

The night market

An Undead market of dubious otherworldly origins , randomly accessible

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Overview

OVERVIEW

The Night Market is a recurring metaphysical location tied to the Shadowfell.

It appears unpredictably wherever reality is "thin," including:

- Graveyards
- Mausoleums
- Crypts
- Battlefields
- Ruined Castles
- Abandoned Roads
- Ship Holds
- Cellar Doors

Entrances may appear as:

- A black door in a wall
- A doorway where none should exist
- Lantern light beneath stone
- A passage far too small to physically fit

The Market:

- Cannot be intentionally summoned.
- Cannot be reliably found.
- Is not evil.
- Is neutral ground.

THE CITY

The Night Market exists within an enormous silent city.

Characteristics

- Every road eventually loops back to the Market Square.
- Players cannot reach the edge of the city.
- The city appears abandoned to the living.

Despite this...

Vendors and undead behave as though the city is alive.

Visitors may hear:

- Music
- Festivals
- Laughter
- Tavern chatter
- Church bells
- Wagons on stone

Buildings may show:

- Lit windows
- Moving curtains
- Passing shadows
- Warm meals

Yet the streets remain completely empty.

THE CROWNED FIGURE

At the center of the Market sits the Crowned Figure upon a throne.

Only its crown remains consistently visible above an impossible shifting form.

Appearance

Anyone who looks upon it sees a face they almost recognize.

The instant they look away...

They forget it completely.

No one remembers its face.

Communication

The Crown never speaks aloud.

Instead, creatures simply know its intentions.

Its will is understood as instinctively as knowing:

- Fire burns.
- Water is wet.

- Falling hurts.

Nature

The Crowned Figure is a Primordial—not a god.

It:

- Requires no worship.
- Seeks no followers.
- Has no visible ambitions.
- Represents endings and inevitability.
- Exists outside the divine hierarchy.

Even gods are temporary to it.

It only intervenes when reality itself is threatened.

It is never intended to be fought.

Any attempt to challenge it simply fails.

Reality rejects the attempt.

PRIMORDIALS

Primordials are not gods.

Gods rule domains within reality.

Primordials embody the fundamental truths that reality is built upon.

Examples include:

- Endings
- Time
- Memory
- Hunger
- Dreams

Primordials:

- Require no belief.
- Require no worship.
- Exist regardless of mortal awareness.
- Rarely interfere.

They act only when the foundations of reality are threatened.

RULES OF THE NIGHT MARKET

Every creature entering the Market instinctively knows these rules.

No one explains them.

Everyone simply knows.

Core Rules

- The Living Shall Not Spill Blood.
 - The Dead Shall Not Spill Blood.
 - Theft Is Invitation.
 - No Bargain May Be Unmade.
 - Names Given Freely Become Property.
 - The Crown Sees All Debts.
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BREAKING THE RULES

When a rule is broken:

- The Market falls silent.
- Lanterns dim.
- Everyone feels something has gone terribly wrong.
- The offender instinctively knows they violated a cosmic law.

First Violation

Wisdom Saving Throw

Success:

- Immediate expulsion from the Market.

Second Violation

Another Wisdom Saving Throw.

Failure results in reality taking something forever.

Possible punishments:

- An arm never existed.
- A shadow disappears.
- A voice is removed.
- A name is forgotten.
- Eyes vanish.
- Memories are erased.

No blood.

No violence.

Reality simply changes.

DIVINE & MAGICAL EFFECTS

Within the Night Market:

- Divine communication becomes distant.
- Curses may temporarily cease.
- Aggressive magic feels weaker.
- Gods feel impossibly far away.
- Detection magic becomes distorted.
- Undead become calmer.
- Reality feels older and heavier.

The Market does not suppress divinity.

It simply exists closer to the foundations of existence than the gods themselves.

FAVOR OF THE CROWN

The Crown has no interest in worship.

It notices:

- Respect
- Calmness
- Honoring bargains
- Mercy
- Acceptance of death
- Courtesy toward the dead
- Restraint

It dislikes:

- Arrogance
- Disruption
- Needless violence
- Attempts to dominate reality

Signs of Favor

- Lower prices
- Rare items appearing
- Safer travel
- Acknowledgment from the King's Guards
- Unexpected gifts
- Market doors appearing more frequently nearby

The Crown never confirms its favor.

THE KING'S GUARDS

Silent guardians of the Market.

They:

- Rarely move.
- Never speak.
- Are neither clearly undead nor mortal.

Their presence alone implies overwhelming power.

If one approaches someone:

- Vendors become quiet.
- Conversations stop.
- Even the dead grow uneasy.

Occasionally, a Guard delivers a gift from the Crown.

No explanation is ever given.

TONE & THEMES

The Night Market should always feel:

- Ancient
- Calm
- Unsettling
- Inevitable
- Civilized
- Melancholic
- Mythic
- Dreamlike

The Market should never completely explain itself.

Players should leave with theories rather than answers.



Roll Table

Night Market Vendor Roll Table (d100)

01-10 — The Lantern Widow

- Wraith-like woman carrying floating soul lanterns
- Soft-spoken funeral tone
- Likes sincere stories about the dead
- Hidden Item:
 - The Last Lantern
 - Speak with Dead or stabilize allies

11-20 — Grinn, Collector of Teeth

- Bloated ghoul jeweler
- Organizes polished teeth like gemstones
- Constantly smiling
- Likes stories of violence and battle
- Hidden Item:
 - The Laughing Fang
 - Psychic dagger tied to fear and survival

21-30 — Sister Pallid

- Vampire nun in white funeral robes
- Sells preserved hearts and healing relics
- Gentle bedside manner
- Likes mercy and spared enemies
- Hidden Item:
 - The Heart That Refused Death
 - One-use Revivify artifact

31-40 — The Velvet Puppeteer

- Six-armed mummy theater master
- Marionettes whisper before he speaks
- Loves performances and dramatic lies

- Hidden Item:
 - Strings of the Final Act
 - Force movement/actions like a puppet

41-50 — Old Vey, the Drowned Astrologer

- Floating drowned corpse in royal robes
- Speaks in prophecy constantly
- Likes forbidden questions and curiosity
- Hidden Item:
 - The Tideglass Eye
 - Ask future danger questions

51-60 — The Ash Merchant

- Burning skeleton untouched by flames
- Calm merchant of destructive tools
- Respects ambition openly admitted
- Hidden Item:
 - Coal of the Phoenix Pyre
 - Temporary fiery resurrection

61-70 — Mother Mire

- Swamp hag with flowers growing through ribs
- Mud around stall moves subtly
- Likes memory trades
- Hidden Item:
 - Seed of Forgotten Summer
 - Creates dreamlike safe refuge

71-80 — Xalith the Starved

- Aristocratic mind flayer
- Consumes emotions instead of brains
- Extremely polite
- Likes intense emotions
- Hidden Item:
 - Goblet of Hollow Thought

- Mental protection at memory cost

81-90 — The Knight of No Banner

- Headless armored death knight
- Immaculate weapon displays
- Values honor and directness
- Hidden Item:
 - Oathbreaker's Nail
 - Magical oath-binding spike

91-100 — The Empty Stall

- No visible vendor initially
- Stallkeeper eventually appears among crowd or party
- Reality around stall feels wrong
- Hidden Item:
 - Coin With Two Shadows
 - Truth-answering coin attracting Shadowfell attention