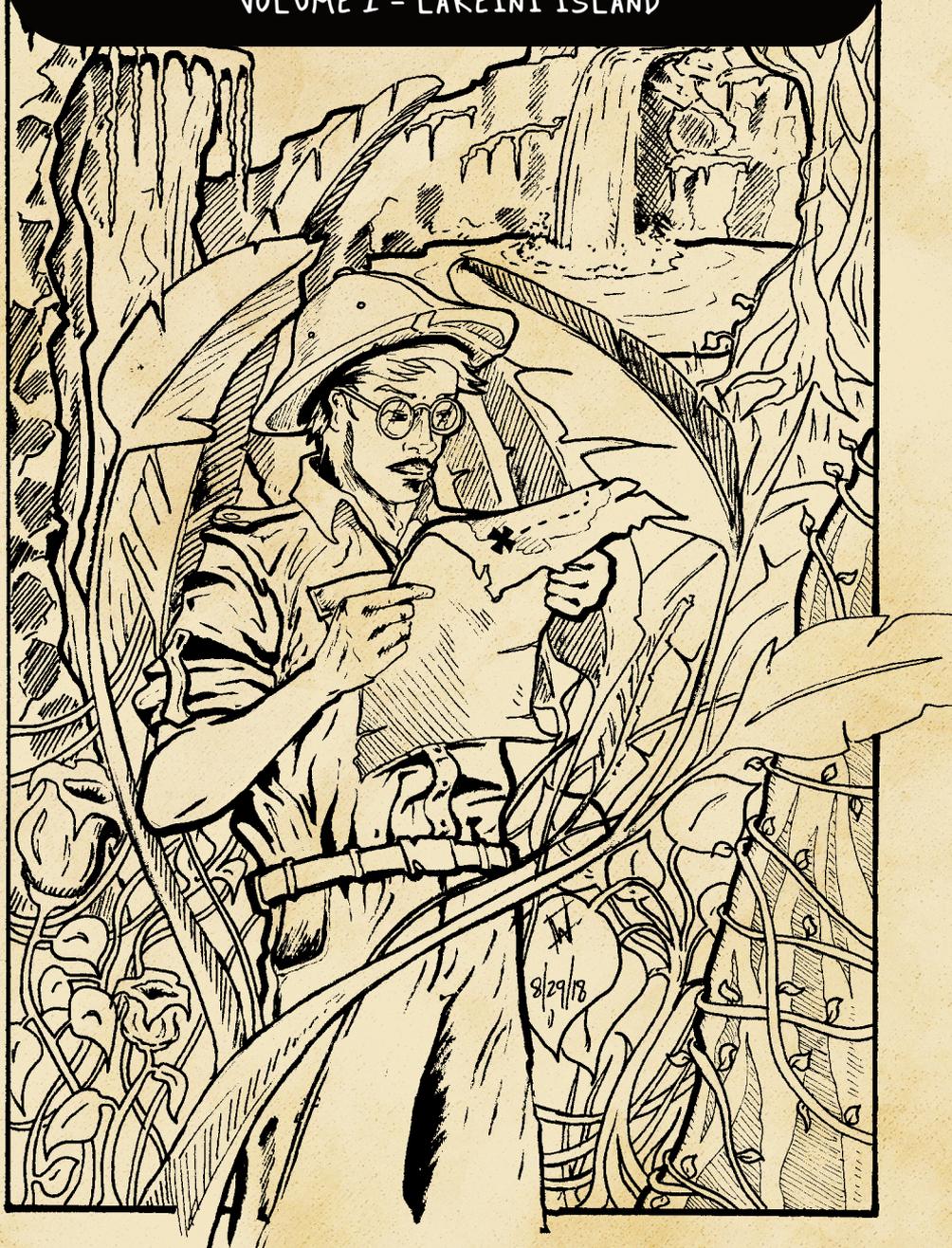


Blackbrand Seas:

