

DUNGEONS & LAIRS #36: SHADOW HOTEL

Shadow Hotel is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 3, 5, 8, or 11**. This document offers a general guideline on how to scale the adventure for each level. The Breakwater Tavern was once a promising roadside inn for weary travelers—that is until the proprietor decided to ax-murder all of her guests. Now, boarded up and abandoned, there's nothing in that place but darkness. The characters must enter the tavern and cleanse it of its corruption.

CREDITS

The following creators made this adventure possible:

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PLUG-IN ADVENTURE

As a plug-in adventure, the adventure content serves as drop-in material for game masters who wish to add a dungeon to a preexisting campaign or need a side quest. If you need a hook for this adventure or already have a similar hook, the Shadow Hotel Hooks table below offers details for introducing this adventure to your players. If your campaign does not take place in Omeria, of course, feel free to disregard the factions associated with each hook.

Gold Rewards. To further incentivize the party to travel to the Shadow Hotel and cleanse it of evil, the party's patron might offer them a gold reward. If you aren't sure how much to reward the party for completing the adventure, pay them a total of 500 gp per level of the adventure so long as their patron is wealthy enough to afford such a price.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. If you don't have a copy, you can access a free basic ruleset from the official source.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under specific circumstances, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block as a way of saying, "Hey, game master, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going

Revenant Ghost Ship Hooks

d8	Side Quest Type	Faction	Details
1	Fetch Quest	Gold Fingers on the Iron Hand	Having a tavern, haunted or no, could be very profitable. A place to meet and a good front. Most people don't go crazy for no reason, something must of started all of this, find it, take it, and then once the smoke is clear, we will take the tavern for ours.
2	Recover Stolen Item	The Sunken	A powerful axe was stolen from one of our members years ago. We have finally learned of its last known location, the Breakwater Tavern. Search the place and retrieve the axe for us.
3	Receive Information	Witnesses of the Worm	It is possible that the strange phenomena in the hotel are connected to the coming of the Un-Worm. Discover if they are, and how to defend against them, so we can protect our own from similar threats in the future.
4	Rescue Mission	Fellowship of the Crimson Staff	The last person to try opening this hotel was one of our own. They eventually stopped responding to messages. Rescue them if possible, and secure the hotel, so we can ensure a proper rest spot along this road once more. (The last owner has been reanimated to feed the shadows in area 14.)
5	Find a Missing NPC	The Company of the Many	The hotel's initial owner, Madame Acelina, simply vanished. Since the location often served as a meeting place, we are interested in her fate, and in possibly reopening the hotel to serve us again.
6	Monster Hunt	The Circle Unbroken	This phenomenon seems like powerful magic. Whatever the history of the tavern, this is more than a mere haunting. We must investigate and take care of whatever may be causing this. It may be localized now, but dark things such as this tend to spread.
7	Supernatural Investigation	Bharzal's Blades of Doom	The doomblades would like to try and ascertain what the weird shadowy thing inside the tavern is, whilst trying not to get caught by anything strange. Payment will be anything shiny that the party may find, as long as they come back.
8	Secure Aid	Answers for the Righteous	Living shadows are of great interest to Our Path, who uses them as informants and spies. If possible, quarantine the area, contain the haunt, and prepare the building for the arrival of Our Path. This creature could be useful.

to be an encounter!” If the stat block appears in the Appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so; otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

Spells and non-magical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players. *Magic items* are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure’s text directs you to an item’s description in the Appendix.

LEVEL SELECTION

Before play, be sure to know the level at which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the locations and their descriptions in the adventure remain unchanged throughout the levels. However, most of the encounters, hazards, traps, and treasure scale with each level of the adventure. The keyed locations will present the differences between each level.

Also, the adventure works for more than just the listed levels. If you wish to run this adventure for levels other than 3rd, 5th, 8th, or 11th, the chart below shows you which version of the adventure you should select for each level. A given version of the adventure might be easier or harder for a given party. It’s not recommended that you run this adventure for characters with an average party level of less than 3 as it may pose too much of a challenge. Similarly, a party with an average party level of 13 or greater might find the adventure too easy.

