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VILLAGE BACKDROP: SHROUDHAVEN





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VILLAGE BACKDROP: SHROUDHAVEN 2.0

Nestled in a deep valley, sunlight has never caressed centuried Shroudhaven. Thick fog—rendered permanent by ancient magics—fills the valley. Here, refugees from a long-forgotten war found sanctuary from their enemies. Most villagers are undead, and a dark reputation hangs over the village. Visitors to the village, though, tell a different story. They speak of the undead battling their basest urges and trying to live peaceful lives.

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CONTENTS

Credits	1
Contents	1
Shroudhaven at a Glance	2
The Shroudhaven Curse	2
Village Lore	2
Villagers	2
Whispers & Rumours	2
Notable Locations	3
Notable Folk	3
Life in Shroudhaven	4
Trade & Industry	4
Law & Order	4
Village Dressing	4
The Surrounding Locality	5
Notable Locations	6
1: Jinkin's Bar and Grill	6
2: Manor House Inn	6
3: Roarg's Alchemy	6
4: The Cathedral	6
5: Hunting Shoppe	7
6: Yvaine's Farm	7
7: Mushroom Fields	7
8: Theatre Mellavious	7
9: Gear and Gears	8
10: Respite Lodge	8
OGL V1.0A	9

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SHROUDHAVEN AT A GLANCE

Ruler: The Gloomhand (five-member council)

Government: Council

Population: 79 (22 humans, 11 dwarves, 27 elves, 6 halflings, 13 ghastrs)

Alignments: N, LE, NE, CE

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Undercommon

Resources & Industry: Alchemical supplies, clockwork devices, entertainment, exotic mushrooms

Finding Shroudhaven presents certain difficulties, as no road leads to the village; wagon ruts serve as the only path. Thick fog interferes with navigation. Wolf howls and mad gibberings from all directions provide travellers constant companionship. Eventually, the first indicator of civilisation, signs spaced around the village proclaiming "No Necromancers, on Penalty of Death" and "Lawbreakers Will Be Eaten," greet visitors.

Shroudhaven's architecture, and its residents' style of dress and dialects hearken back to its centuries-old genesis. Incredible, innovative artwork and artisanship contrasts oddly with the village's quaint nature.

The sky only manages to brighten to a gloomy grey at noon. Brass lamps lining the streets cast yellow glows barely penetrating the fog. When the fog thickens, one can only perceive the vague shapes of buildings and other beings.

While Shroudhaven's undead inhabitants make no outward displays of their state, in order to make guests feel more comfortable, astute observers easily discern the truth. For such guests, the undead don't bother to hide their true natures, and instead put their effort into convincing visitors of their civility.

THE SHROUDHAVEN CURSE

Undead creatures fleeing an ancient war to the supposed safety of a fog-shrouded valley founded Shroudhaven. A group of good divine spellcasters chased the refugees and enacted a ritual, cursing the creatures to remain in the village or perish. The ritualists planned to attack the undead at their leisure or, at the very least, keep the undead from preying on their compatriots and innocent people. The curse carries a stipulation: should all the village's residents cease hunting and eating intelligent creatures, the curse ends. None of the cabal's members believed the undead would meet this condition, so they assumed the curse was unbreakable. Unfortunately for them, they never saw the fruits of their labours, since they were massacred a week after performing the ritual. The curse is still potent, though, and causes a resident to suffer a terrible wasting disease after one week away from the village. This disease is invariably rapidly fatal. With the village's remote location, this prevents ordinary travel, so powerful residents use teleportation magic to travel the world. Through trial and error, they have discovered the allotted time away resets after a decade, allowing repeated, but infrequent, excursions. The curse also affects newcomers, a fact none of the residents share with those they court to join the community.

VILLAGE LORE

A character may know something about Shroudhaven. Determine how knowledgeable the characters are and then impart some (or all) of the information below:

- Shroudhaven's remote location and pervasive fog make it a mysterious place. The population is made up of relatives of refugees from an ancient war.
- Led by the Gloomhand, Shroudhaven is a destination for undead creatures. However, these creatures claim to be civilised and present no threat to the living. They scour the land of what they call the "feral undead".
- Residents of Shroudhaven can't leave the village for long periods. After a week's absence, a villager begins to suffer from a wasting disease. Despite this, representatives from Shroudhaven invite innovative artisans and artists to live there.

VILLAGERS

Appearance: Thanks to the lack of sunlight, and the undead nature of most residents, everyone has a pallid complexion; hair colour ranges from white/blonde to brunette.

