

D1

For Use with the  
OnceWas Campaign

# Dungeon Module D1

## Goats, Goblins, and the Sweetberry Heist

An adventure for level 1 Characters



**Disaster has struck the peaceful halfling village of Sweetberry!**

In the dead of night, goblins on dire goats stormed the town, pillaging every storehouse and barn of its prized pipeleaf harvest—cartloads of carefully aged, magically cured leaf. The goblins cackled all the way into the Worros Woods, leaving behind hoofprints, broken barrels, and dozens of distraught halflings puffing empty pipes in despair.

The annual Sweetberry Harvest Festival is fast approaching, but trouble brews when all of the Sweetberry pipeleaf goes missing from the village's storehouses. The adventurers must track down the goblin thieves, navigate a web of local rivalries, and recover the stolen Sweetberry tobacco before the festival begins, ensuring that Sweetberry can celebrate its beloved tradition.





# Goats, Goblins, and the Sweetberry Heist

A OnceWas Fantasy Adventure  
For 4-6 Characters of 1st Level  
*Compatible with the OnceWas Core Rule Book*

By Jack Frank

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# Introduction

## Welcome to the Wistful World of OnceWas

Goats, Goblins, and the Sweetberry Heist is a lighthearted introduction to the OnceWas world, perfect for beginning adventurers. This module is designed for The OnceWas Core Rule Book—a streamlined tabletop RPG system built on the elegant principle that every action revolves around rolling high on a d20—but can be easily adapted to nearly any fantasy RPG system.

Whether you prefer OnceWas's unified mechanics, classic OSR rules, modern d20 systems, or your own homebrew creation, the adventure framework translates smoothly. Monster stats, DCs, and treasure values can be converted in minutes, letting you focus on what matters: telling an unforgettable story.

A PDF of the Core Rule Book can be downloaded free at [oncewasrpg.com](http://oncewasrpg.com).

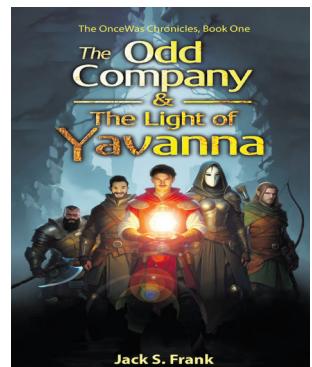
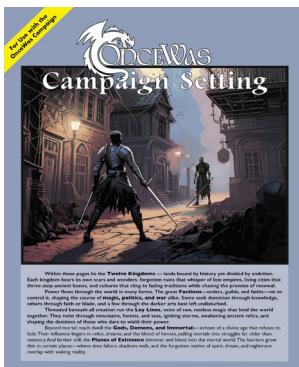
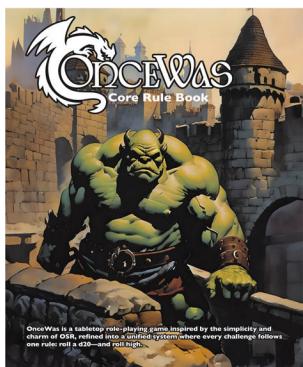
## A Living Story

This adventure exists in two forms—as the module you hold now, and as the opening chapter of the novel **The Odd Company & the Light of Yavanna**. Watch as your players forge their own path through the same challenges faced by the legendary Odd Company, making choices that echo—or diverge from—those heroes of legend. Will your party's story mirror theirs, or will they write an entirely different tale?

Read the book to see how one group of heroes handled these trials, then bring your own players into the world to create their own legend. *Information for acquiring the novel or getting a print on demand copy of the OnceWas Core Rule Book can be found at the back of this module.*

## Your Adventure Begins

Your Adventure Begins: The village of Sweetberry Grove needs heroes....



## Credits

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# Adventure Overview

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## The Situation

Disaster has struck the peaceful halfling village of Sweetberry!

In the dead of night, goblins on dire goats stormed the town, pillaging every storehouse and barn of its prized pipeleaf harvest—cartloads of carefully aged, magically cured leaf worth a small fortune. The goblins cackled all the way into the Worros Woods, leaving behind hoofprints, broken barrels, and dozens of distraught halflings puffing empty pipes in despair.

The annual Sweetberry Harvest Festival is fast approaching, and without the pipeleaf, the celebration will be canceled for the first time in over a century. Worse, trade agreements with merchants from across the realm will collapse, threatening the village's prosperity for years to come.

## The Mystery

But all is not as it seems.

The goblins didn't steal the pipeleaf for themselves—they can't even smoke it properly without getting dizzy and falling over. Someone hired them. Someone who knew exactly when to strike, which barns held the best leaf, and how to coordinate a raid precise enough to avoid casualties while maximizing theft.

Moreover, a mysterious robed figure was seen in the village weeks before the raid, asking pointed questions about harvest schedules and storage locations. The halflings thought nothing of it at the time—travelers often pass through Sweetberry—but now they wonder: was this stranger the architect of their misfortune?

The adventurers must not only recover the stolen leaf but uncover who orchestrated the theft and why. The truth will lead them deeper than a simple goblin hideout—into a web of greed, jealousy, and ambition that threatens more than just one village's harvest festival.

## Adventure Outline

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### Act I: The Call to Adventure

**Setup:** The party arrives in Sweetberry Grove just as panic sets in. The Harvest Festival preparations have ground to a halt, and Mayor Eldon Hilltopple desperately seeks anyone brave (or foolish) enough to venture into the Worros Woods after goblin raiders.

The mayor offers generous rewards—aged pipeleaf from the village reserve, fine cider, honorary citizenship, and a hot meal for life at any Sweetberry establishment. More importantly, he appeals to the party's sense of justice: without the pipeleaf, the village's economy collapses, and families who've farmed these hills for generations will lose everything.