Scaling the Adventure

Average Party Level	Recommended Adventure Version	Relative Difficulty
3	3rd-level	Hard
4	3rd-level	Medium
5	5th-level	Hard
6	5th-level	Medium
7	8th-level	Deadly
8	8th-level	Hard
9	8th-level	Medium
10	11th-level	Deadly
11	11th-level	Hard
12	11th-level	Medium



THE SHADOW HOTEL

The Breakwater Tavern was once a modest roadside coaching inn but fell into ruin when its owner, Madame Acelina (N female human **commoner**), went mad and began ax-murdering her guests. She disappeared after the incident and was never seen nor heard from again.

The tavern then went through a string of new owners, none of whom could keep the business afloat. The culprit? Odd noises, apparitions, and just a few disappearances. The tavern was haunted.

Now, the business stands boarded up and abandoned, a squalid testament to Madame Acelina’s grisly crimes. Lately, however, passing travelers have reported strange sightings within the tavern. Though none can say exactly what they’ve seen, the reports all have one thing in common: the darkness of that place has been seen to writhe, as if the shadows themselves have come alive.

GENERAL FEATURES

The following features are common throughout all areas of the hotel and are printed here for ease of reference:

Size & Dimensions. The ceilings within each area of the hotel are 10 feet high unless stated otherwise.

Illumination. During the day, the outdoor areas are well lit by natural sunlight, and the indoor areas are dimly lit by natural sunlight via cracks in the walls. During the night, the moon provides dim light to outdoor areas only (treat each indoor area as having no light unless stated otherwise).

Surface Detail. The hotel is a squalid structure that’s been abandoned and boarded up. There’s significant rot in the wood. Nature has long begun its quest to reclaim this space.

Barriers. Several doors and windows throughout the hotel are locked and/or boarded up. All of the barriers are made of wood and have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A lock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check made using thieves’ tools, or any barrier can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

AREAS OF THE SHADOW HOTEL

The following locations are keyed to the maps of the hotel on pages 4, 8, and 10.

1 - Outdoors - Hotel Porch

The former “Breakwater Tavern” looks as if it might collapse at any moment. The entrance is boarded up and locked, but the wrap-around porch might allow one to find a different way into the hotel.

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to several other areas via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to area 2
- ▶ 5 boarded-up windows to area 2
- ▶ 1 boarded-up window to area 4
- ▶ 1 boarded-up window to area 8 (requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot)
- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to area 9
- ▶ 1 boarded-up window to area 7
- ▶ 1 boarded-up window to area 6
- ▶ 2 boarded-up windows to area 3

Stairs Up. An outdoor staircase on the tavern’s south side leads up to area 15.

Treasure: Abandoned Cart. On the tavern’s north side lies an abandoned, dilapidated merchant’s cart. A careful search of the cart reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Abandoned Cart

Version	Treasure
3	Small Art Object (25 gp); 1d4 random <i>spell scrolls</i>
5	Ruby Necklace (50 gp); 1d4 random <i>spell scrolls</i>
8	Engraved Emerald Locket (100 gp); 1d4 random <i>potions</i>
11	Platinum Ring (200 gp); 1d4 random <i>potions</i>



2 - Indoors - Reception

The hotel’s reception room appears to be—in complete contradiction to the conditions of the rest of the building—orderly, even clean. The desk at the western end of the room is made of oak and polished metal.

Stairs Up. A staircase in the northwest corner of the area leads up to area 10, but can only be accessed after dealing with Jeeves, the receptionist (see below).

Encounter: Jeeves, Receptionist. As the characters step inside this room, the tavern’s receptionist—an apparition named Jeeves—manifests behind the desk. Depending on the APL of the adventure, several **will-o’-wisps** may appear as well. Jeeves and his helpers won’t attack the characters at first, but will insist that they leave immediately; Jeeves has gone quite mad over the years and wants the hotel to himself. Jeeves may be convinced to let the characters stay in the hotel for the night, provided they succeed on a Charisma (Persuasion) check. In this case, each character “staying the night” must pay 10 gp for the privilege to do so. Alternatively, Jeeves may be bribed by providing objects to aid his quest in maintaining the hotel that meet or exceed a specific gold value, or by giving him the Maintenance Shed Treasure in area 9.

The characters may attempt to both persuade and bribe him once before Jeeves gives his final warning. Refer to the table below for more encounter information.

