

Hook + Overview

SCÉNARIO FLASH SHADOWDARK

Tomb of the Silent Eye

Shadowdark RPG · Level 1-2 · 2-4 hours · English

A tomb where words die, but omens still bleed.

Tonight, Embermist's bells fell silent all at once. At the same moment, the old burial mound in the hills opened like a clean wound in the stone. Since then, dogs no longer bark, newborns no longer cry, and prayers spoken near the barrow vanish before anyone can hear them. The PCs are the only ones mad, greedy, or loyal enough to go below before dawn.

At the bottom of the tumulus rests the Silent Eye, an obsidian globe sealed into the brow of a petrified oracle. The relic absorbs sound, soothes the dead, and draws in those who hunger for flawless revelations. A brotherhood of blind augurs, led by Brother Galt, intends to complete a forbidden rite here. If they succeed, the Warden of Repose will awaken and the whole moor will fall under supernatural silence, with the dead walking soundlessly through it.

- Recommended level: 1-2
- Players: 3-5
- Estimated time: 2-4 hours
- Tone: tense old-school play, tight exploration, consequential choices
- Play promise: a compact but dense site, two avenues of approach, several solutions, and a relic too useful to leave alone

Immediate hook

Choose or roll 1d4.

1. The mayor offers 100 gp and the clearing of every local debt to whoever stops the phenomenon before dawn.
2. Yselde the barrow-watcher begs the PCs to save her brother, who was seized by the augurs and forced into service as a bearer.
3. One PC hears a voiceless promise in their sleep, offering a personal secret if they touch the Eye before the priests do.
4. The PCs were already chasing tomb robbers; their trail leads straight to the gaping split in the mound.

What happens if the PCs delay

For every 30 minutes spent hesitating, resting, or taking a detour, mark one step.

- Step 1: cult scouts seal off the secondary entrance.
- Step 2: the novice Sera is sacrificed; the rite grows stronger.

- Step 3: the Warden of Repose partially stirs; add its aura to the final chamber.
- Step 4: dawn draws near, the tomb exhales silence across all of Embermist, and the ending can no longer be entirely clean.

Situation + Tomb Structure

Read aloud

The wind slides across the moor without a whistle. Before you, the barrow has split open along a clean fissure, as if some giant blade had lifted the hill. Bone stakes line the approach. Black ribbons snap against them without a sound. Deeper in the opening, your torchlight seems to burn with difficulty, swallowed by something that hates voices.

Truth of the place

The tomb was built by the Watchers of the Last Breath, an ancient funerary cult that imprisoned the Silent Eye inside the skull of an oracle who willingly turned to stone. As long as the seal remains whole, the relic keeps the hill-dead asleep and muffles the prophecies that would otherwise claw their way up from the earth. Brother Galt has understood only half the truth; the Eye can indeed reveal the future, but only by feeding the Warden of Repose, an entity of stone and silence bound to the tomb.

Playable structure

Run the site as a readable mini-dungeon.

- Split Entrance: frontal approach, quick, dangerous.
- Collapsed Passage: secondary access through a damp break, slower but quieter.
- Hall of Stelae: a place of lore, secrets, and supernatural contact.
- Flooded Crypt: a detour full of risk and useful resources.
- Blind Well: a tactical junction locked by a sound-based obstacle.
- Eye Chamber: final scene, negotiation possible, combat likely, moral choice certain.

Key areas

- Split Entrance: slick steps, fresh bootprints in the mud, two cult torches, and a recent corpse with black ash packed into its mouth. Search: 8 gp, a bent hook, a silver ring worth 12 gp.
- Collapsed Passage: a crawlspace of broken stone and freezing air. A PC in heavy armor must leave behind a pack or shield to pass without a check. In return, this route opens behind funerary niches that are rarely watched.
- Hall of Stelae: seven monoliths carved with crossed-out ears, closed eyes, and sewn mouths. Careful listening reveals that each stele absorbs a different kind of noise. Whispering against the right stone opens a secret way into the Flooded Crypt.
- Flooded Crypt: black water up to the knees, open niches, drowned votive lamps, oil on the surface. Echo leeches infest the walls. Bundles of bones tied to the ceiling drop if the place is crossed too roughly.
- Blind Well: a broad rim around a vertical shaft with no echo. Five slabs of black bronze are set into the floor. Any uncontrolled vibration alerts the final chamber and hastens the rite.
- Eye Chamber: a petrified oracle seated on a throne of black salt, an obsidian globe sealed into its brow, an incomplete ritual circle, dead censers, fresh blood, and an overturned litter.

