

HARVEST FOR HERFOL

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Harvest for Herfol

An Adventure Module from the GM's Secret Stash



Presented by Quickphix

Harvest for Herfol

A 3 - 4 Hour Adventure for 3rd to 4th Level Characters

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“Weary men, what reap ye? – Golden corn for the stranger. What sow ye? – Human corpses that wait for the avenger. Fainting forms, hunger–stricken, what see you in the offing? Stately ships to bear our food away, amid the stranger’s scoffing. Pale mothers, wherefore weeping – would to God that we were dead; Our children swoon before us, and we cannot give them bread.”

Poem – The Famine Year

Summary

The small village of Herfol has been suffering from a severe crop shortfall. From one season to the next, the soil has turned sour, and grains have started to rot in their fields. Even the wisdom of the elders to use sea-shell powder to fertilize the fields failed to produce the desired results. Clearly, the lands had been cursed by some nefarious spirit. After all, none of the inhabitants, neither young nor old, had ever heard of such a rapid decline in soil quality. Yet, that left the question of who or what would wish them ill. Following months of feverish experimentation, the citizens of Herfol were no closer to finding the source of their misfortune. Soon the King’s taxes would be due and Herfol would not have the means to come up with the required amount. The resulting conscription of men to serve his Majesty as indentured servants would spell the end of this otherwise idyllic little village. In an emergency meeting, the elders decide to look for a more drastic solution. After hours of deliberations, they decide to pool the last of their resources into a reward. The village’s youngest men are sent out to spread the word and seek out anybody, who can save the village from starvation and ruin.

In this 2 – 4 hour adventure, a party of 3rd to 4th level characters take up the investigation into Herfol’s peculiar case. The little village and its inhabitants seem perfectly pleasant and innocuous. So, who or what is causing the soil to turn sour? Why doesn’t even magic seem to help the crops grow? Can the party bring back the “Harvest for Herfol”?

Premise – Investigators Wanted!

An intriguing posting has been circulating around Do-cram’s job boards for a few weeks now: “Investigators Wanted – the village of Herfol offers a 10GP per person reward to anyone able to purify its fields from a mysterious ailment. Free lodging provided to any investigators able to prove their expertise in the matter at hand”. The posting also contains a hastily drawn map, showing the best route to the hidden village of Herfol. As work for hire is rare in the region and good lodging hard to come by, the posting is a welcome sight to any party of wandering adventurers.

Herfol behind the Woods

To follow the request of the Herfolians, the party must pass through the forest of Naywin which surrounds the little village. The journey on foot is estimated to take about 3 days. While many folktales describe the beauty of this ancient woodland in various stories, they also share a common warning “Never leaver the path. If possible, leave the forest before dark”.

The GM can use the encounter table in Appendix I each night to roll for encounters. These encounters serve to add some flavour to the adventure but can be entirely skipped for a shorter adventure.

Small Hunters

According to the map, the party should be arriving in Herfol in just a few hours. Suddenly, they are alerted by

In your Campaign:

This adventure relies on the Blight monsters from D&D 5e, however, most other supernatural plant monsters could be used to a similar effect. Additionally, the entire region surrounding Herfol is closely tied to the religion of the church of Freymore. Hence, in campaigns with an established pantheon, some adjustments may need to be made.

an unusual sound. Next to a clearing, a teenage boy is shivering and sobbing in the thicket below a cliff. Between fearful stutters, he is able to give his name as Aonir from Herfol. He's desperately clinging onto something wrapped into a green linen jacket. With teary eyes he tells the party, that he was attacked by eagles while he was hunting in the forest. He promises to guide the party out of the forest if they safely escort him back to Herfol. Their discussion gets interrupted by an uncanny screech coming from above. Apparently, the eagles Aonir spoke of have found him. With a small yelp he tries to find cover under a nearby tree.

Aonir Fanke (Human Ranger)

A young hunter boy, lost in the woods with his bow missing. He's holding onto an eagle egg, which might break in combat. He will only defend himself if necessary. He knows he stands no chance against the enraged eagles.

Ability Scores

AC: 12 / HP: 8 / Speed 30 ft.