**Initial Investigation:** The party explores Sweetberry, gathering clues:

- Hoofprints the size of platters lead north into Worros Woods
- The goblins were selective—they ignored cider, tools, and even gold coins left in plain sight
- A mysterious robed figure (matching Thargoth's description) was seen weeks ago at Millie Tanglefern's orchard, offering gold for information
- The timing was too perfect—the raid happened the night after the last harvest wagon arrived, when all the leaf was in one place

### Act II: Into the Worros Woods

**Journey North:** The party follows the goblin trail through increasingly dense forest. Crude tripwires and snare traps (set by panicked goblins who know they're being hunted) slow progress. The sound of distant bleating echoes through the trees—the dire goats are close.

**The Goblin Hideout:** The party discovers a ramshackle camp protected by wooden fences and tree-mounted lookouts. Goblin sentries patrol nervously, clutching stolen goods and muttering about **“the deal” and “burning leaf if heroes come.”**

**Confrontation with Grizzak:** The goblin boss sits on his makeshift throne, surrounded by stolen Sweetberry pipeleaf. He's clever, cowardly, and willing to bargain—or burn everything if cornered. The party must decide: fight, negotiate, or find a creative solution to recover the leaf intact.

### Act III: The Goblin Conspiracy

**The Truth Revealed:** Whether through intimidation, negotiation, or searching captured correspondence, the party learns that Grizzak was hired by someone who paid in gold and promised more if the job went smoothly. The goblins were given detailed maps of Sweetberry, guard schedules, and instructions on exactly what to steal.

**The Mastermind's Identity:** Clues point to either:

- A Rival Village seeking to sabotage Sweetberry's festival and steal their lucrative trade contracts
- A Greedy Merchant (like Thargoth) who plans to buy the stolen leaf cheap from the goblins and resell it at enormous profit
- An Ambitious Halfling from within Sweetberry itself—someone jealous of the mayor or another prominent family (potential setup for future adventures)

**Return to Sweetberry:** The party races back with the recovered pipeleaf, arriving just in time to save the festival. They're celebrated as heroes—but they also know that whoever hired the goblins is still out there, unpunished, and possibly planning their next move.

## The Truth Beneath

The Sweetberry Heist was orchestrated by Thargoth the merchant who sought to:

Acquire rare pipeleaf at goblin-raid prices (nearly free)

Resell it to desperate buyers at 10x markup when Sweetberry couldn't fulfill contracts

Establish himself as the “only reliable source” for Sweetberry leaf, controlling future trade

Thargoth bribed Millie Tanglefern (the orchard owner) for information about harvest schedules and storage locations. Millie didn't know the information would be used for theft—she thought she was just gossiping with a wealthy merchant who might buy her apples.

**For DMs:** This conspiracy can remain a background mystery or become the hook for a follow-up adventure where the party tracks Thargoth to his base of operations (see “A2: The Meldorin Winery” for continuation).

## Adventure Details

Expected Duration: 3-6 hours of play. Most groups will complete it in 1-2 sessions.

### Treasure:

**Gold:** 50 gp reward from Mayor Hilltopple (split among party)

**Magical Items:** Pouch of Reserve Leaf (each PC)

- When smoked, grants immunity to fear for 1 hour, usable 1/day

Cloak of Hearth & Smoke (one PC, party's choice) - Functions as Cloak of Protection (+1 AC, +1 to saves), decorated with halfling runes depicting smoke and hearth fires

**Mundane Treasure:** 25 gp worth of recovered goblin loot (assorted silver coins, jewelry, farm tools)

Lifetime invitation to Sweetberry Harvest Festivals (free room, board, and drink once per year)

Honorary citizenship in Sweetberry Grove

### Experience Points:

OnceWas System: Award 1 XP per player for completing the adventure, plus bonus XP for:

Recovering the pipeleaf undamaged (+1 XP)

Uncovering Thargoth's involvement (+1 XP)

Creative solution to Grizzak encounter (+1 XP)

## Adventure Hooks

Use one of these hooks to draw the party into Sweetberry's troubles:

### Hook 1: The Desperate Plea

The party encounters Mayor Hilltopple on the road, riding at breakneck speed toward the nearest town. He spots adventurers and immediately offers them the job, promising gold, glory, and all the cider they can drink. “Please, you must help us! The festival is in three days!”

### Hook 2: The Personal Connection

- A halfling PC grew up there and receives a desperate letter from family

- A PC once helped a Sweetberry merchant and is owed a favor
- A PC's favorite pipeleaf comes from Sweetberry, and they want their supplier protected

### **Hook 3: The Traveler's Tale**

At an inn, the party overhears a group of halfling merchants lamenting that their biggest contract just fell through because Sweetberry can't deliver this year's harvest. "Goblins stole it all, can you believe it? If only someone would go after them..."

### **Hook 4: The Guilt Trip**

The party arrives in Sweetberry planning to just pass through, but Mayor Hilltopple spots them. He launches into a heartfelt plea about tradition, heritage, and the hundred-year-old festival. He appeals to their better nature: "I know you're just passing through, but... what kind of heroes would leave good folk to suffer when they could help?"

### **Hook 5: The Contract**

The party is hired by a merchant guild to investigate why their Sweetberry supplier can't fulfill contracts.

This leads them to the village and the theft. If they recover the leaf, they get a finder's fee from the grateful merchants.

## **Key Themes**

- **Community vs. Greed:** The halflings value tradition and shared prosperity, while Thargoth represents individual greed. The party must decide which side to support.
- **Small Stakes, Big Hearts:** This isn't about saving the world—it's about saving a festival. But to the halflings, that festival represents everything: community, tradition, livelihood, and identity.
- **Rural Mystery:** The conspiracy angle adds depth beyond "go kill goblins." Players who investigate carefully will uncover Thargoth's involvement, setting up future adventures.
- **Heroism at Any Level:** First-level characters can still be heroes. They don't need to slay dragons to make a difference—sometimes recovering stolen pipeleaf is enough.



