1878-1880

Outer World, Town: Terrahaven

Terrahaven is a small but busy town, known for its many caves. Houses are built very close to each other, creating narrow alleys and streets. Transportation, fashion, speech and general lifestyle are in a Celtic, steampunk setting with the historical undertone of the 1800.

Carriages and people fill the streets of Terrahaven. You can hear people greeting each other, in this town everyone knows everyone.

Most people work in mines or fields apart from that the small town has three bakeries, one school, two barbers, a couple clothing stores, a market, a saddler and a leatherworker and a Tinksmith.

A Tinksmith is the combination of a tinker and a blacksmith. Besides fixing devices, armor and weapons a Tinksmith is mostly known for making new, handy inventions.

There is only a hand full of people in our world working as a Tinksmith, one has to be extremely skilled to do that job.

The summers are mild and the winters are long and cold. Most of Terrahavens days are rainy and windy, so the Inhabitants of Terrahaven like to drink warm drinks and tell stories and fairytales by the fireplace to warm up.

The most known tale is a story to keep children from playing in the dangerous caves.

The tale of “Hollow”.

A story about a small world, located below the ground on the inside of our planet.

There are different versions and believes about what creatures or lifeforms can be found in Hollow.

It is told that there is only one entrance towards Hollow and that no one who had found it ever returned! Some believe they didn’t return because it is so beautiful down there that they decided to stay, some say the people are held prisoners and have to work for the residents, and some think Hollow bears a terrible monster that will kill anyone daring to enter.

As for all myths and tales there is a truth in this story that lays somewhere in the middle of those believes.

# Hollow

There is more than just dirt and soil below the earth’s crust. Sure, dirt and soil take up a great amount of space. But deep down underground, below that dirt, there is a spherical cavity.

A cavity big enough to hold the population of a large city. A long time ago, the first humans emerged from exactly that place. Some chose to migrate to the surface while others remained living under ground. As the human species evolved on the surface, they learned about new sustenance, dangers, weather, cultures and everything else that’s important to survive. They built villages and towns based on that knowledge and soon forgot about the small world underground, or thought of it as a fairytale.

In the meantime, the society below the earth formed its own nation called ‘Hollow’. Every Hollowan has distinct animal features; be it a tale, fur or mole-like hands, which people from the outer world do not have.

Nowadays Hollow is split into a city area, “Bell’Hallow” and a less popular area, “Low”, the slums. A wall has been built around the city to protect the residents from so called “radiation”, gangs and crime.

Bell’Hallow presents aristocratic buildings that are decorated with stucco work and metal elements which bestow a steampunk look. Beautiful landmarks, like fountains, statues and cable trains adorn the scenery. The streets are not too busy; there are groups of people standing together here and there, chatting about their day. Ladies are wearing Victorian plaid day dresses (1878/1880) with matching accessories made from the same fabric: handkerchief, fan holder, chatelaine purse. The Gentlemen are dressed in outfits featuring a coat with a contrasting collar, a waistcoat decorated with a watch chain, wide ascot tie, square-toed shoes, and a top hat.

In contrast to that, the slums are the depiction of poverty. Broken down buildings, tents and single matrasses are a common life style in Low. It holds a high incidence of crime. The streets are filled with people and are heavily policed. Clothes; if people own them at all, are mostly torn and dirty.

Years ago, Low used to be a highly regarded industrial area called “Hallow”.

That zone concentrated on revolutionizing Hollow in a technological matter. Hallow offered high technological gear, steam powered factories and laboratories. Colorful lights, shining from machinery and buildings, brightened up the streets. People did a lot of experiments in order to create helpful devices.   
Until one day a great catastrophe turned Hallow into ruins. A number of people lost their lives during that event, even more people became homeless. Life took a sudden change for people surviving the disaster. That was the day Hallow became Low.

Until the present day it is not established what caused the catastrophe. It is believed that an experiment went wrong, resulting in explosions and spreading radiation.

The residents of Hollow nowadays still know about the outer world in contrast to the outer world who thinks of Hollow, if at all, as a fairytale.

The Hollowans, intentionally segregate themselves from outer world as a part of their faith and don’t wish to be rediscovered.

It is however allowed to travel over ground from a certain age when in disguise (hiding animal parts). Reaching that age is a special and exciting event for the Hollowan youth who are then able to see the outside for the first time. It can be compared to the Amish “Rumspringa” and is called “Overground” in Hollow.

The Overground normally occurs between ages 16 and 21 and ends when a youth chooses to live in Hollow, or instead leaves and lives on the outside.

The difference to the Rumspringa however are, that after the Overground Hollowans always will be able to visit both the outside and Hollow without being abandoned by their families. Furthermore the person going to the surface needs to pay 300 gold to the government for insurance.

After the Overground, the majority chooses the life under ground and remains in Hollow.