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Presents...

A NIGHT OF TERROR IN A CASTLE OF DEATH!

WAILING AND THE PALE SHADOW

5e  
Compatible

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“Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed In one self place; for where we are is hell, And where hell is, there must we ever be.”

— Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*.

## STORY SUMMARY

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The PCs arrive at the isolated village of **Soblonec**, where an unrelenting blizzard has hammered the region for three days straight. The villagers speak of grotesquely mutilated bodies found pale and hollow and swarms of flies appearing in impossible numbers despite the winter cold.

Although the villagers are terrified, many still have hope. This is the week of the lord’s annual feast at **Castle Valsk**, a tradition in Soblonec for over a century. The invitation list includes the PCs, along with merchants, nobles, hunters, and clergy from across the region of **Karavelka**.

Upon the PCs’ arrival at the castle, the storm seals the gates with ice and snow, trapping everyone inside. As the feast begins, strange events escalate: Guests mysteriously disappear and other guests fall ill and begin to crave blood. The PCs may explore the castle halls as paranoia grows among the servants and trapped guests.

After enough clues are discovered, the truth becomes clear: The lord has become victim to a bloodthirsty **Nosferatu** who has been slumbering beneath the castle for generations. One by one, guests and servants are being turned into blood-thirsty thralls.

Even if the PCs destroy the thralls, the real threat stalks the crypts below. The ancient vampire prepares to unleash its legion of newly turned servants upon the valley. The storm will soon pass, and when it does, the horrors trapped inside Castle Valsk may be set loose upon the world.

## ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

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Welcome to “Wailing and the Pale Shadow”, an adventure for *5th edition*. This adventure is intended to be completed in one to two sessions.

It is recommended that you read through the entire adventure before running it for your players so that you become familiar with the beats of the story and its major plot elements.

In addition, this adventure features random elements that make it difficult to predict. The intent is replayability and allowing the narrative to be shaped by the players and random dice rolls.

This book is intended to be an Adventure for a group of **4-5 level 4 characters**, but can work with **5-6 level 3 characters**. The adventure does not use XP awards. If your group plays with the experience point rules, use your judgment on what you award at the end of the session.

As with most products from **Deimos Infinitum Publishing**, this adventure has adult themes that some may find disturbing. This adventure is not recommended for children or adults who are sensitive to graphic descriptions.



# STORY BACKGROUND

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Three centuries ago, **Lord Dragomir Borsca** ruled over the lands surrounding **Soblonec** with a cunning and cruel reputation. His most trusted advisor witnessed Dragomir worshipping a relic of strange and forbidden origin. The relic contained carvings of strange symbols that seemed to writhe when in contact with blood.

Afraid of Dragomir's wrath, the advisor poisoned the lord before he learned of the servant's discovery. But the dark power within the relic had its own plan: Dragomir's blood awakened something older and more malevolent within.

Although he was dead to the world, Lord Dragomir had transformed into something dark and powerful. A living dead. **Nosferatu**.

For centuries, Dragomir slumbered beneath the familial and ancestral crypts of **Castle Valsk**, waiting. His tyrannical rule passed into vaguely remembered legend until a few weeks ago, when **Lord Branek Borsca**, Dragomir's descendant, prepared the castle for the annual winter feast.

Several weeks before the festivities, Branek descended to the crypts to pray solemnly before the resting bodies of his ancestors, seeking inspiration for his speech.

It was during one of those nights of prayer that Dragomir awoke. Centuries of hunger and vengeance surged through his dry veins. For weeks, Dragomir crawled out of the castle at night and fed on the villagers, creating paranoia and suspicion in his wake. The night before the feast, without hesitation or second thought, Dragomir killed Branek, gorging on his blood. Hidden in the shadows, he began feeding on

the servants, turning the once-proud ancestral crypts into a massive tomb of terror.

Now, trapped by a relentless snowstorm, the guests (including the PCs) are caught within Castle Valsk. By the time they realize the horror stalking the halls, Dragomir will have already begun turning servants into thralls. Everyone within the castle will either serve him... or be consumed.

## PART 1: THE ICY FEAST

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The adventure begins with the PCs arriving at the village of **Soblonec**. They have been invited to the winter feast, held annually by **Lord Branek Borsca** (a tradition that is centuries old).

The PCs may have received an invitation to the feast for any number of reasons: perhaps they hold distant ties to the lordship of the region, or the invitation relates to their personal backstory, goals, or ambitions.

