

THE OBSIDIAN IDOL



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

- **Theme/Genre:** Mystery, Adventure, Fantasy
- **Tone:** Suspenseful with moments of lighthearted camaraderie
- **Target Level:** Level 3
- **Expected Duration:** 2 Hours
- **Player Focus Preferences:**
 - Combat: Medium
 - Roleplay: High
 - Exploration: High

BACKSTORY AND SETTING

OVERVIEW OF THE WORLD

The fragmented kingdom of Dunmaris hosts your adventure—a land shaped by ancient ruins and hidden relics. Once united beneath a lineage of mighty kings, Dunmaris has broken into lawless territories since the monarchy's fall centuries ago. Ancient treasures, whispered among adventurers, draw ambitious seekers into its myths and shadows.

THE LOCAL AREA: MISTMERE VILLAGE

Nestled along the forest's edge, Mistmere is a quaint village blanketed in the perpetual fog of the **Shadowcrag Forest**. Vibrant yet thick with tension, locals gather in the market square where chatter and trade flourish. Overlooking them is the foreboding **Greyspire Tower**, a vestige of an ancestral order of knights.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Long ago, the Order of the Shadowed Light guarded Dunmaris, wielding magical relics of power. Foremost among these was the **Obsidian Idol**, said to grant dominion over shadows. After the order's collapse, the idol was shattered, its largest fragment rumored to lie beneath Greyspire Tower.

IMPORTANT NPCs

1. **Eldrin Caerlyn:** Historian and scholar of the kingdom's lost past. Eldrin is intrigued by the idol fragment, hoping it could restore the realm's former glory.
 - **Motivation:** To uncover and preserve the history of Dunmaris.
2. **Captain Verna Trynwald:** The stalwart leader of Mistmere's militia, Verna has unearthed a strange obsidian shard and fears its curse.
 - **Motivation:** Safeguard her village from the dark omen.
3. **The Shadecaller:** A shadow-infused warlock haunting the forest's depths, intent on reassembling the Obsidian Idol for ultimate power.
 - **Motivation:** Control shadows to ascend as a demigod of darkness.

PLOT HOOK

OPENING SCENE

The air in Mistmere is charged with anxiety under the misty cover of early evening as the adventurers gather in the warm ambiance of **The Dusken Mug** tavern. Their reprieve is interrupted as Captain Verna bursts in, brandishing a shard of foreboding obsidian that pulses with an ominous purple glow.

"This cursed shard has afflicted my men with nightmares and shadows! One must unveil its purpose before doom claims us!" echoes Verna's urgent call.

Eldrin Caerlyn, amid the murmurs, holds up his tome with conviction. *"This may be part of the idol I have long studied. If these fragments are reassembled, it could unleash an even greater terror."*

CALL TO ACTION

The party is urgently commissioned to investigate Greyspire Tower, searching for further idol fragments to ensure they do not fall into malign hands. **Their mission: Retrieve the fragments and prevent the resurrection of the idol's full power.**

KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION 1: MISTMERE VILLAGE (THE STARTING AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** The village is shrouded in thick, eerie mist, casting everything in a soft, ghostly glow. Villagers converse in whispers, sharing apprehensive tales of moving shadows.
- **Key NPCs:** Captain Verna, Eldrin Caerlyn.
- **Possible Encounters:**
 - *Roleplay:* Villagers share unsettling stories and hint at strange shadows prowling the nearby woods.
 - *Exploration:* A reveal of a shard imbued with faint magic (Arcana check, DC 12 to recognize necrotic energy).

LOCATION 2: THE SHADOWED GLADE (INTERMEDIATE AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** Entering the glade elicits a profound silence. Stone pillars, weathered and covered in moss, encircle the area, with shadows flitting among the trees.
- **Key Feature:** A central warding stone that protects a second orb shard. The party must solve a **rune puzzle** to deactivate the protection.
 - **Puzzle:** An array of ancient runes glows on the stone. Players must align them "light to dark" (Insight or History DC 13 for clues). Incorrect attempts can trigger a *Shadow Trap* (DEX save DC 14 for necrotic damage).
- **Combat Encounter:** Upon dispelling the ward, **Shades of the Idol** (2 Shadows with enhanced HP) emerge to defend it.

