almost random fashion. The town seems nearly devoid of people, but you see a few people up ahead, talking in the street."

Before reading the next part, give the players a chance to describe their characters, and perhaps ask questions about Lortan. Once they decide to enter the town, read the next section.

"The houses are small and modest, all made of wood, with few personal touches. Most are close to the road, but they are well spaced, almost haphazardly. Here and there you can see other signs of civilization, clothes hanging on a line, a woman walking a dog, a man with a mule pulling a cart, etc. The windows on the houses are opaque, rather than clear, made even less transparent by the dust which seems to cover everything.

Halfway through the hamlet, a second road branches off to the north, with a somewhat larger building on the corner of the intersection. This building seems to be the only one of any significant size, and the two people you saw talking earlier enter this building. You can't help but notice the stares of the inhabitants, some from behind dirty windows, or slightly ajar doors."



DM Notes: Lortan is too small to have an official town leader, and armed adventurers are a rare appearance. Eventually, the locals curiosity and trepidation gives way to asking them for help with Lortan's orchard problems. The DM can have this happen in several ways: they might be approached by Murly on the street, they might encounter him inside the Apple Blossom, or he may approach them, inviting them to his house to discuss the matter in private. In any event, the party should be directed to speak to Carda at the orchard, a mile east of Lortan.

The Apple Blossom is not an inn, it's really just a general store that's been added to a house. The sign above the door (which seems to be almost as an afterthought) is a painted apple blossom with the name beneath. It is slightly askew and has faded almost to illegibility. Inside, patrons can buy basic supplies, and there's a few tables near an iron stove in case someone wishes to order a home cooked meal.

This is easily the largest building in the hamlet, and they sell only basic items like rope, food, lamp oil, food ingredients, clothing and so on. It's not

uncommon to find a few townsfolk hanging out here, talking local gossip.

Murly's house, like most in the hamlet, is tiny. It consists of a front room using for everything from cooking and eating meals to entertaining the rare guest. In the back half, there is a bedroom and a small closet. A back door leads to a typical outhouse found in Lortan. Murly himself is a middle-aged human, lean, but not particularly muscular. He is slowly losing his hair, and can always be found wearing simple work clothes. He works at the orchard, and is Carda's right hand man.

From Murly, the PCs can also learn that several of the townsfolk are ill, although none fatally so. Murly does not know the cause for certain, but he and Carda are strongly suspicious that there is something wrong with the apples from their prized orchard.

While first exploring the village, the players may notice the roads are nearly deserted. At the DM's discretion, this can be due to them being bed-ridden or missing. The missing folk may be victims of the Nayla, though the town doesn't know it yet.

GUSTANO'S REQUEST

As the party leaves Lortan, whether towards the orchard or the druid camp, they are approached by Gustano. He is a short, pear shaped, balding human male missing a hand. He tells them, in a sad, worried tone, that his wife, Orella, is two days overdue from her hunting trip. A little over a year ago, he lost his hand, and since then, he stays home and helps raise their two children while his wife hunts for the family. He asks that the PCs keep an eye out for her, and that she was last known to be hunting near the waterfall to the north.

THE ORCHARD

This section of the adventure is designed for new players to test the characters' investigation skills. Insight, Investigation, Persuasion, and so on, can all be brought to bear, and should be encouraged for learning purposes.

“After a few hours, the narrow forest road widens, and you can see the Elling river to the east with an expansive orchard to the west. An autumn breeze blows towards the you, heavy with the scent of fruit. The orchard is rich with apple trees, many of them ripe for picking. Several carts can be seen near the road, and small paths run into the orchard. Here and there, a ladder can be seen leaning up against a tree. A few workers are carrying out assorted tasks, pruning trees, picking and carrying apples, loading carts, etc.”

DM Notes: The fruit appears normal, but upon close inspection will show faint discolorations. Certain forms of druid magic could clear up the fruit, but until the cause is stopped, the tainted water would only spoil it again. Despite it being a sizable orchard, there are few workers here. Most have been sent home as Carda is worried that the fruit is poisoned and unsellable.