THE EXPLORER'S JOURNAL

VOLUME 1 - LAREINI ISLAND





Lareini Islands



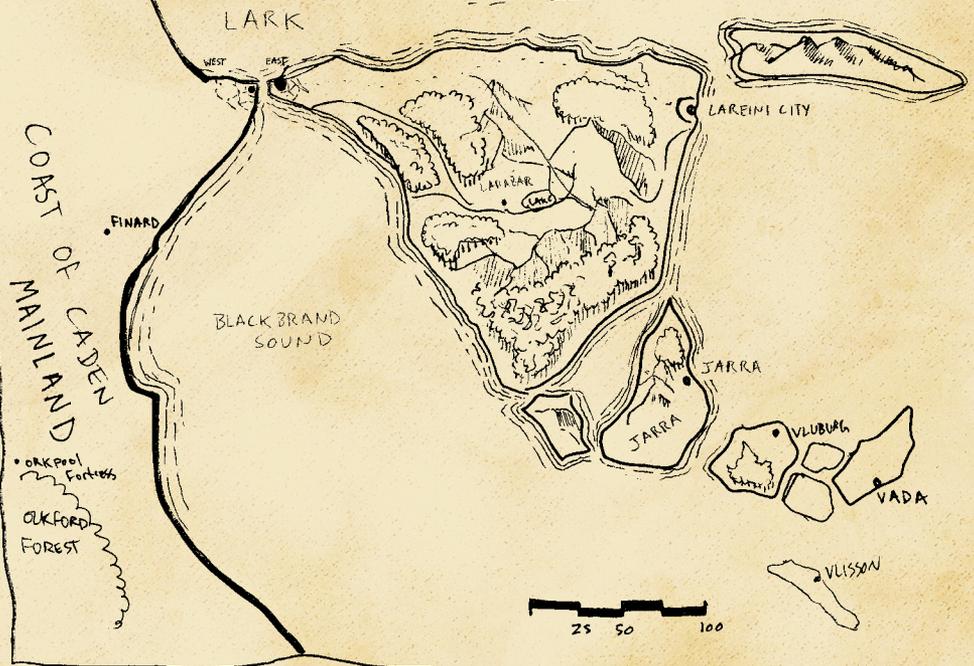
FINALLY I'M STARTING MY ADVENTURE!

I'LL BE USING THIS JOURNAL WITH THE INTENTION OF DOCUMENTING EVERYTHING I SEE AND EVERYONE I MEET ALONG THE WAY. MY CURRENT PLAN IS TO CIRCUMNAVIGATE LAREINI ISLAND BY LAND, AND

MAYBE FURTHER IF I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY. RIGHT NOW, I'M ON THE MAINLAND OF CADEN IN WEST LARK. TOMORROW MORNING I'LL CROSS THE BLACK BRAND CHANNEL AND FIND A HORSE TO HELP ME ON MY VOYAGE.



BLACK BRAND SEAS



I ALREADY FOUND A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE ISLAND. I'VE MADE A MAP AS A ROUGH GUIDE TO HELP ME ON THIS JOURNEY, AT LEAST IT WILL GIVE ME AN IDEA OF ROADS, SETTLEMENTS AND POSSIBLE RIVER LOCATIONS. I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S ENTIRELY ACCURATE, BUT IT WILL DEFINITELY DO FOR NOW.

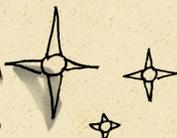
I'M ESPECIALLY KEEN ON SEEING THE CAPITAL, LAREINI CITY. THEY SAY IT'S A BUSTLING METROPOLIS, NESTLED WITHIN THE JUNGLE.

IF I AM ABLE, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE THE JUNGLE INTERIOR. ACCORDING TO MY MAP THERE IS AN OLDER PART OF LAREINI CITY THAT IS MOSTLY JUST RUINS AT THIS POINT. PAST THIS AREA THERE SHOULD BE A TOWN CALLED LARABAR WHERE THE BEAUTY OF THE LAKE IS LEGENDARY.