Alternatively, the PCs might simply be passing through the area when the lord's servants take notice of them. Tasked with summoning armed and capable travelers, the servants ensure the lord can meet these newcomers personally to judge whether they are going to cause trouble before the festivities begin.

Regardless, when the adventure begins, share the following information as the PCs make their way from the village to the castle:

- Powerful winds and heavy snow are buffeting the area as a storm has engulfed the village.
- The villagers stare with suspicion as the PCs walk by, clutching their holy symbols tight.

- Despite the bitter cold, flies seem to be everywhere.
- There are several burned-out pyres with human remains in the village.
- A human servant named **Ludmila** greets the PCs and leads them to the castle. She says a grand feast is planned for tomorrow inside.

**Note that everyone in the castle is trapped inside due to the snowstorm that rages outside.**

Once at the castle, PCs meet the other guests. During this section, be sure to allow players to interact with and meet most or all of the other guests before proceeding to Part 2. Below is a quick summary description of each guest.

### Guests

Allow PCs to interact with the guests while they prepare to settle in for the evening.

#### Miss Malenkova

A young psychic from the north, Miss Malenkova was invited to Castle Valsk by the lord himself, who has long been fascinated by the occult and the arcane. He hopes to witness her powers firsthand and maybe even employ her insights for his annual rites.

#### Milos the Apothecary

Milos is an apothecary from a village near Soblonec, and is known for his meticulous notes on herbs, potions, and local ailments. He has traveled to Castle Valsk under the pretense of attending the feast, but in reality he suspects that a strange plague has begun to spread within Soblonec and may soon make its way

to nearby villages. The disease leaves its victims pale and dead before their time. Milos spends much of his time in the kitchens and storage rooms, examining food, water, and wine, and asking questions of the servants.

#### Captain Radomir Kolesnik

Captain Kolesnik is the seasoned head of the village guard in Soblonec. He has come to Castle Valsk under the guise of representing the village's interests at the feast, but beneath his disciplined exterior lies a man quietly gripped by fear. The strange deaths, the swarm of flies, and the growing rumors of the castle's dark legacy have shaken him. Kolesnik watches the halls with a tense eye, constantly calculating escape routes, and secretly hopes to slip away as soon as the storm ends, although he feels he must maintain appearances until then.



### **Bohdac, Sava, Mikhail**

Three heavily armed and armored human men arrived at Castle Valsk claiming to be wandering mercenaries, traveling through the Soblonec region in search of work (or so they say). Bohdac carries himself with authority, the de facto leader of the trio. Sava, the youngest, seems constantly on edge, scanning corridors and doorways. Mikhail is pale and clearly running a fever, but he insists it's "nothing serious". The others claim it's simply the chill of the mountains. The lord's servants insisted they attend the feast, having been previously given the directive to invite any armed visitors to the castle so the lord can assess whether they might cause trouble during their visit. Their presence is both intimidating and suspicious, and the PCs may need to decide whether to trust these men, question them, or keep a careful distance.

### **Old Simeon**

Simeon is a frail elder wrapped in layers and layers of wool and his hands shake endlessly. He claims to be only 27 years old, aged prematurely by a hag's curse 5 years ago in a small village in Geheil. He insists, loudly and often, that the storm, the black flies, and the pallid illness are omens of something far worse: the coming of a powerful demon who intends to unleash suffering across the region. Most guests snicker at him, but he doesn't seem to notice or care. Simeon paces the hall, cornering anyone who will listen (especially the three armed travelers, Captain Kolesnik, and the PCs), begging them to flee before the demon reaches Soblonec. There is something unsettling in the certainty of his dread.

### **Petru**

Petru is a quiet boy who clings to his servant mother's skirts. He talks about a secret friend who visits him at night: a tall, thin man with long fingers who brings him gifts of mice, beetles, and small dead birds "*so he's never lonely.*" The adults brush it off as childhood fantasies, but Petru insists the friend is real and lives "*in the cold and dark parts of the castle.*" He says the friend is waiting to meet the other guests, and that Petru should tell them, "*Don't be afraid. He already knows you.*"

In addition to guests, PCs may interact with any of the following servants of Castle Valsk.

### **Servants**

The servants speak with the PCs if approached, but they never start a conversation unprompted. If the PCs inquire about Lord Branek Borsca's whereabouts, no one seems to know where he might be. If they insist on meeting him, the servants assure the PCs that they will have an opportunity to meet him the next day when the feast begins.

