

THE HOLLOWFIELD HARVEST FESTIVAL



An Introduction Adventure for 1st Level in
Shadows over Vathak Horror Roleplaying Game

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Based in South Carolina, USA, Fat Goblin Games was founded in 2011 to create Pathfinder Roleplaying Game compatible products. With a focus on high-quality production values and providing a creative environment for our team of freelancers (The Fat Goblin Hoarde), Fat Goblin Games has quickly become a recognized force in the world of Third Party Publishers of not just the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and 5th Edition Fantasy, but also supporting the vs. M Engine, our own Difference Engine, and TinyD6 games originally produced by Gallant Knight Games. With hundreds of support books, visual aids, campaign settings, and quality stock art, Fat Goblin Games continues to provide exciting content and fantastic worlds in which gamers can immerse themselves.

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Adventure Primer

Adventure Level: 1-3rd Levels

Estimated Duration: 1-3 hours

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Every year, during the harvest season of Octombrie, Hollowfield hosts a weeklong festival that attracts merchants, farmers, and craftsmen from nearby towns and cities. This year, the usually peaceful village finds themselves the center of a series of strange events looking to ruin the merriment.

The local cemetery has been desecrated, at night strange noises are disturbing the guests, and there is trouble at the old saw mill. What could be causing these disturbances? And can adventurers from afar save this year's festival?

ADVENTURE LOCATION

The village of Hollowfield represents the “anytown” in the lands of Vathak and can be placed in any area you choose. Hollowfield is a medium-sized village with nearby agriculture and industry prospects (such as logging and mining) but not to an extent that the business is “booming” and the area is seeing massive growth. It's normally “a good day's travel” from the next nearest, larger town or city.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Hollowfield and its festival is a perfect location and event to start a new campaign and get a low-level party together and adventuring.

- 🎯 **Festival Time** The Harvest Festival at Hollowfield is known around the region and many people (including merchants, artisans, and farmers) come to celebrate each year. Characters can easily be attending the festival on their own or with family, or on business.
- 🎯 **Hollowfield Citizen** Although this might give the characters advantage in this adventure, they could possibly all be from Hollowfield and grew up here and surrounding areas. They might have a passing knowledge of some of the residents, but assuming they are young or from the outskirts of town, they might not be completely familiar with a lot of the issues taking place.
- 🎯 **Passing Through** Like many adventurers, the characters could just be passing through the area when they hear about the festival from the many travelling merchants, or even by stumbling into the village itself. This works for low-level adventurers that might be looking for a nearby village to rest and restock.
- 🎯 **First Meetings** This adventure and the Harvest Festival that is part of it is an ideal way to “get the characters together” — if this is the group's first adventure — for future adventuring. It is easy to come up with reasons for any individual character to be at Hollowfield and the threat presented forms a natural way for them to come together.

HOLLOWFIELD AS A RECURRING VILLAGE

Hollowfield represents our template of a standard village in the lands of Vathak. It ideally fits anywhere you want it to be on the map, in any region, and is perfect for a hometown or even as a template for recurring villages the adventurers visit. We will be exploring more adventures and people of Hollowfield in future releases of our *Vathak Times*, so make sure to check it out by joining our **Patreon** at:

<https://www.patreon.com/vathak5th>



Welcome to the world of Shadows over Vathak, a realm of dwindling hope and despair. As players, your characters fight to survive in a land threatened with destruction by the rise of the ancient and evil Old Ones and their spawn. Your characters may represent points of light in the darkness or give in to wicked temptations. Most will fall somewhere in between — survivors struggling to eke out another day. Though the followers of the One True God speak of divine providence while battling the Old Ones, the sins of the Church often rival those of their enemies. In the world of Vathak, your character's perceptions of heroes and villains is a thin line drawn by their own personal morality and, of course, determined by the victor.

This adventure is set in the dark fantasy world of Vathak. As such there are references to the history, characters, and locations of that world. However, with a little bit of alteration, these adventures can be suited for any horror themed 5th edition game.

If you are new to Shadows over Vathak, make sure you join our [Patreon](#) and receive a free copy of the *Explorer's Guide to Vathak*.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, it is recommended that you have copies of the 5th Edition core rulebooks.

In this adventure you might come across spells, abilities, creatures, magic items, and other references to content from these corebooks. When this happens that item will appear in bold/red text, like this:

"The **goblins** are waiting to attack the caravan as it comes around the steep bend."