STR: 11 (+0) / DEX: 13 (1) / CON: 10 (+0)

INT: 11 (+0) / WIS: 9 (-1) / CHA: 9 (-1)

Traits

Local Explorer. Aonir is familiar with the forests surrounding Herfol. He can pass through its difficult terrain without suffering a speed penalty. He also gets advantage on stealth checks while in the woods.

Actions

Dagger (+3 to hit), melee attack, reach 5ft., one target. 1d4+1 slashing damage.

Mother Eagle (large beast)

A screeching shadow crashes through the tree's crown, its giant wings whipping up sharp gales of dust. Shortly after, it is joined by three smaller, feathered shadows. Together they briefly survey their surroundings before plunging at high speed towards the party.

Ability Scores

AC: 14 / HP: 32 / Speed 10 ft. flying 80ft. / CR 1

STR: 16 (+3) / DEX: 17 (+3) / CON: 13 (+1)

INT: 8 (-1) / WIS: 14 (+2) / CHA: 9 (-1)

Traits

Keen Sight. The Mother Eagle has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Teaching to Hunt. When the Mother Eagle hits a creature with a melee attack, she can use her bonus action to manoeuvre one of her hatchlings into a more advantageous position. She targets a hatchling who can see or hear her. The target can use its reaction to move up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks from the target of her attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The Mother Eagle makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its talons

Beak. (+5 to hit), melee attack, reach 5ft., one target. 1d6+3 slashing damage.

Talons. (+5 to hit), melee attack, reach 5ft., one target. 1d6+3 slashing damage.

Giant Eagle Hatchling (small beast)

These three Hatchlings may just be a few days old, but they are born predators, ready to defend their nest and siblings.

Ability Scores

AC: 12 / HP: 6 / Speed 10 ft. flying 60ft. / CR ¼

STR: 6 (-2) / DEX: 15 (+2) / CON: 10 (+0)

INT: 2 (-4) / WIS: 14 (+2) / CHA: 7 (-2)

Traits

Keen Sight. Giant Eagle Hatchling has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Flyby. The Giant Eagle Hatchling doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Actions

Talons. (+4 to hit), melee attack, reach 5ft., one target. 1d4+2 slashing damage.

How to run this encounter

Despite their fragility, the Hatchlings will fight much more ferociously than their mother. The mother will fight defensively, trying to keep her brood safe.

The Way to Herfol

If Aonir survives the fight, he will guide the party safely out of the forest and towards Herfol. He now trusts the party enough to reveal the following information:

- He stole an egg from the Giant Eagle's nest, which is why the mother was attacking them so fiercely.
- He is an apprentice under his father, the village's hunter.
- He knows the forest around Herfol well and can show them a secret location, his trophy hiding place near the village's sawmill.
- A lot of people are avoiding the forest, trade between the villages has thus almost dried out.
- The village has never suffered such a famine, all crops seem to fail, but the forest around it grows just fine.
- He warns the party that a lot of suspicion and rumours course through Herfol; its inhabitants feeling betrayed by their lord and the world in general.
- He mentions the name of his father, Mirald as well as the village mayor, Randford and Tharis, the innkeeper.

If the egg did not break during the fight, Aonir will act as a local guide even when arriving in Herfol and stay with the party all the time, unless told otherwise. He is eager to learn from the mysterious outsiders, which managed to fight off a giant eagle.

Designated Investigators

Aonir takes the players to the village's mayor, Randford Carding. Upon their arrival, they find him engaged in a discussion with some of the village's elders. They introduce themselves as Uron and Melf and suspiciously greet the party.

All around them, the party can see signs that the citizens of Herfol have been fighting starvation for a while now. Hollow faces with sunken eyes follow the party as they approach. The whole village exudes an aura of gloom, desperation, and death. Randford fills the party in about the ongoing problem with the infertile land, the recent fast growing of the forest and the solutions they already tried. Namely:

- Praying to Freymore, the God of the woods
- Using fertilizer, seashells, and different water sources for irrigation
- Using alchemical solutions from wandering vendors to reinvigorate the sour soil
- Using different crops and different fields to let the soil recover
- Chopping down trees for new fields, only to find these same trees regrowing a few days later.