# Chapter 1: Arriving in Sweetberry Grove

Nestled in the sun-kissed rolling hills of Sweetberry, a vibrant community of Halflings thrives. Sweetberry Grove is a simple place, where the air is perfumed with the sweet scent of blooming wildflowers and ripe fruits. The halfling lives revolve around agriculture, with each family cultivating tidy plots and groves filled with an enchanting mix of colorful vegetables and fragrant herbs. Chickens roam freely, clucking cheerfully, while sheep dot the hillside like fluffy clouds against the blue sky.

The Halflings of Sweetberry are renowned for their warmth and hospitality, their laughter echoing through the verdant fields. They blend effortlessly with humans, dwarves, and elves, engaging in hearty exchanges filled with mirth and tales of old. While they dutifully pay their taxes, they regard King Aradun's claim as their sovereign ruler with a healthy dose of skepticism, preferring the guidance of their family elders and the ever-charming Mayor.

Notably, Sweetberry Grove boasts no soldiers from Dunmar, allowing the villagers to maintain their idyllic way of life.

As your party enters the lush, green hills surrounding the village of Sweetberry, the scent of wildflowers and baked apples greets you. Colorful banners flutter between round-doored cottages, and halflings bustle about hanging lanterns and setting long tables.

However, you are not greeted by the excited chatter of the halfling villagers preparing for the Harvest Festival. Instead, the mood is gloomy and forlorn.

But before you can fully take in your surroundings, a red-faced halfling barrels toward you, puffing with exertion and urgency.

## Mayor Eldon Hilltopple's Plea:

(He stops, hands on knees, catching his breath.)

"Oh thank goodness! You—you're adventurers, aren't you? Please, we need help—desperately!"

Last night—horrible business! A whole pack of goblins on massive goats stormed the village under moonlight. They made off with every single barrel and bundle of our Sweetberry Pipeleaf! Our entire year's harvest, gone!"

"We tried to chase 'em, but they vanished into the Worros Woods—deep country, real nasty in places. The Festival's in three days! If we don't get that leaf back, we can't host, and the town's trade deals will go up in smoke!"

Please, you must help us. There'll be rewards aplenty—fine cider, aged leaf from the reserve, and a hot meal for life in Sweetberry, if you want it."

The halfling village of Sweetberry is famed for its unique and beloved Sweetberry pipeleaf—a sweet, mellow tobacco blend sold far and wide and central to its culture.

But just days before the annual Harvest Festival, goblins riding dire goats raided the village in the dead of night and stole every last cartload of pipeleaf from the barns and curing sheds.

Now, the festival is in danger of being canceled, trade deals are on the verge of collapsing, and the villagers are in full-blown panic mode. The mayor pleads with the adventurers to track the goblins into the wild and recover the leaf before it's lost, burned, or smoked away forever.

# Chapter 2: Sweetberry Grove

## Halfling Views on Other Races:

**Dwarves:** “Dwarves make loyal friends, and you can count on them to keep their word. But would it hurt them to smile once in a while? They look like they’ve just swallowed a sour grape!”

**Elves:** “They’re so beautiful! Their faces, their music, their grace—it’s like they stepped out of a wonderful dream. But behind those enchanting smiles, who knows what secrets they keep? Perhaps they’re just waiting for the right moment to bewitch us all!”

**Humans:** “Humans are a lot like us, really. At least some of them are. Step out of the castles and keeps, go talk to the farmers and herders, and you’ll find good, solid folk. The barons and soldiers? Well, they protect their own lands, and that means they protect us too—though I’d still rather share a pint with the farmers!”

## Sweetberry Pipeleaf

“A curl of Sweetberry smoke is worth ten minutes of silence.” — Halfling proverb

In the pastoral village of Sweetberry, nestled in rolling green hills and orchard groves, the halflings cultivate a beloved local crop: **Sweetberry pipeleaf**.

This special variety of smoking leaf, known for its rich aroma, smooth draw, and sweet aftertaste, is enjoyed across the region—and fiercely protected as a source of pride, tradition, and trade.

## The Sweetberry Pipeleaf-Making Process

### 1. Cultivation (Spring)

The halflings plant pipeleaf seeds in warm, sun-kissed soil alongside herbs like wild mint, elderflower, or clover. Pipeleaf grows broad, fragrant leaves, often with purple-tinged veins and a sticky resin that gives Sweetberry its signature mellow sweetness.

### 2. Harvesting (Late Summer)

Leaves are picked by hand, often during festivals like the Sweetberry Harvest Festival, when songs, cider, and dancing accompany the work. Only mature, golden-green leaves are selected—anything too dry or too green is fed to goats.

### 3. Curing (Autumn)

Halflings hang pipeleaf bundles in the rafters of low, warm curing barns, where applewood and cherry bark are burned gently beneath for a slow, fragrant smoke-curing process.

A pinch of honey is sometimes drizzled into the coals to “sweeten the spirit of the leaf.”

### 4. Fermentation

After curing, the leaves are stacked in small casks and lightly pressed with warm stones, where they undergo a gentle, magical fermentation. Elder halflings use nose and touch, not charts, to determine when a batch is “settled.”

### 5. Aging & Blending (Winter)

Pipeleaf is aged in honeyed cedar boxes for several months. During this time, master blenders—known as Smokewrights—create unique blends by mixing different vintages, herb infusions, or forest-grown varietals.

### 6. Packing & Ritual Use

Finished pipeleaf is pressed into bricks, loose pouches, or spiral rolls. It is used not only for leisure but also in halfling storytelling circles, ritual toasts, or offerings to household spirits.

### 1. The Ripe Fig Brewery and Inn

The Stout Pint Brewery and Inn, a rustic establishment with ivy creeping up its stone walls, sits across from a vast lawn adorned with wildflowers. A massive oak tree shelters a lively stage, where villagers gather for festivals and joyous celebrations, their laughter mingling with the sweet aroma of ale.