Jeeves, Ghost Receptionist

Version	Statblocks	Charisma (Persuasion)	Object Value
3	1 ghost	DC 15	100 gp
5	1 ghost, 1 will-o'-wisps	DC 17	200 gp
8	1 ghost with 80 hp, 2 will-o'-wisps	DC 19	450 gp
11	1 ghost with 80 hp, 6 will-o'-wisps	DC 21	600 gp

If the characters successfully persuade or bribe Jeeves into letting them stay at the tavern, he does them the favor of removing the barriers to all the interior doors of the building. They may then ask Jeeves for information about the source of the tavern's darkness, to which he'll answer that Madame Acelina had a strange obsession with the roof and that he's successfully kept the tavern's shadows from coming into the reception room—so far.

A paladin's Divine Sense feature can identify this room as consecrated. If Jeeves is killed, however, the room ceases to be consecrated.

3 - Indoors - Common Area

The common area is all but destroyed: interlopers have turned everything over, broken the tables and chairs, and scrawled lude graffiti on the walls.

Hazard: Ghostly Wail. Characters within 5 feet of the chimney located along the western wall of this area hear the ghostly wail of Madame Acelina. Characters who hear this wail have disadvantage on all Wisdom and Charisma checks and saving throws until they complete a long rest.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Treat this area as having an aura with the same effect as a shadow's Strength Drain feature, except it occurs automatically once every five minutes, doesn't cause any damage, and can't reduce a character's Strength score below 5. Characters may attempt a single DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to resist the effects of this aura **once per room**. A character who resists the aura in this way is immune to that particular room's aura until they leave and reenter it later. A paladin, cleric, or another character with a divine

connection notices the effects of this aura automatically after spending 1 minute in the area.

Hazard: Mummified Body - Modified Cackle Fever. The mummified body of a commoner lies in the southeast corner of the area; the body is covered in a thick mold and is unnaturally emaciated. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the body's muscle mass has completely atrophied. Additionally, any character that physically touches the mummified body is infected with a modified form of cackle fever, depending on the Adventure Level. Printed below is the unmodified form of the disease.

This disease targets humanoids, although gnomes are strangely immune. While in the grips of this disease, victims frequently succumb to fits of mad laughter, giving the disease its common name and its morbid nickname: "the shrieks."

Symptoms manifest 1d4 hours after infection and include fever and disorientation. The infected creature gains one level of exhaustion that can't be removed until the disease is cured. Any event that causes the infected creature great stress—including entering combat, taking damage, experiencing fear, or having a nightmare—forces the creature to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage and becomes incapacitated with mad laughter for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the mad laughter and the incapacitated condition on a success.

Any humanoid creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of an infected creature in the throes of mad laughter must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or also become infected with the disease. Once a creature succeeds on this save, it is immune to the mad laughter of that particular infected creature for 24 hours.

At the end of each long rest, an infected creature can make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the DC for this save and for the save to avoid an attack of mad laughter drops by 1d6. When the saving throw DC drops to 0, the creature recovers from the disease. A creature that fails three of these saving throws gains a randomly determined form of indefinite madness, as described later in this chapter.

Modified Cackle Fever

Version	Saving Throw	Damage	Madness?
3	DC 11	2 (1d4)	No.
5	DC 13	5 (1d10)	Yes.
8	DC 16	7 (2d6)	Yes.
11	DC 20	11 (2d10)	Yes.

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to several other areas via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door in the southwest leading to area 6
- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door in the southeast leading to a hallway; there are 4 boarded-up and locked doors in the hallway that lead to areas 4, 5, 7, and 8

4 - Indoors - Bunk Room

The beds look like they've been smashed with a heavy weapon; there's dried blood covering the walls. The footlockers have been opened and dumped upside down. Scratching noises can be heard behind a door in the northeast corner of the room.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Obstacle: Washroom Barrier. In the northeast corner of the room is a boarded-up and locked door



that leads to a private washroom. The reanimated creature(s) in the room is (are) scratching its surface. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome this obstacle:

Encounter: Feeding Shadows & Zombie. Behind the door to the private washroom are several shadows that are feeding on one or more reanimated people. The shadows are content to ignore the characters unless they open the door itself. Refer to the table below for more encounter information. Shifting shadows can be found in the Appendix.

