

THE VILLAGE OF LAKESIDE IN CASTELLAN VALLEY

In the far north of the Duchy of Karameikos lies a small but fertile valley at the head of the Castellan River. The valley is about 10 miles long and at its widest 5 miles wide. The valley is a fertile floodplain nestled between the majestic snow capped lower peaks of the Altantepes Mountains.

The land has a natural rugged beauty, its rivers & streams are swift, clean and clear, its lakes are deep and dark, the trees are tall and many would take a dozen men to surround their girth. The forests consist mainly of oaks, elms & birches to the east & south and pine & cedar to the north. The open areas are lush and brimming with wild flowers and grasses. The forests teem with wildlife, deer are plentiful as well as bears, wolves & other natural prey. Birds flock to the trees & waters. And its waters teem with trout, eels, pikes and many other types of fish. Beavers, badgers, stoats, rabbits, ferrets & possums mean that there is a plentiful supply of fur.

The surrounding mountains are harsh and unforgiving, and are the home of many ferocious animals. Mountain goats and lions are the least of the worries when one explores the surrounding mountains. Orcs and goblins have been known to venture down from the north. A small tribe of kobolds have a hidden lair to the west and giants are known to live in the far north. A swamp is located to the north of the valley and occasionally attracts the odd interesting creature.

The winters are harsh and long, with snow lasting 4 months of the year, wolves abound in winter and along with the weather makes this season a foreboding one. The springs are quick and lush and growth of crops in this valley is swift, summers are slow and hot & fairly dry, but snow melt provides cool clear water in even the driest of summers. The valley in Autumn is a glorious riot of colours, with fruit, nuts & berries in plentiful supply and the deer is numerous & fat.

In the south of the valley there lies a lake. The Lake is approx 1 mile long and half a mile wide, and is very very deep. Located in the middle of the lake is a small island with a ruined tower on it. The lake has sandy shores to the south west and feeds a small cataract that leads to the waterfalls that drops over a 100 foot high plateau edge. The supply of fish from the lake is plentiful and never seems to lessen. The forests grow to the lakes edge in the north & east but have been cleared to the west. about two dozens farms dot the land that rises to the mountains to west. Over the past 100 years the forests of the west have been felled for the fine white oaks that were growing there. Arising in their place in this lush fertile land are the farms that dot the plain. Each farm consists of solid stone buildings with stout iron bound doors, easy to defend and well protected from the harsh winters. Lumberer and trapping families have lived in the surrounding forests since time immemorial.

There have been people living in this rough untamed frontier wilderness for over 300 years. Ruins near the valley show that there were people occupying parts of the valley back in times long forgotten.

Over time a village slowly formed to service the farms and local folk, a blacksmith, mason, thatcher, cooper, & tavern arose. As the village grew so did the services it offered, an inn was built and a tanner and teamster families moved in. Fishing families harvest the bountiful supply of fish from the lake. 6 years ago Jordan

Tranadular, the son of a local trapper, came back after 20 years adventuring and built a small keep on the hills overlooking the village, this is surrounded by a stout stone wall 15 foot high and is large enough to hold all the villages in times of emergencies.

The village and areas directly around the Lake is home to 7 clans like families of Humans, a few dozen individual families, a family of Hobbits, and a clan of gnomes. Located 10 miles to the east of the lake lies the clan home of the Valarium Elves of the White Oaks. Situated 3 miles west of the lake is the Monastery Of Enlightenment, home of an order of reclusive mystics.

The Clans of Humans are, The Sulan's, The Blackthorn's, The Borski's, The Sulanov's, The Norragon's, The Demetrois's, The Delikemos's. The Halfling family are know as the Stouts and the Gnomes are the Glitternarls.

12 years ago a large Orcish horde stormed down from the northern mountains killing and looting the homesteads and destroyed the small village. A combined local force of Elves and settlers barely defeated these orcs at a cost of many of their lives. Lord Stephan Karameikos heard of their plight and built Castle Castellan at the north of the valley.

The village grew as the Castellan Keep required food and other staples to survive. A few more families moved in to service this requirement.

At the edge of the village a powerful druid has a shrine dedicated to Ordana and preaches that humans and nature need to live in harmony, she has spent many years trying to convince the lumberers to leave the majestic white oaks alone and to harvest the more numerous and faster growing pines of the lower mountains. This has had limited success, sufficient that the oak forests appear to not be receding.

A temple to light has been built in the village by a adventuring friend of Jordans. A second adventuring friend set up a horse farm to the north while the last, a magican of some skill, built a tower on the northern hill and retired to contemplate how the multiverse works.

