

BRANCHING SIDE QUEST: "A PEARL OF HIDDEN DEPTHS"

Introduction: A side quest the player discovers at the river from an uncorrupted selkie. The selkie tells them that water sprites corrupted by the shadow plague have taken a precious selkie heirloom. This quest provides a seal skin which allows the player to transform into a seal, a clue indicating the geographical origin of the shadow plague (if conditions are met), and the ability to summon Nueri the selkie, unlocking her as a romanceable character (with correct dialogue choices).

EXT. The River of Tears, Selkie Sunning Rocks – Day

Several ethereal selkies laze on the rocks of the river, trailing their hands in the water and talking in a language that sounds like the song of a babbling brook. As the player approaches, a few of them dive into the water, fleeing. One selkie approaches.

Nueri: "I thought no uncorrupted fairie remained, and yet here you are. And with the power of our goddess flowing through your veins, no less."

PC: 1. Your kin seem to fear me.

2. And I am even more powerful than I look. Do not test me.

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "They assumed you corrupted along with the rest of your kind. We can't be too careful, especially after what happened with the water sprites."

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "I don't doubt it! But I mean you no harm. I come to you with a request. It is to do with the water sprites."

PC: 1. "The water sprites?"

2. "Get to the point."

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "Yes. A group of corrupted sprites have taken a precious heirloom of ours upstream. They guard it viciously, we have already lost one of our number in the attempts to retrieve it."

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: (laughs) "So feisty for a creature so small! I like it. My request is straightforward. A group of corrupted sprites have taken a precious heirloom of ours upstream. They guard it viciously, we have already lost one of our number in the attempts to retrieve it."

PC: 1. If I assist you, what do I get in return?

2. Sounds dangerous.

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "Why, my eternal adoration of course! And a token of our thanks. As for what it is, I can simply assure you that you will not be displeased."

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "Very!" [dialogue does not progress until player selects option 1]

PC: 1. I'll have to decline.
2. Give me the details and I'll consider it.

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "A shame, I liked you." (exit cutscene)

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "Of course. The sprites lie upstream near Nessa's pool. It is a dangerous whirlpool that sucks you into the sunken caverns. It would be deadly to any creature without water-breath."

PC: 1. I'll have to decline.
2. I'll do it.
3. What of the sprites?

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "Unfortunate." [Exit cutscene]

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "I appreciate your enthusiasm. Take this map to guide you." [Player acquires seaweed map, exit cutscene]

If the player chooses 3

Nueri: "The sprites are fast and deadly. The corruption has rendered their bites venomous. I advise you avoid being bitten."

PC: 1. I'll have to decline.

2. I'll do it.

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "I expected more of you. Seems I was mistaken." [Exit cutscene]

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "Excellent, take this map to guide you. I look forward to seeing you later - or else collecting your bones from the caverns. Either way, we shall meet again." (player acquires seaweed map, exit cutscene)

New quest added to quest log: "A Pearl of Hidden Depths" Find the water sprites upstream and retrieve the selkie heirloom.

If the player has gained the waterspeak ability by this point, they overhear the sprites talking amongst themselves upon approaching the whirlpool.

EXT. Nessa's Pool, The River of Tears - Day

Tiny, web-fingered sprites zip and dip among the water in a chaotic dance. Two sprites skirt the edges of the whirlpool.

Water sprite 1: "Ponki says it's a fungus."

Water sprite 2: "Ponki is touched in the head, it's not a fungus at all."

Water sprite 1: "If not a fungus then what?"

Water sprite 2: "I don't know. It comes from the North, near the Caves of the Lost. There's barely any shrooms up there." [Exit cutscene]

Player receives a new marker on their map indicating the Caves of the Lost.

After retrieving the heirloom:

Nueri: "I am pleased to see you in the flesh. A little longer and I would've begun searching the caverns for your tiny broken body!"

PC: 1. I appreciate the vote of confidence.

2. I have the heirloom. [Player gives Nueri the pearl]

If the player chooses 1

Nueri: "I meant to say, I never doubted you for a second. You have it then?"

[PC gives Nueri the pearl]

Nueri: "You have the eternal friendship of selkiekind, and my adoration. As promised, your reward." [Player gains a selkie seal skin]

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "You have the eternal friendship of selkiekind, and my adoration. As promised, your reward." [Player gains a selkie seal skin]

PC: 1. Thank you. [Exit cutscene]

2. I hope to see more of you.

If the player chooses 2

Nueri: "That can be arranged. Whisper my name into the water and I'll come to you." [Exit cutscene. Player gains the ability to summon Nueri, and unlocks her as a romanceable character.]