The party can speak with Carda here, either by seeking him out or by being approached by him after searching around a bit. Carda is a human male, 40 years of age, and a lifelong farmer. He is over six feet tall, and while not herculean, is certainly in good shape from a lifetime of physical chores. He is in charge of the orchard, and is short-tempered, loud and brisk. Carda has a daughter who is sick, and his worry has made his desperate to find the source of the illness.

If asked about the apples, Carda will tell them in

no uncertain terms that he is convinced the druids are behind the blight. He will tell them that almost a month ago, starting with the children, people were showing signs of illness. The townspeople did not connect it to the fruit right away, but when a few of their merchant customers started demanding refunds, it confirmed their worst fears. Carda states (quite accurately) that he is a very experienced farmer, and that there must be magic at work. He suspects the druids because they also sell fruit to the public (as well as many other goods), and he thinks that they are trying to get rid of any local competition.

With a little bit of exploration, the party can find that the orchard's water source is the Elling river. The Lortan farmers have a simple but effective irrigation system in their orchard, with small metal troughs, a few inches off the ground, carrying water throughout the apple trees.

DRUID CAMP

“You see a large camp spread out before you consisting of several dozen tents, lean-tos and huts, all clearly designed to blend in well with the trees and foliage. Sadly, what was once an orderly camp now shows obvious signs of a massacre. Torn tents, shattered huts, and bloodstains are scattered throughout the area. Nothing stirs except for a lone figure walking with his head down and his back to you.”

DM Notes: This camp once supported thirty men, women and children. The lone figure is Ducell, a druid and resident of the camp. Ducell is a tall half-elf, standing at just under six feet. He wears green and brown clothing that blends well with the forest. He has been away from the camp for a few days and has only just returned. He is understandably distraught and has no idea who would have done this or why.

If asked, he may notice that many of the shiny baubles that decorated the camp are missing, while other more valuable items of wood are untouched.

Regarding the blight, Ducell flatly denies Corda's claims, suggesting that perhaps the humans don't know as much about farming as they claim, and have likely pushed the land too hard. Ducell is quite offended that Corda is spreading lies about the druids. He tells the PCs that Carda's rumors have started to affect the



druids reputations, and that it must stop. Despite his frustration with Carda, the druid is more level headed, and if asked, might suggest that the problems stem from the ground, and not druidic magic.

If the PCs choose to examine the destruction, they can learn the following:

1. There are no bodies (Perception, DC 10), and as Ducell notes, the only other things missing are a few shiny baubles, while potentially valuable wood and stone carvings have not been taken (Wisdom check DC 15).

2. A few of the bloodstains seem to be a much darker color than the others (Investigation check DC 15).

ELLING RIVER

The river is not particularly deep (between 2 and 8 feet), nor is it wide (between 6 to 12 feet), but the current is quite strong. Except for slippery rocks, the river is safe... so long as a person does not drink deeply from it.

After about ten miles of following the river north, it leads to a pond at the base of a cliff that extends into the distance in both directions. A waterfall spills down the cliff and into the pool.

DM Notes: The party can travel near the river, and if they choose to examine it, they can learn several facts from it:

1. A detect magic used on the water will show faint traces of necromantic magic in it.
2. A few hundred yards upstream from the orchard, the party can find tiny, dead fish and worms along the bank (Perception DC 10).
3. The water, if tasted, will taste slightly off (Perception DC 12).

[New DMs: Resist the urge to automatically give the players this information. This adventure is intended to be a mystery, and the players may quite enjoy solving it themselves. However, if the PCs get stuck, either Carda or Ducell might suggest the water could be a factor.]

1. THE CLIFF AND POND

This section of the adventure, and the altar below, are designed to test the characters' exploration abilities. Acrobatics, Athletics and Perception are likely skills to be used here. Again, the DM should encourage to allow the players to fully explore the game rules.