Feeding Shadows

Version	Statblocks
3	3 shadows, 1 zombie
5	2 shifting shadows, 1 ghast
8	3 shifting shadows, 1 mummy
11	4 shifting shadows, 2 mummies

Treasure: Private Washroom. The tub in the washroom is filled with filthy water. A careful search of the tub in the washroom reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Washroom Treasure

Version	Treasure
3	Gold-Specked Decorative Soap (25 gp)
5	Gold-laden Toothbrush (50 gp)
8	Partially Filled Bottle of "Diamond" Cream (100 gp)
11	Half-Full Bottle of "Diamond" Cream (200 gp)

Hazard: Infected Water - Modified Cackle Fever. Any character that touches the tub water is infected with a modified form of cackle fever. Refer to area 3 for more information.

5 - Indoors - Common Washroom

The stench of this room is overwhelming; the tubs are filled with moldy, filthy water. Curiously, there's a mattress in one of the tubs. Looking up, you see why: there's a giant hole in the ceiling. The room above must be another guest room.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Infected Water - Modified Cackle Fever. Any character that touches the tub water is infected with a modified form of cackle fever. Refer to area 3 for more information.

6 - Indoors - Common Kitchen

This area has been ransacked by trespassers. The smell of rotten food hangs heavy in the air.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Encounter: Hungry Shadows. This area is filled with hungry shadows. Refer to the table below for more encounter information. Shifting shadows can be found in the Appendix.

Hungry Shadows

Version	Statblocks
3	4 shadows
5	3 shifting shadows
8	5 shifting shadows
11	7 shifting shadows

Treasure: Random Potions. At all levels of the adventure, a careful search of the kitchen reveals 1d4 random *potions* tucked in the kitchen's pantry cabinet.

7 - Indoors - Twin Room

This room appears to be in relatively good condition; it has yet to be ransacked. Beneath the sheets on the beds are lumpy objects.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Mummified Bodies - Modified Cackle Fever. Beneath the sheets on both beds are mummified commoners; the bodies are covered in thick mold and are unnaturally emaciated. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that their muscle mass has completely atrophied. Additionally, any character that physically touches either of the mummified bodies is infected with a modified form of cackle fever. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Treasure: Moldy Treasure. A careful search of the mummified bodies in this room reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Moldy Treasure

Version	Treasure
3	Light Coin Purse (25 gp)
5	Hefty Coin Purse (50 gp)
8	<i>weapon</i> +1 (GM's choice) - Appears as common weapon; unusable until cleaned
11	<i>weapon</i> +2 (GM's choice) - Appears as common weapon; unusable until cleaned

8 - Indoors - Queen Room

Like much of the tavern, this area has been ransacked. A large pool of blood appears to have dried beneath the bed.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Encounter: Esmerelda, Noblesse. As the characters step inside this room, the room's former occupant—an apparition named Esmerelda—manifests in the room. Depending on the APL of the adventure, several **will-o'-wisps** may appear as well. Esmerelda and her helpers won't attack the characters at first, but will insist that they leave the room immediately so that she can get her "beauty sleep." Esmerelda may be convinced to let the characters examine the room, providing they succeed on a Charisma (Persuasion) check. Alternatively, Esmerelda may be bribed by providing beauty-related objects that meet or exceed a specific gold value, or by giving her the Washroom Treasure in area 4.

The characters may attempt to both persuade and bribe once before Esmerelda gives her final warning. Refer to the table below for more encounter information.

Esmerelda, Ghost Noblesse

Version	Statblocks	Charisma (Persuasion)	Object Value
3	1 ghost	DC 13	100 gp
5	1 ghost, 1 will-o'-wisp	DC 15	200 gp
8	1 ghost with 80 hp, 2 will-o'-wisps	DC 17	450 gp
11	1 ghost with 80 hp, 6 will-o'-wisps	DC 19	600 gp

If the characters successfully persuade or bribe Esmerelda, they may then ask her for information about the source of the tavern's darkness, to which she'll answer that Madame Acelina would often claim that she talked to the stars.

Burned Body. If Esmerelda is slain, her body beneath the queen bed burns up in blue fire, taking the treasure with it.

Treasure: Esmerelda's Body. If Esmerelda allows the characters to examine the room, then they may discover Esmerelda's body beneath the queen bed. On her person is treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Esmerelda's Body

Version	Treasure
3	Silver ring (50 gp)
5	Ruby locket containing a portrait (100 gp)
8	Emerald and topaz necklace (200 gp)
11	Brilliant diamond tiara (400 gp)

Esmerelda is well aware that she's dead, and understands that she has no need for worldly possessions.

