

Playground Adventures



Pixies on Parade

by Stephen Rowe



Pixies on Parade

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Adventure Background

Every year the hardworking townsfolk of Glavost dress in bright colors, fairy wings, and fey masks for a parade in honor of their legendary pixie protectors. Every able-bodied villager cavorts up and down the square with a night of revelry, story-telling, and feasting to follow. All look forward to an opportunity to bring a little magic into their lives, and tourists come from miles around to share in the fun.

To the mortals, good and evil fey are little more than myths, and few realize invisible pixie guardians never miss a parade. It is in their honor after all, and the fairies still remember a pact struck with the living mortal's ancestors. In return for the most minor of ritual observances, the noble fey protect their charges from a dark being wishing to spread endless nightmares.

Beyond the forest, a great and powerful bogeyman lives within a crooked tower of black stone. The Nightmare King wants to steal all the children of Glavost away to his dark palace to corrupt them, one by one. The invisible fey of the forest contain the ambitious monster, protect the town, and prevent even the most wayward children from wandering too far into the forest.

In two centuries, they've failed only once. Edwin was a headstrong child, taken with fairy stories. He hoped to find the pixies, and play with them forever after. He believed his life could be one long parade, with no overbearing parents to tell him what he could or couldn't do. He was still too young for the cautionary tales of the bogeyman, and his land of nightmares.

The Nightmare King found him, and took him as his adopted son. For a decade Edwin's aging has stalled as he becomes a bogeyman himself. The king has robbed the poor child of all the beautiful things he holds most dear, turning them into terrible fears. His false-father now sends Edwin back to Glavost as a conqueror.

Edwin plans for one final parade of horrors before he drags his new playmates back to the crooked tower.

Adventure Summary

Edwin's kidnapping of the pixies removes Glavost's protection from its ongoing gremlin infestation. The pranksters wreak terrible havoc, thwarted by children with the mysterious ability to alter reality. Approached by the last free fairy godmother, they are further empowered to face Edwin's fears, and free him before he becomes a true bogeyman. In confronting the boy with icons of his lost innocence, the children can exorcise the dark influence, but must still defeat the Nightmare King's avatar to free him forever.

Getting the PCs Involved

It is recommended the PCs be children from Glavost itself. While the adventure calls for 6th-level characters, it also provides a convenient reason for children to gain power beyond their years.

If this adventure is run as part of an ongoing campaign, then one or two PCs can be from Glavost, returning for the yearly celebration. Otherwise, the PCs might be passing through and attracted to the festival preparations. Ignore the blessings gained from the pixie godmother if the PCs have already gained enough experience to reach 6th-level before the adventure's start.

Introduction: Trouble in Town

It's almost time! Preparations for the Glavost Pixie Parade are well under way. Brilliant colored banners hang from every house. Some of the children already play dress-up, and the smells of delicious foods waft out the inn's window. There is no school or work, giving everyone plenty of time to wander free and lend a hand.

The townspeople plan for the upcoming parade, with no idea that danger approaches. Edwin's kidnaped most of the pixies, and only the eldest escaped. Without the fey's constant invisible protection, troublemaking gremlins become free to cause chaos.

At this point, treat the town like a sandbox. The PCs can explore, learn valuable information, and encounter prankster gremlins.

Key NPCs in Glavost

Use the following NPCs within the town, but feel free to add your own. The purpose of this initial introduction is to give the PCs exposure to the village, and an emotional investment in its people.

Mayor

Owen Burson is a jovial, blond-haired, middle-aged human man with the beginnings of a belly and many laugh lines around his mouth. Owen is Edwin's father. After his son disappeared, he spent years grieving, but tried to turn his loss toward more positive pursuits. A former farmer, he was well-liked in town, and began taking on an administrative role for his people. Glavost adores Mayor Burson, and he loves his town in return. A kindhearted man, he sees all the children as his responsibility, even if each reminds him of Edwin. He'd do anything to protect them, and always has time in his busy schedule for a story or two.

Role: The mayor's role is to introduce the idea of his son

Glavost

NG Small town

Demographics

Government autocracy

Population 395 (335 humans, 24 halflings, 16 elves, 14 dwarves, 6 half-elves)

Notable NPCs

Mayor Owen Burson (LG male human noble)

Selda Burson (NG female human scout)

Chef Rus Ulden (CN male dwarf guard)

Belle Leaflower (CG female half-elf aeguard)

Elas Leaflower (N venerable male elven wizard 6)

Edwin, who ran away from home. He also suggests helping his wife Selda, Chef Ulden, and Belle Leaflower in getting ready for the parade. He offers each child a silver piece if he hears they do a good job.

Carpenter

Edwin's mother, Selda Burson, is a lanky, handsome human woman, with dark skin and hands thick with callouses. She spent months scouring the furthest reaches of the forest after her son's disappearance, looking for even the hint of a trail. In her heart, she still believes Edwin is alive, and out there somewhere. Selda has an underlying sadness, especially when she's around children. She sometimes hands out small hand-carved toys as gifts, and always offers to show kids how to whittle (+6 with carpenter's tools). She doesn't "need" help, but her husband knows this time of the year is hard on her, and sends the PCs to relieve her loneliness. She puts them to work painting if they are willing to assist.

Role: Selda Burson serves the same role as her husband, introducing the PCs to the idea of their lost son. She also shows off her carpentry, which the PCs can recognize when they encounter Edwin's toys later in the adventure.

Chef

Rus Ulden is a barrel-chested nearsighted dwarf with a bright-red beard full of flour. He refuses to wear glasses, and so has a near-impossible time navigating his own kitchen. Rus is loud and tends to run around like a madman, recruiting anyone present into the chaos. He's a bit "eccentric", but his cooking is delicious... when he can manage to find the right ingredients (+5 with cook's utensils). Every once in a while he confuses salt for sugar, resulting in pretty disgusting cookies but he's always happy to trade cupcakes for a little help reading and sorting through labels.

Role: Chef Ulden is comedic relief between the more serious interactions with Owen and Selda. Interactions with Rus also help set the scene for the upcoming gremlin attack. These attacks show how children have advantages over adults against the fey.

Blacksmith

Belle Leaflower is a tall, broad-shouldered half-elf who uses a large smith-hammer with cheerful ease. Belle tends to burn off her hair, so just keeps her head shaved for convenience. She is a master-smith, with just a hint of magic inherited from her elven father (+6 with blacksmith's tools. Belle knows the mage hand and mending cantrips, and can cast unseen servant once per long rest). The amazon is always happy, approaching a sing-song sort of goofy. She loves her work and the upcoming parade excites her beyond even her normal bouncy cheer. While the forge is a dangerous place for children, she's happy to show them a thing or two about swinging a hammer and may use mending to heal some broken toys if asked politely.

Role: Belle serves a similar role as Rus Ulden.

