Surrounding forest of Morrisville – Unseen dangers for all

The northeast is a breeding ground for urban legends and cryptids. Even before the calamity there have been stories of creatures that stalk and hunt people with paranormal abilities. Many survivors still hold these fears and avoid venturing too far into the woods. Most stories of cryptids post-calamity can be chalked up to other survivors since many must forage and hunt it is far more common to encounter another human. To avoid the possible threat, some survivors will create camouflage and calls that resembles creatures of local myth to scare away ignorant survivors. Even the local military forces have caught onto the occurrence and nicknamed a specialized task force after a local legend.

More present threats within the woods are hidden highwaymen and raider camps. The physical concealment of the trees and brush as well as the reluctance of many survivors to enter the woods, offers a relatively safe and clandestine hideout location. Many of these camps assume a somewhat consistent layout, featuring a central (typically underground) fireplace, handmade hunting shelters, hidden storage areas and are surrounded by noisemaking traps. These traps can be anything from empty cans on wire to landmines however they usually fall in the middle technologically speaking. Snares, pitfalls, bear traps and falling logs or sharpened tree limbs are the most often seen (and experienced).

Highwaymen rarely seriously harm victims and almost never rob someone close to their camp. They have been known to take prisoners in the absence of supplies however in these situations it is not typically known what happens to these prisoners, whether they are killed and dumped or cannibalized. Highwaymen tend to be small, nomadic groups but will settle down in an area until their patterns start to become known to survivors. The military presence in Morrisville rarely conducts raids against highwaymen camps. However, if a camp is discovered and is disrupting the local survivors, a small task force may be dispatched to chase out the group.

There have been some reports from both the military and survivors of highwaymen camps that have been found slaughtered. Many of the bodies found will have large claw marks or shattered limbs. There have even been a few cases where highwaymen were found in states of utter delusion of phantoms and a single report of a group of four highwaymen so bloated with tumors that some limbs and facial features where twice their size. While these cases do certainly stand out, many of them are simply tales that survivors tell around the campfire and are to be taken with a grain of salt.

The main destabilizing force in Morrisville are raiders, these groups are highly disruptive and range in size from scouting outposts to semi large settlements which can hold more than 50 to 100 people. To prevent open conflict, locally based soldiers conduct frequent and near ruthless raids on any encampments that pop up in the nearby areas surrounding Morrisville, as well as hosting many scouting operations.

While smaller raider camps can be mistaken for highwaymen camps, they serve a different function. Most raider camps are built to be permanent and the smaller camps in particular serve to scout the possible hostility of the region. Once a camp is deemed “safe” a full-scale settlement is properly built. These settlements have a large range of location diversity and raiders are not afraid to make a brand-new settlement in the middle of nowhere, however they typically prefer pre-existing buildings if it can be helped. The main goal of raiders is to expand and occupy their land as well as subjugating all other people who inhabit it.