All these experiments have yielded no positive results so far. The elders make a point to emphasize, that their harvest has never failed to such a degree as this year. Since the crops fail no matter where they plant it while the forests around them are in bloom, everyone suspects that they have been cursed. The villagers need to feed themselves and their livestock. Currently, they are trying to survive off the forest's wild fruits and fish from the lake, but these resources cannot last forever. Each member of the party will receive 10 gold pieces should they successfully find a solution to the crisis. In exchange, a little food and shelter is provided for the duration. "Please help us! We are counting on you! May Freymore protect you on your journey and may Savisa shine again to bring an ever-abundant harvest", Uron pleads as the talk ends.

The Nature of Herfol's Curse

The elders give the party permission to freely walk around Herfol and ask questions. They provide the party with a crude map of the village, with some rudimentary information scribbled next to some of the buildings (see Appendix II). Radford shows them to the inn.

From here on out, the players are free to investigate the failing harvests however they see fit. It is up to the GM to provide the players with enough false leads and good hints to point them in the right direction. To do that, they need to understand what is keeping the harvests from developing. The following events have transpired before the players arrived in Herfol:

- The local priest of Freymore, Ingerd Turmont, was sent here from the capital as a punishment for heretical research on trying to capture the essence of Freymore.
- He was welcomed by the community, as their previous priest had died some years prior.
- Ingerd rebuild the local church and helped the Herfolians with his herbalism expertise.
- One day, he received a package from the capital. It contained a fist-sized seedling and an anonymous letter. It proclaimed Ingerd's research on Freymore's essence to be correct: The Nature God's will could be made manifest in the world by caring for the enclosed seedling even through trying times.
- Although sceptical of this gift, Ingerd planted the seedling in his garden. The next morning it had already sprouted into a gnarled little tree. Another week after that, the forest surrounding Herfol had already grown noticeably denser. Shortly after, the first harvests began rotting in the fields.
- Ingerd, now fully convinced that the seedling was a test of faith sent by Freymore continued to care for it. After all, the now ever encroaching forest surely indicated that all the suffering was for a greater cause.
- In actuality, the seed is a necromantic experiment. It draws energy from all surrounding lifeforms and uses it to grow a network of barely-sentient blights – ambulatory plant

creatures with no other goal but to spread out even farther.

Unless the original seedling in the garden of Ingerd is killed, Herfol will some day be devoured by the blights, maybe even before its inhabitants starve to death. Unfortunately, the seedling itself looks perfectly harmless and the only person in Herfol knowing its true nature sees it as miracle. Hence, Ingerd will not tell anyone of the seedling and will defend it with his life.

The GM can use the following social encounters to guide the players through the mystery. To adjust the length of the adventure, each encounter apart from the last can be skipped to save time.

Helping the People of Herfol

While walking around the village, the party is observing the residents. Most of them are not used to outsiders and have resignation written all over their faces. The following characters are willing to talk to them. Each of them is willing to reveal some information and offer them a quest which will improve their current situation but will do nothing to solve the mystery surrounding the failing harvests.

Inn/Tavern:

Tharis Vistan (Elf)

Tharis owns the only tavern and inn, located close to Herfol's townhall. The dire situation has depleted her stock of alcoholic beverages - the major source of her income. She has no financial means to order supplies from outside of the village. She can give the players the following information:

- Mirald and Randford seem to get along quite well since a couple of months, that wasn't always the case (true)
- She does not believe that the growing forest is a source of concern, as it had always been a magical place with strange things happening (true)

- Some say they have seen trees move at night, but she thinks that's just the fear and starvation talking.
- Ingerd Turmont, the priest, is not very good at his job – often just rambling during his sermons, but at least he is a decent herbalist. He's an outsider, loves to drink and rant about how his life in the city was better than in Herfol. If the players succeed on a persuasion check (DC15) then she will reveal that he drunkenly told her about Freymore wanting to test Herfol, but she can't remember much more.
- Tharis will let the party stay at the Inn for the duration of the quest. On the upper floor of the building are two rooms with bunkbeds and lockable doors.

Should the players earn her trust, she will ask them for a favour. In the very back of her wine cellar is a still unopened barrel of rye whisky. However, the cellar is pitch-black and infested with an aggressive Swarm of Rats. If the players could get the barrel (161.5 pounds) out of the cellar, she could raise the general morale in the village greatly – even if just for a while.