Innkeepers Alton and Andry Brushgather are known for their quick wit and hearty hospitality, serving their famed “Red Apple Ale,” a brew so delightful it’s said to make the drinker dance on the tables.

Daily, they serve two broths: a light chicken broth with herbs and potatoes, and a rich stew filled with root vegetables and tender meat, accompanied by creamy cheese and warm, crusty bread.

## 2. Smithy

In the southwest corner of Sweetberry stands Osborn Underbough's smithy, a lively place filled with the sound of clanging metal and the warm glow of the forge. It is a stout, half-buried stone building with a broad chimney puffing out steady coils of dark smoke. Despite its small size, the forge is well-kept and always warm, the sound of hammering echoing across the cobbled lane.

Osborn, with his twinkling eyes and thick beard, is always ready to shoe a horse or repair farm equipment.

Once a member of the Thieves' Guild of Realm's End, Osborn's past is filled with intrigue. Legend has it that he once stole the very heart of a nobleman's daughter and, upon returning to Sweetberry, brought her along, but her heart now lies with another, leaving Osborn to forge a simpler life as a blacksmith.

## 3. Mayor's Home

Eldon Hilltopple, the Mayor of Sweetberry, occupies one of the village's grandest homes, surrounded by blooming gardens and two prized ponies—one white and one dappled brown. He often rides around town, his bright blue coat flapping in the breeze, issuing cheerful orders and chatting with the villagers.

While he basks in admiration, tales circulate that he once tried to host a grand feast, only to burn the pies and have to serve them with apologies—a story that still makes the rounds at the Ripe Fig.

## 4. General Store

Nedda Goodbarrel's general store, adorned with colorful awnings and overflowing with goods, is a bustling hub for locals, bursting with baskets, barrels, and bins. She is a master at trade and gossip, her keen eye ensuring that nothing escapes her notice.

Every corner of the store is filled with sweet and savory delights, from candied fruits to freshly baked goods, enticing villagers and travelers alike.

**Rations** (5 sp / day): Fresh bread, dried fruits, cured meats.

**Candied Fruit** (2 sp each): Restores 1 temporary hit point when eaten during a short rest (flavorful treat!).

**Lamp Oil** (1 sp / flask) and **Tinderboxes** (5 sp): Always stocked and neatly displayed near the counter.

**Healer's Kit** (5 gp): Kept behind the counter—"Not cheap, but cheaper than a cleric," Nedda quips.

**Common Herbs & Teas** (1–3 sp each): Advantage on saving throws against natural sleep poisons if brewed properly.

## 5. Sweetberry Leaf Tobacco Farm

Just outside the village, the Sweetberry Pipeleaf Farm stretches across gentle hills, filled with rows of broad-leaved plants. The air is warm and rich with the scent of tobacco, clover, and wood smoke.

Halfling farmers in straw hats tend the fields, chatting and humming as they work. Low stone walls divide the crops, and small chimes hang from posts to keep away pests and playful fey.

In the center of the farm stands a wooden curing barn, where the harvested pipeleaf is dried and aged. Sweet-smelling smoke drifts from its slats, giving the tobacco its famous flavor. Nearby is a smokehouse, where magic helps cure the leaf more quickly.

Crates and barrels once filled with finished pipeleaf are now missing—stolen in the night by goblins. The ground is littered with broken boards and hoofprints, and the farmers look worried, but determined to carry on.

Milo Goodwin's tobacco farm is a lush expanse where fragrant leaves sway in the breeze. Milo, a friendly fellow with a knack for storytelling, often regales passersby with tales of his adventures, including the time he befriended a mischievous sprite who taught him the secrets of perfecting his crop.

His well-known "Sweetberry Leaf" is said to bring good luck to those who smoke it.

## 6. Woodworker

Lyle Granndshine, the village's skilled woodworker, resides in a quaint home overflowing with the scent of fresh-cut timber. His workshop is filled with curious creations, from intricately carved

furniture to whimsical toys. Known for his talent, he often crafts unique pieces for villagers, and there's a rumor that a tree in his backyard grants wishes—if one listens closely enough.

## 7. Orchard

Millie Tanglefern's sprawling orchard is a picturesque sight, filled with trees heavy with succulent apples. Millie, both envied and admired, often throws lavish harvest festivals that are the talk of Sweetberry.

Yet, whispers circulate about her haughty demeanor, leading to friendly rivalries with other farmers. It is said that during one of her feasts, a mysterious figure appeared, promising her fortune in exchange for a secret.

## 8. Herbalist/Clothier

Callie Brushgather, known for her bright smile and eccentric hats, tends to her flourishing garden filled with rare herbs and flowers. A skilled herbalist and seamstress, she crafts beautiful garments that seem to shimmer with an otherworldly glow. Callie is often consulted for remedies, her knowledge of magical arts making her a local treasure. Some say her potions can even mend a broken heart, though they often come with unexpected side effects.

## 9. Cattle Farmer

Wellby Greenbottle, a robust Halfling with a hearty laugh, raises a small herd of milk cows and a larger pasture of cattle to the northeast. He's often engaged in lighthearted banter with Elbus Farroot, arguing over whose business is more essential to the village. Wellby is known for his storytelling, claiming that one of his cows can predict the weather based on how much grass it eats.

## 10. Fletcher's Place

Dewey Highhill, the village fletcher, has a workshop filled with the aroma of freshly fletched arrows and wooden bows. He is a master of his craft, creating equipment for hunters and offering lessons to aspiring marksmen.

## 11. The Hunter

Milo Thorngage, a rugged Halfling with a penchant for adventure, is the village hunter. Known for his gruff demeanor and unmatched skills, he often roams the woods, returning with tales of encounters with dangerous beasts. A particularly infamous tale tells of a night he faced off against a dire wolf while wearing nothing but his nightclothes—a story that has become a staple of village folklore.