Dress: The people of Shroudhaven wear stylish clothing for the historical period of its founding, but the fashion is outdated.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

While in Shroudhaven, a character may hear one or more rumours from the table below. The character can learn this information in several ways: by overhearing locals gossiping, chatting with regulars over a few drinks at the local tavern and so on.

D6 RUMOUR

1*	A thin ray of sunlight penetrated the fog recently and followed Valdrienne around.
2	The Cathedral has a secret cellar where the Gloomhand inters feral undead they plan to recondition.
3	Sometimes, the fog became acidic and destroys crops and forces the villagers inside for a time.
4	One of the Gloomhand has spoken about stepping down from the council, the first such departure in almost 60 years.
5	Madame Mellavious has enticed an acting troupe to stage an original play on her main stage; devastating events occur after each performance.
6	The mining village of Silver Bluff has discovered the remnants of an engine of war; the Gloomhand has expressed concerns about the engine's reactivation.

*False rumour

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of Shroudhaven comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Jinkin's Bar and Grill:** The first stop for many visitors, Betram Jinkin serves an array of locally sourced food.
2. **Manor House Inn:** Several residents have suites in this massive mansion, which also houses newcomers.
3. **Roarg's Alchemy:** An acrid stench permeates the air around this building, where Quentin Roarg creates alchemical supplies as a break from working on his passion project.
4. **The Cathedral:** Meeting place of the ruling Gloomhand council, the Cathedral also serves as the village's prison.
5. **Hunting Shoppe:** Sestra Vol's shop has a wide variety of hunting supplies suited to repel or destroy the undead.
6. **Yvaine's Farm:** Yvaine Grau raises sheep and cattle near one of the mushroom fields, which provides surprisingly healthy fare for the animals.
7. **Mushroom Fields:** Since normal plants cannot grow without sunlight, Shroudhaven has turned to harvesting mushrooms.
8. **Theatre Mellavious:** Varied performances grace the stages of this magnificent theatre, on a nightly basis. Zuzu Mellavious invites visitors who catch her eye to perform on stage.

9. **Gear and Gears:** Keren Zaris runs this shop, which also sells many of the intricate clockwork objects Keren creates.
10. **Respite Lodge:** Due to the dangerous creatures outside Shroudhaven, visitors might come here for healing.

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are undead.

Betram Jinkin (location 1; N male dwarf thief 5) acts as the village's "face" to newcomers. He is one of Shroudhaven's few living residents.

Damiella Nightingale (location 8; CE female human vampire fighter 6/thief 5/bard 6) has a voice capable of both shattering glass and soothing souls. She is one of Zuzu's prize pupils.