THE NEIGHBORING ISLANDS TO THE SOUTH OF LAREINI ISLAND HAVE A HARSHER REPUTATION, MOSTLY OF PIRACY, BUT THEY CAN'T BE ALL THAT DANGEROUS. I WOULD LIKE TO VISIT AND SEE WHAT I CAN LEARN.

June 17

MY ARRIVAL ON LAREINI ISLAND. LAREINI IS A TROPICAL ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF CADEN, THE ISLAND IS SO CLOSE IN FACT, THAT WEST LARK AND EAST LARK ARE CONSIDERED THE SAME CITY, WITH BOAT TRAFFIC CROSSING THE SOUND DAILY.



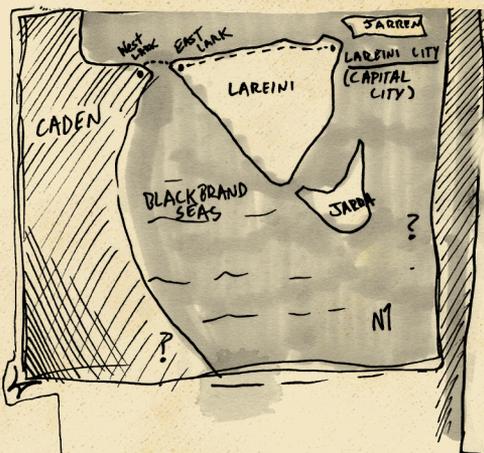
FOR A RELATIVELY SMALL FEE I WAS ABLE TO CROSS TO EAST LARK, IT WAS ACTUALLY A QUICK TRIP, LESS THAN A MILE I BELIEVE IS WHAT THEY TOLD ME. FURTHER TO THE NORTH OR SOUTH THE SEA EXPANDS GREATLY.

I HAVE WITH ME SOME SKETCHES AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ISLAND. SOON I HOPE TO COMBINE EVERYTHING I SEE INTO A REALLY COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE.



I'LL BE EXPLORING EAST LARK TODAY LOOKING FOR A HORSE AND A PLACE TO STAY THE NIGHT.

EAST LARK ITSELF IS AN IMPRESSIVE CITY, WITH



MANY OF THE BUILDINGS BEING MADE FROM WOOD, WHICH STONE SEEMS THE MORE COMMON BUILDING MATERIAL ON THE MAINLAND. THE ENVIRONMENT HERE IS TROPICAL WITH A SLIGHT DESERT ISLAND FEEL TO IT. THERE ARE MANY PALM TREES BY THE COAST, AND SANDY BEACHES ARE PLENTIFUL.

June 18

LAST NIGHT I STAYED IN A DIRTY PLACE CALLED "THE BEE IN THE BOAT", IT'S HERE BY THE SHORELINE ON THE NORTHEAST SIDE OF THE CITY. THE MAN HERE DID HAVE A HORSE I COULD BUY, SO I SUPPOSE I'M READY TO GO.

IT'S ROUGHLY FORTY MILES TO MIDWAY FROM HERE, I MAY HAVE TO CAMP ON THE BEACH TONIGHT.