If the content is new (such as monsters or equipment) and not included in one of the corebooks, we will make note of the source or include the item in an appendix to the adventure.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following are a collection of common abbreviations that might be used in this adventure.

| | | | |
|------------|---|----------------|---|
| AC | Armor Class | GP | Gold pieces |
| CE | Chaotic Evil | HP | Hit Points |
| CG | Chaotic Good | LE | Lawful Evil |
| CN | Chaotic Neutral | LG | Lawful Good |
| cp | Copper pieces | LN | Lawful Neutral |
| CR | Challenge Rating | N or TN | Neutral, or True Neutral |
| d% | Two d10s die one as the 10s the other as the 1s | NE | Neutral Evil |
| d10 | A die of 10 sides | NG | Neutral Good |
| d12 | A die of 12 sides | NPC | Non-Player Character |
| d20 | A die of 20 sides | PC | Player Character |
| d4 | A die of 4 sides | pp | Platinum pieces |
| d6 | A die of 6 sides | sp | Silver Pieces |
| d8 | A die of 8 sides | Stats | The statistical representation of a character |
| DC | Difficulty Class | XP | Experience Points |
| EL | Encounter Level | | |
| EP | Electrum Pieces | | |
| GM | Game Master | | |



BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

When the characters arrive at Hollowfield, the town is deep in preparations for the local Harvest Festival. Vendors are setting up tents and booths, decorations are being hung and placed at every business, and the streets are full of busy people going about various tasks. The Harvest Festival is a “folk event” that is not related to any specific ceremony or the like for The Church of the One True God; although The Church tolerates it (and similar regional festivities) as many travellers passing through can make for fuller coffers in the lean months of the winter.

If you would like to allow the players to explore the town or secure food and lodging, now is a great time. Refer to the map for any local interests, and although everyone is busy, they are more than willing to direct visitors in any direction.

THE CORPSES COME OUT TO PLAY

At some point the characters will be alerted of a commotion in the center or town. Villagers have gathered at the square and are passionately shouting at each other. What looks to be Mayor Horgrang (judging by his chain of office) and the Head of the Town Guard (named Vastus) are doing their best to contain the situation and calm the disturbance.

What is remarkable about the situation is that there appears to be skeletons and remnants of coffins lying about the square. These bodies are mostly being ignored, except periodically when an angry citizen wildly gestures towards one of them.

Many of the skeletons are missing their heads, and in their places are large turnips and other gourds with crudely-carved faces. While some of the citizens are ranting about evil spirits and desecrated graves, the Mayor is trying to calm them with suppositions on his part that this is the work of wayward youth up to no good.

After the event with the corpses in the town square, rumors and whispers abound. Some of these rumors might even be true.

| 1d12 | Rumor |
|------|--|
| 1 | Villagers and laborers from the Kaizermein Saw Mill have been feuding. The laborers desecrated the local cemetery. |
| 2 | Mayor Horgrang has a drinking problem and has been demanding free drinks at the tavern. Vastus has been summoned several times to escort the mayor home. |
| 3 | Although the mines dried up almost forty years ago, a new prospector thinks that he can get them back up and working using alchemy. No one believes he can do it though. |
| 4 | A little girl told her parents that she heard whispers coming from the old town well. No one else has heard a thing, but the girl was mighty frightened. |
| 5 | The spectacle in the square is penance for having the Harvest Festival and celebrating old pagan spirits. Herr Dellburrow has been saying so since he took over the church. |
| 6 | We typically only have a volunteer town guard, but every festival Vastus (he's the mayor's cousin) takes charge and brings in a few of his buddies to act all "official" and such. |
| 7 | I don't care about the corpses in town; more people need to be worried about the woods. |
| 8 | At night you can hear clanging metal throughout the village, like someone banging a hammer. Most likely ghosts coming from the newly opened mines. |
| 9 | The festival was a lot better when it was just the village, all these outsiders really muck the place up and we are left to clean and fix everything. |
| 10 | The bodies from the cemetery being dumped in the square aren't a surprise; a few weeks ago someone mutilated some livestock and did the same. |
| 11 | I think it's Ole' Father Danior getting his revenge on the town; he wasn't ready to step down at the church and soon vanished. . . Now we have Herr Dellburrow to deal with. |
| 12 | This is all the fault of the old crone, Nasty Nellie, who lives by the river. She runs naked with demons at the witching hour, or so I have heard. |

Encounter Trigger If the characters investigate or prod one of the corpses, or if anyone tries to move the corpses or remove their turnip-carved heads, they will animate and attack.