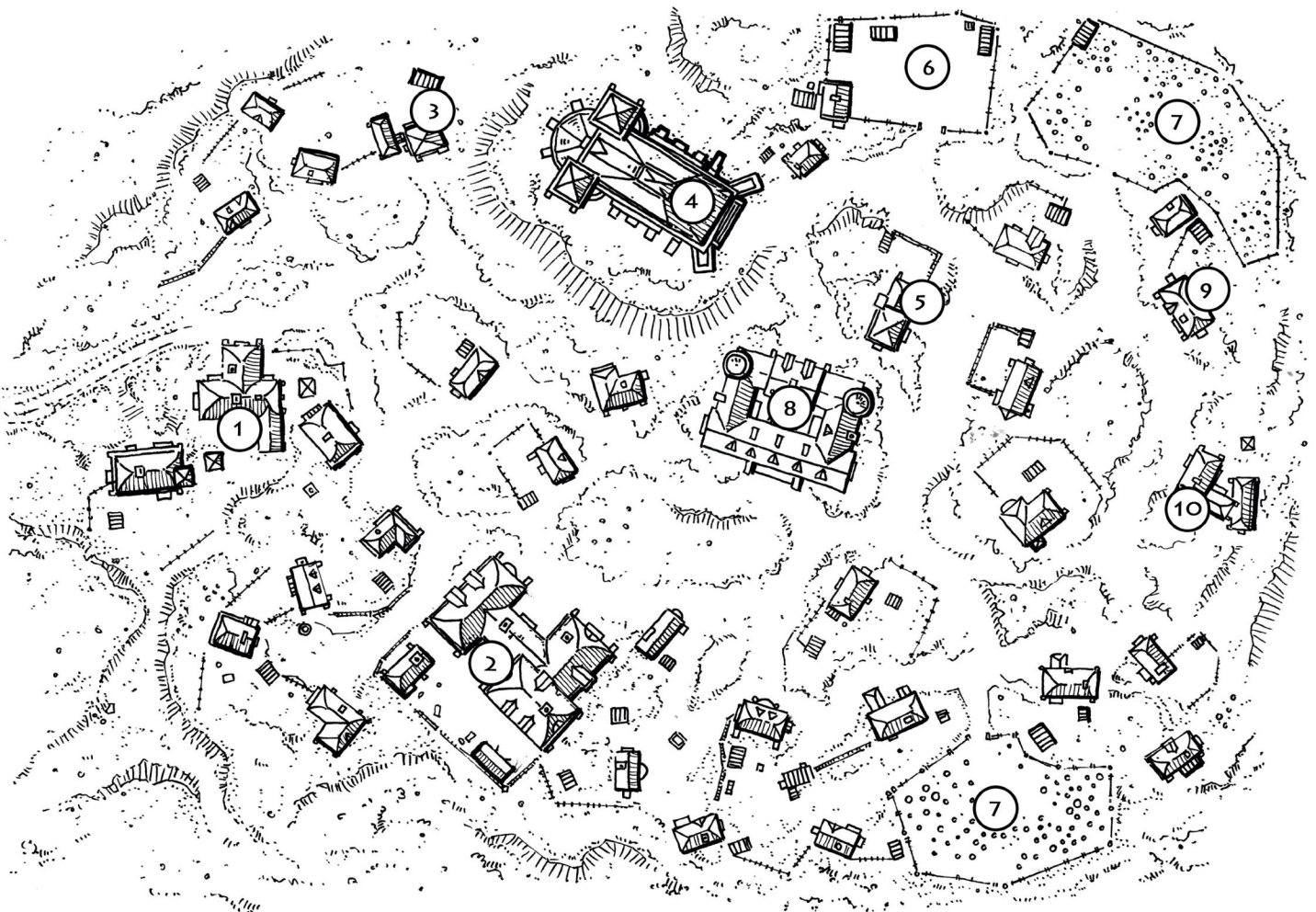
Keren Zaris (location 9; LE female vampire halfling) spends her relative immortality perfecting clockwork devices.

Quentin Roarg (location 3; NE male elf vampire wizard 11) has spent decades formulating a blood substitute.

Sestra Vol (location 5; CE female ghost ranger 9) runs her shop when she is not patrolling outside Shroudhaven.

Yvaine Grau (location 10; N old female elf cleric 9) oversees her farm and Respite Lodge.

Zuzu Mellavious (location 8; NE female halfling vampire) owns Theatre Mellavious, and develops new talent there.



LIFE IN SHROUDHAVEN

The people of Shroudhaven enjoy their relative isolation from the world. They spend their time pursuing their passions or obsessions and resisting their desire to consume the flesh of intelligent creatures. They welcome visitors as a distraction from their day-to-day existence. Visitors who accept the truth of Shroudhaven face many questions from the villagers. Given the villagers’ inability to leave the village for longer than a week, many of these questions concern the outside world, and the course of events therein.

As Shroudhaven’s renown spreads, either regarding the nature of its inhabitants or the wealth of goods and entertainment growing out of their obsessions, the villagers must deal with an influx of newcomers. Sadly, this increase in visitor numbers comes with the downside of an increase in feral undead, as the creatures attack and “convert” those visiting Shroudhaven.

TRADE & INDUSTRY

Shroudhaven’s trade is emergent and depends solely on word of mouth from visitors who sample the village’s wares. Mushrooms are the most common item mentioned by those who pass through the village. Shroudhaven commands a high price for particularly intoxicating mushrooms unique to the village. Second to the mushrooms, Theatre Mellavious has grown in reputation for its fine performances. Wealthy patrons take an expendable retinue with them to survive the trip. Finally, word about Quentin Zaris’s alchemical concoctions and Keren Zaris’s clockworks have reached interested adventurers and collectors.

LAW & ORDER

Shroudhaven has very few laws:

- Do not attack another villager.
- Do not consume the flesh of an intelligent being.
- Do not practice necromancy.

The Gloomhand offers protection, extending to one mile outside the Shroudhaven’s confines, to living creatures visiting the village. Depending on the severity of the first two crimes, the person committing the crime faces jail time or exile (virtually amounting to a death sentence, as ferals and hunters alike target the exiled villager). The sentence for necromancy is death by beheading, and the body receives cleansing to keep it from animating.

