

FREE PREVIEW

THE GLEANING

A Narrative Hall Folk-Horror One-Shot

FOLK HORROR · ONE NIGHT · A VILLAGE WITH A SECRET ·
SYSTEM-AGNOSTIC

A few opening pages of the scene. The full one-shot, with every scene, NPC, map note, and handout, is the complete download on narrativehall.com.

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HOW TO USE THIS ONE-SHOT

This is a complete, self-contained folk-horror scenario for **one session of about three to four hours**, runnable with **any tabletop system you already own**. There are no stat blocks and no mechanics inside, it is pure scenario: a place, a cast, an escalating night, and a terrible choice. Bolt it onto whatever rules you like, or run it rules-light by description and tension alone.

What it is. Your players are outsiders who come down into the valley village of Barrowmere on the night of its harvest festival, the Gleaning. The welcome is warm beyond reason. The village is the loveliest place they've ever been. And over the course of the evening they will discover, too late and all at once, that Barrowmere never knows grief or loss because long ago it gave both away to the thing in the land, and that the festival they walked into needs an offering, and that they are it.

Before you start: run a quick safety check. This is grief-and-sacrifice horror, dread rather than gore, with the violence kept offstage. Take two minutes at the top for an X-card or a lines-and-veils chat. The horror lands hardest when everyone has agreed to go there together.

The uncanny, at the table. Barrowmere's horror is fiction first: the kindness that is appetite, the neighbours who can't grieve, the road that won't let you leave. Narrate it; don't stat it. If your system wants a roll, gate how much the players *notice* or *withstand*, never whether the wrongness is real.

This is also a doorway. This one night is the opening of a full season. If your table wants more, *The Gleaning: Campaign Codex + GM Kit* turns this evening into Act One of a campaign-long descent. See the last page.

THE PITCH (read to your players)

“You come down out of the white moorland mist into sudden gold: a green valley, a village around a stone cross, a dark mere below and a green hill above, and people already coming out to meet you with both hands and warm faces, as if they’d been waiting. There’s a festival tonight, the Gleaning, the harvest rite, the most beautiful night of the year, and you simply must stay for it. There are beds made up. There’s food on. The whole village is lit with lanterns and there’s singing starting up on the green. It is, hands down, the loveliest place you have ever set foot. Stay the night. Stay for the Gleaning. Everyone does.”

Getting them there. Pick whatever’s easiest: a breakdown on the moor road, a wrong turn in the mist, a folk-festival weekend they booked, a vanished friend they’re tracing. However they arrive, the mist closes the only road behind them by full dark. They are here until morning, and the Gleaning is tonight.

Want the rest?

This is just the opening. **The Gleaning: Folk-Horror One-Shot** is ready to run: a complete, system-agnostic kit you can drop into any tabletop game.

Get the full download at

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