SKELETONS (4) CR 1/4

You can increase the difficulty of this challenge by increasing the number of skeletons that animate. Alternatively, if you are using this adventure for higher level-characters, you can use alternative monsters or stats for these creatures. Likewise, the final threat below (the wight) can easily be adjusted to a higher-tier threat to match the party).

If the characters step in and try to calm the crowd, have the first to speak make a Charisma (Persuasion) check at DC 15. A success will calm the villagers down enough that they sullenly disperse, or if questioned will explain the situation to the best of their ability. Any hostile act (such as drawing a weapon or casting a spell) is enough to incite the villagers to fight, as is a failed check. If a fight does begin, the town guard will quickly disperse the crowd before it gets out of hand.

If the characters decide to talk to the mayor or head of the guard, they will need to make a Charisma (Persuasion) check at DC 15. Success means that these men feel the characters can aid them in solving these mysterious circumstances.

Read the following:

Recently we had near forty corpses stolen from Moss Oak Cemetery, and as you can see about half of them have been strewn across the square. We have no idea where the other bodies are or who took them, but this town depends on the Harvest Festival each year. . . we don't need this right now.

We can't find any type of evidence or even a relationship between the missing remains, as some of them are nearly a hundred years apart in death, beyond being all from the town or at least local, we have nothing.

If the characters agree to investigate the strange occurrences and provide them with a suspect, they will be most grateful and happily pay for their service (500 gp).

INVESTIGATING HOLLOWFIELD

Once the characters take on the investigation, they are welcome to explore the town as usual. Most of the residents are quick to return to preparing for the Harvest Festival and catering to the many visitors now arriving. Questioning them will only return similar comments and rumors as provided.

Following are key locations the investigators can visit to gather more information about the strange occurrences. Other locations around town of course exist (many will be detailed in future releases of the *Vathak Times*) but for this adventure these are the key locales.

KAIZERMEIN SAW MILL

The mill has only been open for a little over a year, and although it employs many locals, most of the labor force consists of workers from various regions and backgrounds. These workers have a makeshift tent town (colloquially named “Millfield”) in a field beside the mill. Johann Kaizermein, the proprietor, is away on business but several of his foremen are available to talk.



They will reveal the following:

- The mill has begun cutting down an old grove of trees in the last month that seems to have triggered a series of odd events, causing fear and superstitions to run rampant amongst the men.
- Men have seen strange lights and have heard ominous sounds coming from the grove at night.
- A local man named Gibs Greck was killed at the sawmill a few weeks back, being nearly severed in half and bleeding to death. Locals are blaming the workers for the mishap, although it was well known that Gibs had a drinking problem and was most likely the cause of his demise.
- DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check or DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal strange religious symbols drawn in the mud and written on the outside of the building, these are clearly symbols of the *Church of the One True God*.

NASTY NELLIE'S HUT

The old woman lives quietly on the outskirts of the village, collecting herbs, talking to animals, and sometimes even selling a potion or two when a villager comes asking. She is clearly mad, but also clearly harmless. Talking to her reveals the following if the adventurers are kind to her:

- The strange events are simply caused by the angry spirit of the harvest, an old god of the land, long forgotten, who is furious about the festival.
- The villagers and the sawmill are both responsible for the spirit being angry. All will continue to be punished until it is appeased.
- The Good Citizen's Almanac of the History of Hollowfield: This amateurishly written book has extensive notes on the town's history, and is perhaps the best reference for research. Using the almanac grants advantage on all Intelligence (History) checks made on matters with Hollowfield's past.

MOSS OAK CEMETERY

The cemetery should be the last place the characters visit. A town guard (a bright young woman named Gretchen) is currently patrolling the area since the incident with the desecrated corpses. Characters are welcome to explore the grounds, but she will follow them, mainly out of curiosity and boredom. Investigating the area reveals the following:

- DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check or DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal more of the same religious symbols, smeared on various gravestones. No discernable pattern can be seen.
- DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the graves were dug out from the inside, coming up from beneath the cemetery.
- DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a noticeable tunnel beneath one of the gravesites.