Fishers' Hut:

Uron Hartol (Human)

Uron is a village elder and owner of the fishers' hut. He usually does not talk a lot. He has been providing fish to the villagers, but he knows that the lake will need to recover soon if it is supposed to still carry life next year. He hasn't told this to anyone in the village as he does not want to scare the residents any further. He will come forward with the truth if a player performs a successful nature check on the lake (DC 15).

Something or someone also has been destroying his boat and repeatedly breaking his crab-traps. He is not willing to point any fingers, as he does not wish to escalate the tensions in the village any further. If the players chose to help finding the culprit, they will learn, that a lost merrow lives in the lake. It has been destroying

Hartol's equipment. If the players kill him, the village will have some more fish for the next days.

Farm:

Melf & Irda Vorhold (Human)

Melf is one of the village elders and a life-long farmer. He has been desperately searching for a solution to counteract the harvest failures. The ordeal has financially ruined him and many other villagers who believed in him and offered their own savings in support. Now his stocks are empty, most of his cattle looks starved and many of the people in Herfol blame him and his family for failing to find a solution.

Irda is a well-known cook in the village. She is grief-stricken and blames herself for not being able to provide food for the village. She is living as a shut-in to avoid any interaction with the other villagers.

The couple wants to "apologize" to the rest of the village by gifting them a small sugar-beet treat at the church's next sermon, but the herbs vital for its flavour only grow in the woods. If the players offer to retrieve it, they must venture into the woods. Roll on the encounter table in Appendix I. Bringing the herb back will improve the Vorhold's standing in Herfol.

Church and the house next to it:

Ingerd Turmont (Gnome)

Local herbalist and priest of the church of Freymore. He is willing to tell his name and occupation. When asked about plants he will ramble enthusiastically about his garden and the different species he has gathered. He will avoid encounters with the party as much as possible and his answers will be short. Player can make an intimidation or persuasion check (DC 15) to have him reveal the following

- He was stationed in this village as a punishment by the church, as he lived lavishly in the capital (false).

- He believes the famine is a test from Freymore (true) and will only end, if there are no non-believers left in the village (false – but he believes it)

He also asks the players for a favour: he believes to have created a serum from the wood's mushrooms which can dull hunger-pains. However, he is afraid to test it on himself or the villagers. If the players volunteer to try the serum, they will indeed find their hunger lessened, but will also experience a side effect determined by rolling on the wild magic surge table. As a reward, they will receive 1d6 bottles of the serum for their trouble – the side-effect will be the one initially rolled on the table for each of the bottles.

Townhall:

Randford Carding (Human)

Mayor of the village, whose physique suggests that he is not suffering from the ongoing starvation as much as his subjects. He can reveal the following information to the players

- He can provide the party with the names and location of all the important residents.
- He was just talking to Estella Hartog, wife of Barin, the woodworker. Barin seems to be missing since yesterday but that's not really alarming as it has happened before. "Considering his wife's reaction, I would also hide," he says with a knowing smile.
- If asked, why he doesn't look starved, he will answer evasively. "Well, it's in my blood, I come from a long and strong lineage of rangers." The party can make an insight check (DC 12) to see if he's telling the truth. If successful he will beat around the bush to finally reveal to the party that he has a secret agreement with Mirald Fanke, who is illegally hunting for food in the forest. By the decree of the lord, all wild animals belong to his Majesty and the punishment for ignoring this law is forced labour.

He asks the players to help finding Barin Hartog, as he himself dares not to enter the forest (see subsequent chapter for quest description).

Smith:

Ferin Ingor (Dwarf):

The smith and dentist of Herfol. He appears to be hard to talk to as he does not trust strangers.

- His cousin Barin had been missing since yesterday. "He told me he forgot something at the sawmill that was important to him." He can't remember what it was
- He doesn't want to look for him in the woods. "The forest is cursed, no way am I going in, that's dryad territory. Also, I have an appointment today I can't look for that fool."

His forge also went cold a few days ago – his large leather bellows broke. He has neither the time nor the materials to fix it. If the players find the necessary wood and cured leather it could be fixed, either with a DC15 survival check or a DC12 check with a fitting tool proficiency (e.g. carpenter's tools). Fixing the bellow will allow Ferin to fix the villagers' broken farming and woodworking equipment, greatly increasing morale.

