

Hook

SCÉNARIO FLASH

YZE

PWYW

The Last Vigil

YZE · Beginners · 2-3 hours · English

Tonight, someone must stay awake for what waits beneath the chapel.

The PCs reach Ashen Hollow as the wind seals the roads. In the common hall lies old Heda, warden of the hamlet, dead at the start of the vigil she led every winter. No one dares move her body yet. Everyone knows that when the last cold rises, a vigil must be kept in the chapel until dawn. If the watcher leaves their post, whatever sleeps beneath the slabs starts speaking with the voices of the dead, then with those of the living.

This year the rite is incomplete, the hamlet is tearing itself apart, and the outsiders are the only ones who have never sworn themselves to the thing. That may be a chance. Or the perfect offering.

- Players: 3-5
- Duration: 2-3 hours
- Tone: rural winter, collective guilt, useful superstition, horror that imitates the intimate
- Play promise: short investigation, constant Stress pressure, a vigil climax more dangerous than a straight fight

Immediate hooks

- Someone close to Heda asked the PCs to attend her funeral without ever explaining why.
- The road is cut off: Ashen Hollow is the only shelter before the storm.
- One PC finds their own name carved beneath the chapel bell even though they have never been here.

Vigil Count

Start at 0. Add 1 each time a PC pushes a roll, panics, lies publicly to the hamlet, or makes noise in the chapel. At 2, the voices begin. At 4, the thing forces the crypt and the climax begins, wherever the PCs are.

YZE Rule - Pushing Rolls and Stress

- After a failed roll, a PC can push it once and reroll all dice that do not show 1.
- Each 1 on the reroll inflicts 1 Stress or 1 damage, depending on the fiction.
- In this scenario, Stress mostly comes from fear, voices, and isolation. At 0 Resolve, a PC is Broken.

The Hamlet and Its Key Scenes

Ashen Hollow

Twelve low houses pressed against the wind, an empty pen, a common hall heated too much, then the chapel standing apart at the edge of a mist-choked ravine. Bundles of rowan hang from every door. After nightfall, the villagers avoid naming themselves aloud.

Scene 1 - Heda's wake

Heda's body rests seated upright, coat closed, a copper bell tied to her wrist. The villagers refuse to explain the rite clearly until the PCs take a side.

- Observation or Insight: Heda has black earth beneath her nails and fresh splits at her neck, as if something had tried to speak through her.
- Empathy or Persuasion: calming the gathering reveals the useful truth. The vigil does not demand a sacrifice, but four sincere voices before dawn: one watcher in the chapel and three witnesses able to speak true names without trembling.
- Push: a Stress 1 here makes Heda murmur with the voice of someone close to a PC. Everyone present gains 1 Stress if no one regains control at once.

Scene 2 - The warden's house

Heda's home holds traces of the true rite: salt, tallow, red wool, a notebook covered in crossed-out names, and a crypt key hidden in a hardened loaf.

- Observation: the notebook shows that the thing never takes a stranger first; it prefers voices that have already lied to the vigil.
- Crafting or Survival: properly preparing lamp, salt, and wool binding grants +1 die to the first Wits roll made in the chapel.
- Empathy with Nilsa, Heda's granddaughter: she admits she heard Ivar the gravedigger suggest leaving an outsider alone to "solve the problem."
- Release: sharing a true memory of Heda or carrying out a simple funeral gesture removes 1 Stress from one PC.

Scene 3 - The sealed chapel

Beneath the chapel, an iron hatch leads to an ancient crypt. The room smells of cold tallow and scorched wool. As long as a lamp remains lit on the altar and a living watcher keeps their place without fleeing, the thing stays beneath the boards.

- Entering alone inflicts 1 Stress. Entering together spreads the fear but immediately adds 1 to the Vigil Count: the rite becomes unstable.
- Wits or Observation: hear that the scratching answers to the names of the hamlet's recent dead.
- Persuasion or Empathy: convincing a villager to serve as witness keeps everything from resting on the PCs alone. Ivar lies out of cowardice, but he can still redeem himself.
- Push: on a pushed roll in the chapel, the thing imitates the PC's voice and whispers a secret they are hiding from the group. If they deny it, they gain 1 additional Stress.