9 - Indoors - Maintenance Closet

As expected, the maintenance closet is a heap of everyday objects; no one's even bothered to ransack it, leaving everything intact.

Obstacle: Closet Barrier. The door to this room is boarded-up and locked. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome this obstacle:

Treasure: Maintenance Tools. The shed is packed to the ceiling with everyday equipment. A careful search of the room reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Maintenance Shed Treasure

Version	Treasure
3	A Very Nice Broom (25 gp)
5	A Golden Employee-of-the-Month Broom (50 gp)
8	Mostly Clean, Silver-Lined Dinner Napkins (100 gp)
11	Immaculately Clean, Gold-Lined Dinner Napkins (200 gp)



10 - Indoors - Second Floor Lounge

The flooring in this area is rotten and covered in a slick, black mold. An oily substance drips from the ceiling. Though the furniture is ruined, there's a glass bookcase that seems to have survived the intervening years.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Weak Floor. The wood has gone to rot in this area. Whenever a humanoid creature attempts to move farther than 5 feet in a single move action, they must pass a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall 10 feet to the floor below, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone. **Note:** if a character has fallen through the floor of area 16, they automatically break through this floor as well and land in area 2, taking 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage instead.

Treasure: Rare Books & Spell Scroll. A careful search of the glass bookcase reveals several rare tomes, regardless of APL. The rare books weigh 25 lbs total and are worth 250 gp to interested parties (antiquarians, libraries, museums, etc.) or 25 sp to common vendors. Characters with proficiency in Arcana or History recognize the books' true value, while those without just have a vague notion that

they're worth *something*. Additionally, the characters find one *spell scroll* with a random inscribed spell (GM's discretion) folded and hidden in one of the books.

11 - Indoors - Twin Room, Floor 2

This room has been ransacked. In the quiet, you hear nothing but the sound of floorboards creaking underfoot.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Ghostly Wail. Characters within 5 feet of the chimney located along the western wall of this area hear the ghostly wail of Madame Acelina. Characters who hear this wail have disadvantage on all Wisdom and Charisma checks and saving throws until they complete a long rest.

12 - Indoors - Family Suite

This room appears to be in better condition than much of the tavern. A large mirror sits upright by the doorway, covered in a bloodied bedsheet.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Treasure: Mirror of Life Trapping. There's an empty *mirror of life trapping* by the doorway. Until a character is attuned to the magic item, it appears as a simple, if valuable mirror. The characters may find its command word engraved on the Nice Desk Treasure in area 13.

13 - Indoors - Bunk Room, Floor 2

Much of the flooring in this room has rotted and collapsed to the room below. Across the chasm is a desk in good condition; unlike most of the tavern, it has remained untouched after all these years.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Collapsed Flooring. The wood has gone to rot in this area and collapsed to the floor below. In order to reach the nice desk (or return to the room's entrance), a character must pass a DC 17 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to leap across the chasm or fall 10 feet to the floor below, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone.

Characters who choose to enter via the windows will see the giant hole before they step into the room.

Treasure: Nice Desk. The desk is unlocked. A careful search of it reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Nice Desk Treasure

Version	Treasure
3	Gold-Lined Paper (25 gp)
5	Golden Ink Quill (50 gp)
8	Platinum Wax Stamp Tool (100 gp)
11	Platinum Ink Vase (200 gp)

Engraved on the treasure is a single word: the command word to the *mirror of life trapping* in area 12.



14 - Indoors - Junk Room

The room stinks of rotten flesh and is filled with miscellaneous detritus. One glance tells you that there's nothing of interest here.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Scratching Noises. Characters outside the door can clearly hear something scratching at the wood.

Encounter: Feeding Shadows & Zombie. In this room, hidden beneath the rubble, are several shadows that are feeding on one or more reanimated people. The shadows are content to ignore the characters unless they open the door itself. Refer to the table below for more encounter information. Shifting shadows can be found in the Appendix.

Feeding Shadows

Version	Statblocks
3	2 shadows, 1 zombie
5	1 shifting shadows, 1 ghost
8	2 shifting shadows, 1 mummy
11	2 shifting shadows, 2 mummies

15 - Outdoors - Second Floor Patio

The second-floor patio has gone to rot. The wood is molded over and bows unsettlingly beneath your feet.