# Chapter 3: Investigation

- The villagers are frazzled.
- The smokehouses and storerooms have been ransacked.
- Investigating the scene shows hoofprints, broken barrels, and signs of goat teeth gnawing through ropes.
- The festival prep stalled.

## Rumors & Clues

1. The goats left hoofprints as big as platters! Headed into Worros, straight north.

2. Funny thing, the goblins didn't touch the cider. Just the leaf. That was the plan all along.

3. I saw a goblin sniff a barrel and fall over giggling. Thought it was dead.

4. Word is some smuggler from Realm's End has been looking to buy pipeleaf cheap—maybe the goblins weren't working alone.

5. During one of Millie the Orchard Owner feasts, a mysterious figure appeared. A big person. Andry from the Fig said she overheard him promising her gold in exchange for information.

He was garbed in a red and blue robe with a long blue scarf and wearing a blue hat with a red feather. He had on low cut blue leather shoes. He had dark brown hair, and a pointed beard. A fat purse was belted to his side.

*This man was Thargoth (from A2\_The Meldorin Winery) a merchant in cohorts with the Vex and Balhar the Immortal Orc.*

### 6. Millie Tanglefern's Guilt

If players specifically question Millie or succeed on an Insight check (DC 14) when talking to her, they notice she's nervous and evasive. If pressed (**Intimidation DC 13 or Persuasion DC 15**), she admits:

"All right, all right! A few weeks back, a merchant came by—fancy dressed, big purse, smooth talker. Said his name was Tredurmerith, a wizard from the south. He bought some apples and asked about the harvest schedule. I thought he was just

making conversation! How was I to know he'd rob us blind? He paid me five gold pieces for 'market information'—I thought it was just business!"

She describes Thargoth's disguise: red and blue robes, long blue scarf, blue hat with red feather, pointed beard, low-cut blue leather shoes, fat purse.

Millie is genuinely remorseful but also afraid of being blamed or ostracized by the village. The party must decide whether to expose her role or keep it quiet to spare her reputation.

## Directions to the Goblin Hideout

"Right, so if you're headed after those no-good goat-riding goblins, best move quick—before they smoke the whole crop or sell it to some troll with expensive tastes."

"Start by takin' the old root trail out past Millie Tanglefern's orchard—it winds down by the stone well, y'know the one with the mossy owl carved in it. Go left there. You'll see where the grass gets trampled—that's where the carts went in."

"Now, once you're in Worros Woods, keep your eyes peeled. It's thick in there. Real twisty."

"Mind your feet, though! The goblins set up tripwires and snare vines—saw 'em myself and nearly lost a boot. And if you hear bleating, that's their dire goats. Big, mean, and smell like wet fur and bad cheese."

"They've holed up somewhere deep near the Old Orchard Ruins, I'd bet my second-best pipe on it. Just follow the leaf trail, and try not to sneeze too loud—the goblins'll hear that."

"Good luck, now. And if you bring the leaf back, I'll name my next calf after you!"



# Chapter 4: Goblin Hideout

## Crude goblin tripwires

The forest path winds tightly through a tangle of trees, where the canopy above hangs low and the air grows damp. As you move forward, something about the underbrush seems... arranged. Twigs snapped and stuck into the dirt at odd angles, leaves piled just a bit too neatly.

A flicker of silver glints briefly beneath a fern.

Hidden beneath fallen leaves and bits of brush are thin cords of braided goat-hair and bark, stretched low across the trail at shin level. They're sloppy but effective.

### Snare Trap (Dex Save DC 13):

**On fail:** Caught by the leg, pulled upside-down into the air by a bent sapling

Become restrained, hang 10 feet above the ground

Take 1d4 bludgeoning from the sudden yank

**Noisemaker:** A rusted pots filled with spoons and forks rattle from a nearby tree branch.

Any goblins within 300 feet are alerted and begin moving toward the sound (DM decides if it results in combat or ambush)

## Traveling through the forest.

The trees of Worros Woods close in like crooked fingers, their gnarled branches tangled with moss and old spider silk. The path narrows to a faint trail, half-lost beneath fallen leaves and hoof-scuffed earth. Strange noises echo between the trunks—twigs snapping, distant rustling, and something wet snorting in the underbrush.

After nearly an hour of picking their way through the dense forest, the party catches the sharp scent of woodsmoke on the wind. Moments later, the faint, eerie sound of bleating—deep and guttural—drifts through the trees ahead.

The goblins can't be far now.

## Goblin Hideout

The air is filled the sounds of the forest. Occasionally, the sound of goblin laughter echoes through the trees.

The goblin hideout is cleverly concealed among twisted roots and dense foliage. A narrow, winding path leads to a series of wooden huts, lean-tos, and shelters, all surrounded by a makeshift wooden fence and lookout towers perched high in the trees.

A mix of ten goblins of varying sizes, including a Boss and a few tinkerers. They are skittish but clever, using ambush tactics against intruders.

The goblins are aided by several **Dire Goats**, which are often found in the huts, scavenging for food.

**Escape Route:** A hidden path through the woods leads away from the main hideout, allowing goblins to flee if threatened. This path opens into a nearby thicket.

### 10 Goblins – Small Humanoids

**AC 14 | HP 5 (1 HD) | MV 60 ft. | Save DC 15**

Str (-), Dex (+2), Con (-), Int (-), Wis(-), Cha (-)

**Attack:** Scimitar. +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., 1d6 + 1 slashing damage. | Shortbow. +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. 1d6 + 1 piercing damage

### Dire Goats – Medium Beast, Neutral

**AC 14 | HP 8 (1 HD) | MV 60 ft. | Save DC 15**

Str (+1) Dex (+1) Con (+3) Int (-3) Wis (+1) Cha (+0)

**Resistances** Poison

**Head Butte.** +1 to hit, 1d6+1 bludgeoning damage.

If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a **DC 12** Str check or be shoved 5 feet and must make a **DC 10** Dex check or fall **prone**.