“As you follow the river’s path, it leads to deep pond, above which is a short waterfall, spraying cool mist in over the area. The waterfall isn’t large – no more than twenty feet across at most – and it begins from a vertical cliff face almost sixty feet above. The Elling river emerges from the pond, and slowly makes its way back down a shallow slope towards the orchards of Lortan beyond.”

DM Notes: The source of the Elling river is this pond near the top of Mount Taine, which is fed by many springs and tributaries that come from higher on the mountain. One such tributary winds its way through the mountain and eventually exits through the wide crack in the rocks above which in turn feeds the waterfall.

The pond itself is about 40 feet deep, 80 feet across, and is inhabited by mountain trout, crayfish and a giant frog. The frog usually stays deep in the water, and cannot be seen from the surface.

Climbing the cliff is not particularly difficult, and the waterfall is such that the PCs can climb behind it over the pool below or beside it over the ground.

The surface of the cliff is uneven enough to climb without special gear, but their movement speed is halved while doing so. The cliff is shortest (60 feet) at the waterfall, and its height increases quickly to either side, making this the best method of reaching the top of the cliff. It is fairly obvious that climbing over the water would reduce falling damage significantly, though they will definitely get soaked during the climb. Climbing over the ground would be drier, but more dangerous.

2. ASCENDING THE CLIFF

No matter where the party decides to climb there are other unforeseen dangers. The cliff face is infested with giant centipedes that have burrowed into the soft earth between the rocks. When the PCs have climbed about 30 feet, the centipedes erupt from the dirt wall and attack (1d4 centipedes per PC). Any PC that is hit must make a climbing check or fall (DC 10). If the PC is above the pond, the fall does only 1 hit point of damage. If they fall over the ground, the standard falling rules apply. Any PC attempting to attack while climbing does so with a disadvantage.

To add drama to the scene, the DM can spread out the time at which the centipedes emerge, making the attacks unpredictable.

Should anyone fall into the water, the frog will attack from below.

GIANT CENTIPEDES

STR 5; DEX 14; CON 12; INT 1; WIS 7; CHA 3

AC: 12; HP: 5 each; Attack Bonus: 2; Damage: 1 + Poison

[Constitution save (DC 10) or poisoned for 1d6 hours.]

Any PC who fully enters the water (either willingly or by falling into it) will be attacked by a giant frog. The frog will not come to the surface to attack, nor is it susceptible to most ranged attacks that come from the shore.

GIANT FROG

STR 12; DEX 13; CON 11; INT 2; WIS 10; CHA 3

AC: 12; HP: 16; Attack (Tongue): +3; Attack (Bite): +4;

Damage (Bite): 1d6 + 2.

It first attacks its target with its sticky tongue (15 foot reach). The tongue does no damage, but on a successful hit, the victim is pulled into the mouth at the beginning of the next round. It will

then bite and attempt to swallow its victim.

Medium or larger targets cannot be swallowed, so the frog will simply keep biting them in an attempt to do so. Small creatures however can be swallowed whole. A single successful bite on a small creature means that they are swallowed, and they begin taking 1d4+1 acid damage at the start of each of the frog's turns until it escapes. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained.

3. THE ALTAR

“At the top of the cliff, the sound of the roaring water is diminished. The river continues on to a rock face a hundred feet from the edge. A crude block of gray stone has been erected in the center of the river near the falls. There are crude runes painted in some sort of red pigment on its surface and the remains of dozens of butchered corpses litter the top and around the sides of the profane stone. The nearby rocks are strewn with bones, bloodstains and other grisly remnants. To the east, another large scattering of bones and bits of cloth can be seen.

The water that feeds the river is pouring from a wide crack in the rock face, above a large cave opening. The cave itself seems to be a natural opening, though there are signs of recent activity including bits of flaked stone and a pile of ash nearby. Trees, vines and other plant matter climb across the surrounding stone, making it very difficult to see the interior without moving closer.”

DM Notes: The water is not deep here, no more than a foot, and the altar dominates most of its ten foot width. If someone uses some method of detection, they will sense either faint magic or evil radiating from

the gory altar. It is here that the shaman casts many sacrificial spells, which the tribe believes blesses the flesh they eat to make them stronger.