Glavost Gazeteer

A. Town Square

The central square within Glavost includes a wide causeway, plaza, and well, serving as a hub for the Pixie Parade and festival. **Mayor Owen Burson** also uses the area for delivering important speeches or news to the townspeople. In preparation for the upcoming celebration, all the buildings are covered in bright colored banners.

B. Pixie's Place Inn

The dwarven chef **Rus Ulden** owns and operates the Pixie's Place inn. Rus tried to change the name to something more dwarven after winning it in a bet, but the proposition met with a near-rebellion by his customers. The chef is a master of fine cuisine and has one of the best stocked bars in the region. Visitors should be wary in placing orders, since the nearsighted fellow sometimes confuses a few key ingredients. Complaints don't go over well, often resulting in unintelligible shouting and the throwing of food.

C. Glavost Forge

The quirky half-elf **Belle Leaflower** has worked the anvil and bellows in the Glavost forge for decades after taking over for her elven father **Elas Leaflower**. Her aging father retired when the taxing nature of the work got to be too difficult. Belle is much more comfortable swinging a hammer than reciting incantations, and so still calls on her

father for the real “magic work”. The half-elven smith enjoys singing in time with the blows of her hammer. While she can’t keep a tune to save her life, she’s so cheerful nobody ever asks her to stop.

D. Glavost Carpenter

Selda Burson is the town carpenter and keeps a little shop set next to the house she shares with her husband the mayor. Selda loves carving and painting in her spare time, although not as much in the decade since Edwin ran away from home. Her shop still has many beautiful handmade toys gathering ever-thicker layers of dust. Selda refuses to sell them to adults, but might be willing to part with one if a child forms a bond with her.

E. Shrine

The town of Glavost has no official religion, and people tend to be diverse in their beliefs. The only ritual memorial stands between the square and the forest. Someone, centuries ago, carved the shrine from the trunk of an ancient oak felled by a bolt of lightning. It is traditional to leave a weekly offering for the fairies who are said to watch over the people. Many adults don’t bother except around parade-time, but the polished wood is usually covered in candles, flowers, and treats by children looking for luck.

F. Fairy Forest

Glavost borders on an old and unspoiled forest said to be the domain of the fair folk. The people respect the boundary, even if none ever encounter the legendary fey inhabitants. The great wood has the look of deep old magic, with narrow paths twisting beneath moss-covered canopies. The townspeople are careful to only harvest lumber from dead or dying trees, and even then they take care to replant a new life for each they take.

Fairy Tales

A number of stories and rumors circulate around Glavost, especially during parade season. For the adults, these are nothing more than legends. For the children, they are captivating tales that are often part of their imagination games.

Gremlins

The townspeople do not believe in gremlins, but they are happy to blame everything that goes wrong on the pests. A hundred tales are told of these mischievous little trouble makers — they sour milk, loosen horse shoes, and steal anything that goes missing. Some tales say the fey arise when crimes go unpunished, and others claim the tricksters appear whenever a curse word is said above a whisper.



Nightmare King

Adults reserve scary stories for when the children are out of earshot, but intrepid kids might hear snippets. They whisper that the King of Dark Dreams lives on the other side of the forest. In eons past he was a lord of the strange realms the fey call home, but became banished after a lost duel of imagination. Now he waits in his tower of living shadow for the ages to turn, so that he might return to claim his throne. To pass the time, he loves to frighten or kidnap mortals venturing too far off into the forest. He is the bogeyman, and he waits for the unwary.

Pixie Parade

Many legends surround the origins of the festival, and none tell the full truth. The basics can be gleaned from any story, although the details vary between tellers. Long ago, a terrible menace loomed over Glavost, and brave mortals sought the fey for help. Together, they stood against the scourge, and conquered it. The pixies agreed to protect the heroes' children unto the last generation, and the champions promised they'd always honor their saviors. Hundreds of years later, the imagined threats vary between dragons, warlords, and the Nightmare King. The brave and noble heroes change to resemble listeners, parents, or ancestors. What is important is that the pact was made, and the people of Glavost remember it.

Imagination Magic

The Nightmare King makes use of old fey magic to empower Edwin in defeating the pixies once and for all, making Edwin's dreams, desires, and fears manifest physically within the world. However, this has an unforeseen effect, and any child with a strong enough imagination can borrow the bogeyman's power.

This is a subtle ability, allowing the PCs to make minor cosmetic changes to reality. In essence, the subconscious desires of the PCs have a literal impact on the world.

If any of the PCs need mundane equipment, they have it, or it is near at hand. Objects never appear when they are looking, but might manifest within a bag when it wasn't there before. Likewise, scenery can shift to suit the PC's desires or dramatic actions. A PC planning a leap from a roof might find a convenient water barrel, or a PC wanting to jump across a room sees a strong rope to swing from. With this ability, the PCs cannot create anything magical, or completely defy logic. For example, they cannot summon a unicorn to ride or create fire with their mind, but a pony might wander loose from its pen, or they could find a match inside their pocket.

The PCs should not be immediately aware of this ability, but they might figure it out on their own. Once they become aware of it, they can better control the power, wishing for

anything mundane but useful.

Inspiration Award

Award the PCs Inspiration if or when they discover how to control their imagination's ability to alter reality.

A. Pranksters and Pixies

The town has always suffered from a bit of a gremlin infestation. The invisible pixie godmothers keep the creatures in line most days, but with their absence, the little monsters revel in their freedom. Luckily, they aren't hard to scare off, and even children can knock the cowardly fey around. Each of these encounters can occur in any order, or at any time coinciding with the PC's presence at the various locations.

Cartoon Violence

Combat should stay abstract and cinematic for the fights against the gremlins before the PCs gain the pixie's blessing and become full 6th level characters. Using initiative and attack rolls might help introduce the concepts, but damage is unimportant. Violence between PCs and gremlins should be like a cartoon at worst. The fey's damage resistance makes them impervious to any "real" harm a normal child might dole out. Likewise, the gremlins have no intention of hurting or killing anyone. Between their craven tendencies, abilities, and the flexible nature of reality, insane comedic events might happen. You can introduce anything from bopping with hammers, throwing the pests through windows, or groups getting together to build flour catapults. This sort of whacky fun can continue as long as it seems enjoyable for the players.

Creatures

A mob of pugwampi and vexgit gremlins plague the town. While the activities of the fey seem to go unnoticed by the adults, the PCs can spot them and their mischief right away. Only after the kids foil the monster's plots do the adults realize what is happening. Even then, they are in denial at the idea of actual fey.