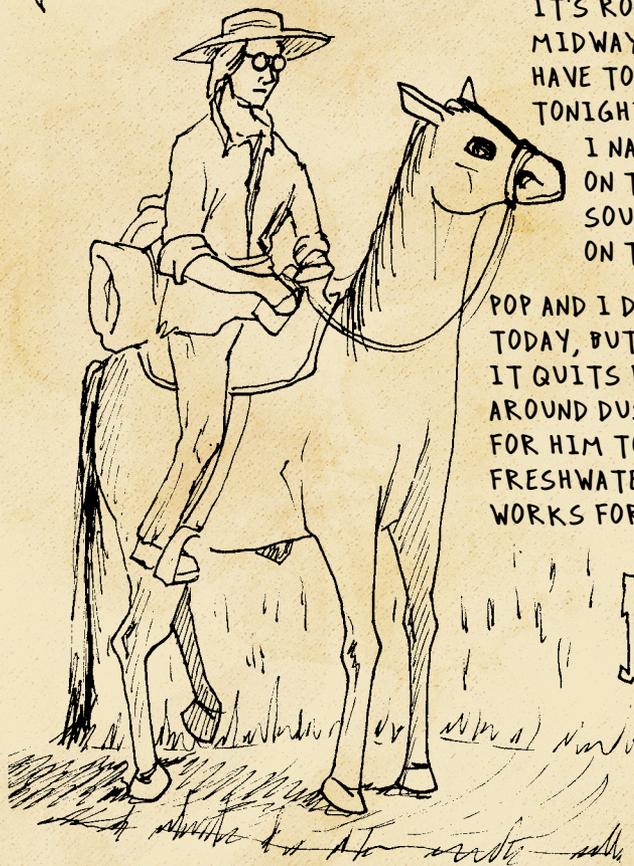
I NAMED MY HORSE "POP", ON THE ACCOUNT OF THE SOUNDS HIS HOOVES MAKE ON THE STREET COBBLES.

POP AND I DID MAKE GOOD TIME TODAY, BUT WE DECIDED TO CALL IT QUITS FOR THE DAY, JUST AROUND DUSK. THERE WAS GRASS FOR HIM TO EAT NEAR A FRESHWATER STREAM, WHICH WORKS FOR BOTH OF US.

JUNE 19

AFTER AN EARLY START, AND WHAT FELT LIKE MOST OF THE DAY RIDING, POP AND I ARRIVED AT MIDWAY STATION.

MIDWAY - AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, IS ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN LAREINI CITY AND LARK. THIS IS A MILITARY OUTPOST PRIMARILY, BUT THERE IS AN INN WHERE WE CAN REST FOR THE NIGHT.



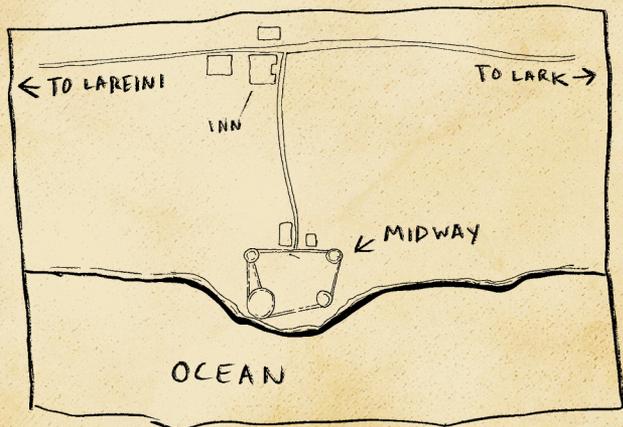
JUNE 20

MIDWAY STATION IS A FORTIFIED MILITARY STRONGHOLD ON THE NORTH SHORE OF LAREINI ISLAND, IT SITS ON A SOMEWHAT HIGHER POINT ON THE BEACH. THIS PROVIDES THE CASTLE WITH A GOOD VANTAGE POINT TO THE EAST AND THE WEST. THE CASTLE ITSELF IS USUALLY OFF LIMITS, BUT THE SMALL VILLAGE NEARBY HAS EVERYTHING A TRAVELLER NEEDS.

THE ADDED BONUS TO HAVING THIS OUTPOST ON THE ROAD IS THE LACK OF CRIME. MILITARY PATROLS HAPPEN QUITE OFTEN ON THE ROAD AND BY SEA. I'M GOING TO REST HERE ANOTHER NIGHT - I THINK POP WOULD ENJOY THAT AS WELL.



MIDWAY STATION FROM THE SEA, AS BEST AS I CAN TELL.



June 21

TODAY I'M GOING TO SPEND THE ENTIRE DAY EXPLORING THE AREA AROUND MIDWAY. I'VE GOT TO SAY, THE FOOD ISN'T HALF BAD HERE EITHER. I'VE BEEN STAYING AT "THE CRACKED CASK", AND THEY SERVE SOME OF THE BEST FRIED FISH I'VE HAD IN A LONG TIME.

