

Cursed Village

1. Characters:

- Anca – (fallen) priestess of Melitele. She was cast out of her order because she believed that people shouldn't be directly helped but that they must learn to help themselves. She also believes in destiny, that it can't be avoided and that people should live with the consequences of their actions and not hide from them. She found the village after she was cast out, while she was trying to prove to herself and her former sister that the way she saw things was right, and she decided to remain here in order to help the villagers deal with the curse.
- Razvan – assassin. He is stuck in the village for half a year; he has sent a message asking for assistance, but Geralt is the only one that managed to reach him. He was on route for an assassination and rested for a night at the inn, only to find out that he can't leave the village anymore. He finds life in the village boring and wishes to return to the bloody life he had before this.
- Lavia – villager. Always cries for her baby. Says he was killed by "the beast".
- Andu – Lavia's husband. Always accompanies his wife and doesn't let her give to many details about their son.
- Old man Irus – villager. Everybody blames him for the curse. He seems insane and it's hard to make sense of what he says.
- 6 other villagers, husband and wife, that don't want to exchange words with Geralt.

2. Setting:

- The villagers (except Irus) reside in the main part of the village. They wake up and the morning and just stay in front of their houses, doing routine actions. There's nothing of value to be found in their houses.
- Anca – resides in the village. At day she walks the streets preaching about redemption and at night sleeps in her house. Wardrobe in her house contains her diary, which shows her view on the world.
- The Inn is the house of Razvan and Irus. Razvan stays here because he finds the villagers boring and this is the only place that has alcohol. He never sleeps, waiting impatiently for the witcher to solve the situation and to set him free. Irus hides in a room, horrified, praying all day long and talking to himself.
- Meadows – this is where most echinopses attacks happen.
- Ruins – haunted at night by wraiths.

3. Monsters:

- Wraiths – can be found at night in the ruins. Also, they attack when Geralt tries to leave map during the night
- Echinopses – they appear along the road, on exit point from the map, having the same behavior in day as wraiths in night.

4. Plot synopsis

a. Introduction

- The witcher comes to the villages because he has heard there is a curse and that someone named Razvan is offering a reward for whomever removes it.
- He enters the map and heads for the village. No one wants to speak with him except for Anca who recognizes Geralt as a witcher and dismisses him, saying that the village has everything it needs, and that his help is not welcomed. Geralt tries to find out more about the curse but the priestess insists that the blessing Melitele is all the villagers need. She directs Geralt to the location on Razvan.
- Geralt goes to the Inn and meets Razvan. The assassin tells him how he got to the village and now he can't leave because echinopses attack him during the day, and wraiths during the night, if he tries to leave the village. He doesn't reveal his "profession". He wants the witcher to destroy the echinopses and indicates the meadows as the place where they can be found.

b. Plot development

- The witcher heads to the meadows and slays the echinopses. He notes that these creatures usually grow over violent deaths.
- As he returns he meets Anca. She says she has warned him not to interfere. She explains her philosophy on what is happening – the village is cursed for a reason, and just destroying the perils won't help them. They have to learn to deal with what they have done. Helping them will only make them vulnerable to the next peril, while, if they learn to deal with this, next time they will be prepared. Plus, the villagers don't remember what brought the curse upon them and they are likely to do the same mistake again. She hates witchers because they represent only a temporary solution, blinding the people from the whole picture with their so-called help.
- Geralt returns to Razvan and tells him the quest was completed. Razvan pays him and says he needs to rest before leaving the village. Although he hates the idea of spending another night here, he hasn't closed his eyes in days and needs to get some rest before the journey. He suggests the player to do the same.
- Geralt is woken by the assassin who is screaming and cursing. He had tried to leave the village in the morning but was attacked by echinopses. He accuses the witcher for not doing his job. He also reveals that he is an assassin and he made a big mistake by not killing Geralt in his sleep and taking the money. He continues to babble about his good days. Geralt doesn't approve of the assassin's ways, but a deal is a deal and he says he will help Razvan leave the village.
- Geralt investigates in the village:
 - Most villagers don't want to talk to him
 - Lavia seems crazy and cries over her baby, cursing the beast that killed him. She tries to talk about great fortune and cursed baby, but her husband doesn't let her talk

- Andu stops his wife from talking and tries to push the witcher away. He says the old man is the only one responsible, but wouldn't give any other details.
- Anca is reluctant to talk, as she doesn't approve of the witcher. She warns him that no good will come if he continues to help that murderer and hopes that Geralt now see that everything happens for a reason – Razvan is trapped here to repent for the crimes he has committed; if he is allowed to leave he will just do more harm. She is sure that once the assassin will give up his evil ways, he will be able to leave the village.
- Geralt returns to the Inn without finding too much. When asked about and old man, Razvan tells him that the only one he knows is the one hiding in a room in the Inn.
- Geralt enters Irus' room to find him praying. The old man thinks he is alone and says that is sorry for the greed, for the murders; especially for the cripple kid. He can't escape the memory of the blade cutting his body. When he realizes Geralt is hearing him, he starts mumbling scared, mentioning only "sins", "gold" and "ruins".
- Geralt talks to Razvan who tells him there are some ruins nearby and that they are haunted by wraiths at night. He suggests that maybe slaying the wraiths will free the village. Geralt goes to investigate.
- When he arrives there (at night) he witnesses a scene – to wraiths seems to be talking – one is saying "I had to slay him, he was a disgrace to our legacy, we can make plenty more. Now we are rich – kings can't have proofs of their bad blood." The wraiths notice Geralt and he kills them. Investigating the ruins he find a chest with some gold coins.