Useful secrets

- The Watchers did not hide a treasure here. They were trying to stop the world from hearing a prophecy too vast for mortal minds.
- The ghost of the sealed priestess can teach a simple counter-rite, but only to those who gather her bones and close her broken jaw.
- Galt is no martyr: if the Warden fully awakens, he will try to flee with the Eye rather than die for his faith.

Encounters + Obstacles + Stat Blocks

Dynamic encounters

- Terrified looters: two wounded tomb thieves hiding behind a cracked lintel. They saw three augurs descend, a bound porter, and a novice in tears. They trade that information for a torch, treatment, or a promise to get out alive.
- The mute supplicant: a veiled ghost of a tongueless priestess. She does not attack. She mimes the gestures of covering the slabs, closing the Eye, and burying the blood. If soothed, she reveals the counter-rite and blesses a torch: its flame does not flicker inside silent zones.
- Sera the novice: a young augur in a panic, still sighted in one eye. She can betray Galt if promised a way out. She knows the secondary passage exists and that Galt keeps a sacrificial blade of black copper.
- Galt's rite: when the PCs reach the final chamber, Galt is nearly finished. He speaks softly, offers to share the vision, and mostly tries to buy time. He would rather use the PCs against the Warden than face them head-on.

Old-school obstacles

- Sounding slabs: each slab crossed carelessly triggers a voiceless vibration. On the first trigger, the cultists prepare themselves. On the second, the novice is wounded and the rite advances. On the third, the Warden gains +6 HP and awakens immediately if blood touches the Eye. Solutions: cloth, sand, planks, slow movement, the ghost's signs, a pole, or a risky jump.
- Smothering dust: in disturbed areas, a collapse of black dust forces a DC 12 CON check. On a failure, the victim cannot speak or cast a verbal spell until the end of their next turn.
- Crypt oil: if set ablaze, it drives off the leeches and sheds good light, but it fills the area with heavy smoke; everyone acts with disadvantage on visual perception checks there.

Factions and intentions

- Blind augurs: they want absolute revelation. They fear clear light, sudden fire, and anything that breaks the solemn rhythm of the rite.
- Dead of the barrow: they want the silence sealed, not a slaughter. They aid those who close what should remain closed.
- Living opportunists: looters, Yselde, and local survivors. They want to leave with something, not necessarily with the truth.

Shadowdark creatures

- Blind augur: AC 12, HP 7, MV near, ATK dagger +2 (1d4) or sling +2 (1d4). Morale 7. Devoutly blind: if a target spoke loudly, shouted, or cast a verbal spell this round, the augur has advantage on its next attack against that target.
- Echo leech: AC 13, HP 9, MV near swim, ATK bite +3 (1d6). Morale 6. Stolen voice: the target loses its voice until the end of its next turn; to cast a verbal spell before then, it must succeed on a DC 12 CON check.

- Warden of Repose: AC 15, HP 24, MV near, ATK stone fist +4 (1d8) or grapple +4 (special). Morale 12. Silence aura: at near range, verbal spells require a DC 12 INT or WIS check; on a failure, the spell does not go off but is not lost. Funerary grip: on a natural attack roll of 18+, the target is pinned until it succeeds on a DC 13 STR check.

- Brother Galt: AC 13, HP 11, MV near, ATK ritual knife +3 (1d6) or blinding powder +2. Morale 8. Faded prophet: once, he can force a visible PC to reroll a successful roll; Galt then describes the worst consequence he claims to have foreseen.