Pugwampi

Tiny Fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 7 (3d4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Gnoll, Undercommon

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Hard of Hearing. The pugwampi has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

Innate Spellcasting. The pugwampi's innate spellcasting ability score is Charisma (spell save DC 10). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: prestidigitation, speak with animals

Magic Resistance. A pugwampi has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Unluck Aura. The pugwampi radiates an aura of unluck to a radius of 20 feet. Any creature in this area other than a beast, gnoll, or gremlin has disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks. Creatures under the effect of a bless spell are immune to the pugwampi's unluck aura.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Shatter Pulse (Recharges after Long Rest). The pugwampi can unleash a thunderous burst from a point it can see within 30 feet. Within 10 feet of that point, unattended glass, pottery, or crystalline objects are destroyed. Sturdier objects and creatures must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (3d4) thunder damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Vexgit

Tiny Fey, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural)

Hit Points 13 (3d4 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Stealth +3 (+5 in metal or stony areas)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Loud Joints. The vexgit has disadvantage on Dexterity

(Stealth) checks made while moving.

Innate Spellcasting. The vexgit's innate spellcasting ability score is Charisma (spell save DC 10). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: prestidigitation

1/day: entangle (cast on crafted objects and structures, doesn't affect gremlins), *rusting grasp*

Magic Resistance. A vexgit has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The vexgit makes two melee attacks; one with its bite and one with its warhammer.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d8-2) bludgeoning damage and if the target is wearing armor, the armor is damaged and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers (minimum AC 10). A character proficient in the appropriate tools can repair damaged armor during a long rest, eliminating all penalties dealt by the vexgit's warhammer.

Speedy Sabotage. A vexgit can quickly dismantle or sabotage any sort of construction. For complex devices this requires the vexgit's action as normal, but simple devices such as a door lock can be sabotaged as a bonus action. A sabotaged device ceases to function, jams, or might backfire in some fashion when a creature attempts to use it.

Kitchen Chaos

Four pugwampi gremlins sneak into Chef Ulden's kitchen. They begin switching labels around, eating all the sweets, and smashing the glassware. The PCs must protect the nearsighted dwarf from the fey, and chase them off before they ruin all the food for the festival.

Blacksmith Bungles

Two vexgit and one pugwampi are in Belle Leaflower's forge. They try to create dangerous circumstances, with the pugwampi's unlucky aura making clumsiness perilous. They heat up handles, loosen nails on floorboards, and try to drag heavy things up into the rafters to drop. The PCs must protect Belle from the gremlins, or she ends up with a series of minor injuries.

Firework Fumble

A mob of six vexgit gremlins have gotten into the fireworks set up for the parade at the town square around the well. They are working to aim the explosives at the buildings and people with plans to set them off early. The PCs must chase them off and defuse the explosives.



Development

The PCs defending the town from the gremlins gain the attention of the last pixie godmother. They also earn the sincere appreciation of the confused adults they aid.

Treasure

Mayor Owen Burson gives each PC a silver piece and a gold piece, in recognition for their bravery in helping avert disaster.

Inspiration Award

Award the PCs Inspiration if they manage to foil all the gremlin's escapades.

A2. Fairy Godmother

The PC's success against the gremlins earns them the

attention of Lista, the last of the fairy godmothers to resist capture.

Lista is a wise old pixie who has watched over the children of Glavost for centuries. Even if there were no pact in place between her people and the mortals, she would still help them to her last breath. The idea of putting youngsters into harm's way runs against her every instinct, but she knows in her heart they are already in terrible danger. They might be the only hope of saving the village without destroying Edwin.

Lista waits until the PCs are alone before choosing to reveal herself. Read or paraphrase the following.

With a swirl of bright colored lights, a tiny whimsical-looking old woman appears hovering in the air on a pair of gossamer wings. "Children... my name is Lista, and I've watched over each of you all your lives.



I only reveal myself to you now because Glavost is in terrible danger."

Lista does her best to answer all the PC's questions. If they are from Glavost, she addresses them all by name, and speaks to them like a grandmother. She might even make kind-hearted references to times she saw them being naughty, or had to save them from trouble. After she's had a chance to earn their trust, she tries to explain why she needs their help. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Every fairy tale starts the same, but I warn you children, this one does not yet have a happy ending,"
Lista says in a sad sing-song voice.

"Once upon a time there was a boy named Edwin. His parents loved him, and did everything they could to keep him safe. His pixie godmother watched over him, though he and his parents never knew it.

Edwin loved the Parade so much he became determined to live with the pixies forever. He'd heard all the old stories of fey hiding in the forest, and ran away from home to find them. His godmother tried to stop him, but Edwin was always a stubborn boy. He leapt over streams, climbed up ravines, and ran headlong into

terrible danger.

Parents have stories they don't share with children. They worry it might give you bad dreams... but sometimes a little fear is important when it keeps you safe.

Edwin met a man in the forest. His eyes were black, he had claws for fingers, and when he smiled his teeth were sharp. 'What brings you to my side of the forest, little boy,' the dark man asked. 'I want to live as a fairy all-year long,' Edwin replied.

He didn't realize he spoke to the Nightmare King of Bogeymen... a monster looking for a new son. Edwin wanting to be fey was all the excuse the dark one needed to take him away forever. He filled him up with evil magic and sent him back to capture my pixie sisters. I fear he plans to turn them wicked before attacking the town.

The King put an innocent child on a dark path, but I hope you can save him. The bogeyman's magic is spreading everywhere, making children's wishes come true, and with a little help, you can use it to save Edwin. I can sacrifice my own power to help turn you into mighty heroes, but even with my blessings you'll have to work hard to earn a happy ending."

Development

If the PCs accept Lista's blessings, she kisses each on the forehead and taps valued possessions with a magic wand. In so doing, she sacrifices the greater part of her power to heighten their connection to the reality-shifting magic. Each child becomes a 6th-level player character of any type they wish or what is most appropriate for their ability and personality. The PC does not change in appearance or age, but grows in power and knowledge. Any experience they've gained from previous encounters is added to the base experience for a 6th-level character. After bestowing her blessings, Lista becomes weak. She points to the forest, telling them to follow the path, find Edwin, and free him from his nightmares. The pixie then turns invisible to find a safe place to rest.

Treasure

The PC's mundane equipment, toys, and trash become magical items with power corresponding to their level (each should gain $500 + 1d10 \times 25$ gp worth of adventuring gear, one rare magic item, and one uncommon magic item). The objects shift in appearance, becoming wondrous and obviously magical. Sticks might transform into jewel-encrusted silver blades, dirty dresses become mithral chainmail, or carved wooden gifts from Selda transform into *figurines of wondrous power*.

B. Path of Nightmares

Rumor and legends say the forest bordering Glavost is fey territory. Children are not permitted entry, and even adults avoid the place unless there is a good reason. The townspeople have no idea the danger they are in, and would be reluctant (to say the least) in allowing the PCs to run off on an adventure. However, the pixie's blessing has taken root, and events conspire to let the children slip away without any adult's notice. Even if the PCs call attention to themselves, the grown-ups get distracted or otherwise lose track.

