

# Shadowglade

## Game Masters's Guide

By Nate Petersen

**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



# Shadowglade: Game Master's Guide

**Author:** Nate Petersen

**Cover Frame:** John C. Walborn

**Cover Illustration:** Anthony Cournoyer

**Interior Illustration:** Paul Boutros, Anthony Cournoyer, Jaqui Davis, Jonathan Roberts

**Shadowglade Map:** Jonathan Roberts

**With Assistance From:** Charlie Boon, Troy Logsdin, Cody Methvin, Randy Pfefferle, Will Thibault, and Caleb Wrege.

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# Welcome To Shadowglade

Welcome to the Game Master's Guide to Shadowglade. As much as any setting has its secrets and hidden gems that players are left to discover, you will find that Shadowglade has many, many more.

To get things out of the way early and help you decide if this is something for your party or not, here's the meat of what's going on:

- The world was destroyed five-hundred years ago, and has finally, in recent years, been able to return to some semblance of normalcy.
- On the fringes of this world the supernatural is very real...
- ...And the world at large knows nothing about it, including the player characters...
- ...Because a number of secret societies work hard to keep it secret for the safety of that world at large or their own twisted agenda.
- Players can expect to fight ghosts, ghouls, golems, necromancers, vampires, werewolves, zombies, and other various supernatural elements...
- ...and perhaps even join their number!
- And finally, not everything they know and learn, nor everything you know and learn, will be true and accurate.

Still sound interesting? Excellent! Then keep reading and we'll break down the remainder of the setting and how to use it to your party's surprise, horror, and enjoyment!

# A World Within A World

The world of Shadowglade is effectively split in two; on the surface, you have the everyday world that the vast majority of the population experiences. This is a rather common and mundane existence, very little of excitement or interest. Days go by, children are born, fields are worked, and the vast majority of the population lives a peaceful life and die a quiet death late into life.

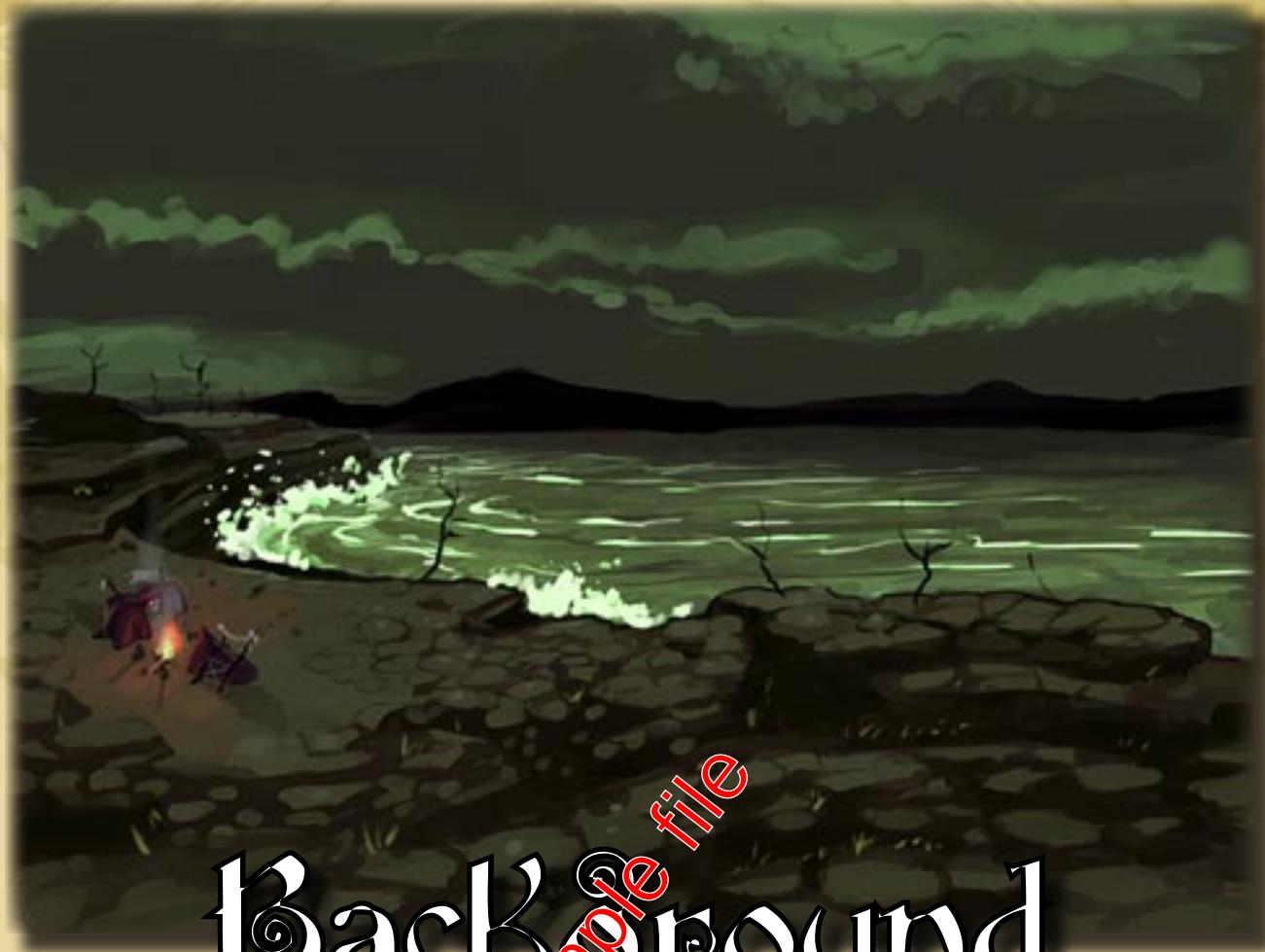
Beneath that quiet, placid surface, however, lies a darker, more sinister world. Supernatural forces and unnatural extensions of the land exist that threaten to tear it apart if left unchecked. Within this world, little is certain and there is no peace, no rest, no reprieve for those engulfed in the shadow.