I'VE DECIDED THERE ISN'T MUCH GOING ON HERE. I SAT WITH FROCIO FOR MOST OF THE NIGHT, HE SPOKE AT

LENGTH ABOUT ALL THE PEOPLE HE MEETS, AND HE WISHED ME WELL ON MY JOURNEY. THAT WAS FUN, I USUALLY DON'T MEET PEOPLE THAT FRIENDLY. I'VE HEARD LAREINI

FROCIO'S FRIED FISH



CITY IS A LOT MORE FREE SPIRITED THAN LARK, WHICH WILL BE EXCITING. ONE THING I'M WARY ABOUT THOUGH IS ONCE I START MOVING SOUTH I HEAR IT'S DOWNRIGHT LAWLESS AMONG THE SMALLER ISLANDS. PIRATE COUNTRY.

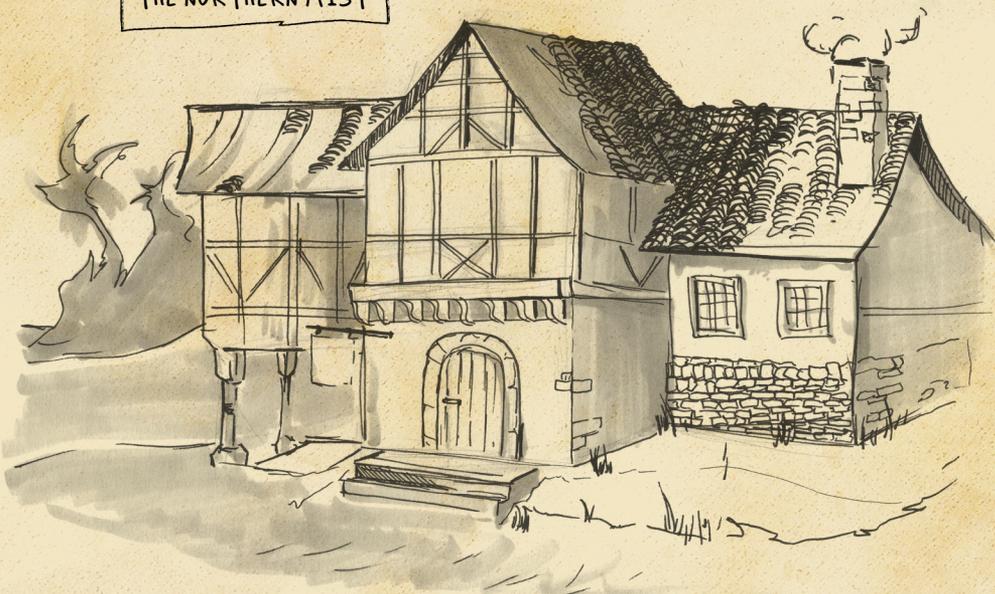
JUNE 22

POP AND I LEFT MIDWAY AROUND SUNRISE. I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE WHERE WE ARE NOW. IF I HAD TO GUESS, WE ARE ROUGHLY HALFWAY, IF NOT A BIT CLOSER TO LAREINI CITY. WE STOPPED FOR FRESH WATER A FEW HOURS AGO, WHICH IS GOOD BECAUSE THERE ISN'T MUCH HERE. SHOULD BE FINE THOUGH, I'M GUESSING I'LL BE THERE BEFORE NOON TOMORROW.

June 23

WE ARRIVED!! A LITTLE LATER THAN I THOUGHT, BUT THAT'S OK. THIS IS CLEARLY THE ECONOMIC HEART OF THE ISLAND. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO HERE, BUT I THINK I'LL STAY FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS AND ENJOY MYSELF.