Among the bones, bloodstains and cloth to the east are the remains of Orella. At his discretion, the DM can choose to have some small personal item of hers found here, or inside the cave among the Nayla. The DM can also choose to have additional bones found here, or inside the cave. Perhaps the Nayla have killed some of the druids as they tried to negotiate with them.



4. THE CAVE

“Passing through the curtain of vegetation, you enter a wide, low cavern that is roughly 40 feet across, 80 feet deep and 12 feet high. Brown rocky walls form a rough arch overhead, with a naturally smoother floor of stone and hard-packed dirt. A few bones are here, and a faint trail in the dirt leads towards an opening in the wall that appears to lead to further caverns deeper in the mountain.

Flickering firelight can be seen emanating from within, and there is the faint hint of wood smoke mixed with some other sour odor on the air.”

DM Notes: The cave system is made up of five or six separate chambers. The stony ground is sloped upward slightly. The tracks of the Nayla are clear in the dirt, leading to the other areas formed by the natural cavern. Two Nayla are often in this outer cave, but this is up to the DM and the actions of the PCs outside. The Nayla have no guards posted, but if the party was particularly loud, it may have attracted their attention.

See the appendix for the Nayla stats.





5. CENTRAL CAVE

“This irregular cavern has several other exits leading deeper into Mount Taine. The room is dominated by a large fire pit, dug out of the hard dirt and encircled with skulls facing outward that are blackened with soot. Bones, both partial and complete, are among the deep bed of coals that line the bottom of the fire pit.”

DM Notes: These caverns are where the Nayla (13 in all) have been living for several months. This central cavern is where the Nayla gather as a group when they are not sleeping or out hunting. There are four passages that lead in lead in different directions to other chambers in this cave complex.

If the PCs have been stealthy and quiet in their approach, 8 Nayla can be found here. However, if they have been fighting in the outer cavern, it is likely that the Nayla would have heard and joined the battle in chamber 4.

6. THE NEST

“This oblong cavern has a hard dirt floor, with numerous, irregular furs laying about haphazardly. Indentations in the pile suggest that this is probably a sleeping area, though it is nearly impossible to distinguish how many might sleep here.”

DM Notes: There is little here beyond the description. The Nayla tend to sleep as one group, often lying such that their limbs are atop one another, in a chaotic pile.

7. MEAT ROOM

“This area has a second fire pit. This one is long and narrow, emitting more smoke than flame. The vapors are slowly cooking the numerous meats hanging above it. A mixed stench comes from the meats, as they range in type from rabbit to steer, human and elf.”



DM Notes: These bodies have been stripped of hair and heads, and hang from a thick spindle about eight feet above the fire pit. The Nayla are carnivorous, and are not picky about which meats they consume.

8. BUTCHERY

“A mixture of bones, fur and blood litter the back of this cavern. Numerous skulls are among the bones, and represent both animals and humanoids. Many of the skulls show indentations and fractures, clearly made by heavy, blunt objects.”

DM Notes: Sometimes the Nayla will feast wherever they slay their victims, and other times they will drag their kill back to the cave to feast upon later. They have little concern whether their victim is dead or merely unconscious when they being gutting them for roasting.

9. THE SHAMAN

“A half-dozen Nayla, armed with large clubs, are standing near the back of this large chamber. Standing in their midst is a taller Nayla adorned with a necklace of bones and a staff with skulls hanging off it. The ones in front crouch, raising their weapons in defense. The taller one holds his staff high as it and begins to growl.”

DM Notes: This encounter will not be needed if all the Nayla joined the fight in the Central Cave (5). If you do opt to have Nayla here, you might make them aggressive, and attack on sight, or more defensive, protecting the shaman.

Other options for this encounter could include the Nayla holding back to protect young Nayla huddled in the corner, or perhaps they have bound prisoners that are still alive, and they’re using them as living shields.



10. OFFERINGS

“The cave complex comes to an end here, and the occasional drip from the walls suggests that they will continue to form over millennia. At the back of this cavern, there is a small pile of assorted items. These include shiny pieces of metal, bits of jewelry, assorted coins, and polished rocks.”

