

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The last few generations of people residing in Shadowfield have known only one major calamity—Thibbet Vaum. This human was responsible for no less than two dozen slayings, mostly women, before he was captured by a group of brave men who had simply had enough. Neither adventurers, nor deputized lawmen, this band of individuals one day agreed to track down Vaum and end his bloody spree.

The group eventually caught up with Vaum at an abandoned ranger's homestead on Shadowfield's western frontier. The killer had been offering up his victims' hearts in some kind of gory sacrifice to a nameless deity of evil. Vaum was beaten into submission before being taken in for trial. The next day saw the vile human at the gallows in what turned out to be a solemn gathering of the entire community. It seemed as though no resident had gone untouched by Vaum's heinous deeds. The man used his last breath to curse the attendees and vow that he would somehow return to exact vengeance on those who had captured him.

These men thought little of the threat as the murderer swung by his neck and, indeed, they each lived out happy lives. It is their descendants, however, who might wind up paying for the sin of their fathers...

For the Game Master

Sin of the Fathers is an adventure for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and is geared toward 1st-level characters. The plot of this adventure is that the spirit of Thibbet Vaum has gathered together the descendants of the individuals that brought him to justice. In a specially prepared gauntlet of dangerous traps and creatures, the murderer-spirit's new form—a scarecrow—stands ready to take its revenge on the families of its enemies. It doesn't matter what races the PCs are playing or even if they have detailed family histories already written up. Somehow, they are related to the brave men who captured Vaum nine decades before the adventure begins. The characters answer an invitation to accept an inheritance and, once at the adventure site, have free reign to investigate.

If they survive the night (and the adventure), they will hopefully learn about their valiant relatives and

thus why they have been targeted by this evil entity. In addition, Vaum has not only hatched the scheme to take revenge but also to acquire a new body. The scarecrow's unnamed deity has agreed to grant this to Vaum if he offers up the PCs' hearts to it in a special ritual. The specifics of this deity as well as the area in general have been kept vague so that you might more easily place the adventure into your home campaign setting. The two specific details here are that the region is rural and the time of year is late autumn.

PART ONE: THE GATHERING

A. Invitation

This section sees the gathering of the PCs from wherever they happen to call home before starting their adventuring careers. Each character receives a letter addressed only to him/her by private carrier which the GM can read or paraphrase as follows:

To: _____

You are invited to a ceremony during which you will receive an inheritance which is past due from great uncle Huun Becktin. To claim this valuable treasure, please travel to Shadowfield by Harvest Eve [or whatever passes for Halloween or the end of October in your campaign world; the date is a week from the present date]. Late that afternoon, meet the driver at the carriage house and he will bring you to my residence. There is no need to respond in advance. Failure to arrive by the aforementioned date will result in forfeiture of your inheritance.

*Sincerely,
Fura Becktin, wife*

A character who has access to family members (or recent records of their family), can discover that their grandfather once banded together with X other individuals ("X" is the number of PCs in the party) to catch a murderer in Shadowfield. As for the community itself, what the PCs can discover before heading there is up to the GM. In a nutshell, Shadowfield is an area of 15 farms surrounding a handful of buildings that comprise the community's "civilized" face, including a general store/trading post, tavern (with three bedrooms above it), stable/



carriage house, smithy, constable, and a bakery/produce shop. There's some traffic every day, mostly around highsun, as Shadowfield is located almost equidistantly between two larger cities.

It's quite possible that PCs making their way to Shadowfield might bump into one another en route (depending on where in the campaign world they are traveling from). The characters can swap notes on what they know about the farming region and possibly bond before the actual adventure begins. Whether the GM is inclined to have this type of pre-module meet-and-greet depends greatly on his own style of GMing and whether or not the players would enjoy the roleplaying. For those groups who jump right to the carriage house, nothing will be lost as the opportunity to converse with the other characters is present there.