**Goat Stubbornness.** Once per day, when reduced to 0 hit points, the dire goat makes a DC 10 Con check. On a success, it instead drops to 1 HP and immediately flees in a wild panic (movement doubled this turn).

## Entrance:

The entrance to the hideout is marked by a low archway with a moose skull mounted above it. The ground is littered with bones, broken tools, and the remnants of stolen goods, hinting at the goblins' mischievous exploits. A crude wooden sign, painted with a warning in broken Common, reads: "Turn Back or Be Goblin Grub!"

The hideout consists of a series of interconnected wooden structures, its uneven walls constructed from scavenged planks that tell tales of past raids and hurried repairs.

## I. The Gathering Hut

As you step into the hut, the scent of smoke, sweat, and roasted tubers hits your nose. A circular fire pit crackles at the center, casting flickering light that dances across rough wooden walls. Around it, a jumble of mismatched stools—some carved, some broken, some clearly stolen—are scattered for goblins to perch and plot.

A group of goblins huddles together smoking pipeweed and whispering conspiratorially about their next raid.

Rough tables made from old crates and gnarled branches stand at odd angles, their surfaces stained from hasty meals and goblin brawls. In the corners, piles of stolen goods—everything from ripe fruits to polished tools—spill over, a chaotic treasure hoard in miniature. One shiny silver spoon sits atop a pile like a crown jewel, catching the firelight with an allure that feels strangely important.

Crude charcoal drawings and maps line the walls, showing the local region, past goblin raids, and even depictions of strange beasts with oversized fangs and wings—some friendly-looking, others not. In a small nook to the side, a “trophy corner” boasts a colorful jester’s hat, a cracked shield with a child’s drawing scrawled across it, and a stuffed rat wearing a tiny tiara.

## 2. The Boss's Chair

The party pushes aside a ragged curtain of stitched leather and steps a chaotic mess: dented pots, half-eaten fruit, broken barrels, and farm

tools are strewn everywhere. Rusted weapons and cracked skulls hang from the walls like trophies, alongside colorful banners torn from distant towns—tokens of goblin raids and mischief.

At the center stands a makeshift dais, built from stacked logs and draped with stained furs. Atop it sits a fancy chair now serving as a throne. The Goblin Boss lounges here holding a lit torch, flanked by a few guards.

Grizzak, the Goblin Boss, sits on a throne made of logs and bones. He’s a small but clever goblin, about four feet tall, with green skin and sharp, bright eyes full of mischief. He wears a crooked crown made of metal and bone, decorated with trinkets taken from his enemies.

His patchwork robe is made from animal skins and is decorated with stolen jewelry, showing his status. Barefoot and toughened from the woods, he often fiddles with a rusty dagger at his belt.

Grizzak is smart and tricky, known for outwitting both friends and foes. He fiercely protects his tribe and uses clever plans to grow his power. Though ruthless, he has a dark charm that inspires his goblins with stories of glory and treasure.

**Throne.** The dais is not just for show. Sharp-eyed adventurers may notice something strange about its construction. Hidden behind the throne is a concealed wooden panel—revealing a hollow space within the dais (**Investigation DC 13 or Spot DC 15**). Inside lies the goblins’ true prize: the stolen Sweetberry pipeleaf. Dozens of canvas sacks bearing the seal of Sweetberry are stacked tightly, some containing rare “Festival Reserve” leaf that’s magically cured and extremely valuable.

If threatened or cornered, Grizzak may use this stash as a bargaining chip—or worse, try to burn it in a fit of rage or desperation, using the smoke and confusion to make his escape. The room offers half cover behind debris piles, and its uneven terrain can make combat unpredictable.

Recovering the pipeleaf intact will require both quick thinking and quicker feet.

Grizzak’s throne room is a chaotic assembly of stolen goods, cluttered with treasures from defeated foes and unfortunate travelers.

**Treasure Hoard:** The goblins' loot includes stolen fruits, farm tools, and the wagon loads of Sweetberry pipeleaf.

### Grizzak's Threat!

Grizzak leaps to his feet atop the dais, arms flailing with manic glee. His guards tense up, and behind the throne, a greasy torch lies just inches from a pile of canvas sacks on his log pile - dry and dangerously flammable.

"Ahh, heroes, is it? Too late! Too slow! One step closer, and fwoosh!—The Sweetberry pipeleaf goes up in smoke! Whole forest will smell like your precious leaf for miles!"

"You want the halfling sleepy-leaf back? Drop your weapons! Or watch it all burn!"

He raises a torch high and waggles it dangerously near the bundles. The goblins cackle in support.

**Why Grizzak Stole the Leaf:** If the party negotiates or interrogates captured goblins, they learn:

"Big man in fancy robes came to our camp two moons ago. Showed gold—real gold! Said he wanted pipeleaf from halfling village. We asked why not just buy it. He said, 'Where's the fun in that?' and offered us fifty gold pieces—more money than we've ever seen!"

He gave us maps, told us when to strike, even showed us which barns had the best stuff. Said if we did good job, he'd pay more later. We were supposed to meet him at the Old Ruins near the Thistlebrook River three days from now to hand over the leaf.

We don't even like the stuff! Makes us dizzy and giggly. But gold? Gold we like!"

#### Grizzak's Bargaining Position:

Grizzak knows he's caught but still has leverage—the pipeleaf itself. He'll try to make a deal:

"You want leaf? Fine! Take it! But you let Grizzak go free. No hunting, no revenge, no telling big folk where we camp. Grizzak just wants to live, yes?"

And maybe... maybe you go after big man who hired us? He still owes us second payment. If you find him, you take his gold, we call it even. Grizzak even tell you where to meet him!"