Hartog's Woodshop:

Estella Hartog (Dwarf):

Wife of the missing woodworker Barin. She is sobbing frequently. "He's usually so punctual. Oh Freymore, please let my husband be okay. I am not ready for a life as widow. Especially not now." She can reveal the following information

- Her husband left yesterday at noon, evasively telling to grab something at the sawmill
- The sawmill is outside of the village, close to a small river. However, with the forest growing at the rate it has been, it is a bit tricky to locate.

She asks the players to help finding her husband, (see subsequent chapter for quest description).

Hunters Hut:

Mirald Fanke (Human):

Self-proclaimed best (and only) hunter in Herfol. He will brag about his hunting achievements by pointing towards the many trophies on his wall. He is not even hiding the fact that he's been poaching in the forest. "I'm the only reason why Herfol still exists!"

The party can request his assistance to find the way to the sawmill. He will resist this request unless the party pays him 10 gold. You can make a persuasion check (DC 15, DC -5 if you argue that you saved his son). Otherwise, you can make an intimidation check (DC 5), threatening to reveal his illegal hunting activities to the authorities.

He also asks the players if they would be willing to return to the woods and hunt for another Giant Eagle (see above), as just one of their eggs is enough to feed a family for a day. If the players succeed, the village will have enough food for the coming week.

Fierce Forest Encounters

If the party decides to search for Barin, they can either ask Mirald or his Son Aonir, to guide them. This encounter should be presented to players last, as it moves them closer to the ending of the adventure.

Magical Darkness

After a prolonged walk through the forest, the woods grow increasingly denser, dimming the sunlight. Each player makes a survival check DC 12 – if they fail it, they gain one level of exhaustion. The party's guide seems to be lost as well and tells them, that they need to set-up camp. Roll on the encounter table in Appendix I. After the encounter and a short rest, the party is ready to move on.

The Sawmill

Suddenly, muffled screams can be heard through the thicket. Mirald immediately flees the scene, Aonir tells the party that he will wait here. Now the party is left without a guide, and they have little choices beside moving deeper into the forest towards the source of the screams. After struggling through the thick underwood, an overgrown house is visible.

It is without a doubt Barin's sawmill, but the forest has reclaimed almost the entire complex (see Appendix IV). Vines hang from the roof; shrubs cover almost every path, and the sun is still largely blocked out by the treetops. There is no sign of Barin. A DC 12 perception or survival can make out tracks of blood leading a bit further to the west, towards an old well. There, the players find a figure with its back propped against the rim of the well. He looks beaten, blood slowly running down his face, barely alive.

"Don't come near me, leave the forest immediately! It's dangerous!" he stutters before the sound of whipcrack silences him. Roll for initiative:

Twig Blight (small plant)

Previously hidden in the ground, three of these vile creatures have gathered around Barin Hartog, hungry for his blood. Barin has only 5HP left – they will knock him unconscious and try to kill him unless the players manage to interfere in time.

Vine Blight (medium plant)

Awoken by the screams of Barin, the vines covering the sawmill's roof come to life and slowly start moving towards the party. They aim to surprise the players and catch them in a pincer-attack.

Just in Time

If the players manage to beat the Blights back, Mirald or Aonir will appear with a small potion of healing,

trying to revive Barin. They urge the players to hurry back to Herfol, as Ingerd would be able to save Barin.

In the middle of the night, Ingerd is awakened by a group of exhausted looking adventurers, the badly wounded Barin amongst them. With a short glance at his wounds, Ingerd tells the party that there's nothing he can do for Barin. But upon a second look at the injuries, realizing that they were plant made, he suddenly changes his mind and welcomes the party into his house. He directs them to put the injured Barin in his bed as he scrambles around in his home to find potions. Whilst treating the patient he will inquire about all that happened in the forest. He is obsessed with every detail the party can give them about the creatures they have fought of and will repeatedly ask questions relating their physique, attacks, smells, etc.

When satisfied with the information given by the player, he tells them to leave the injured man with him overnight. On their way out, a DC 10 perception check will reveal, that even though basic treatment has been provided, Ingerd is still taking notes while inspecting the different wounds. His expression is clearly excited, instead of concerned. Now it's up to the players, either they go to the inn and sleep, or they make a quick stop at the smith's house to tell him the good news about his cousin. If they go to Ferin, he will be overjoyed tells them, they will get a reward tomorrow.