NPCs and Threat

Scene 4 - The watcher's crypt

When the Vigil Count reaches 4, or as soon as the PCs open the hatch, the crypt reveals a lined shaft, bones bound with red wool, and a figure woven from roots, dry hides, and human jaws. It is not a local god. It is the habit of fear, fed for generations.

The Hollow wants only one thing: a voice willing to remain. It promises to protect Ashen Hollow for one more winter if it is given a watcher, a confessed lie, or a name freely offered. It lies very little. It mostly devours half-truths.

Key NPCs

- Maela Sorne, village elder: harsh, authoritative, convinced that an outsider must pay this year. She also knows the vigil still works if four witnesses speak the truth together.
- Ivar Tallec, gravedigger: exhausted, ashamed, ready to betray others to survive. He cut one of the red wool bindings earlier, helping the thing awaken.
- Nilsa Heda, age 12: the only one who heard her grandmother's last instructions. She knows Heda always said, "Never keep watch alone out of pride."

Compact YZE Stats

Panicked Villager - Superstitious Human

ATR Strength 2 · Agility 2 · Wits 2 · Empathy 3 Health 3 · Resolve 4 · Stress 1 Persuasion 2 · Observation 1 · Close Combat 1 ATK Pitchfork or knife +1 [1 damage] · Range Close
 CONDITIONS: Afraid of the chapel SPECIAL ABILITY: Nervous mob. If not alone, gains +1 to Persuasion when pointing out a scapegoat. PUSH: if they push a social roll and get 1s, they immediately accuse the calmest PC and inflict 1 Stress on them.

The Hollow Beneath the Chapel - Vigil Entity

ATR Strength 4 · Agility 2 · Wits 4 · Empathy 1 Health 5 · Resolve 5 · Stress 0 Observation 3 · Close Combat 2 · Insight 3
 ATK Wool-and-bone hands +2 [1 damage + 1 Stress] · Range Close
 CONDITIONS: Immune to Fear; Broken if four true names are spoken while the lamp burns and the salt circle remains intact SPECIAL ABILITY: Borrowed voices. Anyone who hears it must make a Wits roll or gain 1 Stress. PUSH: if it pushes an Insight roll and gets 1s, it speaks the witness's worst secret aloud in front of them.

Panic, Climax, and Conclusion

Panic Table (D6)

When a Stress die shows 1, roll 1D6. If the character has 4 Stress or more, increase the result by 1, to a maximum of 6.

- 1. Startle: drops an object or accidentally snuffs out their light.
- 2. Tremor: -1 die to the next physical action.
- 3. Freeze: loses their action, eyes fixed on the source of fear.
- 4. Flight: moves away from the chapel or the crypt at once if possible.
- 5. Scream: all allies in range gain 1 Stress.
- 6. Break: attacks the nearest presence or collapses Broken if attacking is impossible.

Running the climax

The finale should force a choice, not just a brawl. The PCs have three main outcomes available:

- Restore the vigil: one watcher remains before the hatch, three witnesses speak a true name and a true regret aloud, the tallow lamp burns, then the salt circle is sealed again. The Hollow becomes Broken and sinks back down for a year.
- Bargain: a PC or an NPC freely offers a major memory, an oath, or a season of watchfulness. The hamlet survives, but the marked person begins every future scene with 1 Stress until the debt is broken.
- Break the cycle: fire, salt, and the collapse of the crypt destroy access to the shaft. The Hollow is scattered, but Ashen Hollow loses its chapel, Heda loses her tomb, and the hamlet must live with what it fed for so long.

Possible endings

- Dawn held: the vigil is done properly. Maela finally lowers her eyes, Ivar admits his fault, and Nilsa becomes the new memory of the rite.
- Bitter peace: the bargain is struck. Winter stays calm, but the thing gains a new voice in the world.
- Open ash: the crypt is destroyed. The village may be free, but every house now keeps a fragment of ancient fear.

GM advice

- Give 1 Stress for familiar voices, public lies, and isolation, not for every noise.
- Offer good reasons to push often: gain proof, calm the crowd, keep the lamp lit, save a witness.
- Remove 1 Stress when a PC tells a costly truth, receives sincere comfort, or sees dawn coming closer.

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