DM Notes: The amount of treasure you put here is up to you, depending on the kind of game you like to run. Some of the bits of metal don't have to be coins or jewelry to be valuable, they might be bits of silverware, broken lengths of gold chain, etc. You might also include a few small flasks of magical potions, a magic ring or even a necklace.

Most of the treasure here is covered in spatters of blood, and in the case of a ring, still contains the decayed remains of a finger.

The most noteworthy item in this gruesome collection is a black sheathed dagger that rests prominently on a stone at the back of the pile (see Raptor Blade in the Appendix).

RESOLUTION

The party could end the river tainting problem in the short term by merely destroying the altar in the river, but the Nayla would simply make another, and the problem would return. Once the Nayla have been defeated, and the ritual stone is destroyed or removed, the orchard's contamination will clear up within a few days.

Returning any heirlooms and/or remains to Lortan will earn a great deal of gratitude and respect from the villagers. Although they have little to offer in the way of wealth, they will make it clear that the PCs are always welcome, and that they will never find themselves wanting for apples.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Should you wish to expand the adventure, there could be clues that lead the characters to believe that the Nayla are a new threat in the entire region. Perhaps a distant war or change in the climate has caused the Nayla to move into new territories, or perhaps they even came through a rift from a strange world.

NAYLA CAVE & VICINITY MAP

1. THE CLIFF AND POND
2. ASCENDING THE CLIFF
3. THE ALTAR
4. THE CAVE
5. CENTRAL CAVE
6. THE NEST
7. MEAT ROOM
8. BUTCHERY
9. THE SHAMAN
10. OFFERINGS



APPENDIX A: NEW CREATURE & MAGIC ITEM

THE NAYLA

NAYLA TRIBALIST

STR 14; DEX 12; CON 10; INT 8; WIS 10; CHA 10

AC 13; HP 13; Attack: +4; Damage (Club): 1d4+2; **Blood Frenzy:** When an enemy drops to 0 hit points, the nearest Nayla makes a free melee attack at disadvantage. If the shaman is killed, all remaining Nayla get this free attack.

NAYLA SHAMAN [3RD LEVEL CASTER]

STR 12; DEX 12; CON 10; INT 10; WIS 12; CHA 12

AC: 17 (with Mage Armor); HP: 30; Attack: +4; Damage (Staff) 1d6+1

Shaman's Spells: Shield (once per day as the spell), Shocking Grasp (every round as the spell), Ray of Enfeeblement (2/day as the spell); Burning Hands (3/day as the spell); Light (at will as the spell).

These are crude, vaguely lizard-like humanoids, who live mostly in anarchistic tribal groups. They are very aggressive (particularly with outsiders) and are prone to violence. They speak a crude, guttural language that incorporates a lot of hissing sounds and throat clicks that can be mistaken for animal noises at a distance.

Physically they stand about five feet tall with a greenish gray skin that is similar to a snake. They have sharp, elongated needle-like teeth which are so long, that their lips cannot fully conceal them, giving the Nayla a permanent feral grin. They are hairless, with sloping heads that taper to a vaguely reptilian triangle.

The majority wear crude leather rawhide or fur-covered armor and use simple weapons such as clubs and spears. Those of greater importance may have simple jewelry of bones, leather, shell and stone, and perhaps even a mantle made of animal furs.

A few of the Nayla are slightly more intelligent, and so are capable of crude magic. These rare individuals tend to be wild shaman and leaders of the tribe.

They are omnivorous, but have a strong preference for meat, and are not above cannibalism.

DM Notes: Feel free to expand and elaborate on the Nayla in your campaign, since there are still many unanswered questions. Where did they come from? Are there more of them around? Will they eventually come looking for those who desecrated their altar?

RAPTOR BLADE

This dagger is of an odd, slightly curved design that is not common to this region. It has a single sharpened edge on the concave side of the blade and a talon-like point on the tip. It seems to be in excellent condition, and of a masterwork quality, with the steel showing the tell tale signs of a master weapon smith.