#### This gives the party options:

- Fight and take everything by force (risky—Grizzak might burn the leaf)

- Negotiate and let Grizzak go in exchange for information about Thargoth
- Promise to bring back Grizzak's payment if they catch Thargoth (clever players might do this)

### 3. Tinker's Corner

The party steps into a cramped, smoke-filled room that smells like burnt metal and old goat. Rusty tools, gears, and strange little gadgets cover every surface. Half-finished traps and odd machines sit on rickety tables, some sparking quietly or leaking something foul. A crooked sign on the wall reads, "Danger: Goblin Engineering in Progress."

In one corner, crude maps are pinned to the wall—rough sketches of Sweetberry Village and the nearby woods, marked with red Xs and scrawled goblin notes. The edges are singed, as if they've caught fire more than once.

**Trap.** Hidden among the cluttered tools and gadgets, a loose floorboard triggers a small mechanical device. When stepped on, it releases a burst of sparks and a swinging metal arm coated with rusty spikes.

**Trigger:** Pressure plate disguised as a loose floorboard near the center of the room.

#### Effect:

When triggered, a concealed gear spins loudly and a metal arm swings out from the wall (or table), forcing anyone in its path to make a **Dexterity saving throw (DC 13).**

On a failed save, the target takes **1d8 piercing damage** from rusty spikes and is **distracted**, giving the next attack against them at +1

On a successful save, they take half damage and avoid being distracted.

### 4. Lookout Towers

Tall wooden towers built high in the trees, providing vantage points for the goblins to spot intruders. Ropes and ladders connect these towers to the ground.

Goblin sentries keep watch from these heights, equipped with slingshots and crude bows, ready to alert the others of approaching threats.

# Chapter 5: Conclusion

The party arrives in Sweetberry to a scene of joyous chaos. Halflings pour into the streets, cheering and crying with relief. Mayor Hilltopple personally escorts them to the village square, where the recovered pipeleaf is displayed like treasure.

That evening, the village throws a Feast of Heroes in their honor:

Long tables groan under platters of roasted meats, fresh bread, honeyed cakes, and endless cider

Musicians play, and halflings dance the traditional “Pipeleaf Reel”

Elder halflings toast the party with aged Reserve Leaf, calling them “Saviors of the Harvest”

Children beg for stories of the goblin raid, wide-eyed and wonder-struck

The festival proceeds as planned the next day, with record attendance from across the region. A bard composes “The Ballad of the Sweetberry Heroes,” which becomes a local favorite.

## Each player receives:

- Pouch of Reserve Leaf (magical consumable)
- 50 gp from the village treasury
- Lifetime invitation to Sweetberry Harvest Festivals (free room, board, drink once per year)

One character (party’s choice) receives the Cloak of Hearth & Smoke

## If the party also uncovered Thargoth’s involvement:

- Mayor Hilltopple offers an additional 25 gp reward to track down the merchant
- This becomes a hook for “A2: The Meldorin Winery” adventure
- The party gains a Reputation in the region as “the heroes who saved Sweetberry”

## If the players partially succeed:

(Recovered some but not all the pipeleaf, or got it back damaged)

The festival proceeds, but on a smaller scale. Sweetberry’s reputation suffers, and trade contracts are renegotiated at worse terms. The halflings are grateful but subdued.

## The party receives:

- 25 gp (half payment)
- Pouch of Reserve Leaf (one per PC)
- Thanks, but no legendary status

The village remembers them fondly but not as legendary heroes.

## If the players fail:

(Couldn’t recover the pipeleaf, or it was destroyed)

The festival is canceled for the first time in 128 years. Halflings speak of this as “The Year of Empty Pipes,” and the village enters a period of mourning.

Trade suffers catastrophically—merchants who relied on Sweetberry leaf must find new suppliers, and some halfling farmers face bankruptcy.

## The party receives:

- No reward (the village has no money to spare)
- Cold treatment from locals who blame them for not acting faster or smarter
- Reputation loss: Known as “the ones who let Sweetberry down”
- Mayor Hilltopple is voted out of office within a month, replaced by a harder, more militaristic leader who vows “this will never happen again.”

A new rumor emerges: “The goblins may come again. And next time, who will save us?”

## Dark Consequences:

- Thargoth successfully corners the market on pipeleaf in Realm’s End, becoming wealthy
- Grizzak’s goblin tribe grows bolder, raiding other villages
- Sweetberry becomes a cautionary tale: “pay for proper guards, or lose everything”
- The party might try to make amends in a future adventure, but the damage to their reputation lingers.

# Appendix A: Monsters

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## Goblin

*Small Humanoids, Neutral Evil*

**Init** +2 | **AC** 14 | **HP** 5 (1 HD) | **MV** 40 ft.

Str (+0) Dex (+2) Con (+0) Int (+0) Wis (+0) Cha (+0)

**Save DC** 15 | **Resistances** None

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft. | **Languages** Kragth, Common  
**Attack**

**Scimitar.** +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., 1d6 slashing damage.

**Short Bow.** +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target.  
1d6 piercing damage.

**Description.** Goblins are small, mischievous creatures with green skin, sharp features, long pointed ears, and beady eyes. Typically standing around 3 feet tall, they are agile and cunning, often lurking in caves, forests, or ruins.

Known for their chaotic nature, goblins love to cause trouble, whether through theft, ambushes, or tricks. They are quick to scurry away when threatened, but when in numbers, they can be fierce and unpredictable opponents.

Goblins often dress in ragged clothes and wield crude weapons, scavenged from their victims or found in the wild.

## Dire Goat

*Medium Beast, Neutral*

**Init** +1 | **AC** 14 | **HP** 10 (1 HD) | **MV** 60 ft.

Str (+1) Dex (+1) Con (+3) Int (-3) Wis (+1) Cha (+0)

**Save DC** 15, **Resistances** Poison

**Senses** Keen Hearing and Smell | **Languages** na  
**Attack**

**Head Butte.** +1 to hit, 1d6+1 bludgeoning damage.

If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a **DC 12** Strength check or be shoved 5 feet and must make a **DC 10** Dexterity check or fall prone.