With the reality altering magic, Edwin's fears are becoming terrible monsters under his control. To face and save Edwin, the PCs must battle their way through an enchanted wood full of dark dreams, using their newfound power and imagination to overcome many obstacles.

Each time the PCs defeat one of Edwin's nightmares they recover a piece of his innocence. By confronting him with these totems, they can force him to remember, allowing them to exorcise and defeat the bogeyman's influence.

B1. Hide and Seek

The forest is dark, and the path is wide, but winding. It becomes difficult to see what might be ahead.

The black shape of a boy steps out from behind a tree. He looks like a living shadow with a carved wooden sword held in one hand.

"Hi!" he says, his voice echoing in the quiet forest. "I want to play hide and seek! Do you want to hide first or second?"

The first figment of Edwin's dark dreams takes the form of the boy's own shadow wielding a carved wooden sword his mother made. The monster is a broken reflection of one of Edwin's favorite games. In the palace of the Nightmare King, the bogeyman twisted this innocent past-time into something horrible. He set dark fey and shades to hunt Edwin like prey through the terrifying halls of his crooked tower. The PCs can attempt to redeem this piece of the boy's childhood by beating him at his own game.

The PCs can choose if they'd like to be the first to hide or the first to seek and can play as many games as they wish with the shadow.

Hide

PCs hiding in the forest make Dexterity (Stealth) checks opposed by the shadow's passive perception. A PC using a creative method of hiding within the woods (climbing trees, using magic, or causing distractions) gains advantage on the check. When the shadow finds each PC, he takes an attack with his wooden sword before flying off laughing to look for the next child.

Seek

PCs looking for the shadow have an easier time due to him being unwilling to relinquish his wooden sword. This gives the characters advantage on their passive perception scores. PCs might make bright lights with magic or fire, reducing the monster's Stealth check total (see: Skills). The shadow hides within the following locations: inside a hollow log, within a dense bramble, and merged with a tree's shadow, creating dark patches, easily noticeable by perceptive children. PCs thinking to look in any of these locations get advantage on their passive perception scores.

Creatures

Edwin's hide and seek shade acts as a powerful shadow. While the sword he uses seems sharp, he only smacks with the flat of the blade to count coup, and never uses his strength draining touch. If he happens to reduce a creature to 0 hp, he always opts to knock the target unconscious rather than kill them.

Child's Shadow

Small undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15**Hit Points** 67 (15d6 + 15)**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	15 (+3)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +8 (+11 in dim light or darkness)**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**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** Common**Challenge** 7 (2,900 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.**Sunlight Weakness.** While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS**Multiattack.** The child's shadow can make two melee attacks.**Edwin's Wooden Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) slashing damage, or 11 (1d10 + 6) slashing damage if used with two hands.**Strength Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. 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 non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Development

The spirit continues to play the game (switching between hider and seeker) until the PCs beat him in at least one opposed check for each. He then fades away into the shadows with a happy laugh as the innocent fun penetrates years of fear.

Treasure

PCs defeating the shadow in his game gain his wooden longsword as treasure, which remains a powerful magical item. The wooden weapon is a magical longsword that



grants a +1 bonus to hit and damage, and gains the finesse property when attuned to its wielder.

Inspiration Award

Award the PCs Inspiration if they defeat the shadow at both hide and seek on the first try.

B2. Toy Soldiers

On either side of the path stands a tall blocky looking soldier holding a musket-rifle and standing at attention. The one on the left looks like Mayor Owen Burson, and the one on the right resembles Selda Burson. Upon closer inspection, each appears carved from wood, with colors painted-on.

Edwin's mother loved to carve wooden soldiers for him to play with, and the beautiful toys were the envy of all other children. Selda would often get quiet offers from parents around birthdays and holidays to carve matching figurines. She always refused these polite requests because it was important to her for Edwin to have something uniquely his.

The Nightmare King took the wooden soldiers and animated each into terrible guards. The constructs were set to watch over Edwin every night as he fought a losing war against bad dreams. Any time he'd try to escape, they'd stop him, or drag him back to the tower. In time, he came to focus his hatred at the jailers wearing his parent's faces. Now, the soldiers serve Edwin once more, commanded by his great shadowy hands.

Creatures

As the PCs approach the toy soldiers, giant hands of shadow appear to direct their movements. The toy soldiers are treated as flesh golems in splint mail armor. They lack the flesh golem's normal Berserk trait, and gain the Musket action.

Toy Soldiers (Variant Flesh Golem)

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+X)	15 (-3)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine.

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Toy Soldier

Figurine of Wondrous Power, Toy Soldier

Wondrous item, rare

This small wooden figurine is a beautiful carved and painted soldier armed with a black musket. It can become a human-sized wooden soldier to defend a single ally you designate. The wooden soldier provides that ally with cover against a single opponent for 1 minute. The soldier can be attacked independently, and is AC 20 with 40 hit points. With a second command, the soldier takes a single shot of splinters with its musket (+7 to hit, 21 (6d6) piercing damage) with a range of 30 feet. The figure reverts to toy form immediately after the soldier takes an attack in this manner. Once it has been used, it can't be used again until 2 days have passed.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aversion to Fire. If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks, and uses its musket if it is able.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Musket (recharge 5-6). The wood golem takes aim with its musket and fires a blast of wooden splinters into a target it can see within 20 feet. The target takes 21 (6d6) piercing damage, or half as much with a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw.

Hazard

The giant shadow hands moving the toy soldiers around are arcane hands, interposing hand option. The hands grant the golems cover from all foes, but don't prevent creatures from moving within 5 feet. The hands have an AC of 20 and 40 hit points. Destroying one removes the cover and also reduces the golem's slam attack bonus to +4.

Development

Defeating a toy soldier dispels the corresponding *interposing hand* spell. The golems shrink in size, becoming painted toys once more, blessed with Selda's love. See the sidebar for details on the pair of toy soldier magic items.

B3. Fetch

Plopped down into the middle of the road is a giant burning hound with fiery red eyes. Scorched wood and piles of ash circle the beast. In her mouth is a flaming stick, reduced to smoking embers in seconds. The pony-sized dog gives a disappointed whine, before trying to find a new branch to gnaw on.

Edwin's parents got him a puppy for his birthday — just a month before he ran away. The little mutt followed him off into the forest, and the Nightmare King took her as well. The bogeyman turned the dog into a terrifying beast, to serve his heir as a more fitting companion.

Now the hellhound is a fearsome monster, growing in size with every passing day. While Edwin sets her to defend the woods and attack all adults, the simple creature sees children as potential playmates.