Inhabitants who find it impossible to keep their blood- or flesh-lust in check depart Shroudhaven and find settlements where they can prey on humanoids, at least until the time limit imposed by the village’s curse compiles them to return. The villagers somehow know when someone returns from a wild hunt and take pity on the one who succumbed. As long as the killing takes place outside a one-mile radius of the village, however, the killer receives no punishment.

VILLAGE DRESSING

Use this table to generate the minor sights and sounds the characters experience as they move about Shroudhaven.

D20 DRESSING/EVENT

1	One of the vampire residents attacks a visitor. Everyone witnessing the attack is arrested for questioning.
2	A hunter returns, breathless, with news of a troop of paladins led by a mighty cleric of a sun deity who are a two-day march from Shroudhaven.
3	A human from the farm manages to escape. He stumbles into the characters and babbles incoherently before a farmhand grabs him.
4	An ancient elf arrives with a bow- and sword-wielding retinue; he demands Yvaine return to her homeland.
5	A character hears occasional whispers from the fog. At night, freezing hands formed from the fog reach out to the character, but no one else can see them.
6	Hurricane-force winds strike the fog, clearing it for a moment and exposing the village to direct sunlight.
7	A pack of feral ghouls enters the village and head for the farm. If left unchecked, the ghouls infect some of the humans with ghoul fever.
8	A vampire child cries for her lost parents. If asked, she explains they have been dead for 80 years.
9	A steady drizzle of ordinary rainwater mixed with ash and blood falls on the village.
10	A tremor opens up the ground on the east side of the village, revealing several intact (inanimate) skeletons.
11	Howling emanates from the dead forest to the north. The villagers make a show of being unconcerned, but canny observers see through their facade.
12	Light from the full moon penetrates the fog, even though the sun-obscuring mist has the same consistency.
13	Magpies alight on one of the buildings and seem to converse among themselves. A villager chases the birds away, only for them to settle on a nearby roof.
14	A pervasive rotten odour induces nausea in living visitors.
15	A villager shrieks, “I can’t take this anymore!” He then stalks away from Shroudhaven, as a couple of people follow him and plead for him to return.
16	A wagon arrives laden with several casks. The dried red liquid on one of the casks could be wine or blood.
17	Mournful pipe organ music plays from the Cathedral.
18	One of the villagers returns from her travels. Many of her neighbours crowd her as they pepper her with questions.
19	An explosion precedes the release of green smoke from one of Roarg’s windows.
20	A villager bears a striking resemblance to a character.

THE SURROUNDING LOCALITY

The plains and forests around Shroudhaven were once vibrant lands supporting a diversity of flora and fauna. However, shortly after the village's founders arrived, they poisoned the trees and salted the land to render it uninhabitable. They also drove away or killed explorers and homesteaders. The blighted land and the feral undead roaming the blasted landscape make the immediate surroundings inhospitable, allowing the villagers to live in relative peace. Of course, the decision to destroy the surrounding land's arability proved short-sighted. When the undead decided they would no longer feed on intelligent creatures, they were forced to farm fresh blood and flesh within the village's confines.

The fog covering the village extends a few hundred feet in all directions. Beyond that boundary, clumps of fog still form. For those unfamiliar with area, it is easy to get lost, especially as the villagers deliberately obscure paths to the village and leave no markers. A guide from the village is necessary to ensure safe travel through the fog and passed the "degenerate" undead prowling the vicinity.