The dire goat slams its massive, horned head into its target with wild fury, sometimes launching foes off their feet or into nearby trees.

**Goat Stubbornness.** Once per day, when reduced to 0 hit points, the dire goat makes a **DC 10** Constitution check.

On a success, it instead drops to 1 HP and immediately flees in a wild panic (movement doubled this turn).

# Appendix B: Scaling the Adventure

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## For Easier Play (3 or fewer players, or very new players):

- Reduce goblin count to 6-8 total
- Remove one dire goat
- Give Grizzak only 8 HP instead of 12
- Make the traps easier to spot (DC 10 instead of 13)
- Have goblin guards flee after Grizzak is defeated

## For Harder Play (5+ experienced players):

- Increase goblin count to 12-15
- Add 2 more dire goats
- Give Grizzak 15 HP and a magic item (Potion of Invisibility he uses to escape)
- Add a “Goblin Shaman” lieutenant with minor healing magic

- Include more dangerous traps (DC 15, dealing 2d6 damage)

- Have some goblins fight to the death defending their boss

## For Different Tones:

- **Comedy Emphasis:** Play up the goblins’ incompetence, have them accidentally smoke the pipeleaf and act goofy during combat

- **Mystery Emphasis:** Focus heavily on investigating Thargoth’s involvement, make the Millie Tanglefern subplot central

- **Combat Emphasis:** Make the hideout assault more tactical, with goblin reinforcements arriving in waves

- **Negotiation Emphasis:** Give Grizzak more personality and reasonable motivations, let players talk their way through most encounters

# Appendix C: Future Hooks

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After the party returns victorious, Mayor Hilltopple mentions:

"You know, that merchant you described—the one who hired the goblins? Wears fine robes. Has a pointed beard Word reached me from a traveling tinker. Seems he has been traveling back and forth from OuterValley Well to Realm's End.

Could be nothing. Or could be your man

If you're interested in finishing what you started, I'm sure the Dunmarian authorities would pay well for information about a fence dealing in stolen goods. And I'd rest easier knowing that snake couldn't do to another village what he tried to do to us."

This leads directly into "A2: The Meldorin Winery" adventure, where the party can confront Thargoth and uncover his larger criminal operation.

# Appendix D: Running the Adventure

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**Tone:** Keep it light and fun. This is about halflings and goblins and stolen pipeleaf, not world-ending doom. Players should feel like heroes without the world literally ending if they fail.

**Pacing:** This adventure should move quickly:

**30-45 minutes:** Arrival and investigation in Sweetberry

**45-60 minutes:** Journey through Worros Woods

**60-90 minutes:** Goblin hideout exploration and encounters

**30 minutes:** Return to Sweetberry and conclusion

**Player Agency:** Give players multiple ways to succeed:

- Sneak into the goblin camp and steal the pipeleaf back

- Fight their way in and defeat Grizzak

- Negotiate with Grizzak (offering gold, promising vengeance on Thargoth, or making threats)

- Create chaos (set fire to distract, stampede the dire goats, etc.)

- Creative solutions (disguise as goblins, poison the guards' food, etc.)

**Consequences Matter:** The halflings remember how the party solved this. Burning down the goblin camp might recover the leaf but also make the party seem brutal. Negotiating and letting Grizzak go shows mercy but might embolden future goblin raids. Let player choices shape their reputation.

**Humor Opportunities:**

- Goblins getting dizzy from smoking pipeleaf and falling over mid-combat

- Halflings being overly dramatic about their "crisis" (it's just tobacco)

- Dire goats being stubborn and refusing to move at critical moments

- Grizzak's elaborate threats that he can't actually follow through on

The village's relief being expressed through endless food and drink

## Emotional Moments:

- Mayor Hilltopple's genuine desperation to save his village's tradition

- The halflings' collective grief when they think the festival is lost

- The explosion of joy when the party returns victorious

- Individual halfling NPCs thanking the party for saving their livelihoods

**A1**For Use with the  
OnceWas Campaign

## Dungeon Module A1 The Ogres of Worros Woods

A beginning adventure for low level Characters



The village of Green Meadow lies nestled along the winding banks of the Ardent River, its prosperity built upon generations of skilled sheep herders and fertile pastures. Recently, however, the idyllic peace has been shattered by relentless raids from ogres who have emerged from the Worros Woods. These brutish giants, driven by hunger and greed, have been plundering sheep and terrorizing the villagers, leaving destruction in their wake.

In desperation, the village mayor has put out a call for brave souls willing to venture into the dangerous southern territories to confront the ogre threat. Promising a handsome reward, they seek adventurers bold enough to follow the trail of destruction and put an end to the raids once and for all.



The OnceWas Chronicles, Book One

# The Odd Company & The Light of Yavanna



## DESIGNER'S NOTES

This adventure is part of the OnceWas Fantasy Adventure Path, compatible with:

## OnceWas Fantasy Novels

### The Odd Company Chronicles:

- The Odd Company and the Light of Yavanna
- The Odd Company and Halfhag's SoulTrap
- The Odd Company and the Black Gates of Ix

## Additional OnceWas RPG Offerings:

- The OnceWas Campaign Setting
- The OnceWas Creature Compendium
- The OnceWas Core Rulebook

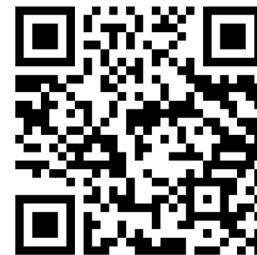
## OnceWas Adventures

- A1\_Ogres of Worros Woods
- A2\_The Meldorin Winery
- A3\_Tower of the Immortal Orc
- A4\_Werewolves of Orckrag
- A5\_Silvandor and the Shattered Light
- A6\_Beneath the City of Keys

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May your dice roll high, and your heroes return home safely. —Jack Frank

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