LOCATION 3: GREYSPIRE TOWER (FINAL AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** The decay of the tower is palpable. Shadows cling to the crumbling walls as the party ascends to a throne room soaked in magical darkness.

- **Boss Encounter: The Shadecaller**, wielding assembled fragments, battles the party, bolstered by 2 Shadow Entities.
 - **Shadecaller (CR 3 Warlock):** Utilizes spells like *Arms of Hadar* and *Darkness* to control the battlefield.
 - **Environmental Challenge:** Magical darkness ebbs through the room, obscuring vision. Players must counteract with light or strategic ingenuity.

ENCOUNTERS AND CHALLENGES

- **Combat Tactics:**
 - Shadows use their **Shadow Stealth** to isolate and target solitary characters.
 - The Shadecaller employs a combination of AOE spells, such as *Arms of Hadar*, and summons additional shadow minions mid-combat for added pressure.
- **Roleplay Prompts:**
 - Eldrin pleads with the party to destroy the idol, emphasizing its danger.
 - Villagers implore consideration of harnessing the idol's power for good, despite the inherent risk.
- **Puzzle Mechanics:**
 - The runes in the Shadowed Glade emit faint tones when touched. Insight (DC 13) uncovers their sequence forms a melody to be played correctly.

CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION

FINAL CHALLENGE

During the climactic battle, the Shadecaller attempts to reassemble the idol, channeling shadow magic. Upon the final assault, the idol fragments explode, plunging the room into chaotic shadows. Players must collectively succeed on a DEX save (DC 14) to navigate the chaos unscathed.

STAKES

- **Success:** The idol's power dissipates, arresting the curse and sparing Mistmere.
- **Failure:** The idol's lingering strength poses an ongoing threat.

CONCLUSION

Returning to Mistmere, the adventurers are hailed as heroes—or, in failure, bear grim news. Eldrin expresses gratitude, and Verna continues her guardianship with renewed determination. The cursed shard is securely sealed, warded to prevent its influence from spreading.

REWARDS

- **Treasure:**
 - 50 gp per adventurer, along with a **Moonlit Pendant** (Custom Magic Item, +1 to Persuasion rolls when under moonlight).
- **Story Rewards:**
 - Esteem among Mistmere's inhabitants, earning free accommodations and meals. Eldrin may propose future quests.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

STAT BLOCKS

- **Shadecaller:** A Warlock tweaked for shadow-themed spells. Modify the standard Warlock (Great Old One) to include **Darkness** and **Arms of Hadar**.
- **Shadows:** Use the standard Shadows from the Monster Manual, each with an additional 10 HP for better durability.

MAPS & HANDOUTS

- Basic sketches illustrating the layout of Greyspire Tower and a small map of the Shadowed Glade.
- A visual representation of a “cracked fragment of obsidian” adorned with pulsing runes.

ATMOSPHERIC MUSIC

- **Mistmere Village:** “Village Atmosphere” (soft, haunting flutes, subtle murmurs).
- **Shadowed Glade:** “Forest Whispers” (eerie, rustling strings, distant echoes).
- **Greyspire Tower:** “Ruined Keep Ambience” (windy, echoing drips, unsettling).

FLEXIBLE OUTCOMES

- **Alternate Paths:** If players opt to negotiate with the Shadecaller or decide to claim the idol, this could spur further storyline complexity or set the stage for a sequel imbued with moral dilemmas.
- **Improvisation Tips:** Stay adaptable for unexpected player strategies like rallying villagers or devising creative alliances. Encourage explorative and strategic solutions for in-depth immersion.