



THE HAUNTING OF BLACKWOOD MANOR

A SAVAGE WORLDS MYSTERY, FANTASY ONE-SHOT
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Briarhollow Village, a quaint and unassuming settlement on the edge of an ancient, shadowed forest. For over a decade, the haunting mystery of Blackwood Manor has cast an eerie shadow over the village. Once home to Eveline Blackwood, whose death remains unsolved, the manor now stands abandoned and feared.

As adventurers, you will delve into the manor's depths, unraveling its secrets, confronting restless spirits, and following clues that twist toward multiple possible truths. Each step you take could reveal a different outcome, shaped by the choices you make and the paths you explore. Prepare for an adventure steeped in mystery, suspense, and danger. Briarhollow's haunted legacy lies in your hands—where will the truth lead you?

SETTINGS USED

- Briarhollow Village
- Blackwood Forest
- Blackwood Manor

NPCS AND MONSTERS

- Barnaby, The Tavern Keeper
- Mara, Eveline Blackwood's best friend
- Rowan Thorne, the old Groundskeeper for Blackwood Manor
- Various Townspeople
- The Ghost of Eveline Blackwood
- Wolves (Page 181 of the core rulebook)
- Swarm of Vampire Bats (Page 189 of the core rulebook; add Flight: Pace 12)
- A Black Cat (Page 181 of the core rulebook)
- Wraith (Use the Wraith entry found on page 248 of the SWADE Fantasy Companion or the Ghost entry found on page 183 of the core rulebook: add Havoc Power of D10)

For the purpose of this game, a wraith will be defined as an ethereal and vengeful spirit, often lingering between the world of the living and the dead due to some powerful, unresolved anguish or attachment. Unlike ghosts that may be benign or even helpful, a wraith emanates a chilling malevolence, its very presence draining warmth and light from the air. Shrouded in dark, tattered wisps and often appearing as a shadowy figure with hollow, glowing eyes, a wraith moves with eerie silence and can phase through walls or disappear at will. It may lash out in anger at anyone who disturbs its haunted grounds, making it a dangerous and relentless guardian of whatever secrets keep it tethered to the mortal realm.

In folklore and games alike, wraiths serve as warnings of the restless dead—a reminder that some spirits seek peace, while others only want to spread their misery to the living. Feel free to change the name of this creature to anything you feel would be more appropriate. It's your game, after all!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

To embark on this adventure, you'll need the Dragonbane core rulebook, a set or two of gaming dice, character sheets, and pencils. Maps are optional but can enhance the experience, helping bring the eerie world of Blackwood Manor to life. And of course, don't forget the snacks—essential fuel for a night of thrilling exploration!

This adventure is crafted with a love for storytelling and the thrill of discovery. Feel free to adapt, expand, or adjust any element to make this journey uniquely yours, creating an unforgettable experience for both you and your players.

REMEMBER

This story has multiple endings so be sure to read them in advance and decide which ending you want to use. Or if you're feeling really adventurous, roll a D6 and let the dice decide which ending you're going with. But be sure you're ready to have the final answers when the ending is revealed.

GM NOTE

Adjusting the Difficulty: If your players are seasoned investigators, consider adding extra red herrings or more intricate puzzles. For newer players, keep clues straightforward, and allow NPCs like Barnaby or Mara to offer hints as needed.

Encouraging Roleplay: The social scenes in the adventure offer opportunities for deep roleplay. Encourage your players to interact with townsfolk and ask questions. Remind players that seemingly small interactions may lead to valuable clues or new allies.

Atmosphere and Pacing: This adventure is rich with atmosphere, so take time to set the tone in each scene. Let players feel the eerie isolation of Blackwood Manor or the warm safety of the tavern. Don't rush moments of suspense; lingering in silence or letting players explore on their own heightens tension and makes discoveries more impactful.

Adapting the Clues: The mysteries in this adventure are designed to unfold in layers. However, if your players become stuck or miss a key clue, consider letting them discover it through another means—an overlooked note, an observation from an NPC, or a roll to recall a rumor they've heard. This keeps the story moving while ensuring they don't miss out on essential parts of the plot.

The Ghost of Eveline Blackwood will be more of a psychic echo. Her ghostly image is seen throughout the adventure but she seems distant. Her attention seems to focus on something unseen. She barely notices the players but will interact with them.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a single-session experience that balances exploration, investigation, and atmospheric horror. Players will unravel a haunting mystery surrounding Blackwood Manor and its tragic inhabitant, Eveline Blackwood. The GM's role is to create a suspenseful, immersive experience while subtly guiding players toward the clues they'll need to uncover the truth. Here's how to approach this story:

Tone and Atmosphere: The adventure is a blend of eerie suspense, emotional mystery, and sporadic danger. Set a somber, cautious mood by emphasizing the stormy weather, flickering shadows, and the eerie silence that pervades Briarhollow Village and Blackwood Manor. Encourage players to consider each clue and interaction carefully, as each piece contributes to the story's puzzle.

Non-Linear Exploration: While the adventure unfolds in a roughly linear progression from Briarhollow to Blackwood Manor, players have the freedom to explore each room and outdoor location in any order. GMs should remain flexible, allowing characters to follow their curiosity. Clues are placed in various areas to maintain player engagement and promote exploration without forcing a rigid path.