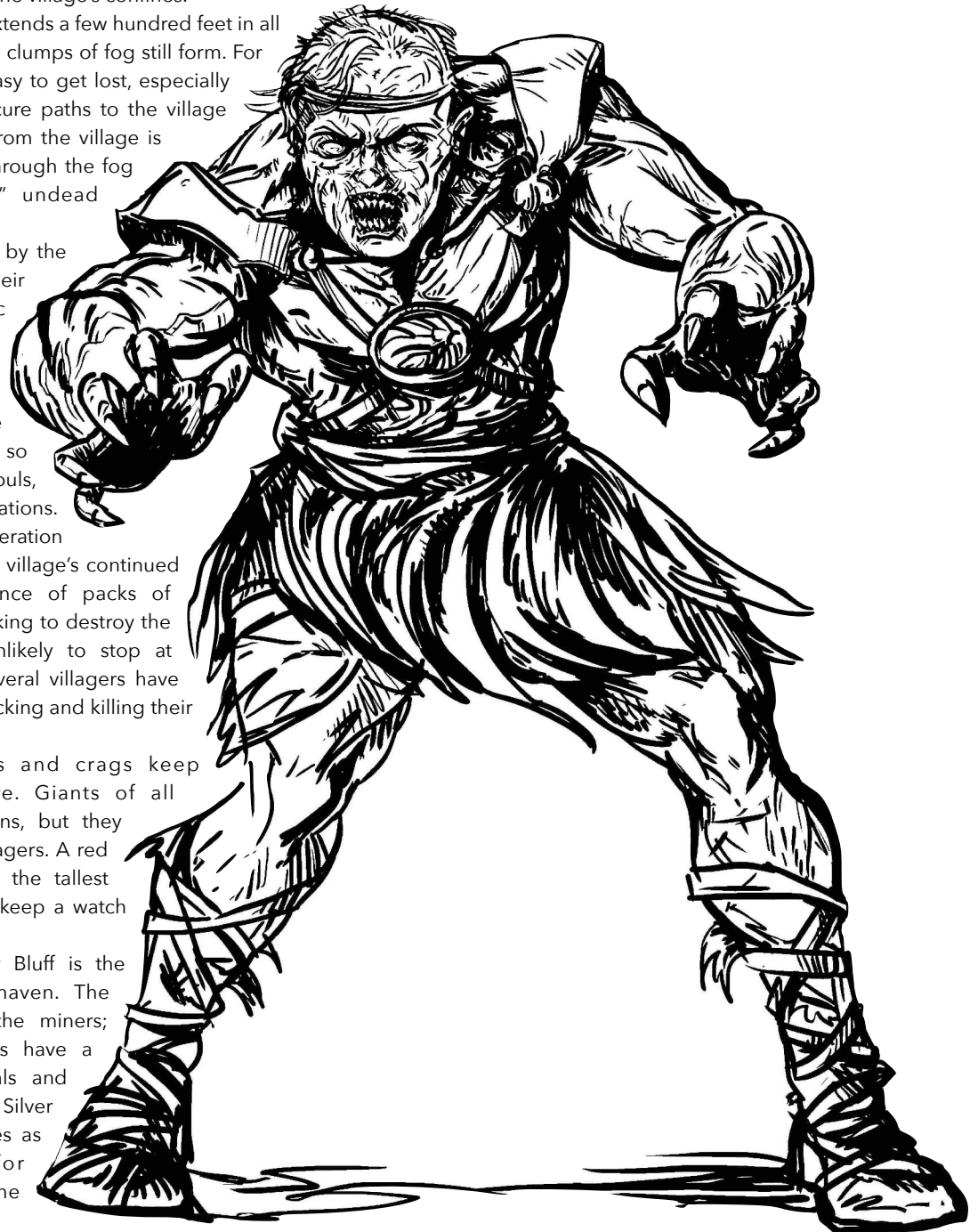
Undead creatures turned out by the villagers quickly succumb to their hunger and become barbaric remnants of their former selves, hunting living creatures who blunder into the area. These wild undead have a distinct advantage in the murk pervading the area, so they easily pick off unfortunate souls, few of whom escape their depredations. The Gloomhand views the proliferation of feral undead as a threat to the village's continued existence, believing the presence of packs of undead will attract crusaders seeking to destroy the undead. Such crusaders are unlikely to stop at Shroudhaven's borders. Thus, several villagers have taken up the mantle of hunter, tracking and killing their former neighbours.

Further afield, mountains and crags keep Shroudhaven relatively secure. Giants of all description inhabit the mountains, but they have learnt not to bother the villagers. A red dragon slumbers at the top of the tallest peak, so scouts from the village keep a watch over the creature.

The mining village of Silver Bluff is the nearest settlement to Shroudhaven. The village irregularly trades with the miners; Quentin Roarg and Keren Zeris have a particular interest in rare metals and alchemical runoff produced by Silver Bluff's mines. Shroudhaven serves as an incidental destination for travellers from Silver Bluff. The

village harbours those who have lost their way in transit (such as Bertram Jinkin) or those who have become undead at the claws and teeth of independent creatures haunting Silver Bluff.

The Gloomhand hopes to reintroduce life to the nearby area, provided they can prove themselves relatively peaceful to potential neighbouring settlements. As word of the village spreads, thanks to merchants trading with Shroudhaven's inhabitants, and as populations continue to increase, the council believes it is inevitable that they will have prolonged contact with the outside world. Of course, they would prefer newcomers capable of looking past their undead existences.



