

## Cover and practical information

---



SCÉNARIO FLASH SHADOWDARK

# The Blind Mage's Crypt

Shadowdark RPG · Level 1-3 · 2-3 hours · English

He buried himself to meditate. Something is still meditating with him.

In the hamlet of Brumeterre, no one has slept for three nights. Beneath the Hill of Hollow Briars, a deep, wet chant rises from the earth after midnight, as though several throats were speaking with a single mouth. Everyone knows the old crypt of Avérion the One-Eyed, a withdrawn mage who, two hundred years ago, asked to be walled in alive there so he might "see farther than eyes." No one had heard his voice since.

The truth is less simple than a haunted tomb. Avérion let himself be buried in order to complete a great work: to imprison beneath his crypt an underground eye of sorcery capable of devouring visions, memories, and wills. Two centuries of vigil have worn him down, twisted him, perhaps saved him. The chants mean either that his seal is failing or that he is finally nearing success.

- Recommended level: 1-3
- Players: 3-5
- Estimated time: 2-3 hours
- Tone: buried secret, corrupted sorcery, old-school tension, pity mixed with distrust
- Play promise: mini-crypt in 4 zones, clear clues, readable danger, open finale between combat, aid, and sacrifice

### What the villagers know

- Avérion had only one eye in life; he blinded himself before entering the crypt, which gave him his later name.
- The chants began exactly three nights ago, always when the hamlet's torches gutter.
- A missing goat was found before the entrance slab, perfectly intact but with its eyes gone.

## Background, hooks, NPCs, and map

---

### Truth of the place

Avérion was neither saint nor sage. Beneath the hill he discovered a "Deep Pupil," a magical concretion that slowly swallowed the villagers' dreams and then their memories. To study it, he first fed it animals, then his own sight. When he understood that the entity would eventually open a passage, he had a sealing crypt built around it and asked to be buried alive so he could keep it asleep with a ritual chant.

The chants heard today come from two voices intertwined: Avérion's, still lucid in flashes, and that of the Deep Pupil, which is finally learning how to answer. If the PCs merely kill the mage without stabilizing the seal, the true evil will break open. If they help him blindly, they may perfect a ritual that is already corrupted.

### Immediate hooks

Choose or roll 1d4.

- 1. Elder Ysolde offers 70 gp and the old communal mule if the PCs stop the chants before the next night.
- 2. One PC dreams of a round chamber where someone offers them their own eye like a warm pearl.
- 3. The hamlet gravedigger swears he saw the entrance slab open on its own, then close again like an eyelid.
- 4. A family begs the PCs to find a sleepwalking child who wandered toward the hill while humming the guttural melody.

### Key NPCs

- Ysolde of the Stones, elder of Brumeterre: hard, superstitious, sincerely protective. Motivation: save the hamlet quickly, even if the crypt must be sealed forever.
- Corin the gravedigger: gaunt, nervous, knows old stonework. Motivation: prove that Avérion was a misunderstood benefactor. Secret: three days ago, he already cracked the crypt open to "listen more closely."
- Avérion the Blind Mage: desiccated, seated, voice worn but precise. Motivation: maintain or complete the seal before he truly dies. Secret: the ritual is slowly turning him into a living relay for the very thing he thought he had imprisoned.

### Simplified map

- 1. Shaft of Buried Chants -> 2. Chamber of Stone Eyelids
- 2. Chamber of Stone Eyelids -> 3. Scriptorium of the Black Line
- 3. Scriptorium of the Black Line -> 4. Avérion's Cell
- 2. Chamber of Stone Eyelids -> secret niche to 4 if an obsidian eye is placed in the split statue

## The 4 zones of the crypt

### 1. Shaft of Buried Chants

Spiral stair, cold dampness, walls scratched with phrases repeated by fingernails worn to bone. The chant rises from below, felt more in the chest than in the ears.

- **Danger:** descending quickly or with an unsteady light calls for a DC 11 DEX check; on a failure, a hard fall deals 1d4 damage and creates a loud crash heard throughout the crypt.
- **Clue:** the inscriptions all repeat some version of the same line: "What I close looks back at me."
- **Encounter:** 1d2 Chantre de Glaise crawl out of the steps if anyone bleeds here or speaks too loudly.
- **Loot:** in a niche, 12 gp, a flask of oil, and a split silver bell worth 15 gp.

### 2. Chamber of Stone Eyelids

Twelve blind faces are carved into the walls. Each bears an eye socket, save for one split statue whose orbit remains empty. The floor is dusted with gray salt.

- **Readable trap:** taking an obsidian eye without replacing its weight on the plinth triggers a shower of splinters; DC 12 DEX check, or else 1d6 damage and disadvantage on the next WIS check based on sight.
- **Solution:** wedge the plinth with a round stone, a sphere, or close the mechanism again with damp salt.
- **Secret:** placing an obsidian eye back into the split statue opens a discreet slab leading to the final cell.
- **Treasure:** 2 obsidian eyes worth 20 gp each; one also serves in the final ritual.

### 3. Scriptorium of the Black Line

Wax tablets, rotten scrolls, hundreds of black cords stretched from ceiling to desks like a network of nerves. A breath of air makes them vibrate and compose low syllables.

- **Obstacle:** crossing without cutting or snagging the cords requires a DC 13 DEX check; on a failure, the cords coil around the arms, deal 1d4 damage, and the target is restrained until they succeed on a DC 11 STR check.
- **Encounter:** a Guetteur sans Paupière floats here, nourished by the vibrations and drawn to light sources.
- **Revelation:** Avérion's notes explain that he buried himself to prevent "the eye beneath the stone" from learning human speech. The present chants prove he has almost failed.
- **Treasure:** the Bandeau du Dernier Regard, 24 gp in old pledges, and a bowl of black salt usable in the finale.