Fetch

While Edwin's hound has grown in size, the love she had for fetching is still part of her nature. Unfortunately, any stick she tries to pick up just turns to ash in seconds, causing her to breathe fire at the surrounding woods in anger. The PCs can attempt a DC 22 Wisdom (Animal Handling) skill check to calm the beast and earn her trust. The PCs can work as a group toward succeeding on this check by using the Help action. Playing fetch with the hellhound using something nonflammable (like a sword, crowbar, or metal shield) reduces the DC by 5. Other creative ideas, such as giving the hound food, or taking some fire damage to pet her, further reduce the DC by 5. The PCs can retry the skill check, but only with new actions taken to win the hound over.

Creature

Edwin's puppy became a hellhound, but she does not attack children due to her protective training.

Hellhound

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 +14)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +5

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The hound exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.





Development

If the PCs manage to soothe the hellhound, she gets smaller and smaller. The fires surrounding her fade, until she can play fetch with a normal stick again. The restored puppy begins jumping on PCs, desperate for affection. The pup stays by their side, or allows one of the PCs to carry her further into the forest. Despite her small size, the dog is impervious to harm, although she can't help the PCs much in combat.

B4. Lost Teeth

Intersecting the path ahead are two circles formed from growing toadstools and mushrooms. From the trees to either side comes a chorus of metal snapping sounds.

Edwin was waiting for his last teeth to fall out, and kept the rest in a small leather pouch. When the Nightmare King took him away, he found his teeth becoming sharp and pointed like the bogeyman's. As he lost his precious memories of youth, the bag only made him uncomfortable, so Edwin tossed it out the window of his prison. Each took root in the ground, sprouting into a dangerous fairy.

The fairies follow Edwin like scavengers, and hope to create more of their kind by stealing children's teeth. However, each represents the hope of a coin in return for the first sign of growing up. Should the PCs fulfill this promise, the fey wink out of existence.

Intelligence (nature)

With a DC 10 check, the PCs recall mushroom circles are "fairy rings", caused by the dancing of fey creatures. With a DC 15 check, the PCs recall hearing dangerous warnings about the rings.

When the tooth fairies become visible, the PCs can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check to know these fairies are bigger and stronger than normal, but fey always pay a price for power. They likely have some sort of weakness related to local legends.

Intelligence (History)

With a DC 10 check, the PCs recall the tooth fairy traditions of Glavost. A child is to keep all their baby teeth in a special pouch. When the last one falls out, they are to bury them in the woods as an offering to the pixies. In return, following morning. Particularly good children might even find a real gold piece as reward for their kindness.

If the PCs pass both the Intelligence (History) and DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) skill checks for the tooth fairies, they can realize the fey might have a weakness to coins. ✨

Traps

The fairy rings are circles of mushrooms growing in a 10-foot radius. Any creature other than a fey who begins

its turn inside a fairy ring, or enters a fairy ring for the first time on its turn is subjected to the magical trap. The creature make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature suffers the effects of an irresistible dance spell until the start of its next turn.

As described above, successful Intelligence (Nature) checks reveal warnings about stepping within fairy rings. A successful dispel magic (DC 15) cast on the ring destroys the trap. A creature within 5 feet who damages the mushrooms must save as if they stepped inside the ring.

Creatures

Each of Edwin's baby teeth has arisen as an evil tooth fairy. They plan on harvesting the teeth of Glavost's children to create more of their ilk. Eight of the monsters lurk invisibly nearby. They attempt to surprise the PCs and steal their teeth to spawn more tooth fairies. The creatures fight until reduced to puffs of stinky fairy dust.

Empowered Tooth Fairy

Tiny fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 12 (5d4)

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5

Skills Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Coins. If the tooth fairy is hit with a gold or silver coin (requiring an improvised ranged or melee attack), then the coin is consumed and the tooth fairy is destroyed without triggering its death throes.

Create Tooth Fairy. When the tooth fairy steals a tooth with its tricky thief action, the dropped tooth immediately sprouts into a new tooth fairy (without its own pair of pliers). When this tooth fairy is destroyed, the stolen tooth reappears in its space.

Death Throes. When killed, the tooth fairy explodes into a cloud of sparkling white fairy dust that clings to creatures within 5 feet. Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute by the foul stench of the dust. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its

turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Innate Spellcasting. The tooth fairy's innate spellcasting ability score is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand*

1/day each: *invisibility (self only)*, *sleep*

Pliers. The tooth fairy owns a pair of magical pliers it uses to torment its victims. If its pliers are destroyed (AC 10, 5 hit points), the tooth fairy is stunned for 1 round. If the fairy is killed, its pliers rust away to worthless splinters 1d4 rounds later. It can create a new pair of pliers by spending 1 hour, which destroys any existing pair.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tooth fairy makes two melee attacks, one with its pliers and one with its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 round.

Pliers. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Tricky Thief. The tooth fairy can make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check against a target's AC within 5 feet to pinch the target's fingers, or attempt to steal a tooth. If it pinches fingers, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

If it tries to steal a loose tooth, the fairy makes the Sleight of Hand check at disadvantage unless the target is incapacitated or surprised. If successful, it removes one of the target's loose teeth and triggers its Create Tooth Fairy trait.

Treasure

When one of the original tooth fairies is defeated, it

Baby Tooth

Wondrous Item, uncommon

This item is a child's tooth, fallen out as they grow in age. Once per day, you can throw a baby tooth at a creature within 10 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or begin glowing (as a faerie fire spell). If the tooth is recovered, it can be reused. Alternately, you can expend the tooth's magic all at once, causing it to explode into fairy dust. This destroys the tooth and creates a 10-foot radius of brightly glittering golden dust centered on a point you can see within 30 feet. All creatures in the area are covered in the dust for 1 minute and must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. While covered in the dust creatures can't Hide, gain no benefit from invisibility, and are blinded. Creatures who succeed on the save are not blinded.

bursts into a cloud of sparkling dust. A single *baby tooth* falls to the ground. See the sidebar for details on the eight *baby tooth* magic items.

Inspiration Award

The PCs gain Inspiration if they defeated any of the tooth fairies by sacrificing gold or silver coins.

B5. Chains of Gold

The trees trap a great golden dragon, with iron manacles binding her arms, legs, wings, and neck. She looks like she crashed into the forest, and has many injuries to show for it. The beautiful creature appears unconscious, and her breathing is unsteady.

Before Edwin ran away from home, he committed the worst sin of his young life. He worried the fairies might not accept him if he lacked a valuable gift to give. Valuable things were hard to come by for the child, but he knew his father didn't like wearing his wedding ring while working. Edwin snuck into his parent's room and stole his father's gold wedding ring from a jewelry cabinet.

After the Nightmare King took him, Edwin tried to barter the ring for his freedom. The bogeyman laughed at the idea of such a bauble holding real value, and refused. He let Edwin keep the ring, because he could feel the weight of regret it placed upon the child.

Intelligence (Arcana)

With a DC 10 skill check, the PCs recall gold dragons are among the kindest creatures in the world, and they are always willing to help others in need.