Important NPCs

- Yselde, barrow-watcher: scavenger of grave relics, hard in a bargain, not built to die for treasure. Motivation: recover a sacred silver mask she swore to sell. Secret: she was the one who sold Galt an old incomplete plan of the tumulus.
- Sera, novice augur: terrified, filthy, her scalp already scarred for the rites. Motivation: get out alive. Secret: she saw that the Eye can also look through the stone of the well.
- Brother Galt: leader of the augurs, soft voice, hands stained with ink and dried blood. Motivation: hear a prophecy with no contradiction at last. Secret: he knows the Eye always kills its first full interpreter.

Treasure and rewards

- The Silent Eye: once per day, it creates a zone of total silence at near range for 3 rounds. While carrying it, the bearer senses hidden mechanisms, secret doors, and hollow spaces within near range as pressure in the teeth. Mild curse: for every night it is carried, make a DC 12 WIS check; on a failure, the bearer dreams of a starless sky and loses 1 point of STR on waking until the next full rest in a sacred place.
- Silver funerary masks: 120 gp total, but taking more than three masks without the proper rite makes the dead hostile.
- Black-copper sacrificial blade: a finely made dagger; if it draws the first blood in the tomb, the next roll tied to the rite is made with advantage or disadvantage, depending on how it is used.

Endings + Tables + Continuation + Credits

Running the final scene

When the PCs arrive, choose the state of the rite based on lost time and alarms already triggered.

- Limited progress: Galt negotiates at length. Sera may turn on him. The Warden is only a latent threat.
- Medium progress: the circle pulses, black dust seeps from the oracle, and the Warden is already moving beneath the stone in the walls.
- Strong progress: blood is almost touching the Eye. Any sudden violence can trigger a full awakening.

The PCs can win in four ways: kill Galt, break the circle, perform the counter-rite, or seize the Eye and flee. All four come with a price.

Possible endings

- Sealing: the PCs complete the counter-rite, close the Eye, and return silence to the tomb. The dead remain calm. Embermist owes the group a lasting favor.
- Sacrilegious theft: the PCs leave with the Eye. The village is safe for now, but relic hunters, mystics, and uneasy dead will soon take up their trail.
- Contained awakening: the Warden rises, but the PCs destroy it or bury it again. The moor remains marked; voices carry badly there for weeks, and some newborns no longer cry.
- Revelation at a cost: Galt wins a partial vision before dying. One of the PCs hears a crucial name, place, or date for your campaign as well, at the price of a lingering hush around them for 1d6 days.

1d6 table - What the Eye whispers to whoever touches it

1. The name of a dead person the PC thought forgotten.
2. A vision of a sealed door beneath another hill.
3. The burned face of a future enemy bearing the same symbol as Galt.
4. A rain of black stars falling over a city without bells.
5. Someone close to the PC standing motionless inside a ring of silence.
6. An untouched treasure guarded by something that no longer needs eyes to see.

1d4 table - Exit complications

1. A band of looters waits outside, ready to strip the survivors.
2. The mayor wants the Eye so it can be handed over to a passing scholar.
3. Sera begs the PCs to take her far away before the other augurs find her.
4. The tumulus slowly closes again, trapping anyone who lingers.

Hooks for what comes next

- A map carved inside the oracle's skull leads to a larger underground observatory where other relics were walled in with their interpreters.

- Three factions learn of the Eye's existence in the same week: a college of astrologers, a prince-bishop who collects miracles, and a pack of raiders that venerates the Warden as a saint of stone.

Compatibility and license note

- Compatible with Shadowdark.
- Independent third-party product designed for Shadowdark RPG, with no official affiliation to The Arcane Library.
- Published by AITTIA Studio for the wider ORC / open-license tabletop RPG ecosystem.

Credits

- Design and text: AITTIA Studio
- Line development: Flash Scenarios
- Editing: AITTIA Studio

Notes for the illustrator

- Cover: a barrow split like an eyelid, a wind-lashed moor, bone stakes, tiny adventurers facing an opening that is too black.
- Interior: a damp megalithic hall with carved stelae, a veiled tongueless ghost, and a meager torch in air thick with dust.
- Finale: a petrified oracle on a throne of black salt, an obsidian globe set into its brow, Brother Galt kneeling, an incomplete blood circle, and a stone Warden tearing free from the wall.

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