A Cluck in Time

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Hook: While passing through a small village the party is inadvertently caught in a time loop (a la Groundhog Day) until they can solve the mystery. For some reason, only the party remembers what is going on. The party might meet Farmer Yeomsley on the road and help him fix a wagon wheel on his chicken cart before travelling into town.

The Problem: By cosmic coincidence, a magical Time Egg has been laid by one of the chickens brought to market. When endangered, it will revert time to the beginning of the day (when the party arrives in town, or wakes up at the inn, whatever makes sense). The egg's goal is to be reunited with its hen and hatch. Cultists have placed the egg on the altar in the chicken shrine. They plan to use it in some dark ritual at midnight...

The Chickens: Farmer Yeomsley's chickens have quite the personalities. Mrs. Cluckes insists on wearing a bonnet. Featherhead is a bit of a dunce. Lily thinks she is the most elegant chicken. Harriette is loud and combative. Eggina wears glasses and tends to scribble math in the dirt. Periwinkle has very unusual plumage. Roll 1d6 to determine which chicken laid the Time Egg, or choose yourself ahead of time.

Town: The local tavern is called "The Rising Triangle" and is run by Yvonne, a former Mathmagician. Terry the Toothesayer often hangs around, offering divination in exchange for spare teeth (he used all of his own making gambling predictions). Brassworker Balin is a stout fellow who runs "Touch of Brass" and provides metalworking services. The "Temple of the Bold" is headed by Father Pallum the Meek and his several acolytes. The "Bank of Hillford" is operated by Louis, who is often lost in thought. "The Denim Guard" is a mercenary company that provides town guard duties. What they lack in decent equipment they make up for in gumption. Gallus the bard wakes up early to perform for the town's "enjoyment" and would love to follow a real adventuring party.

Gremlin Caves: Whenever junk gets thrown in the river it flows down to the gremlin caves south of town. There the gremlins love to take things apart and learn how they work. When they put things back together it is never quite right...

Hogwood Forest: On the far bank of the river lies a tranquil forest. If one carefully spent the better part of a day searching the clover fields, they could probably find a lucky 4-leafed one. Beware the stinging hogweed patches! Legend says a nereid lives in the waterfall pond where she cares for lost animals.

The Chicken Cult: in a secret lair beneath the Temple of the Brave lays the secret gathering place of those who believe the next incarnation of their god will come in the form of a chicken. It is guarded by Father Pallum's secret cockatrice familiar.
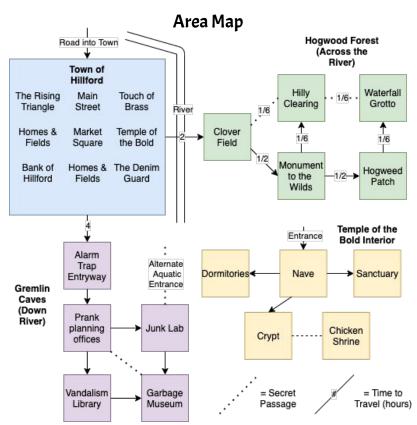
Chicken Fates: After being sold, the chickens end up in the following locations (assign randomly, or choose, or make up your own!). If they are not rescued in an appropriate time, they may meet a grisly fate.
- Sold to another farmer just outside town (hour walk)
- To be served as a last meal to a prisoner of the Denim Guard
- To be this evening's Soup du Jour at the local inn
- Stolen by gremlins for experimentation
- Sainted at the church
- Escapes to the wilds in the forest

The Time Egg: While fragile, it is very intelligent, has limited telepathy, and can sense its surroundings. When in danger it will loop back time. If reunited with its mother and allowed to warm, it can hatch and return to its home plane of existence. It is vulnerable to philosophical debates and lets down its guard when discussing such matters.

Rewards: Honest adventurers will find valuable treasures in the waterfall lair of the nereid, the hidden chicken shrine, and amongst the junk piles of the gremlins. Paying adventurers could seek out Yvonne who likely has some magical items and Balin could craft new gear. Others may find more treasure in the bank if they can pull off the perfect heist...

How to prep: Make up some interesting npcs (townsfolk, gremlins, forest folk, etc) and give them a fast and loose itinerary. Something like 2-3 per region should be good. Having an extra list of less fleshed out npcs can help in a pinch. Adjust / setup monster and npc stats for your system of choice. Roll to see where the 6 chickens end up. Roll to see which chicken is the time egg's mother. You may wish to expand and add notes to the schedule as the party explores to keep each day somewhat consistent. Blame the butterfly effect if things change!

Area Map

Encounter Suggestions

Schedule	Hillford Location	Hogwoods Location	Gremlins Faction	Temple Faction
Morning (6am - 10am)	• Gallus awakens town • Markets set up	• Curious pixies • Wary elk	• Greedily foraging in river for junk	• Sleeping in • Performing morning sermon
Day (10am - 5pm)	• Shops open, workers work • Rude children bother adventurers	• Quarrelsome rival adventuring party • Agitated awakened Hogweed	• Dismantling junk, building traps • Napping in the cave	• Proselytizing villagers • Running errands
Evening (5pm - 10pm)	• Gumptious guards bother strangers • Rich noble visits bank	• Thieving quickling • Territorial boars	• Pranking villagers • Causing mischief in town	• Evening sermon • Retreat for private prayer
Night (10pm - 12am)	• Rainstorm. • Gallus becomes a were-rooster	• Forlorn will-o-wisps • Restless wolves	• Releasing the "slow but murderously insatiable scrap golem"	• Entering the secret shrine • Performing egg ritual