### 4. Avérion's Cell

Small rotunda beneath a low dome. A circle of salt and wax surrounds a stone chair. Avérion sits there, eyes bandaged, his hands sewn to the armrest with copper wire. Behind him, a dark fissure pulses like a wet pupil.

- **First, he speaks.** He asks to be released only if someone agrees to finish the chant, or to be slain only after the seal has first been closed again with salt and an obsidian eye.
- **If the PCs attack without listening, the fissure spits out 1 Rejeton de l'Œil Enfoui on the following round.**
- **Closing the seal requires 3 actions:** place the obsidian eye back in the fissure, pour black salt over the broken circle, then succeed on a DC 13 INT or WIS check to take up a stanza legible in the scriptorium.

- **Visible treasure:** a knotted staff, a copper coffer with 33 gp, and the Anneau de la Pupille Close on the mage's desiccated finger.

### Shadowdark creatures and NPCs

- **Chantre de Glaise:** AC 12, HP 9, MV near, STR 13, DEX 8, CON 12, INT 4, WIS 9, CHA 3, ATK clay claws +2 (1d6), Morale 7. Guttural chant: on a hit, the target must succeed on a DC 11 CON check or be unable to speak clearly or cast verbal spells until the end of its next turn.
- **Guetteur sans Paupière:** AC 13, HP 6, MV near fly, STR 4, DEX 15, CON 10, INT 6, WIS 12, CHA 5, ATK obsidian sting +3 (1d4), Morale 8. Drawn to light: it has advantage against the first creature to brandish a torch or lantern in the room.
- **Rejeton de l'Œil Enfoui:** AC 14, HP 15, MV near, STR 14, DEX 12, CON 14, INT 5, WIS 11, CHA 2, ATK nerve whip +4 (1d8), Morale 10. Gaping pupil: on a natural 18+, the target must succeed on a DC 12 WIS check or stumble back to near range, overwhelmed by an alien vision.
- **Avérion the Blind Mage:** AC 14, HP 24, MV near, STR 9, DEX 12, CON 15, INT 18, WIS 16, CHA 11, ATK sealed staff +3 (1d6) or blinding ray +5 (1d8), Morale 10. Burial chant: instead of attacking, Avérion forces one nearby creature to succeed on a DC 13 WIS check or remain hesitant until the end of its next turn, unable to move toward the fissure. Unfinished great work: if the circle is repaired, Avérion ceases fighting and helps the PCs; if the circle is broken, he gains +2 damage but loses 3 HP at the start of each round.

### Magic items

- **Bandeau du Dernier Regard:** a strip of gray linen sewn with tiny obsidian shards. Once per day, its wearer may blindfold themselves for 3 rounds to perceive secret doors, invisible creatures, and traps at near range. While wearing it that way, they act normally in melee but suffer disadvantage on ranged attacks. Light curse: after use, DC 11 WIS check or troubled dreams, with no recovery of 1 HP on the next rest.
- **Anneau de la Pupille Close:** a ring of blackened copper. Once per day, the bearer may ignore one charm, visual illusion, or blindness effect targeting them. In return, their iris blackens until dawn, and superstitious NPCs react one step worse at first.

## Tables, possible endings, and GM aid

---

### 1d6 table - What the chants whisper

- 1. "Let me see for you."
- 2. "The mage lies, but the seal lies too."
- 3. "One eye is enough to open."
- 4. "The village will forget you before dawn."
- 5. "Kill the keeper, not the door."
- 6. "Sing true and no one will have to bleed."

- Design and text: MythCore
- Editorial line: Flash Shadowdark Scenarios

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

### 1d6 table - Complications on the way out

- 1. Corin wants to keep one obsidian eye "for study."
- 2. A child of the hamlet still repeats a fragment of the chant in sleep.
- 3. The hill has sunk and reveals a second, deeper fissure.
- 4. The ring's bearer sometimes sees pupils in black water.
- 5. Ysolde demands that the crypt be sealed with or without the truth.
- 6. A white owl with no eyes perches on the PCs' roof.

### Possible endings

- **Repaired seal:** the PCs help Avérión finish the chant and close the fissure. The chants cease. The mage finally dies, or sinks into motionless sleep, at the GM's choice. Brumeterre is saved, but the scriptorium notes imply that other "Deep Pupils" exist.
- **Wary mercy:** the PCs close the fissure first, then grant Avérión a true death. His body dissolves into gray ash. They leave with the ring or the blindfold, and with a truth too heavy for the hamlet.
- **Blind rupture:** the PCs kill the mage without stabilizing the seal or loot the final chamber in haste. The spawn escapes, the chants stop for only one night, and then the hill begins to "watch" the village.
- **Terrible inheritance:** one PC agrees to take up part of the chant or wear the obsidian eye in a makeshift blindfold. They immediately gain 1 luck token, but from now on their dreams speak with Avérión's voice.

### GM aid

- Play Avérión as an exhausted man, not a triumphant necromancer. He may lie from shame, never from pure sadism.
- Reveal the truth in three beats: the shaft inscriptions, the scriptorium notes, then Avérión's confession.
- If the group is cautious or new, use only one Chantre de Glaise and delay the arrival of the Rejeton de l'Œil Enfoui by one round.
- If the group only wants to "clear the dungeon," let them, but show clearly that killing the mage too early does not erase the real problem.
- Reward any solution that combines observation, on-site materials, and moral risk.

### Compatibility and ORC license

- Compatible with Shadowdark.
- Independent third-party product designed for Shadowdark RPG, with no official affiliation with The Arcane Library.

### Credits