Hazard: Weak Floor. The wood has gone to rot in this area. Whenever a humanoid creature attempts to move farther than 5 feet in a single move action or remove a barrier in the area (see below), they must pass a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall 10 feet to the floor below, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone.

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to several other areas via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to a hallway; there are 5 boarded-up and locked doors in the hallway that lead to areas 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14
- ▶ 1 boarded-up window to area 14
- ▶ 4 boarded-up windows to area 13
- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to area 10
- ▶ 3 boarded-up windows to area 10

Ladder Up. In the northwest corner of the patio is a rusted metal ladder that leads up to area 16.



16 - Outdoors - Rooftop

Seeping from the water tank appears to be some kind of black ichor. It reeks of death.

Hazard: Encroaching Darkness. The evil of this place is so pervasive that it cuts the soul. Refer to area 3 for more information.

Hazard: Weak Floor. The wood has gone to rot in this area. Whenever a humanoid creature attempts to move farther than 5 feet in a single move action, they must pass a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall 10 feet to area 10 below, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone.

Hazard: Ghostly Wail. Characters within 10 feet of the water tank hear the ghostly wail of Madame Acelina. Characters who hear this wail have disadvantage on all Wisdom and Charisma checks and saving throws until they complete a long rest.

Encounter: Madame Acelina. If the characters open the water tank to investigate the black ichor, Madame Acelina manifests to them as a ghost. Depending on the APL of the adventure, several **will-o'-wisps** may appear as well. Unlike the other apparitions in the tavern, Acelina and her helpers will do everything in their power to forcibly remove the characters from the tavern (and life itself).

Madame Acelina

Version	Statblocks
3	1 ghost
5	1 ghost, 1 will-o'-wisp
8	1 ghost with 80 hp, 2 will-o'-wisps
11	1 ghost with 80 hp, 5 will-o'-wisps

Treasure: Acelina's Axe. Acelina's Axe is a *berserker axe* with the following modification: so long as this weapon is on the grounds of the Breakwater Tavern, you gain an additional +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In addition, so long as this weapon is on the grounds of the Breakwater Tavern, your hit point maximum increases by an additional 1 for each level you have attained. It floats near her body in the water tank.

As a cursed item, it appears at first to be a simple axe +1.

Cleansing the Tavern. The bloated, molded-over corpse of Madame Acelina floats in the water tank. So long as her body remains on the premises, the tavern will remain a cursed place: One **shadow** will spawn in a random room of the tavern once per week.

Once the body is removed, the water tank stops spewing black ichor. The body will spontaneously combust 1d4 minutes after being removed, ending the curse: the Encroaching Darkness auras throughout the tavern dissipate, and any ghost inhabitants left alive are released to the afterlife.

Hazard: Infected Water - Modified Cackle Fever. Any character that touches the water is infected with a modified form of cackle fever. Refer to area 3 for more information.



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE CARETAKER...

Once the characters have cleared out the undead creatures haunting the tavern, their patron will pay them their just reward. They'll ask about their adventure and, disgusted and horrified, declare that they're no longer interested in the building if they were before. The characters may repair and operate the hotel thereon.

However, if Acelina's body was not removed from the water tank, a **shadow** will spawn in a random room of the tavern once per week. If repairs have begun on the building, they'll be halted as workers report disappearances amongst the crew.

RUNNING THE HOTEL AS A BUSINESS

Once the adventure is concluded, the characters may find themselves as the proprietors of their very own hotel. The following sections are suggestions on how to manage the day-to-day operations of the hotel itself.

Repairing the Hotel

Before the hotel can be turned into a profitable enterprise, it must first be repaired. The extent of these repairs determines the **lifestyle level** of the hotel, which in turn affects the amount of currency generated by each guest.

Hotel Repairs

Lifestyle Level	Repair Cost (Cumulative)	Months (Cumulative)	Profit Per Guest
1 - Wretched	N/A (Default)	N/A	N/A
2 - Squalid	100 gp	1 Month	1 sp
3 - Poor	250 gp	2 Months	2 sp
4 - Modest	750 gp	4 Months	1 gp
5 - Comfortable	2,250 gp	8 Months	2 gp
6 - Wealthy	7,500 gp	16 Months	4 gp

The lifestyle level of the hotel can be improved upon after the initial repairs are completed. Note however that each upgrade takes a certain number of months, meaning that the hotel won't be generating profit during that period. Make sure your workers keep getting paid so they don't leave!