NOTABLE LOCATIONS

1: JINKIN'S BAR AND GRILL

Standing at Shroudhaven's most accessible border, Jinkin's Bar and Grill has warm lights shining in all its windows as a welcome to visitors. Bertram Jinkin (N male dwarf thief 5) greets newcomers and ensures he is the first local to meet people. Formerly a miner in Silver Bluff, Jinkin chafed at the conditions the mining company imposed on its workers. He travelled from Silver Bluff fifty years ago and stumbled upon Shroudhaven after a narrow escape from a pack of ghouls. In contrast to that harrowing experience, the residents seemed quite friendly, but it took him little time to realise they were also undead. Valdrienne Cort from the Gloomhand met Jinkin and made his case for the village's burgeoning notion of ceasing to prey on intelligent beings. Jinkin, intrigued by what he heard and saw, accepted a job wherein he would introduce visitors to Shroudhaven and inform them of its residents' unusual natures. Jinkin has a shrewd eye for whether people will be accepting or not.

The tavern serves new arrivals and Shroudhaven denizens alike. It features meat from the livestock raised at Yvaine's ranch, as well as an array of mushrooms cultivated in the village. Jinkin has turned his alchemical skills to fermentation of mushrooms into earthy, yet potent alcohol. For those who Jinkin believes would react poorly to Shroudhaven's secret, he cheerily puts them up in a couple of well-appointed rooms upstairs from the dining hall. Otherwise, he directs them to the Manor House Inn for lodging.

- **Food & Drink:** Meal (mutton or beef [or other] sausages, sautéed mushrooms) (1 gp), mushroom wine (2 sp).

2: MANOR HOUSE INN

This three-storey stone building accommodates Shroudhaven's residents, invited guests and visitors who wish to stay longer than one night (who Jinkin has vetted). Hondra Van Veldt (CE male ghast), who has mastered suppressing his stench of decay, leads a staff of twenty workers who keep the manor house spotless and ensure they meet all guests' and residents' needs. Each room has a private bath, heated gradually by an alchemical process designed by Quentin Roarg. All guests and residents can receive meals in their rooms or join the others for formal meals, during which much of the village's gossip is shared. The manor house also serves afternoon tea, to which everyone in the village has a standing invitation. The two-acre grounds surrounding the inn has space for horse riding, leisure activities and a number of outdoor games, some of which have fallen out of common practice.

- **Accommodation:** Two-bed chamber (3 gp); private suite (10 gp).

3: ROARG'S ALCHEMY

Roarg's shop is not difficult to find thanks to the eye-watering stench pervading the air around the building. The stone comprising the building is blackened in spots, and, in others, the stone has partially melted. Smoke belches from a chimney and colours the fog above a sickly green hue. Quentin Roarg (NE male vampire elf wizard 11) enthusiastically greets those who brave the noxious atmosphere to enter the building. He then quickly warns them to stay where they are while he sets down a bubbling beaker, which sometimes explodes. In this case, he cackles while picking glass shards from his fallow flesh. Roarg's skin is discoloured from the many experiments he carries out, making it hard to determine whether he is undead. He happily confirms he is undead if anyone asks, and then immediately launches into an excited discussion about the artificial blood he has been attempting to synthesise. This typically leads him to ask for blood samples from living visitors ("purely for research purposes"). Anyone capable of diverting his attention can commission alchemical items which he sells at ten percent below the base cost, or twenty percent below normal price for those who provide blood samples.

An Age-Old Problem: One of Roarg's stray lines of study seeks an end to the Shroudhaven Curse. His experimentation has shown promise, but the curse inhibits his ability to conduct thorough research. If he finds a capable group, he offers them a considerable sum to perform the research for him, which requires exploration of ancient tombs guarded by powerful beings. Failing an appeal to greed, Roarg is not above kidnapping and turning a group member's friend or relative as enticement.

4: THE CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral is a daunting stone edifice standing four-storeys high replete with gargoyles along its multitudinous ledges. The building, also featuring a steeple disappearing into the fog, is one of two places inaccessible to visitors (the other being the hidden farm below the livestock farm [location 6]). The Cathedral is home to the Gloomhand, Shroudhaven's governing council, who make appearances in the village, especially when a promising visitor arrives. Often, Valdrienne Cort (NE female vampire halfling), Zuzu Mellavious's sister-in-law, acts as the Gloomhand's ambassador.