Creatures

Edwin's guilt manifests itself in the form of a wounded young gold dragon. She is a good-aligned creation born from the bogeyman's power, and would never hurt an innocent. The dragon shows the boy is not yet lost, and hidden within his remorse is a glimmer of love for his parents.

Young Gold Dragon

Large dragon, lawful good

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +9, Wis +5, Cha +9

Skills Insight +5, Perception +9, Persuasion +9, Stealth +6

Damage Immunities fire

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive

Perception 19

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Breath Weapons (Recharge 5-6). The dragon uses one of the following breath weapons.

Fire Breath. The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Weakening Breath. The dragon exhales gas in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or have disadvantage on Strength-based attack rolls, Strength checks, and Strength saving throws for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Freeing the dragon from her chains requires either picking or breaking the lock. Opening the lock requires a DC 20 Dexterity check with thieves' tools. The chains are AC 19 with 18 hit points, and break DC 30. Returning the dragon to consciousness requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Medicine) skill check, or any amount of magical healing. Once the PCs save the dragon, read or paraphrase the following.

All of the dragon's wounds close and heal as her great eyes blink open. She pulls herself to her feet and snorts a short burst of fire in amusement when she sees her saviors. "Children! You have my heartfelt thanks," she says in a kind and resonant voice. "But you should know, I am not real. I am nothing more than a wedding ring, stolen from Edwin's father. The boy hoped to bribe the pixies with me, but I brought him only guilt," the dragon says with a slow shake of her head and long neck.

"There are others here, like me. We are all pieces of Edwin's memory. I've held on the longest of all, because through my pain he remembers his parent's love." The great dragon pauses, and begins to shrink in size. "You must show him, and remind him of what he has lost," the dragon declares, before turning into a golden ring.

Development

By freeing and healing the dragon, the PCs help redeem another piece of Edwin's past.



Treasure

After the conversation's conclusion, the gold dragon shrinks back to a gold wedding ring. See the sidebar for details on the *gold dragon's ring* magic item.

Inspiration Award

Award the PCs both Inspiration and experience for defeating the dragon if they free and heal it.

Gold Dragon's Ring

Ring, rare (requires attunement)

This golden ring bears an inscription describing a vow or noble purpose. While wearing this ring you gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet, or add 60 feet to the range of any existing darkvision. Additionally, you can use an action to speak the command word to sprout draconic wings with golden scales for one minute. These wings grant a fly speed of 60 feet (poor maneuverability). The ring can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

B6. Stuffed Bear

It's an earthquake! Several old dead trees snap and fall to the ground with a crash. Rising up above the canopy is a gigantic teddy bear with a missing eye. It begins thundering closer, each massive footfall causing the ground to move.

The last corrupted piece of Edwin's youth takes the form of a gigantic stuffed bear, shaking the ground with its every step. The boy slept with the toy each night; even though he worried his friends would mock him if they found out. Thinking he might go off to live with the pixies forever, he took it with him into the forest.

The Nightmare King found the boy's faith in the toy amusing, and made certain it was one of the last pieces of innocence he took away. Even after Edwin lost all his other good memories, he held tight to the stuffed bear. As his eyes turned black, his fingers became claws, and his teeth grew sharp, the bear grew larger and more terrifying. Edwin still clings to it for protection, and trusts the guardian as his last line of defense.

Creatures

The stuffed bear has swollen with Edwin's fear, growing almost as powerful as its master.

Terror Bear

Gargantuan construct, neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 132 (8d20 + 40)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	2 (-5)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Fearful Gaze. If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the terror bear and the two of them can see each other, the terror bear can force the creature to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw if the terror bear isn't incapacitated. On a failed save the creature is frightened for 1 minute. If the creature ends its turn more than 60 feet away from the terror bear, then it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. This condition ends if the frightened creature attacks the terror bear. A creature is immune to this gaze for 24 hours after the condition ends for it.

Quaking Steps. When the terror bear moves more than 5 feet in a turn, all creatures within 80 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. The

ground within this area is considered difficult terrain until the start of the terror bear's next turn.

Soft. The terror bear's attacks are actually quite soft, and creatures reduced to 0 hit points by the terror bear are always knocked unconscious.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The terror bear makes two slam attacks, and uses swallow if it is able.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a large or smaller creature it is grappled (escape DC 19). The terror bear has two paws, both of which can only grapple one target.

Swallow. When the terror bear starts its turn with one or more grappled creatures, it can attempt to swallow one of them. It makes a melee weapon attack at +11. If it hits, the target is swallowed and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, and has total cover from attacks and other effects outside the terror bear. The interior of the terror bear is soft, fluffy stuffing, and the target takes no further damage.

If the terror bear takes 15 points of damage in a single turn from a creature inside it, it must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or cough up all swallowed targets. Coughed-up targets land prone within 10 feet of the terror bear, but take no damage because of the wads of soft padding that land with



them. If the terror bear dies, swallowed creatures are no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 30 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Hazard

The terror bear causes earthquakes with its weighty footfalls, and knocks down trees in the forest with only casual motions. Whenever the terror bear uses its quaking steps ability, the trees of the forest fall and might trap PCs beneath them. If the PC fails the Dexterity save for quaking steps by 5 or more, they become restrained by a falling tree. Escaping out from under the tree requires an action and a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Development

If the PCs defeat the terror bear, it shrinks down to the size of an ordinary teddy bear. It is well-worn, missing an eye, and with cotton stuffing poking out from holes within.

Treasure

See the sidebar for the *stuffed bear* magic item.

B7. Lost and Found

The path opens into a clearing, but the sunlight is hidden by thick gray clouds. Within the center stands a