Hiring Workers & Worker Development

Workers (**commoners**) require a living wage, a sign-on bonus, and bonus wages for expertise.

Workers can develop over the course of their career to become Experts. The better quality workers hired, the less prone to corruption they are. The characters can hire up to six workers.

If the characters wish to hire workers, refer to the following chart:

Hiring Workers

Quality	Sign-on Bonus + Monthly Wage	Corruption Chance (d20)	Tip Chance (d20)
1 - Novice	1.5 gp + 2 gp per month	1-5	17-20
2 - Journeyman	3 gp + 4 gp per month	1-4	16-20
3 - Expert	6 gp + 8 gp per month	1-3	15-20

Who's in Charge? Every hotel needs a general manager to oversee its operations while the characters are away. The general manager's quality is one level higher than the highest quality worker the characters hired for no additional cost (i.e. a Journeyman is upgraded to an Expert for free). The general manager still contributes to the overall production of the hotel.

Corruption Roll. At the end of the month, after all wages have been paid out, roll a d20 and consult the "Hiring Workers" chart above. If the result equals the Corruption Chance of the **lowest** quality worker in the hotel, then the hotel loses 1d20 sp in revenue that month, plus half of whatever bonus tips were given in that month's Tip Roll.

Tip Roll. At the end of the month, after all wages have been paid out, roll a d20 and consult the "Hiring Workers" chart. If the result equals the Tip Chance of the **highest** quality worker in the hotel, then the hotel is tipped a modest sum (25 gp). If

the result is a natural 20, then the hotel is tipped a generous sum instead (500 gp).

Worker Development. Novice workers can become Experts over time. It takes six months of continuous employment for a Novice to become a Journeyman, then twelve months of continuous employment for a Journeyman to become an Expert.

Hotel Profits

The profitability of the hotel depends on two things: the number of guests checked in and the lifestyle level of the hotel.

At the beginning of each month, check to see how many guests are staying at the hotel by adding together the **total quality level** of each worker in the hotel (including the general manager) and subtracting 1d6 from the total.

Each guest generates an amount of sp or gp according to the lifestyle level of the hotel itself. Additional tips may be received by chance (depending on the expertise of the workers themselves).

If the characters aren't present to pay the workers' wages on the 1st of every month, the general manager will compensate them from the profits generated that month, then deposit the rest of the hotel's profits in a safe place for when the characters return. In this event, make an additional Corruption Roll (see the previous section) for that month and subtract 3 from the result.

If any worker goes uncompensated for a month of work, the **highest** quality level worker leaves permanently.

Hotel Guests

On rare occasions, a special guest might show up at the hotel. At the beginning of each month, roll a d20: if the result falls into the **Tip Chance** range of the hotel's **highest** quality level worker, a special guest shows up. Who the characters may run into is up to the GM, but here are some suggestions:

Hotel Special Guests Table

Guest	Purpose	Event	Operations Modifier
Bard	Attracts guests; sings and performs.	A jilted lover tracks the bard down and causes trouble.	d6 penalty to the number of guests is ignored; Tip Chance improved by 2.
Noble	Pays well; very demanding.	An assassin checks into the hotel alongside the noble.	Next month only: quality level of all workers reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1); extra d100 gp in profit this month.
Mercenary	Available for hire.	Fellow mercenaries get too drunk one evening and wreck the hotel bar.	d100 sp in damages; mercenary can be hired (GM's discretion). Ω

APPENDIX

Shifting Shadow

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Stealth +5

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amorphous. The shadow can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Shifting Movement. Difficult terrain doesn't cost the shadow extra movement, and opportunity attacks against it are made with disadvantage.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Strength Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4 + 1. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a humanoid dies from this attack, an ordinary undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after this shadow in the initiative count.

Shadow Stride (Recharge 4–6). If the shadow is in dim light or darkness, it teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see that is also in dim light or darkness. Before it teleports, it can touch a Medium or smaller creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or be teleported with the shadow, arriving in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the shadow's new location; if there is no unoccupied space for the target to arrive in, this effect fails.

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