THE NORTHERN MIST



June 24

MY FIRST NIGHT, (AND MAYBE MORE), WAS SPENT AT "THE NORTHERN MIST". THIS IS A LOVELY PLACE JUST ON THE MAIN ROAD

LEADING TO THE CITY FROM THE NORTH. SO FAR I AM IMPRESSED BY THE DEMOGRAPHIC HERE. IT TRULY IS A MODERN METROPOLIS. I HAVE SEEN ALL MANNER OF PEOPLE AND IT'S ONLY BEEN ONE NIGHT.

AFTER A SHORT WALK FROM THE NORTHERN MIST I FOUND MYSELF IN A DENSE CITY THAT WAS SOMEHOW ONE WITH THE JUNGLE. NOT AT ALL LIKE LARK, WHICH IS APPARENTLY A MUCH DRIER CLIMATE. THE PEOPLE, THE VENDORS AND THE SHIPS - SUCH AN AMAZING PLACE! THE CASTLE KEEP OF LAREINI WAS BUILT ON THE WATER, MUCH IN THE SAME WAY AS MIDWAY. IT'S JUST STARTING TO POKE INTO VIEW

THROUGH THE TREES. ALL THE HOUSES HERE ARE CONSTRUCTED VERY MUCH LIKE THEY WERE ON THE MAINLAND. NOT SURE WHY I'M SURPRISED, I GUESS I WAS EXPECTING PALM WOOD HUTS. FROM WHAT I CAN TELL, THIS IS THE LARGEST CITY IN CADEN.



LAREINI -
NORTH DOCKS

I MUST TRY AND REMEMBER TO FIND ANOTHER FISH FRYER. THE FISHERMEN HERE HAVE HAD THE MOST IMPRESSIVE LUCK!



JUNE 25



AFTER A DAY OR TWO OF EXPLORING, I FINALLY FEEL LIKE I HAVE MY BEARINGS IN THIS CITY. I SPENT THE MORNING ON THE EAST DOCKS, WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE SHIPS COME THROUGH. I'VE LEARNED THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENT PORTS HERE. ONE FOR COMMERCIAL TRADE, ONE FOR THE MILITARY, WHICH IS NEAR THE CASTLE, AND THE LAST ONE IS FOR PRIVATE BOATS. THIS LAST ONE IS WHERE I'VE BEEN, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF TOWN. IT IS CURIOUS HOW BUSY THIS PLACE IS. I FIND MYSELF WONDERING WHERE EVERYONE IS COMING FROM AND GOING TO.

I WAS ABLE TO TAKE A SHORT SAIL TOUR AROUND THE CITY, WHICH GAVE ME GREAT VIEWS OF THE CITY.



JUNE 26-

THE ROAD TO LARABAR-

AFTER OUR GLORIOUS TIME IN LAREINI CITY, POP AND I ARE CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY SOUTH. I'VE BEEN TOLD THERE ARE TWO PATHS I CAN TAKE, ONE THAT FOLLOWS THE COASTLINE, WHEREAS THE OTHER GOES THROUGH THE JUNGLE. THE COAST, FROM WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD, IS MOSTLY UNEVENTFUL, SO WE DECIDED TO GO INLAND. THIS ROAD LOOKS QUITE A BIT MORE EXCITING, AND TAKES US THROUGH TWO NOTABLE LANDMARKS. THE FIRST, WHERE I AM NOW, IS THE LONG FORGOTTEN RUINS OF THE OLD LAREINI CITY. ALL THAT REMAINS NOW ARE GIANT STONE WALLS CRUMBLING, ACTIVELY BEING TAKEN OVER BY THE



JUNGLE. I'M TOLD THAT THE CURRENT CITY HAS A LOT OF THESE OLDER STRUCTURES REMAINING AS PART OF ITS FOUNDATION, AND LOTS OF UNDERGROUND PASSAGES AS A RESULT.

THE OTHER ATTRACTION ALONG THIS PATH, I SHOULD REACH TOMORROW. THIS IS A LAKESIDE VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS CALLED LARABAR. IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE VERY BEAUTIFUL THERE.

