

DAY OF THE SWINE

A one-page scenario by Heron Prior



The village of Hogwallow appears on no map. No signpost points its way. Its squalid shanties lie hidden deep within the forest, and for good reason. Its people are Swinefolk – crude, shape-shifting pig men, who delight in kidnapping travelers from the main road. Those they take are never seen again, either sold into slavery, eaten, or sacrificed to Squee'la, Demon Goddess of Swine.

The party might come to Hogwallow investigating disappearances, pursuing would-be kidnapers, or by sheer chance. It is a chaotic, ramshackle place, filled with the squeals of hogs and the crass bellows of the Swinefolk.

The villagers pose as human, welcoming visitors with cheerful curiosity. They apologize for their lack of an inn, but offer the use of an empty shack. Any business or serious questions must await the return of the village leader, Boss Grogg, who is “away” for several days (actually in a nearby cave, observing religious rites).

Visitors are free to wander, but Swinefolk in animal form keep a close eye on their movements. If the party is still in the village upon Grogg's return, he invites them to a feast... to be drugged and ambushed at the first opportunity.

Swinefolk do little work. The youngest tend a few meager crops, but the rest fill their days with wrestling, drinking, and vulgar antics. If questioned, they play dumb or make crude jokes. In combat, Swinefolk take a hybrid man-hog form, but prefer weapons to their natural attacks. They fight as bandits (but with lycanthropic immunities). If wounded, they shape-shift, attempting to hide amongst the pigs.

The Wallow – scores of hogs roam the village, congregating in a vast, noisy mud-pit. Ten are Swinefolk children, who live as pigs until adolescence. 1d6 are adults, frolicking in animal form.

Covered Wagons – Used for “hunting” on the main road. Tarps hide shackles, cudgels, and other tools of the slaver's trade.

Shanties – Reeking, filthy shacks house roughly forty Swinefolk. Each has a few coins and at least one weapon hidden away.

Mungillion the Magnificent – a rat-toothed hedge-wizard lives in this gaudy caravan. Mungillion tutors Boss Grogg in spell-craft (with little success), but spends more time dallying with a Swinefolk widow. He is crafty, and loyal only to himself, but too afraid to betray the Swinefolk. Hidden in the rafters are a book of simple spells, several packets of wolfsbane and a silver dagger (insurance).

Ringworm's Pub – A family of Mongrelmen serves up a caustic moonshine of skunk cabbage and toadstools in this old barn. Their many children are shameless pickpockets, and nearly impossible to grab ahold of; Swinefolk simply kick them aside. The family turns a blind eye to the affairs of the village.

Barbarian Slavers – five slave-traders from the fierce woodland tribes stay here, awaiting Boss Grogg's return. They spend their days drinking and sparring, and are eager for new sport. Their leader, Grizzletooth, carries *The Goathammer* - a two-handed sledge granting sure-footedness and doubled move speed 1/day, but the user appears goat-legged for the duration. The men are greedy and mercenary, but don't realize the villagers aren't human.

The All-Seeing Owl – A young druid in owl form spies on the village from atop a crag. His elders have yet to pass judgment on the Swinefolk, but the druid, Barris, might reveal himself or offer minor aid to a sympathetic party.

Smokehouse – mostly holds small game, but a search reveals human bones.

Grogg's House – a crumbling farmhouse, littered with trash.

Grogg keeps a room upstairs, guarded by a pet boar. The key to the stables hangs on a peg, while a reeking mattress hides a scroll of two simple spells and *The Song of the Sow* – a blasphemous hymn to Squee'la which inflicts the reader with gluttony.

Old Stables – The main entrance is crossbow-trapped. A locked side door reveals 2d4 shackled prisoners, awaiting sale (or worse). Their jailor, a raven-headed Forest Harpy named Gertha, sits in the rafters. Her croaking “song” induces a trance-like state, keeping the prisoners docile. She warns intruders away, but is hesitant to fight. Gertha is paid in moonshine, and the floor is littered with empty jugs. If offered drink, she guzzles it greedily, then flies away to sleep it off.

Hidden Archers – six pig-faced orcs of the Redsnout tribe watch from beneath a shelter of woven branches, ready to rain arrows down on the trail below. The Redsnouts are devotees of the Demon Sow, and often come to buy slaves or share in religious rites. Two carry wrapped bundles of silver arrows, “just in case”.

Cavern of the Black Sow – Odd fetishes and symbols adorn this candlelit cavern. Unless alerted, Boss Grogg and two Redsnout shamans sit in meditation around the *Pit of Whispers*, fasting until the new moon. In combat, Grogg assumes a centaur-like form with jutting tusks and the lower body of a massive hog (treat as a wereboar). At the back of the cave, a basalt idol of Squee'la hides a strongbox with minor jewelry and a large cache of coins.

Pit of Whispers – faint voices and a chill wind emerge from this bottomless cleft. This is a site of unholy power. Anyone listening too closely risks being cursed, turning slowly towards chaos and evil. After 1 month, the victim becomes one of the Swinefolk.