Session 8. Dusk

- Harlan's funeral

Harlan's funeral

Guru looks into the Wolves' Den and sees animal bones but also a ripped and torn haversack. In it is a field kit containing parchment, vials and an inscribers kit.

We take two vials of blood from the Wolves and determine the following will be needed to craft a Frost Mane Cloak:

- Thick Fur X 6
- Tough Hide X 2
- Animal Fat X 2
- Bone Fragments X 2
- Monster Fang X 2 to make Decorative Clasps
- Linen Thread X 2 spools
- Leather Straps X 2

We return to Moonrest which is sombre in the dusk. Harlan's cloak, gloves and axe lie on a bier. Many of the villagers are gathered, there's no order and folk stand where they wish. Shrine Keeper Torv slowly tolls the bell three times. As the final note fades into the dusk Elder Saelin steps forward to speak the eulogy for Harlan Oakheart, telling tales of his bravery and strong sense of duty. Tala steps forward carrying a bundle. She opens it to reveal a carved seabird which Harlan made for her. She places it lovingly on the bier as Torv chants.

We stand together a s a group and Torv turns to us. He gives all an unlit candle and asks if we will place our candles by the memorial. As one we all place a candle on the bier and say a few words in memory of Harlan.

Bran removes his Moonrest Broach and adds it to Harlan's cloak. The remaining members of the watch salute their comrade. At this point all the villagers light candles and leave them to burn through the night.

The villagers remain by the funeral bier Torv takes Harlan's memorial candle and lights a lantern made of dark iron and polished oak. He then lights three lanterns for those who have not yet returned. The lanterns are old, and each bears a plaque showing the names of the three missing. Torv speaks softly and places a hand on each of the lanterns in turn reminding people to bring the missing home.

Elder Saelin addresses the crowd telling them that hope still remains.

The vigil complete, the villagers return to their homes. talking quietly amongst themselves. Torv watches them leave, turns to us and says "There is one last duty if you have the strength. Will you walk with me, please?" He leads us through a narrow path until we reach the Elders' Long House. Outside is now fully dark as he asks us into the building. He moves a heavy rug and opens a broad hatch, showing us steps leading down into a dark basement smelling of resin and old oak. Massive beams holding up the roof have names carved into them. Aethswold and Aethlewynn realise the

names are all equal in status; the oldest look to have been here for centuries. Torv says that wood lives forever if cared for, but stone breaks and books burn.

A large, well-cared for inscription reads "The Brunswick Boys". Torv says "They were travellers, heroes to some, troublemakers to others".

Another reads "Merrick Trugust" Torv smiles as he says "He was a friend to Moonrest. Spent most of his life down here as he couldn't stop asking questions". Then starts to carve a new name - Harlan Oakheart.

He asks what mark we wish to leave. Aethswold carves a raven. Aethlewynn asks to wait as she still has to find out who she is. Guru carves a cat. Riteable leaves a print. We choose wings and a halo for Salus and suggest Sebastien would choose a fish.

As we leave Torv says most think the village is build from wood and stone, but it's built from the people who chose to stay and give all. Salus turns to look at the ledger seeing that it is old and well handled; containing different peoples' handwriting and different writing styles. She notices the entries become more detailed as we get closer to the present day, and that although the handwriting changes the style doesn't. It is as though each Elder now writes alongside the long dead.

Aethlewynn looks for clues to her parents in the ledger and finds an entry made eighteen years ago. Although she finds two names she is unsure if they are her parents as she has been lead to believe she is seventeen:

1. **Aelira Vael** , Elf . Traveller in Winter. Taken by fever after arriving from the Southern Seas. Remembered for a quiet voice, a silver pendant and asking too many questions about the old paths. No family recorded.
2. **Caelith Vael**, Elf. Companion of Aelira. Depated Moonrest three days after her death destination unknown. No memorial carving made.

As the sun rises on a new day life returns to Moonrest once more.

Bran hurries to find us and asks us to bring all the foraged items to Yselle at the Longhouse. Aethlewynn heads there as quickly as she can. Yselle is in the loft where she has covered all available surfaces with notes, samples and containers.

As we hand over all the items we have gathered, she says, "It'll take as long as it takes" and she opens a new notebook. Aethlewynn offers to help and looks downcast when Yselle tells her that she works better alone and that we should rest and take some time for ourselves.

We leave and Bran closes the door after us and saying "She'll be like that for days now".

Aethlewynn is at a loose end and seeks out Tala. She finds her helping Mara at the Tavern. Tala tells Aethlewynn that she is alright and nothing odd has happened to her since she returned from the forest. Aethlewynn asks Mara for work, but there is none. Mara does offer us free food and gives Aethlewynn six vials. Salus says Aethlewynn can use her house for crafting.

As we're in the Tavern a young lady comes in and nods to Aethswold who recognises the Graveskeeper, Lysa Venn. She takes a seat by herself and Aethswold goes to join her. Lysa tells him that she's on to something and may have work for us in a few days.

Guru trades the stone he collected and the kettle with Garran, who would be willing to trade them for a blacksmith's kit.

To be continued.