The guard is fashioned of copper in the shape of two eagle claws, each clutching a perfect half inch diameter blood stone. The handle is wrapped in a weave of thin copper and bronze wire, and the pommel a beautifully carved silver eagle's head. The eyes of the eagle are inlaid with small bits of emerald.

The scabbard is of equally fine work, fashioned of bone and leather, the texture of which resembles black feathers running down its length.

Their fine condition is enough to cause anyone to suspect that the dagger might be magically enchanted, and a simple detection spell will confirm it.

If anyone has the ability to glean its history (whether through magic or lore) they can determine that this once belonged to a notable ranger known for his affinity to eagles. He lived approximately 250 years ago, and as far as anyone knew, this dagger was buried with him in a distant barrow.

Delving for more information will only reveal that at some point in the past 50 years or so, the barrow was looted by tomb robbers, one of whom sold the dagger to a collector. It passed through many unremarkable hands before being taken from a merchant slaughtered by the Nayla several weeks ago.

PROPERTIES

This dagger functions as a +1 dagger, and although it doesn't look as if it was designed to be a ranged weapon, it throws surprisingly well. Its range is 30/90 and it has the unique property that allows it to return to the hand of the thrower if the attack misses. If it misses the target, it immediately begins a tight, turning arc that returns it to the thrower. There is no roll necessary if the thrower intends to catch the blade, but if they make no attempt, or are unaware that it will return, they must make a Dexterity save to avoid it (DC 10). If they fail their save, an attack is made on them at a disadvantage using the thrower's attack roll.

APPENDIX B: MISCELLANEOUS LORTAN NPCs

Anut. [*Male Human Cooper, Neutral*] Anut is tall, with straight gray hair and hazel eyes. He wears fine raiment and a fur cape. Anut compulsively rhymes words.

Unos. [*Male Human Peasant, Good*] Unos is rugged in appearance, with braided red hair and gray eyes. He wears a silver necklace given to him by his husband Anut. Unos is concerned that the blight will cause his husband's business financial ruin.

Eortil. [*Male Human Peasant, Neutral*] Eortil is short and willowy, with thick blonde hair and bright hazel eyes. He wears plain clothing and a gray cloak. Eortil is practical and aggressive.

Estadh. [*Female Human Carpenter, Neutral*] Estadh is rugged in appearance, with gray hair and light hazel eyes. She wears well-made clothing and several small tools hang from her belt. Estadh is caring for her son who is very ill from the apples.

Terna. [*Female Human Scholar, Neutral*] Terna has thin gray hair and light amber eyes, and slightly pointed ears. She wears expensive clothing and a feathered hat. Terna is unforgiving.

Anac. [*Male Human Farmer, Neutral*] Anac has a long face, with black hair and gray eyes. He wears well-made clothing and numerous rings. Anac compulsively plays with a copper ring. He is married to Terna.

Dicia. [*Female Human Artist, Good*] Dicia has matted white hair and green eyes, and a beaked nose. She wears expensive clothing and a gold amulet. Dicia compulsively mutters taunts and mockery.

Caemhe. [*Male Human Peasant, Neutral*] Caemhe is tall and slender, with black hair and green eyes. He wears worn clothing and riding boots. Caemhe has an animal companion, a tawny goat named Maelti.

Beti. [*Male Human Artist, Evil*] Beti has a square face, with matted brown hair and gray eyes. He wears fine clothing and a ragged cloak. Beti is slothful and harsh.

Volao. [*Female Human Priest, Good*] Volao is tall, with tangled silver hair and blue eyes. She wears modest garments and a sling of vials of mundane potions. She is exhausted from caring for the sick of Lortan.

Baili. [*Male Human Ex-Soldier, Evil*] Baili is short, with long black hair and blue eyes. He wears chain

mail beneath his clothes and wields a short sword. Baili is absent-minded, and always searching for a items that he believes others have stolen. No amount of discussion or coercion will convince him to go with the party.