DOWN, DOWN, UNDER THE GROUND

If the characters discover the tunnel, they can choose to enter it and proceed into the vault beneath. If they did not discover the tunnel, have Gretchen be attacked and pulled into the tunnel.

The tunnel leads to a web of crude corridors leading all over the graveyard, with obvious spots where something clawed its way into the graves. Continuing the path, or following Gretchen's screams, will lead the characters to an open chamber.

A wight is in this room, if he didn't grab Gretchen, then he has an unknown victim (possibly a villager the characters encountered earlier). It appears the wight has been living in this area for a while. Once an old forgotten tomb, he has since decorated it with an assortment of stolen religious trinkets and random bones. What stands out the most are the remaining missing corpses. These bodies have been positioned around the room, dressed in an assemblage of found clothing, several with similar turnip and gourd heads, and give the aura that they will come to life at any moment to continue on with the lives they left behind.

If the characters attack, or simply interrupt the wight, he will abandon his victim and fight.

WIGHT CR 3

The wight will fight to the death. If the characters are easily defeating the wight, have it call for help from several skeletons hiding in the scattered corpses.

After the confrontation with the wight, characters are welcome to explore the tomb. As they do this, Gretchen (if she is alive) will volunteer to take the wight body to the mayor as well as organize a team of guards and volunteers to come and take care of the desecrated corpses.

Treasure A shelf covered with webs and containing remnants of a skeleton (DC 15 Perception to notice)

in the northwest wall still contains a few religious supplies, including five vials of holy water, a scroll of lesser restoration, and a wand of cure light wounds (15 charges).

HEROES OF HOLLOWFIELD

News spreads quickly of the characters' victory and Mayor Horgrang holds a small event to announce the end of the troubles as well as praise the party. Many of the villagers will offer small favors of appreciation, such as meals and store discounts (on general merchandise) as a show of appreciation for their efforts.

Treasure 500 gp reward from the Mayor.

Vastus of the Town Guard will pull the characters aside and inform them that he believes the wight to be none other than Ole' Father Danior who went missing a few years back. He is going to investigate further, but asks the characters if they can be available for the remainder of the Harvest Festival and offers them a small room above the town guard's office as a token of gratitude.



APPENDIX 1

The Festival

During this adventure the Harvest Festival is just beginning. This section includes activities and events the characters can partake in during their downtime.

There are a number of different games that will be available to play. Each game should cost a silver to play. Some ideas for games are as follows:

- 🍷 **Arm Wrestling** This is a Strength ability check between a character and an opponent. Regardless of the opponent, they have a +2 Strength modifier.
- 🍷 **Bobbing for Apples** Competitive game of who can grab the most apples from a barrel of water, with 3–4 players at the same time. Each makes a DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of Hands) check to grab an apple in their teeth (no use of hands). Each round they must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or spend their turn huffing and puffing for breath. A barrel starts with 5 apples per participant.
- 🍷 **Fortune Telling** A character gains a point of inspiration that they can use, owing to a minor detail they were told about their future. This is a perfect way to introduce possible adventure hooks to the players.
- 🍷 **Marksmanship** Ranged attack roll with an appropriate weapon (shortbow, handaxe, dagger, etc). This roll may be made with disadvantage to hit a specific target or bullseye.
- 🍷 **Pumpkin Pie Eating Contest** A three-round contest. A character must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw to advance to the next round. For those left at the end of round three, the best roll wins the prize of three jars of local apple butter.
- 🍷 **Ring Toss** DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hands) check. After each game, the booth operator will try to goad the character to do another round, as they secretly switch to harder targets (DC increases by +5) in a “double or nothing” type prize. Their goal is to always get it too high for the character to win by doubling again.

Limits: A character can only win a game once, after that they cannot play the game again. You might also choose to limit them to three tries to win any game.

Reward Trinkets for winning any contest or game include: Carved turnip or pumpkin heads, Corn dolly or poppet, a small jar of rhubarb jam, fresh pumpernickel bread loaf or small seed cake, or a barmbrack cake (which may contain a charm inside that foretells the future: a pea, a stick, a piece of cloth, a small coin and a ring).

The ring toss booth will offer more and more outlandish things if the character can “double or nothing,” though often they’re just playing up some otherwise unremarkable thing like “Rare honey from a monastery in the Black Mountains available only once every 10 years (really just local honey in a funny jar).” If “real” prizes are needed, see the raffle unique trinkets below.