ALONG THE WAY WE FOUND A CLEARING. IT'S NOT IDEAL, BUT I CAN SPREAD SOME OF THE LARGER LEAVES DOWN FOR SOME BEDDING. WE CAN HOPE THAT IT DOESN'T RAIN TONIGHT.

I NEED TO REMEMBER TO LOCATE A BOTANIST WHEN I GET TO THE NEXT CITY. THERE ARE A LOT OF INTERESTING PLANTS IN THE INTERIOR THAT WEREN'T ON THE BEACHES.





JUNE 27TH -

THANKFULLY IT DIDN'T RAIN LAST NIGHT. THE INSECTS AND JUNGLE NOISES WERE A LITTLE CONCERNING, BUT WE DID OK. WE REACHED LARABAR A LITTLE AFTER MID DAY, AND THE STORIES DIDN'T DISAPPOINT. THERE IS ABOUT TWENTY OR SO STRUCTURES SURROUNDING A SMALLISH LAKE FED BY THE STREAM IN THE MOUNTAINS ABOVE. THE WATER IS CLEAR AND IN THE AFTERNOON LIGHT IT HAS A PLEASANT BLUE AND GREEN HUE TO IT.

I WILL LIKELY SPEND A DAY HERE EXPLORING. HOWEVER, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ROAD, THE JUNGLE IS TOO DENSE TO EXPLORE.

I CHECKED INTO A LOCAL PLACE CALLED THE TANGLEWOOD INN. THE PLACE IS VERY NICE INSIDE, THEY HAVE DECORATED THE GREAT HALL WITH MANY SHIELDS, TOOLS AND WEAPONS. THE TAPESTRIES AND CLOTH DRAPES ARE ALSO QUITE PLEASING.

I GOT TO TALKING TO ANOTHER PATRON CALLED BERNARD DALANTHAN. I ORDERED A CHICKEN PIE WHILE HE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE. THE TOWN IS VERY SMALL, BUT THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTRAINTS IN THE VALLEY. IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT, IT WOULD BE QUITE LARGE. HE TOLD ME THERE ARE SEVERAL MINES IN THE AREA MAKING THE TOWN VERY WEALTHY.



JUNE 28TH -

I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED MY STAY AT THE TANGLEWOOD INN, THE ROOMS WERE CLEAN AND THE BED WAS SOFT. I COULD TELL THIS PLACE WAS VERY WELL KEPT. THE FOOD WAS BASIC, BUT LOOKED VERY WELL. THERE ISN'T A LOT TO DO IN THIS SMALL TOWN, BUT IT MAKES FOR A BEAUTIFUL SPOT TO REST IN THE MOUNTAINS. TODAY I HAVE BEEN WANDERING AROUND THE TOWN AND MEETING VARIOUS PEOPLE. I EVEN SPENT SOME TIME FISHING IN THE LAKE WITH THE LOCALS. I WILL STAY AT THE INN ONE MORE NIGHT BEFORE I BEGIN MY JOURNEY TO LONG SHORE. INITIALLY I DIDN'T THINK I COULD MAKE THIS JOURNEY WITHOUT HAVING TO GO BACK TO THE COAST, HOWEVER I LEARNED THAT THERE IS A MOUNTAIN PASS THAT WILL CUT DAYS OFF OF MY JOURNEY. FROM THERE I THINK I WILL HEAD SOUTH TO VISIT THE OTHER ISLANDS.

v

THE EXPLORER'S JOURNAL - VOLUME 1

IN THIS BOOK, THE ADVENTURE STARTS BY FOLLOWING THE NARRATOR AS HE TRAVELS FROM THE MAINLAND OF CADEN TO LAREINI ISLAND, OVER THE NORTHERN SHORE TO THE CAPITAL CITY AND FINALLY TO MAKING HIS WAY INTO THE JUNGLE INTERIOR.

Website/Blog:

<https://www.wkwillustrations.com>

Patreon:

<https://www.patreon.com/williamcopic>

Etsy Shop:

<https://greywizardshop.etsy.com>