Faisa. [*Female Human Scholar, Good*] Faisa has an angular face, with cropped copper hair and sharp hazel eyes. She wears modest garments and carries a fine stiletto.

Colma. [*Male Human Farmer, Neutral*] Colma has a long face, with thin golden hair and large brown eyes. He wears modest garments and an amulet of luminous crystal. He is married to Tuga.

Tuga. [*Female Human Blacksmith, Neutral*] Tuga has brown hair and soft gray eyes. She wears worn clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. She operates the only smithy in Lortan.

Dalla. [*Female Human Entertainer, Neutral.*] Dalla has black hair and blue eyes. She wears tailored clothing and several pouches hang from her belt. Dalla compulsively cracks her knuckles. She performs her music and tells stories weekly for the villagers. She only arrived in Lortan 3 years ago and is still considered an outsider to some extent.

Finda. [*Female Human Alchemist, Good*] Finda has a narrow face, with cropped copper hair and brown eyes. She wears modest garments and an amulet of luminous crystal. Finda is working day and night to provide medicines to Volao.

Voada. [*Female Human Peasant, Good*] Voada is noble in bearing, with silver hair and narrow blue eyes. She wears sturdy clothing and a red cloak. Voada has an animal companion, a copper snake named Sachu. She is married to Denba and Cene.

Denba. [*Male Human Weaver, Good*] Denba has a square face, with short red hair and dark brown eyes. He wears modest garments and a sling of tailoring tools. He is married to Voada and Cene.

Cene. [*Male Human Forester, Good*] Cene has red hair and blue eyes, and a thin nose. He wears well-made clothing and carries a long knife. He is married to Voada and Denba.

APPENDIX C: ILLUSTRATIONS FOR PLAYERS







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THE STORY OF THE SWAMPER

AFTER YEARS OF CHASING MYTHS AND RUMORS ABOUT THE SWAMPER, OUR RESEARCH TEAM FINALLY TRACKED THIS ENIGMATIC BEING TO HIS HOME. IN THE DARKEST REGIONS OF THE MYONE MIRE (SIMPLY CALLED "THE MIRE" BY THE LOCALS) WE FOUND HIS HUT, AND ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MANY EERIE AND ELDRITCH BEINGS IN THE WORLD, FEW ARE AS ODD AS THE SWAMPER.

AS HE DICTATED HIS STRANGE TALE, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN MUCH ABOUT HIM. DURING THE JOURNEY BACK TO CIVILIZATION, WE SPECULATED ABOUT THE SWAMPER'S TRUE ORIGINS. WAS HE AN OLD BARD GONE MAD? A WIZARD TURNED HERMIT? A DEMIGOD IN HIDING?

WHATEVER HIS ORIGINS, FEW COULD DENY THAT HIS WAY OF WEAVING STORIES AND ADVENTURES HELD HIS LISTENERS ENTHRALLED, AND LEFT THEM FEELING AS IF THEY HAD EXPERIENCED THE EVENTS PERSONALLY.

THIS IS THE FIRST ADVENTURE ADAPTED FROM ONE OF THE SWAMPER'S CURIOUS TALES, AND WE FEEL THAT WE HAVE DONE IT JUSTICE. IT CONCERNS THE PLIGHT OF A SMALL COMMUNITY, TAINTED FRUIT AND A POTENTIALLY GRAVE THREAT TO THE ENTIRE REGION.

STRANGE HARVEST IS DESIGNED FOR 4-6 CHARACTERS OF 2ND TO 4TH LEVEL, BUT CAN BE ADJUSTED TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR GROUP. IT IS SUITABLE FOR DMS AND PLAYERS OF ALL EXPERIENCE LEVELS, THOUGH THERE ARE NOTES INCLUDED TO AID NOVICES IN THEIR FIRST FORAY INTO FANTASY ROLE PLAYING. THE DOCUMENT INCLUDES DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS, MAPS, AND EVOCATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS TO HELP CREATE THE MOST IMMERSIVE ROLE PLAYING EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE.

CHALLENGE RATING 2