The Smell of Defeat

The next day, Ferin awaits the party in the inn with his reward. "Thanks for saving my cousin. His condition is not improving though" he says with a grim look on his face. "I think our so-called healer is out of his wits. Maybe you can assist in some way to help Barin recover?"

Whether the players visit Ingerd or not, they will soon notice a weird smell coming from his house. A successful DC 12 Perception check will reveal that it is the smell of compost mixed with the rot of flesh. Knocking on the door will prompt Ingerd to say: "Go away, I am busy" The door is locked and the window shutters are closed all around the house. To open the front door roll players

may roll to pick the lock with appropriate tools (DC 15) or just kick the door in with brute strength (DC 16). If the players previously aided other inhabitants of Herfol, they might also ask them for a second key to Ingerd's house.

Confronting Ingerd

Ingerd is sitting at a desk, studying some ancient looking religious texts (see Appendix V). He is surprised at your tenacity, forcing your way into his house. Barin lies on the eating table in the middle of a slightly glowing magic circle. He is almost completely covered in vines and other plant material that seems to be moving in an otherworldly rhythm.

"What the hell are you doing? You are disturbing a very important treatment! I am so close to applying the essence of Freymore to a living host. The beginning of a symbiotic, divine race is close. Plants and Humanoids will coexist in each other, much stronger than each one alone. Freymore's children will no longer be forced to starve – they will receive all they need directly from him! It's so close, watch my creation come to live!"

Roll for initiative.

Ingerd Tumont (Gnome Druid)

The banished priest turned manic botanist. He devoted his life to serve Freymore and will see this final ritual through – no matter the cost. With a snip of his finger a number of Vine Blights equal to the number of players grow out of his forearms and back.

Ability Scores

AC: 11 / HP: 24 / Speed 25 ft.

STR: 8 (-1) / DEX: 12 (+1) / CON: 14 (+2)

INT: 15 (+2) / WIS: 15 (+2) / CHA: 12 (+1)

Traits

Wild Shape. As an action, Ingerd can magically assume the shape of a beast. He can stay in beast shape for 1 hours before reverting to his normal form (or as a

bonus action earlier or if he falls unconscious, drops to 0 hit points, or dies)

Early Symbiote. As long as Ingerd is connected to at least one of the Vine Blights, all damage dealt to him is dealt to the Vine Blights instead. A connection is only severed once a Vine Blight dies.

Actions

Ingerd is druidic spellcaster – his spell attack is +4 and his spell save DC is 12. He can cast the following spells:

Cantrips. Poison Spray, Resistance,

Level 1 (4 Slots) Absorb Elements, Entangle

Level 2 (3 Slots) Misty Step, Spike Growth, Spider Climb

How to run this encounter

Ingerd will use defensive spells like entangle and spike growth to stay out of the players way, while his Vine Blights try to fight the party off. After round 3 he will use misty step to teleport into the garden. There he will climb the gnarled tree which sprung from the mysterious seedling, screaming that nobody will hurt Freymore's Essence. The fight can only end once Ingerd has been incapacitated. Otherwise, he will continue to throw cantrips in the players direction.

Fanatic's End

After the fight, the players are free to rummage through Ingerd's belonging. In his notes, Ingerd details the effects of the seedling on the harvest as well as his believe, that removing the seedling will probably kill it. The tree in the backyard is revealed to be the seedling. A DC 12 investigation check might also reveal the following pieces of information:

- The seedling which Ingerd called the Essence of Freymore, came from an unknown person in the capital. Judging by the letter, a highly educated person.
- Naturally, there is a connection to the church of Freymore, as the envelope enclosed in the

package bears the church's seal. A religion check (DC 15) will reveal that the seal belongs to a person with a high position in the church's hierarchy.

- The seedling works in an interesting way, efficiently draining all other living plants with their magic and in return boosting the growth of vines, certain trees, undergrowth, and weeds.
- The seed does not respond well to fire and ice

One thing becomes clear: chopping down the seedling might end Herfol's Harvest problems.