Stuffed Bear

Wondrous item, uncommon

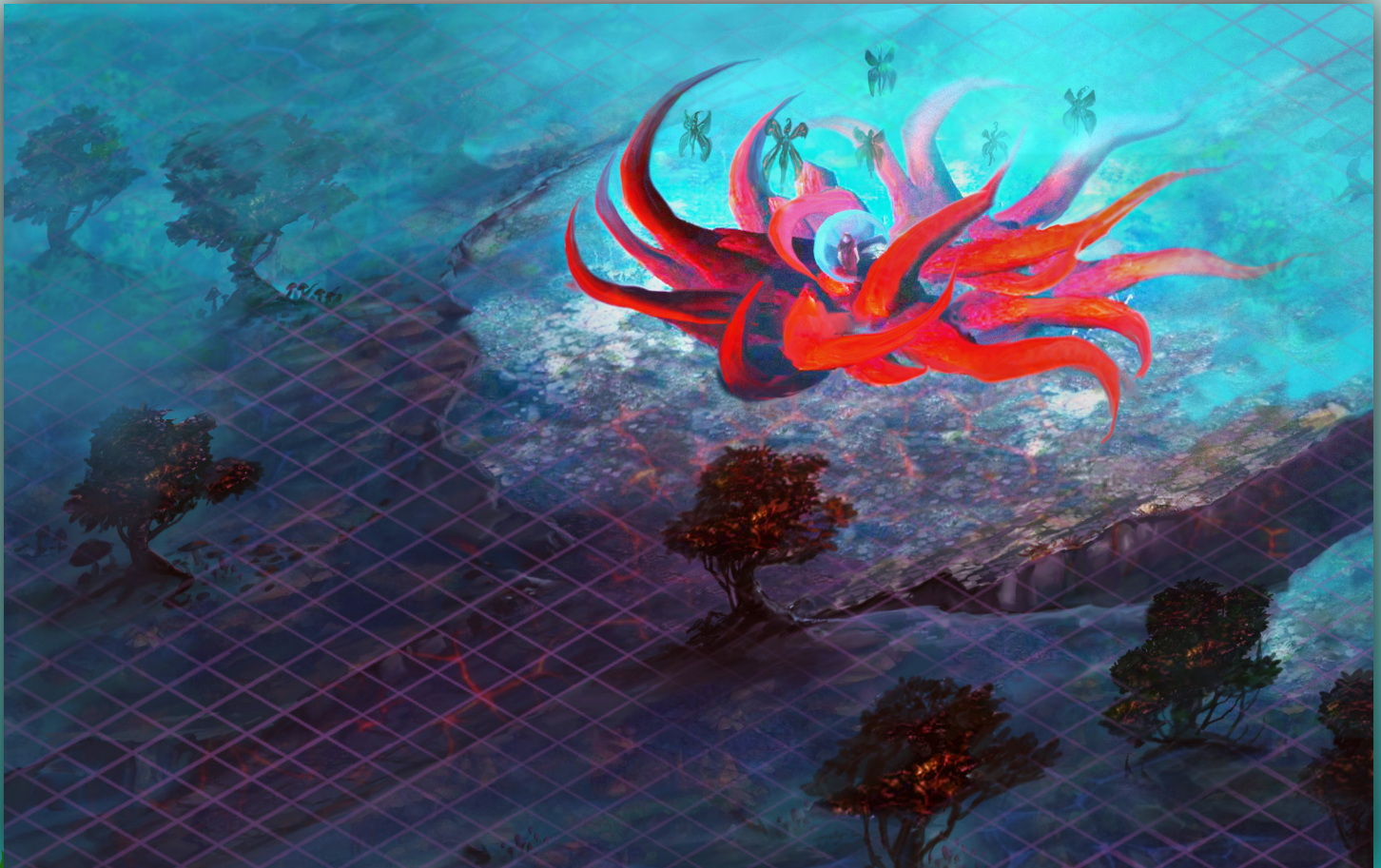
The stuffed bear is a child's well-worn and loved teddy bear. As long as you hold the bear it suppresses the frightened condition. Any time the condition is suppressed counts against its duration. If the bear is stowed away but still on your person, it grants advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

boy, with black eyes, claws for fingers, and sharp pointed teeth. Shadows and darkness billow all around him, like living grasping tentacles. Flying in the darkness are six pixies, but the color drains from their wings and skin. Each pair of eyes is as black as the boy's.

With upraised hands, the child shouts, "Now is the time for the final parade! We march to collect our new brothers and sisters!"

Edwin's favorite time of year was the Pixie Parade. As he became corrupted by the Nightmare King's manipulations, he grew resentful of the fairies and festival he once loved. Why wouldn't they let him stay with them forever? Where were they when he needed protecting?

The boy plans to make the pixies pay, and for the town of Glavost to see one final parade. At his evil patron's direction, he fought and captured the fairy godmothers



defending the town. Using dark magic born from fear and darkness, he turns them to his side. Soon he plans to force Glavost's protectors to destroy the town they love.

Redemption

There are six elements to Edwin's recovery, and each time the PCs confront him with a facet of his lost innocence and memories, they free another of the pixies from his control. With all six fey cured, they exorcise the Nightmare King's influence from the boy. The PCs can then defeat and banish the dark manifestation of the bogeyman's power.

The PCs should possess the wooden sword, toy soldiers, puppy, lost teeth, gold ring, and stuffed bear gained from the previous encounters. It is not enough for him to see the items; the PCs must present them and try to form a connection with the boy. Every time they do so, the darkness fades from a pixie, as the color returns to her body. The freed fairy godmother joins the PCs against Edwin, shooting other pixies with sleep arrows or waking sleeping PCs.

Hazard

Tentacles of shadows fill the dark heart of the forest where Edwin now holds sway. This acts as a black tentacles spell (spell save DC 15) and makes the area difficult terrain. Creatures possessing at least one of the recovered magic items from previous encounters are immune to the tentacles and ignore the difficult terrain. Edwin and the pixies are immune to this effect. This hazard disappears after Edwin is freed.

Creatures

The corrupted pixies fight for Edwin, and are nearly unstoppable thanks to his growing power. The pixies can't be stopped by hit point damage, and never fall unconscious no matter how much punishment they take. The secret lies in curing their corruption; the PCs can cure each of the fey as a step towards freeing the boy as described above.

Edwin himself avoids combat unless pressed, allowing the corrupted pixies to fight for him. If forced into combat he won't remain longer than one round, and uses gaseous form, and invisibility to keep his distance after that.

Corrupt Pixies

Tiny fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 1 (1d4-1)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Magic Resistance. The pixie has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The pixie's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring only its pixie dust as a component:

At will: *prestidigitation*

1/day each: *confusion, dancing lights, detect evil and good, detect thoughts, dispel magic, entangle, fly, phantasmal killer, polymorph, sleep*

ACTIONS

Superior Invisibility. The pixie magically turns invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the pixie wears or carries is invisible with it.

Edwin (Variant Assassin)

Small fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +6, Perception +3, Stealth +10
Damage Resistances poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that isn't magical

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Evasion. If Edwin is subjected to an effect that allows him to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, he takes no damage if he succeeds on the save, and only half damage if he fails.

Regeneration. Edwin regains 5 hit points at the start of his turn as long as there is a frightened creature within 30 feet of him, and he has at least 1 hit point.

Innate Spellcasting. Edwin's innate spellcasting ability score is Charisma (spell save DC 14). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *darkness, gaseous form, ghost sound, hold person, invisibility, suggestion*

1/day: *nightmare*

Magic Resistance. Edwin has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). Edwin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Edwin's that isn't incapacitated and Edwin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Edwin makes two claw attacks and can use his Frightful Presence.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature frightened in this way takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage at the start of its turn. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of Edwin's choice that is within 30 feet of Edwin and aware of him must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Edwin's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Development

Exorcising the dark influence over Edwin frees him and the pixies from the Nightmare King's control. It also releases

the evil force possessing the boy. This avatar manifests, and tries to take revenge on the PCs for thwarting it.