c. *The Choice*

- Geralt returns to the Inn where he finds Razvan and Anca arguing. He tells them what he has found at the ruins and how he has connected the facts – the villagers might have discovered some treasure and their greed made them kill each other.
- While he talks, Irus appears and confirms his theory. He says the few that found the gold were blinded with greed and decided everyone would get a bigger share if the treasure wouldn't have to be divided between too many. So they decided to kill the other villagers in their sleep and bury them in the meadows. But after a day Irus felt guilty, and his remorse overwhelmed him and the guilt created the monster that guard the village. After his confession, the old man goes to his room and refuses to talk.
- Geralt has to make a choice:
 - Razvan's side – he thinks the old man is the cause of the curse and that killing him should lift it. He points out that the man is guilty for destroying the life of the other villagers, plus the eventual travelers, like Razvan, that would stumble across the village and remain trapped here. He finds no wrong in their greed, but condemns his selfishness, as he made the deaths useless as the survivors can't use the gold that they have killed for.
 - Anca's side – she thinks that the old man is on the right path by repenting, and that the others should do the same. She thinks that they should confront

the villagers with what they have done and make them choose the same path. She thinks that the treasure is the sign of destiny – a lesson about greed that the survivors should learn if they repent.

d. *Aftermath*

1. *Razvan's side*

- The witcher decides that killing the old man is the right thing to do as it will lift the curse. Irus doesn't resist as he is glad to find liberation in death.
- Geralt, Razvan and Anca travel to the village and on the way they find dead echinopses, sign the curse was lifted.
- They tell the villagers what has happened and the villagers are rejoiced – finally they can spend the money. Andu tells his wife now they can restart their life and that she should be glad because she is rich and beautiful. They can make a new child, a normal one, not like that bad blood.
- Anca tries to tell the villagers that they should feel sorry for their crime and learn of the evils of greed, but nobody wants to listen to her, everybody is heading towards their homes. She is angry at the witcher, saying that all he has managed to do here is ruin the life of these people who find it normal to kill for treasure.
- Razvan is glad he is finally free, but he says that now that everything is normal he wants to stay and investigate the ruins, maybe there's treasure left for him.
- Geralt leaves.

2. *Anca's side*

- Geralt, Razvan, Anca and Irus travel to the village to confront the others. They tell them they have found out about what happened. Anca talks about how wrong it was, but that they can still be saved, and that this will only make them stronger in the path for salvation, as their hearts will be now cleaner than before. They must renounce their treasure and repent for what they have done.
- Andu screams that he hasn't killed his progeny only to remain empty handed because of the stupidity of an old man. He tells his wife to come with him, get the gold and try to escape. She refuses as she never forgave him for killing their child and believes the path of the priestess is the right one. Andu runs away.
- Anca continues to try and convince the others. As she talks, the screams of Andu are heard, signs that he has been killed by something. Anca pleads that this expects everyone – a meaningful death if they don't realize their sins.
- The villagers begin to be convinced by her, and their greed and craziness seems to disappear, as some of them start crying for what they have done.
- Only one not content is Razvan, but the priestess assures him that he could find salvation too. Razvan only accepts because he hopes that the curse will disappear soon, as Irus' vision is embraced by all.
- Geralt leaves.

e. *Ending*

1. *Choosing Razvan's side*

- As Geralt almost leaves the village he hears screams and fire starts spreading. He tries to turn back and help, he sees Razvan running towards him – the villagers got overwhelmed with greed again: they killed the priestess first because she was insisting that they give up the money. Then they started killing each other. The assassin says he might have joined “the party”, but everybody had an insane look that even scared him
- Geralt thinks that perhaps the priestess was right – witchers provide only a temporary solution, causing problems in the long run. Perhaps some curses belong in this world.

2. *Choosing Anca's side*

- As Geralt almost leaves the village he hears screams. He tries to turn back and help only to see Anca running towards him – the villager's guilt created new monsters. As they thought they should be punished for their actions, this thought transformed into reality and started punishing the literally.
- Anca doesn't understand how this can be – if the villagers saw the wrong in their way, why did they have to be killed? Where is the life lesson that should make you stronger in all of this?
- Geralt think that some persons can't live with the consequences of their actions and that guilt is a heavy weight. Perhaps it is better to have a cold heart and not care about the world surrounding you, as ignorance makes your life easier.

A comment from Artur Ganszyniec:

The story has an interesting plot and both sides of the conflict have strong and unusual motivations. The players will have to ask themselves, what it really means to take responsibility and whether it is right to help people out of troubles they caused by their own actions. The only doubts I have, concern the ending of the story. It was supposed to make a point, but it turned out to be a little unclear. I'd suggest adding some positive aspects to the ending, or put more effort into preparing the players for what is about to happen. This will make the story more clear and the point stronger .

A comment from Katarzyna Kuczyńska:

You wrote a really nice story, the characters have their motivations and beliefs, and the plot is based on an interesting conflict. You could think about telling this story not only by dialogs, but also by some other means (gameplay, decorations, scenes, items). The only part I didn't like is *Ending*, maybe it would be better to finish the adventure right after Geralt leaves. The ending scenes are difficult to implement and I don't fully understand the moral.