Rewards

Depending on which villager quests the players completed, they might gain additional favours from the Herfolians – e.g., the smith creating something custom-made for them or the Vorholds brewing a potion for them.

Barin recovers from his injuries thanks to the players heroic deeds. Despite this, Randford is not too eager to hand out the full reward to the party, but the other villagers pressure him.

After the adventure in the woods, Mirald was never seen again. His son found a note reading; "I went hunting in a new spot". Judging from the things missing from the house, he must have fled the village. Hence, Aonir asks the players if he could accompany them on their journey.

What's next?

As the party is leaving, Tharis mentions, that the church of Freymore is currently recruiting new apostles to spread the word of the forest God around the continent and that this expansion worries him. After all, one question surrounding Ingerd and the seedling lingers: who has sent him the seedling in the first place? And why?



Appendix I – Wood Encounter Table

#	Encounter
1	The party's campfire is suddenly extinguished. After a moment of silence, a small, doll-like figure made from embers climbs out of the ashes. It happily waves to the players and points towards some nearby firewood while making a begging gesture. If the players feed it, it will grow larger. If they keep indulging it, it will then point towards one of them. It then splits in two and the party are attacked by a Magma Mephit and a Smoke Mephit. If they stop feeding it, it will run into the woods.
2	Near the players' camp 1d20 mushrooms begin to glow as soon as night breaks. They look delicious. Each time one of these mushrooms is eaten, the GM rolls on the wild magic surge table to determine what effect it has. The lose their glow and their magical properties about 10 minutes after being picked.
3	While camping, the players hear the sound of hooves drawing nearer. However, no light or figure can be seen on the wooden path. It somehow keeps coming closer, without ever arriving. The entire night. If the players still decide to sleep through the night, they will awaken to all their mounts being gone without a trace. Any person staying awake may avoid this, but at the cost of gaining one level of exhaustion. With the light of dawn, the sound of hooves suddenly vanishes.
4	The players are being stalked by a giant spider. If any of the players stray from the path or if the party sets up camp, they will be attacked. If undiscovered until then, the giant spider gets to use its Web ability in a bonus round.
5	Near the players' camp, one of them discovers a cup carved out of wood which someone has hung on branch nearby. Below there is a crude drawing of a hand bleeding into the cup, a drawing of a sun, a drawing of a moon and then the drawing of a happy face. If the players place a few drops of blood within the cup, it will magically merge with the tree and begin to slightly hum. The next morning, it is filled with a silvery liquid. Drinking it grants +2 to max HP to the player drinking it. Afterwards the cup disappears.
6	The party comes across a line in the road. As soon as they cross it, they can hear the growling of several creatures following them. Yet, each time they move closer to the source, the sound vanishes and reappears somewhere else. This phenomenon continues until nightfall when the growling suddenly stops. As soon as any of the players let their guard down, they are attacked by a number of blink dogs equal to 1.5 times their own number.
7	Thick fog rolls in as soon as the sun sinks below the horizon. A disquieting whisper grows ever closer and humanoid shapes emerge from the woods. The players are attacked by a number of shades equal to their own number. With all of them defeated, the fog suddenly lifts.
8	The players need to cross an ice-cold river. Just swimming across requires a DC 16 Constitution saving throw which results in one level of exhaustion upon failure.
9	The players come across a small cabin. The owner, a friendly wood-gnome offers them food, drink, and a place to sleep. In exchange, he wants to hear the darkest secret of each of the players. He will cast zone of truth to ensure, that no one is cheating. If the players at any point refuse or get hostile, the gnome will cast as spell and the entire cabin vanishes.
10	One of the players triggers some sort of hunting trap and is hoisted up 40 feet into the air by their feet. They are dangling from a thick rope, way up in a treetop.
11	The players notice a large ditch filled with wooden stakes. A skeleton wearing leather armor and carrying a backpack is impaled upon them. A shimmering light (a Will-o-Wisp) is hovering above the corpse. If the players want to get to the backpack, they need to find a safe way down into the ditch and fight-off the will-o-wisp guarding the corpse.