Pacing and Clue Delivery: The mystery is best revealed gradually. As players ask key questions, they may trigger reactions from Eveline's ghost or summon the wraith to guard certain secrets. Avoid answering everything at once; instead, reveal one clue at a time to keep players engaged and invested in solving the mystery. Whenever the players ask questions that hint at the true culprit, consider having Eveline vanish, heightening the suspense.

Role of the Wraith: The wraith functions as both a protector of Eveline's memory and an obstacle for the players. It appears at critical moments to defend against probing questions or unwanted entry into certain areas, like the basement. The wraith's behavior should hint that it is not simply a monster but a spirit bound to protect Eveline's story.

Managing Encounters: Encounters with creatures like the wolves, vampire bats, and the wraith should build tension and keep the players on their toes. These threats are dangerous but manageable. Use these encounters as a tool to emphasize the danger of the surroundings rather than as mere combat challenges.

Resolution and Rewards: As the mystery is unraveled, players should have the satisfaction of seeing Eveline's spirit laid to rest. The encounter with the wraith or the true culprit, provides closure and a dramatic end to the mystery. Be sure to reward players with items, experience, and in-game gratitude from the villagers, providing a fulfilling end to their journey.

This adventure encourages the GM to create an immersive atmosphere while letting players drive the investigation. Focus on fostering an unfolding sense of mystery, tension, and discovery to make this a memorable one-shot experience.

SETUP

This adventure offers five unique endings, so it's best to review each one along with their corresponding clues beforehand. You can either choose the ending you think will resonate most with your players or let a roll of a D6 decide. Be sure to use the appropriate clues and handouts from Appendix X, starting on page XX. With a clear idea of your chosen direction and the correct handouts prepared (printed or digital), you'll be ready to guide your players through the mystery.

GM TIPS FOR RUNNING THE HAUNTING OF BLACKWOOD MANOR

KNOW YOUR ENDINGS AND CLUES

With five possible endings, flexibility is key. Before you begin, familiarize yourself with each ending's unique clues, characters, and motivations. This will make it easier to adapt on the fly, follow player decisions naturally, and keep the mystery engaging.

BE MINDFUL OF TONE AND PACING

This adventure blends elements of horror, mystery, and suspense, so setting the right atmosphere is essential. Describe settings with vivid, sensory language, and don't be afraid to slow down and let tension build, especially during moments of eerie silence, sudden noises, or supernatural encounters.

STAY FLEXIBLE WITH CLUES

Players may not investigate every room or question every character you expect. Don't hesitate to adapt by shifting vital clues to locations or interactions the players do engage with. This ensures they'll uncover enough to make an informed decision about the mystery's resolution.

USE EVELINE'S GHOST WISELY

Eveline's ghost serves as both a guide and a tragic figure. Her vague responses to questions are key to keeping players engaged while leaving them with just enough mystery. Use her appearances sparingly to maintain her impact and keep the players guessing.

ADJUSTING FOR PLAYER REACTIONS

Some players are quick to jump into combat, while others focus more on investigation. This adventure allows for both playstyles, so feel free to adjust encounters and social interactions based on their preferred approach.

BUILD SUSPENSE WITH THE WRAITH

The Wraith is a formidable enemy, but it's also an important part of the story's horror element. Use its appearances strategically, giving players the sense that they're being hunted. Allowing it to vanish or retreat after certain conditions are met also adds to the Wraith's mystique.

PREPARE HANDOUTS IN ADVANCE

Many clues are presented in the form of letters, diary entries, and other documents. To enhance immersion, consider printing or digitally preparing these handouts beforehand. Handing them out as players discover them can create memorable, tangible moments.

ENCOURAGE PLAYER THEORIES

With multiple possible endings, the players may come up with theories as they gather evidence. Encourage these discussions—they'll add depth to the investigation and make the final reveal more satisfying, regardless of the ending you choose.

GM NOTE

Balance tension with brief moments of calm to keep players from feeling rushed. A slow, suspenseful build works wonders—try describing each setting with at least one unique sensory detail to draw players into the scene.

GM NOTE

If the players miss a vital clue, use the black cat to draw their attention. It might start digging or sniffing around the fireplace and uncover the burned letter! The cat's behavior can naturally guide players without feeling forced.

GM NOTE

Allow room for players to discuss theories—it enriches their experience and may lead to new twists. Engage with their ideas without confirming or denying to keep the intrigue alive.

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THE BASEMENT IS KEY

The basement holds vital answers but should only be accessible once players have gathered all three critical clues: the burned letter, the unsent letter, and the diary pages. Without these pieces, the secrets below remain concealed. You have a few options to manage access to the basement: keep the door hidden and require a challenging Awareness Check (with a Bane) to detect it; keep the door visibly locked from the inside, reinforcing the sense of mystery; or have the Wraith appear as a spectral guardian, intervening whenever someone approaches too closely. If a player attempts to pick the lock, the Wraith can even pass through the door itself, forcefully throwing the would-be intruder backward as a clear warning not to proceed prematurely. This restriction adds tension and reinforces the significance of gathering the clues, making the eventual entry into the basement a well-earned progression in the story.



**NOT FINAL IMAGERY
THESE ARE PLACEHOLDER GRAPHICS**