B. Shadowfield

As described above, Shadowfield is a small collection of buildings surrounded by over a dozen farms that stretch a few miles in every direction from the center of "town." In the likely event the PCs decide to arrive early to the rendezvous and do some exploring, the

main buildings are described below (full NPC stats and descriptions can be found at the end of the adventure).

Constabulary: Local law is enforced by a single human monk in his mid-40s named Nemek.

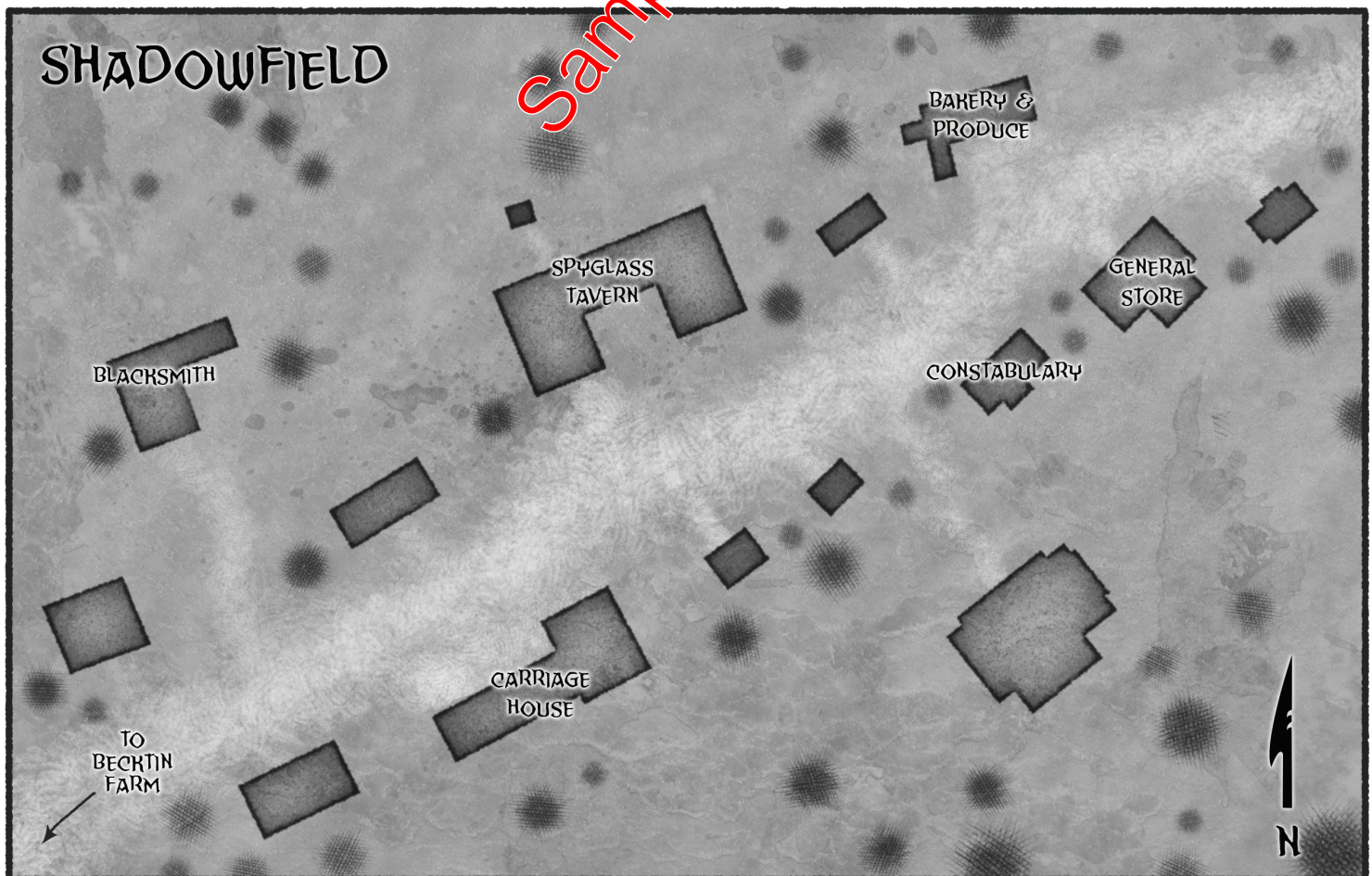
General Store: "Sputz" has the standard items here as in any general store. The variety is good but there is not high volume given the area's small populace and limited traffic.