Word of caution: nothing in the realm of Shadowglade is exactly as it would seem. The mundane jobs taken to ensure a full meal and warm bed may drag your party into the cold shadows forever; under the tutelage of the Torchbearers, your comrades could have the veil of mystery lifted and see the monsters amongst the men for the first time. While in the employ of the Order of the Ebon Throne, you may come to realize those "monsters" simply want their own place in the world, while a mission from the Guild may ultimately reveal the true monsters aren't those who skulk in shadow but those who walk proudly in the sun whilst seeking to stab their brother in the back.

And all along the way, friends will be made, comrades lost, old mysteries solved with new ones discovered, great evil forever vanquished, and maybe, just maybe, your party will earn the right to rest in world finally freed of horror, chaos, and secrecy...

This guide serves as an introduction to the "other side" of the realm of Shadowglade. The mundane world as it is known by the players and the common folk of the realm is discussed in the Player's Guide to Shadowglade. The Game Master's Guide you are reading now is for your eyes only; it contains background information about things that may or may not exist as far as the players know, contradicts some beliefs held by the rest of the world, etc. As game master, you are entitled to the truth, or most of it at least, and can share this knowledge with your players through adventures undertaken in this realm!





# Background

Shadowglade is a world with a very thick background despite its shattered memory. Though not often recommended, it does pull a bait & switch at times with players; much of what is presented in the **Player's Guide** and even the **Introduction to Shadowglade** isn't exactly false, but its not exactly true either.

Much of this has to do with the history of the realm and the Upheaval; because complete knowledge of the world's history before the event was scoured, survivors were only left with scraps of memory and a few records on which to base their understanding of their world and the history they lost. As with a game of "telephone", snippets taken out of context, historical revision, gaps in knowledge, and occasional wild assumptions led to a vastly different world view than what actually occurred.

This portion of the Game Master's Guide is intended to fill in a lot of those blanks for you as the game master so that you can better fill your role and provide a more entertaining experience for your players. Really, very little of this will come to light at your table. Most of the players will latch on to their expectations of the setting, what they have learned through the introductory player materials, and be perfectly

content with that. Sometimes however, they will encounter something... unusual. Or start asking questions about the past and go digging for themselves. This material will help you deal with those situations and hopefully deliver a rich and satisfying exploration of the world's history.

While at the outset much if not all of this remains hidden from the characters in the world, we have a number of projects on the bench to explore more of these. The necromancer city of Soularus, as you will read about, features prominently in several potential campaigns and will receive a full treatment. Prisse's Folly, the archeological disaster, will be more fully explored on paper so that your own group can fully explore it in play. These and many other treatments are due out as quickly as we can record their histories and provide an exciting experience.