The Cathedral also holds Shroudhaven's prison, buried beneath the building itself. The prison is largely empty, but occasionally the Gloomhand uses the space to interrogate people they believe threaten the village. The Gloomhold also quietly incarcerates feral undead in the prison before attempting to break them of their atavistic urges and return them to what the council considers polite society. Many outsiders witnessing these attempts would liken the techniques used to torture. A guillotine stands behind the Cathedral; those found guilty of necromancy meet their fates here.

The steeple holds a staircase and reaches above the fog bank, nearly one mile high. Climbing the staircase is not as easy as gaining access to it. Ghostly creatures, pale remnants of former residents who perished here and abroad, are trapped in the fog and attack any who dares climb too high.

Disturbing Rumours: A couple of villagers have returned with news that descendants of the spellcasters opposed to Shroudhaven's vampires (and responsible for the curse afflicting all residents) has taken up their ancestors' quest. Valdrienne requests a neutral party investigate these distressing accounts and report their findings. If the agents disrupt the threat posed by these successors, all the better.

5: HUNTING SHOPPE

This simple building is a two-room affair, containing a chaotically arranged shop and Sestra Vol's (CE female ghastranger 9) room. The shop contains a jumble of gear and provisions for hunting trips in the surrounding wilderness. Sestra crafts her own traps for mundane animals, such as wolves and bears, and willingly sells them along with normal gear to visitors who need an advantage when they leave the village. She also has an array of mundane and magical hunting gear she uses to capture or kill feral undead. She won't part with these items, unless the buyers agree to go with her on a hunt or otherwise prove themselves to her satisfaction. Her stringy, grey hair and the hint of decaying flesh mark her out as unnatural. She laughs when someone brings up her condition and makes veiled threats if someone expresses disgust about her undead state.

6: YVAINÉ'S FARM

Sheep and cattle placidly graze on clumps of sickly grass in this large field. A group of five workers watches over the livestock. Thanks to Yvaine Grau's training, all five are adept at animal husbandry, and have taken druidic training to encourage plant growth. Recently, the Gloomhand permitted them the judicious use of *light* spells to strengthen the plants and make the livestock healthier. As more of Shroudhaven's residents turn to blood and meat to sustain them while they await a breakthrough from Quentin Roarg, Yvaine's crew makes greater effort in ensuring the food sources are hearty.

Provisions are also available for those who haven't given up their taste for humanoid flesh. Due to the distasteful nature of the source, and to prevent visitors from becoming outraged, a group of humans lives in a subterranean area underneath a barn at the centre of the ranch. Yvaine and Quentin devised a way to alchemically lobotomise children born to the humans, and the two workers tending the humans treat them as well as the farm's more traditional livestock.

An improbable Revolution: Though Shroudhaven's human farm is a well-kept secret, rumours have spread outside the village. These rumours caught a do-gooder's notice, and he managed to sneak into the underground farm where he works to incite an uprising among the lobotomised humans. Frustrated with his inability to achieve his goal, he looks for potential allies who might be able to restore the minds of the villagers' human "cattle." Alternatively, Quentin Roarg has discovered the infiltration and asks living visitors to help him flush out the perpetrator.

7: MUSHROOM FIELDS

The damp atmosphere and lack of light make perfect conditions for the mushrooms grown outside Shroudhaven. A riot of mushrooms thrives in the damp ground, and farmers (N various races druid 2) working the fields have cultivated different varieties. The majority of the fields host staple mushrooms, which are meaty and nutritious, but somewhat bland. Specialty mushrooms include those with spiciness comparable to eye-watering peppers, fermentable species used to create alcoholic beverages that even affect undead physiology and popular psychedelic sorts. Varieties unique to Shroudhaven have gained popularity outside the village and command large sums.

8: THEATRE MELLAVIOUS

The centrepiece of Shroudhaven—at least according to its proprietor, Zuzu Mellavious (NE female halfling vampire)—Theatre Mellavious hosts amazing performances. Mellavious, a flamboyant halfling who wears a variety of ostentatious wigs and clothes, constantly watches for new talent. She follows local gossip, so she knows when newcomers arrive. She often turns up at Jinkin's place (disguising her vampiric nature, of course) and turns conversation with newcomers toward the arts. With luck, someone offers to perform for her; a particularly impressive performance piques her interest. She is not above using her abilities to compel a favoured artist to remain in Shroudhaven and take the stage. Mellavious is also the most widely-travelled of the villagers, as she searches the world for talent she can poach (or cajole to move to Shroudhaven).