Bakery/Produce: The smells of baked goods and fruit waft out of the open door to this business. Patrice also keeps a selection of hearty "pack pies" (dense concentration of dried fruit and nuts within a doughy shell) for adventurers passing through town.

Smithy: Wren can offer repair services to battered/broken weapons and has a small selection of simple and martial weapons for sale (85% chance of a PC's choice being mastework).

The Spyglass Tavern: Jemis Rhone runs this well kept tavern. Menu is limited but the prices are fair and the quality excellent.

Carriage House: Nelf'difan runs this establishment and is happy to run fares day or night.



C. The Carriage House

At the appointed time, the PCs should convene at Nelf'difan's business. The half-elf is ready to go (and pleasantly greets each PC hoping for tips) and says, "I've been instructed to take you folks to the Becktin farm. Please climb into the carriage and we'll be off." Nelf knows little about this whole scenario except that the Becktin's haven't been seen for a few days (at least not seen by him) and that a letter from Fura Becktin asked him to deliver visitors at this time to their home (with generous tip enclosed).



Read or paraphrase the following as the trip progresses: *The dirt road from Shadowfield is bumpy but Nelf drives with a practiced hand. The three miles out to the Becktin farm pass quickly enough but the darkness of twilight descends early as the sun dips below the mountains further to the west. The half-elf stops the wagon at a bend in the road at a small pond. The dirt path winds another few hundred feet to a farmhouse, where smoke is barely seen rising lazily from it. "I'm to drop you here and have you walk the rest of the way. Sorry, but I do as my clients instruct. Enjoy your evening, folks!"*

Only a faceless, cock-eyed scarecrow (not Vaum) greets the PCs at the edge of the nearly-harvested corn field. A sudden breeze blows the scarecrow's rumpled hat off of it and sends desiccated husks tumbling past the group as they start toward the home.

PART TWO: CAT AND MOUSE

A. Becktin Beckons [CR 3]

As the PCs approach, it is obvious that a fire is burning inside the farmhouse. Besides the column of smoke, a flickering light can be seen in what is likely the common room. Observant PCs will note that the smoke is actually coming from a front window (DC 12 Perception) and not from the chimney! When the front door is opened, read or paraphrase the following:

Inside this living area, a figure sits with its back to you in a frail-looking chair. It is backlit by a fireplace and seemingly unbothered by the smoke that permeates the room. It is difficult to make out the room's features because of the smoke and the near-twilight conditions outside.

On closer inspection, the figure is actually a corpse—or, to be more precise, a yellow musk creeper zombie. Its corpse status should be easy to ascertain from the human's sickly green skin and the yellow veins that permeate its face. If a PC comes this close to the zombie, its eyelids snap open suddenly to reveal pupiless yellow eyes before reaching out with filthy claws to attack. The combat should proceed as follows:

Round 1 – The seated zombie is (or rather was) Huun Becktin. He rises and engages the closest PC while the yellow musk creeper he was seated on sprays the next closest foe with its pollen attack (DC 14 Will save).

Round 2 – Huun continues to attack and the creeper plant attacks anyone within its tendril's 10-foot reach. Continue until both creatures are slain.

Special – Because of the smoky interior, all sight is obscured (foes within 10 feet have concealment, 20% miss chance; foes farther away have total concealment, 50% miss chance)

After the battle, the PCs may discover that the chimney's flu was closed and sealed with packed