12	The players have carelessly stumbled in a small swamp. The terrain is difficult to traverse, the buzzing insects are stinging them non-stop, and the gas is making them dizzy. Suddenly, they are alarmed by a large explosion somewhere ahead of them. A goblin is tossing burning logs into the swamp, igniting the gas, and causing it to explode. It has not seen the players yet, but judging by its gleeful malice, it will not hesitate to blow them up as well.
13	A yelp alarms the players just in time to hold at the edge of clearing. A large pack of Dire Wolves have hunted down a giant stag and are fighting over their kill. The smaller members of the pack still look pretty hungry and would definitely attack the players should they notice their presence.
14	A troop of hunters carrying two large deer on their back cross the players' path. They are not from Herfol but they are aware, that poaching is forbidden. They will draw their weapons and attack, unless the players can find a diplomatic solution (i.e., convince them, that they will not report their poaching to the local lord).
15	The moon-light suddenly turns red and the animal-noises around them quiet down completely. Suddenly, mice, squirrels, insects, and other woodland creatures begin attacking the players without any regard for their own life. After a minute, the moon's light returns to its normal paleness and the attack stops.
16	The party is approached by a wild looking Goblin. It carries a large bag and introduces itself as Bram the Trader. It offers the players completely useless stuff (e.g., a flat rock, dried wolf droppings, a pretty feather, some moss-covered bark, etc.) at completely horrendous prices (several gold pieces). If asked why these obviously useless goods should be worth so much, Bram just winks and says, that they are worth far more than they appear. Bram will keep following the players unless they buy something or attack it. However, no matter what they buy, it is completely worthless, despite Bram's mysterious hints.
17	A young dryad suddenly steps out of a nearby tree and happily waves the players towards her. She has never seen other humanoids before and wants to know what they are. She offers each player a good berry in exchange for one of their possessions or an interesting story.
18	The stone walls of a cottage are still clearly visible amongst the trees. The roof has caved inwards and through the cracks intact furniture can still be seen. Upon closer inspection, the inside of the cottage is suspiciously clean. This is because of the gray-oozes dripping out of every wall of the cottage and slithering towards the players.
19	One of the players feels a piercing pain in their foot and must pass a DC 12 dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, they see a small snake slithering away in the underbrush – they are poisoned for 1d6 hours. If they fail their saving throw, they are additionally so surprised, that they slip and hit their head for an additional 2d6 bludgeoning damage.
20	The players notice a ring of mushrooms growing on their path. Suddenly, a pixie appears in its middle. She wants the players to entertain her by answering her riddle. If they answer correctly, she will reward them handsomely. If they fail, they would still be free to go. A DC 12 Insight check might reveal the sincerity of the offer. Her riddle is: "Why would I ask you a question about pigs?" – The answer is: "Because I wouldn't want you to get boar-ed". Should the players provide this or a similar pun as an answer, the pixie will give them a jar of restorative ointment (or "oinkment" as she calls it). If the players guess wrong or take too long to answer, she will cast polymorph on one of them before disappearing. Effectively turning said player into a boar for 1h

Appendix II – Fight in the Woods



Legend

1. The Giant Eagle's nest, suspended about 40ft. above ground.
2. Aonir's hiding place – the cliff provides enough cover for a child to not be seen from the air.
3. The path back to Docram, about a two day's journey on foot.
4. The path to Herfol, a few hours journey on foot.

Appendix III – Map of Herfol



Legend

1. Church of Freymore
2. Cliffside Inn
3. Herfol Townhall
4. Hunter Fanke's House
5. Smithy
6. Ingerd's House
7. Hartog's House
8. Vorhold Farmstead
9. Carding's Hut

Appendix IV – Sawmill Map



Legend

1. Path back to Herfol
2. Abandoned campsite. Someone hastily tried to start a fire and spilled woodchips and tar everywhere.
3. The sawmill. While the building itself looks to be fairly new, it and its surroundings are completely overgrown with vines and other plant life.
4. The old well, a 20ft. shaft leading down into a stream of icy cold water.

Appendix V – Ingerd’s House



Legend

1. Charming living room with a hot stove. The shelves are filled with partially dried leaves and alchemical agents. A writing desk on the south wall is covered in medical texts and religious scripture.
2. Washing room, filled to the brim with dirty laundry and soapy water.
3. Surprisingly sparse sleeping quarter, with a window looking out into the garden.
4. Ingerd's herb garden. The plants look sickly but are clearly still alive. The gnarly tree is the seedling Ingerd is protecting.