ZUZU MELLAVIOUS

NE female halfling vampire

This pallid halfling's cheeks are dabbed in rouge. She wears an elaborate gown suitable for a night out at the opera, and her ostentatious wig conceals her real hair.

Mannerisms: Zuzu does everything with a flourish, making dramatic movements with her arms or head and carrying on spirited conversations regardless of the topic.

Personality: The halfling is a magnanimous patron of the arts, always on the lookout for someone to promote. However, she harbours jealousy for those with transcendent artistry, since her undeath has made her unable to improve her own talents.

Background: Very few people remember Zuzu Mellavious during her heyday, when she commanded the biggest stages in far-off Languard. Her performances drew the attention of an aristocrat-turned-vampire, who decided the gift of immortality would preserve her as an artist forever. It had the opposite effect, however, as her vocal quality declined, and her newfound status made it impossible to retrain her voice. She spent several decades feeling sorry for herself and feeding off other performers before learning of Shroudhaven's existence and assuming a new role as talent scout and manager.

9: GEAR AND GEARS

In contrast to the village's other supplier, Keren Zaris's (LE female vampire halfling) home and shop are models of orderliness. Very little of the gear she sells overlaps with Sestra Vol's offerings. She prides herself on practical gear for adventurers, such as five-foot-long poles that can extend to ten feet (or longer) with the push of a button. Like many of the vampires in Shroudhaven, Zaris obsesses over a particular activity; in her case, she creates intricate clocks and clockwork devices. Many of her accurate clocks grace homes and businesses throughout the village. She nears completion on her largest project yet: a troupe of clockwork dancers. She hopes to feature the dancers on Madame Mellavious's main stage, but the impresario has not budged on her stance regarding the unnaturalness of what she considers mere machines.

10: RESPITE LODGE

Yvaine Grau (N old female elf cleric 9), a golden-haired woman with sparkling emerald eyes, used to divide her time between her farm and this place of healing. She has trained other residents to handle farming duties, though, allowing her to focus on being another ambassador for Shroudhaven.



Respite Lodge stands at the opposite side of the village from Jinkin's Bar and Grill, a good location since the approach from the Lodge's side is fraught with danger. When Yvaine expects visitors or knows her fellow villagers plan to hunt feral undead, she memorises many *cure* and *inflict* spells. She serves a similar role to Jinkin for newcomers, but she often sends visitors to him after she has tended their wounds. More importantly, she serves as an advisor for the undead living in the village. She relies on her connection to nature to provide guidance for those struggling to maintain their civility. Her 200 years of life also give her perspective on the near-immortality of the vampires she guides.

- **Accommodation:** Common room (4 sp).
- **For Sale:** Holy water (30 gp), unholy water (20 gp), *scroll of sanctuary* (300 gp), *scroll of protection from good* (300 gp).

Unusual Poison: One of the Gloomhand recently visited Yvaine in secret with complaints of stomach distress. The elf healed the council member and sent her on her way. The incident piqued her curiosity, so she conducted a cursory investigation, whereupon she discovered the councillor's wine had been dosed with holy water. After checking her own supplies and finding nothing missing, she concluded the poisoner procured it from somewhere beyond the village, either returning with it or arranging for its delivery. With no investigative skills, and a strong desire to avoid involving herself in a political conflict, she looks to outsiders to look into the poisoning. She trusts Jinkin to find suitable sleuths.

KEREN ZERIS

LE female halfling vampire

Dressed in plain and practical work clothes, this halfling woman has close-cropped hair and an intense stare. Despite her undead nature, her skin is flushed, as if from great exertion.

Mannerisms: The halfling distractedly jots down notes or makes asides about various projects she has in progress. Otherwise, she keeps her hands busy assembling or disassembling clockwork devices.

Personality: Keren is obsessed with her work and can spend hours of thought on problems besetting her. She does not like diversions from her tasks, but she has learned to be less visibly annoyed when someone attempts to engage her in small talk. However, if a visitor discusses something relevant to a current project, Keren spends hours bouncing ideas off the visitor,

Background: Keren is a relatively recent arrival in Shroudhaven. Prior to her undeath, she worked as a tinker. The vampire who spawned her was slain by an adventuring group days afterwards, but Zuzu found her and invited her to Shroudhaven. The halfling enjoys her new status, as it allows her to tirelessly perfect her craft. Part of Keren's obsessions involve repaying the mistress of Theatre Mellavious for her kindness.

OGL V1.0A

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