

TWILIGHT'S LAST OATH



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Title: Twilight's Last Oath

Theme/Genre: Dark Fantasy, Mystery, Intrigue

Tone: Brooding, Morally Ambiguous, Suspenseful

Target Level for Players: Level 5

Expected Duration: 2 hours

Player Focus Preferences:

- **Combat:** Medium
- **Roleplay:** High
- **Exploration:** Medium

BACKSTORY AND SETTING

SETTING OVERVIEW

The adventure takes place in the cursed region of **Duskpine Vale**, a desolate area shrouded in perpetual twilight where the sun has not risen for over a year. The once-thriving region is crumbling under an arcane curse, and strange creatures stalk the shadowed wilderness. At the heart of the vale lies the village of **Ashenrest**, a bleak settlement struggling under oppressive fears of the unnatural and beset by failing crops and restless spirits. Old superstitions now grip the people, as whispers of betrayal and dark pacts fill the air.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A century ago, the vale prospered under the protective blessing of **Elisvah, the Twilight Warden**, a celestial figure known as a guardian of balance. Devoted clergy once conducted annual oaths at her sanctuary to preserve the light's dominion over the shadows. But 20 years ago, a betrayal within the clergy led to the sanctuary's destruction, severing the region's connection to Elisvah. Since then, slow decay turned to outright ruin as the curse befell Duskpine Vale and strangled the light from its skies. To this day, the betrayer's name remains unknown.

IMPORTANT NPCs

1. **Reeve Audric Harrowhall** (Human, Local Magistrate): A grim and harried leader of Ashenrest, desperately trying to hold the village together. He is pragmatic but conceals a secret from the party regarding his involvement in the curse.
2. **Sister Lirien Duskbow** (Elf, Devout Acolyte): The sole surviving cleric of Elisvah's faith. She believes the curse can be lifted if the Warden's forgotten oath is renewed and will act as the party's guide.
3. **Veylin Thornroot** (Half-Orc, Renegade Hermit): A reclusive scholar living in the wilderness near Ashenrest. Known for unearthing ancient ruins, Veylin holds critical knowledge of the sanctuary and its secrets. Obsessed by paranoia, he is reluctant to share.
4. **Umbryss, The Sworn Devourer** (Shade Knight): The campaign's final antagonist—a shadowy enforcer of the curse. Umbryss is bound to ensure the pact remains unbroken and the vale forever drowned in darkness.

PLOT HOOK

OPENING SCENE

Location: Village Square, Ashenrest.

Atmosphere: Twilight fades slowly, leaving an unsettling chill. Lanterns flicker with each gust of wind as worried villagers gather.

As the party arrives at **Ashenrest**, they witness a grim scene: townsfolk gathered in a storm-battered square under flickering lanterns. The Reeve addresses the villagers over the body of a slain farmer whose throat was marked with claw-like punctures. The people whisper of a **“Noctis Stalker”**, a shadowy beast said to roam the wilds at night. A distant bell tolls, hollow and muted, and with it, comes the Reeve’s plea to the adventurers:

Reeve Audric: *“Something stirs in the woods—a predator like no other. It stalks those far from shelter and strikes with unrelenting malice. But this is more than a forest predator. The curse tightens its grip, and we are running out of time. I beseech you—help us uncover the truth lurking in these shadows. This has gone beyond our control.”*

The **primary objective** is clear: uncover the source of the curse before it consumes Ashenrest entirely.

KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION 1: THE VILLAGE OF ASHENREST

Atmosphere: The village is cloaked in an eerie half-light, where shadows stretch unnaturally. Lanterns struggle to pierce the gloom, and the villagers avoid the party’s eyes—both cautious and desperate.

NPCs & Encounters:

- **Reeve Audric:** Gives the mission briefing and hints that Sister Lirien can guide the party.
- **Villagers:** A mixture of suspicion and despair. Some blame outsiders for cursing the land; others beg the adventurers for help, providing roleplay opportunities.
- **Subplot Clue:** Investigating rumors leads to the discovery that someone deliberately shattered an ancient oath long ago.

LOCATION 2: THE RUINS OF ELISVAH’S SANCTUARY

Description: A broken shrine sunken into the hillside, where vines strangle the carved stone and the air is thick with rot. Symbols of shattered sunlight and forgotten prayers adorn the structure. Occasional faint whispers surround the party, urging them away.

Challenge:

- **Puzzle:** A faded mural outlines the Warden’s forgotten oath, but it is incomplete. The missing piece is hidden within a locked reliquary guarded by a faded spirit of one of Elisvah’s former priests.
- **Combat:** A group of shadowy zombie-like creatures shambles in when the party begins the puzzle but acts as a defensive distraction rather than a lethal force.
- **Clue:** The safe passage into the vale’s deeper mysteries lies in completing the oath—missing fragments of the puzzle reference Veylin Thornroot’s research.

LOCATION 3: THE HOLLOW SPIRE

Description: A jagged obsidian tower overgrown with dead trees, perched precariously above a ravine that emanates malice. The deeper the party climbs, the more reality seems to warp—steps crumble randomly, shadows move of their own accord, and unnatural whispers batter their resolve.

Encounter:

- **Final Boss Fight - Umbryss, The Sworn Devourer:** A relentless shadow knight wielding cursed magic. During the battle, the environment plays against the party (the floor shifts to open abyss pits, etc.).
- **Objective:** Reciting the completed Twilight Oath weakens Umbryss dramatically, reducing him to his mortal form and forcing him to reveal the truth about the oath’s betrayal.

ENCOUNTERS AND CHALLENGES

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS:

1. **Ashenplain Wolves (x4):** Hunt the perimeter of the sanctuary.
 - **Tactics:** In shadows, these creatures gain heightened stealth and attack in coordinated pairs.
 - High stealth perception required to avoid ambush.
 - *Stat Block Example:* Medium predator, AC 14, HP 42, Pack Tactics ability.
2. **Umbryss, the Sworn Devourer (Boss):**
 - **HP:** 180
 - **AC:** 18
 - **Abilities:** Legendary actions to bind foes in shadow. The key victory method ties to breaking his curse, weakening repeated shadow-born reinforcements.

CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION

- **Final Challenge:** The party must decide:
 1. **Restore the Oath:** Activating the celestial sigils cleanses the region but requires a grave personal oath from one party member, perhaps symbolically surrendering light and exposing personal cost themes.
 2. **Alternative Outcome:** The party could choose to unravel the curse's binding entirely, freeing the region from both shade and the draining light, exploring what it means to adapt to a new balance.

RESOLUTION

Once the decision is made, the environment responds dramatically:

- If the Oath is restored, light begins to break the twilight, casting long-awaited warmth and hope.
- If a new balance is sought, natural energies shift, and the village adjusts to the unshackled magic. The party earns recognition for ending the enduring night.

EPILOQUE AND FUTURE HOOKS

With **Duskpine Vale** liberated from its oppressive pall, new challenges and opportunities arise. Villagers begin rebuilding their lives, and unknown lands beckon the adventurers' curiosity. Sister Lirien might invite the party to formally reinstate the lost clergy's presence, while Veylin, finally free of paranoia, aids them with relics recuperated from ages past.

This concludes the one-shot campaign "Twilight's Last Oath." May it offer adventure, intrigue, and lasting memories.