B8. Waking Nightmare

As color returns to the last pixie, Edwin lets out an ear piercing scream and black smoke billows out from his mouth. He collapses on the ground, looking like a normal blond-haired young boy. The pixies fly to the unconscious child, grabbing and dragging him to safety while turning invisible.

The black smoke pulls together into the shape of a man with a sharp-pointed crown and a deep and echoing voice. "I cannot be denied. Not by... children. The boy is mine. The world shall be mine."

In freeing Edwin from the Nightmare King's influence, they've forced the possessing shard of the ancient bogeyman's spirit to manifest.

The pixies do not engage in the fighting, as their weapons and spells are near-useless against the incorporeal avatar. Instead, they protect the unconscious Edwin from harm, allowing the PCs to concentrate on the foe.

Hazard

The nightmare avatar is the raw power that was allowing Edwin to alter reality. This gives it the ability to change its surroundings, but it lacks focus and control without a body. Each round it remains manifested, it shifts the world in chaotic ways to impede or harm the PCs. Roll randomly on the following table at the beginning of the nightmare avatar's

Nightmare Hazards

1d8	Hazard
1	All PCs are slowed (as the <i>slow</i> spell). A DC 15 Wisdom saving throw negates.
2	Grass becomes dangerously sharp to run through (as the <i>spike growth</i> spell).
3	The ground becomes like muddy quicksand for a moment. Creatures must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained when the ground hardens. Creatures stuck in the ground can dig their way out as an action.
4	Severe winds blast out from the nightmare avatar (as the <i>gust of wind</i> spell, DC 15 Strength saving throw negates).
5	Driving sleet falls from the sky covering the ground in ice (as the <i>sleet storm</i> spell).
6	The ground quakes. Any creature moving on the ground falls prone (DC 15 Dexterity saving throw negates).
7	Gravity is reversed (as the <i>reverse gravity</i> spell, DC 21). Creatures fall up 10 feet and take 1d6 falling damage when the effect ends.
8	Gravity is reversed (as the <i>reverse gravity</i> spell, DC 21). Creatures fall up 10 feet and take 1d6 falling damage when the effect ends.



turn. Each hazard affects all the PCs, or the area within 60 feet of the avatar. The previous round's hazard ends as soon as the new one begins.

Any PC may attempt to end the hazard effect or dispel any ongoing shadow conjuration or shadow evocation effect cast by the nightmare avatar (see below) by succeeding in an opposed Charisma-check against the monster as a full-round action. A PC can guess they can use their imagination powers in this manner with a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (Nature) check

Creatures

Use the following statistics for the avatar of fear and dreams. The nightmare avatar attacks by using its Shadow Illusions ability to conjure terrifying creatures and magical effects. It is fond of using *wall of fire*, *ice storm*, *stinking cloud*, and similar spells that sow confusion and dissent among its foes.

Nightmare Avatar

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)

Speed 0 ft/, fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Wis +6

Skills Deception +8, Intimidation +8, Perception +6, Stealth +8 (+11 in dim light or darkness)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that isn't magical.

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech, Common

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Bravery. The nightmare avatar is repelled by bravery. A creature immune to being frightened, or with advantage to saving throws against being frightened also has advantage on saving throws against the avatar's Shadow Illusions, and creatures conjured by Shadow Illusions have disadvantage on attack rolls against such a creature.

Incorporeal Movement. The nightmare avatar can move through other creature and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends

its turn inside an object.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the nightmare avatar can use a bonus action to Hide, even while being observed.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the nightmare avatar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Shadow Illusions. The nightmare avatar conjures images of fearful monsters and effects to defeat its foes. This takes the form of the conjure fey spell, or any other conjuration or evocation spell of 5th level or lower. The damage dealt by any effect created by Shadow Illusions is psychic. In the case of spells that allow saving throws, the targets make DC 16 Intelligence saves. Damage from the Shadow Illusions is all in the victim's mind, and can't actually cause death on its own. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by a Shadow Illusion is knocked unconscious.

Shadow Illusions uses the nightmare avatar's action, even if the spell it duplicates has a different casting time. Spells duplicated by Shadow Illusion are cast at their lowest possible level. If a spell duplicated by Shadow Illusions requires concentration, the nightmare avatar must concentrate to maintain it. If it loses concentration the spell ends immediately.

Development

Destroying the avatar forever frees Edwin from the bogeyman's influence. If it defeats the PCs, it can reclaim Edwin as a vessel to continue with the Nightmare King's evil plans.

Treasure

As thanks for freeing him, Edwin offers to let the PCs keep his toys recovered along the way.

Concluding the Adventure

Saving Edwin banishes the Nightmare King's influence from the forest, and the invisible pixies can once more protect Glavost. The PCs can return to town with Edwin, who has only vague fading memories of the horrors inflicted by the bogeyman. To the boy, it feels like waking from a bad dream, but he no longer wishes to run away from home.

Their son's return shocks Owen and Seldra, and the family has a tear-filled, but joyous reunion. They can only wonder in amazement at how Edwin hasn't aged in ten years, and any stories the PCs choose to tell about how they saved him. While it is difficult for them to believe the whole tale, there is no arguing with the fact some strange magic was at work.

The mayor wastes no time in declaring the PCs heroes. He appoints them the marshals of the parade, and they get to lead the town in celebration! Only the PCs see the pixies (especially a thankful Lista) attending the festival, with grateful smiles on their faces.

Continuing the Adventure

The abilities and items the PCs gain from the Nightmare King's spell and the pixie's blessing need not fade after their triumph. The PCs have come into startling power for

children so young, and many more adventures might await them. However, convincing parents to let kids set out on their own might be difficult.

The PCs foiled the Nightmare King's plans to gain an heir and destroy Glavost, but he is far from defeated. The powerful bogeyman continues to plot from his crooked tower, now perhaps with a mind toward revenge. Defeating the ancient fey and his many minions could provide fuel for an entire campaign. Perhaps Edwin's efforts set him free by accident, or the bogeyman seeks a portal to the fey realms to reclaim his throne.



The End

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Join the parade!

The Pixie Parade is a time-honored event, drawing tourists to the small town of Glavost every year. For these peaceful folk it is a grand feast and excuse for fun, but centuries of tradition leave the origins shrouded in mystery. The citizens are soon to discover all their fairy tales are true.

A brave group of pixies keep the Nightmare King at bay as part of an ancient pact. Now, the bogeyman sets his heir against the defiant fey. When the long-lost boy returns home to lead a final parade, only the town's children have a hope of victory. Can they turn the fey lord's magic against him? Can they stand against fear and free an innocent boy?

Pixies on Parade is a stand-alone **5th Edition** adventure for 1st - 6th level characters.