This is your village,
This is your home,
THIS IS YOUR LIFE.

A Day In The Life Of The Village Of Lakeside

The long harsh winter months are over, the snow has melted and the hills are covered with the bright green of a new spring. Floating across a crisp blue sky skids clean white clouds promising spring rains and a bountiful harvest. In the fields, under the warm spring sun, newly born foals gambol and fleecy lambs play. The trees are alive with birds and bright butterflies flutter across the meadows. In the fields the new crops have been planted and their crisp green shoots reach towards the sun.

In vineyards nearby buds are bursting forth, as though shouting to the world, it is spring, it is spring. Orchards are filled with many coloured blossoms and gentle wind wafts the sweet scent of apple blossoms across the village square.

Yes, the sweet & subtle scents of spring, you know them well. For this is the village of Lakeside, you have known it for all your life. Sturdy stone houses with thatched roofs, each house with its own gardens and fruit trees, with chickens scratching the fresh soil looking for fat spring worms. Stone fences line winding dirt roads, still bogging from the spring thaw, the fresh spring grasses growing beside them and small oaks are dotting along many of them. All the windows of the village are open, the goodwives are spring cleaning, in the back yards, stand those children who were unlucky enough not to get away and they stand there beating the dust from carpets used over the winter months.

You stand in the village square and take in the surrounding life that means home. The tall inn with its orange clay tiled roof and many stone chimneys. Angus Blackthorn, the blacksmith, with arms the size of most men's thighs, he beats a bar of iron into a horse shoe for the large Clydesdales that Fedrick will rent out to any farmer who needs stumps pulled from their paddocks. Old Marcus Norragon, still working at 65 is up on the Dance Hall, checking that the thatching has survived another winter.

The gently wind swings a sign depicting a lady of beauty and grace, The Graceful Lady is a rambling single story tavern that is also home to the Sulan Clan, if we are lucky we might hear Sylvia "Sweettounge" Sulan singing there tonight.

In the NE corner of the square stands a tall graceful stone building with fluted columns and fancyful statues, this is the temple of light and its doors are wide open welcoming all to come in and seek the blessings of the gods of law.

To the south is the new general store, with its barrels of goods lined up outside, while inside is the smell of many herbs and spices, tar and rope, candles and paper, pots & pans and the many, many things that the good folk of the village lived without but are now coming to treasure, sweeping the porch is Julius and his wife Cinthia, a young couple fresh up from Specularum.

To the East is the townhall, with its stout stone walls and windows with bars, inside is the single holding cell, often occupied by old Huie the town drunk, he staggers inside on many a night and uses the cell's soft mattress to sleep away his nights revelry.

Constable Ahurian Truian stands outside dressing down the village guards, fellow villagers look on in amusement as it has been a long winter and the guards are sorely out of shape and in much need of practice.

Looking past the townhall and the houses next to it, you notice the gentle waves lap on the sandy shores of the deep blue lake that the village is named after.

Folk are wandering into village square, they arrive on the main northern road that runs through the village square on its way to Castellan Keep.

Overlooking the square on the hills to the west is Mansion of Jordan Tranadular, a local hero who, after many years of adventuring, came home with a wife and built a beautiful house. To the north is the stark tall tower of the Mage Morlos, pointing like a black finger at the bright sun overhead.

Today is a special day, it is the feast of Beltine, a celebration of spring, growth & rebirth. Trestles are being taken out and set up in the village square, and the air is thick with feast favourites being cooked, in the middle of the square a whole deer being roasted along with two pigs and 3 sheep. Ale casks are set up to one side, along with wine, cider and the potent apple brandy made by the Mystics of Nei. You look ahead to a day of games of all types, tests of strength and skill, speed and endurance, wrestling, sword fighting and archery. It will be a day of feasting and a night of drinking and dancing... and time of secret trysts. It will be a day to remember.

After an amazing day of successful and not quite so successful competitions, an afternoon of glorious food and an evening of revelry, you open your bleary eyes.... you are cold and damp from sleeping in the back yard of Marcus the Thatcher... with you are a number of other excitable youths around your age..... and looking at you with a look of sympathy is a soldier from Castellan keep... you wonder why it looks at you sympathetically..... then the pounding begins and those extra brandies decide they want to see sunlight... all of you except Thralum race to the fence and are violently sick... Thralum laughs with a deep throaty laugh as though you were running a race.... and then you remember him saying the night before.... I beat you 1 gold piece you will all be sick in the morning.. Thralum is now 5 gold pieces richer.