GOODIE BAGS

All visitors of the festival receive a small bag of treats for attending. Kids love these confectional treats.

| 1d6 | Treats |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Black Licorice |
| 2 | Caramel Bites |
| 3 | Candied Apple |
| 4 | Maple Nuts |
| 5 | Rock Candy Sticks |
| 6 | Horehound Candy Drops |



BIERGARTEN

Although the tavern is open for business, a biergarten has been set up outside to handle the many guests at the festival. Long banquet tables have been set with wooden benches as local girls wearing traditional harvest festival costumes serve the patrons. If you are looking for more elegant food, head inside the tavern, as the biergarten is serving just the basics.

| | |
|---|------|
| Apple Cider Ale | 2 sp |
| Festbier (served in a large clay jug shaped like a boot) | 3 sp |
| Potato and Corn Chowder | 3 sp |
| Turkey Leg | 2 sp |
| Sausage | 3sp |

CRAFTSMAN AND MERCHANTS

Weapons Booth This vendor buys and sells non-magical weapons at standard prices.

Armor Booth This vendor buys and sells non-magical armor at standard prices.

Arts and Craft Booths These vendors buy art, jewelry, and crafts of a non-magical nature at standard prices. However, if an item has local historical importance, add an additional 10% to the price/cost.

WAGON RIDE

A favorite for families and the elderly, this rustic wagon trip goes on an hour-long ride around the farmlands of Hollowfield.



UNIQUE ITEMS AND TRINKETS AVAILABLE AT THE FESTIVAL

Although most of the festival is typical for these types of things, characters can find some unique, if not mundane, items available at the Harvest Festival. These are especially perfect prizes for a raffle, at 1 gp to enter.

1d12 Unique Items

- 1 **Scarecrow Mask** Less a mask and more of a poorly stitched hood, it's a thing of nightmares.
- 2 **Turnip Head** One of those creepy carved turnips. It's said to ward off evil.
- 3 **Commemorative Beer Stein** This simple clay mug is carved with a similar face as those ugly turnips and has "Hollowfield Harvest Festival" written on it.
- 4 **Pouch of Sea Salt** So far inland, this bag of salt is worth its actual weight in gold to many folks (only about 5 gp), but also useful as a spell component to some.
- 5 **Corn Doll** Made from the leaves from local corn stalks, it bears a remarkable resemblance to whomever gets it in an eerie way.
- 6 **Matilda the Piglet** She was the runt. . . she has a bow tied to her tail.
- 7 **Shovel of Sharpness** This otherwise seemingly normal spade shovel has an edge that magically will not wear down, even when used on the rockiest of soils or toughest of roots. It does not allow for cutting into solid rock or anything, but bashing it into one won't bend, dull, or break it either.
- 8 **Harvest King Hat** This "magical" hat is one-of-a-kind. Once per day, a person wearing it can yell "I am the Harvest King!", and a pumpkin will appear under the large hat.
- 9 **Last Apple of Fall** Local legend tells that this apple has magical properties, as it was the final apple harvested and the last still on the tree. Eating it fills you up as if you've had a full meal and it is equal to a potion of healing.
- 10 **Zimmermann Farm** Although this one-acre farm yields no harvest, and the two-room house needs more repairs than it's worth, Zimmermann is letting it go to pursue his dream of being a carpenter.
- 11 **Elven Wine** This bottle of fine wine is labelled as "elven" and implied to be hundreds of years old and from before the Purge. It really is just that, but it has turned to a delicious vinegar. If it were still truly wine, it would potentially be priceless, but as vinegar it's merely an oddity (the current owner doesn't know it has gone bad).
- 12 **Local Almanac** This book has weather forecasts, planting dates, tide tables, and a detailed calendar of both secular and sacred days. The times of the rising of the sun and moon are included as well as other celestial events. For any given prediction in the almanac, there is a 75% chance it is right.

MAP OF HOLLOWFIELD



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As players, your characters fight to survive in a land threatened with destruction by the rise of the ancient and evil Old Ones and their spawn. Your characters may represent points of light in the darkness or give in to dark temptations. Most will fall somewhere in between — survivors struggling to eke out another day.

Though the followers of the One True God speak of divine providence while battling the Old Ones, the sins of the Church often rival those of their enemies. In the world of Vathak, your character's perceptions of heroes and villains is a thin line drawn by their own personal morality and, of course, determined by the victor.

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- New Character Options
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