We do have to ask one thing; please keep the knowledge on these pages to yourself. Share when the time is right, when your players delve deeply into the world, but allow them to discover it for themselves. Life is rarely about the destination and the journey is always more important, entertaining, and satisfying.

# Pre Upheaval

## The Beginning

All stories begin at, well, the beginning. The realm that is now known as Shadowglade began as a formless void, a black, blank slate. Into this realm came the twin siblings, Asurik and Rheana, the son and daughter of greater powers. They were given this niche of Creation to do as they saw fit.

The natural laws were already in place and the brother and sister were tasked with crafting a new world based on those. They had seen the realms created by their other siblings and the greater powers and sought something different. In their world, there was to be no fear, no anguish, it was to be a world in balance.

To that end, the two split the duties of the realm but ensured that each depended on the other. Rheana, the sister, was given a suite of responsibilities that matched her; her smile would bring the new day and brighten the heavens, her warmth would cloak the ground of the new world and coax life from the bare soils. Asurik, the brother, would act as guardian and defend the world when his sister would rest. In the dark of the night while she rested, his ever vigilant eye would fall upon the world, and his cloak would cover the land in comfort and peace.

To help fill the world and paint the canvas, Asurik and Rheana convinced several dragons to join their world. A great white dragon brought the strength of the four winds, while a regal blue dragon brought the deep seas and waters. A powerful red dragon breathed fire into the heart of the world, warming it and so that its green brethren could help bring forth wondrous life. Their task complete, the already ancient dragons were allowed to dwell within the world, free of the persecution they had faced in other lands.

The great white dragon made a home in the north, causing the lands around him to chill and freeze over. From here, the world's winters would come and coat the world in pristine white. The majestic blue dragon settled in the tropical southern seas to bask in the glory of the sun and gentle surf. The red dragon found a home in the east, nesting deep within the earth. The green dragon likewise found a home to the west, where the rich seas met the cool earth and great groves sprang forth.

Other creatures were brought into the world, some from realms beyond imagining, some born of the twin creators. All manner of flower and beast roamed the open lands and life flourished. Proud of their budding world, Asurik and Rheana sought stewards to help them govern the lands. In that they found two creatures across the other worlds who proved to be strong choices for overseeing the newly crafted world. These were humans, who at their best

represented great ingenuity and talent, and the Wyre, beast men of incredible strength and loyalty. Those who sought peace and tranquility from the other lands were brought to their new realm to help it begin to fully blossom.

As the supreme powers of their world, it fell to the twins to ensure that all aspects of the natural order were preserved, including the inevitability of death. Not wanting to burden his sister with the terrible task, Asurik assumed the mantle himself but not as a grim specter as other worlds possessed. Asurik sought to help bring the children of his world to a peaceful end and ensure that they reached their just rewards in the afterlife. Death would be painless in their world, the soul free to seek lasting rest in the realms beyond. Thus, Asurik became the protector of the dead, while his sister Rheana guided and nurtured those who remained and ensured theirs were long, happy, and fulfilled lives.

## The Emissaries

The world flourished, but after many years it began to overwhelm the new gods. Those from the other worlds had little idea what to do with the pristine paradise offered to them by the new gods, knowing only warfare and strife, and constantly sought guidance from them. Rheana especially was beseeched, for it was she who shone down upon them when awake, and she who gave life whereas her brother, they believed, took it.

Among their number arose a dashing young man who came to the world as a child. With knowledge of the world his family left he fell in love with the paradise they were given and indeed in love with Rheana. Seeing his countrymen lost, he began to speak up, to assume some of the burden Rheana bore for the world. He spoke wisdom and common sense born of understanding, and the people listened. He regularly consulted Rheana in matters, but helped his people take the reins as well. "We must do as we can, and when we can do no more Rheana will help us finish our task" was a common saying he offered.

The years wore on and the young man turned grey and his pace slowed. He still spoke with Rheana, who saw only the young vibrant soul of her champion. In his twilight years, Rheana approached her brother to see what might be done for a life so well lived in their service. Asurik himself had been meaning to speak with his sister for similar reasons regarding another of their flock...

In the early years of the realm, while death was inevitable it was not prevalent. Wildlife passed on, though rarely human or Wyre, and Asurik ensured that all creatures great and small found their way into the afterlife. Despite his unique approach to death, he sadly found he was still feared by those new to their world. It was to be expected he knew, and the very same reason he assumed the mantle in place of his radiant sister. One among them, however, saw his