### **Adelina**

Young Petru's mother, Adelina, is a 29 year old human and a loyal servant whose family has been serving the lords of Castle Valsk for three generations (well four, once Petru is old enough). She currently handles the cleaning duties for the public areas of the castle.

### **Bogdan**

Bogdan is a 57-year old man who is in charge of all the servants. He delegates duties and handles any additional tasks around the castle.



### **Casimir**

Casimir is a 20-year old human handyman who is in charge of random repairs within the castle. Although he is very fit, he is not a fighter and runs from trouble.

### **Ivan**

The head chef at Castle Valsk, Ivan is a heavyset man with a jolly disposition. He makes light out of most situations and remains generally positive even in the most stressful moments.

### **Ludmila**

A woman in her 30s, Ludmila is Lord Branek Borsca's mistress and trusted hospitality specialist in charge of making sure guests at the castle are comfortable. She knows the lord better than the other servants, but doesn't know where he currently is. She suspects he has been deep in prayer in the castle's crypt.

### **The Singers**

Lord Branek Borsca commissioned a renowned trio of traveling vocalists: **Ilyana, Marija, and Selka**.their harmonies are said to "warm even the coldest winter halls." All three are women in their early thirties, regal in posture and dressed in matching deep-blue winter cloaks.

### **Sunset**

As the sun sets, seven bells are rung from the village monastery and the PCs are shown to their guest suites. Within a couple of hours after turning in, a scream awakens them. Allow them time to don their armors and gather their weapons before investigating.

At this point, roll on the "**Who is Infected?**" table on page 9 and reference that individual's entry on pages 9-10 to determine what happens.

The PCs are most likely going to have to kill the infected individual and may want to investigate further. Unfortunately, there is not much more to learn until after sunrise.

Roll 1D12	Who is infected? (re-roll duplicates)
1	An Unnamed Servant
2	Miss Malenkova
3	Milos the Apothecary
4	Captain Radomir Kolesnik
5	Bohdac (One of the Armed Men)
6	Old Simeon
7	Adelina
8	Bogdan
9	Casimir
10	Ivan
11	Ludmila
12	All 3 Singers

### Captain Radomir Kolesnik

Lord Dragomir Borsca, the Nosferatu, turned the captain into a bloodthirsty creature of the night, the first of many he expects to join his legion of thralls. The captain is mindless and savage, attacking any living creature it comes into contact with. Use the **Bloodthirsty Legion** stat block for the captain.

### Bohdac

While Mikhail is bedridden and Sava is looking after him, Bohdac is the trio's point of contact. But he has secretly been targeted by Lord Dragomir Borsca the Nosferatu, who intends to turn the most physically capable guests into his **Bloodthirsty Legion**. Bohdac has become feral and filled with rage, attacking and killing anyone who is nearby.

### Old Simeon

Simeon's prior fears about the coming demon were unfounded, but ironically he was right about one thing: the village is in grave danger and will soon be consumed by darkness and evil unless the Nosferatu is stopped. Sadly, Simeon has become a mindless puppet under the control of the ancient Lord Dragomir Borsca (Use statistics for **Dragomir's Thrall**), and attempts to disable victims for the Nosferatu to later feed upon.

### Adelina

Adelina is taken into the shadows and turned into a **Tenebrant**. Her first deed is to take her son, young Petru. If she manages to take him, he is never seen again. Then, she stalks the other guests from the shadows until the Nosferatu reveals himself.

### Miss Malenkova

When infected, Miss Malenkova becomes a **Tenebrant**: a creeping creature who stalks from the shadows. Not quite bloodthirsty yet, Malenkova's psychic abilities have become hungry for mental energy and emotion. When she turns, she attacks an unnamed servant girl who is now in a permanent catatonic state. She becomes invisible and as PCs investigate, she attacks them.

### Milos the Apothecary

Milos begins to emit a horrific wail as he turns pale. He shambles and limps through the halls, wailing as he wanders. An unnamed male servant becomes his first victim and is left broken and twisted (barely alive). Milos is now a mindless servant (**Dragomir's Thrall**) who leaves victims helpless for his new master to feed upon.

### **Bogdan**

The head of the servants becomes a useful pawn of the Nosferatu, with access to all areas of the castle. He is also able to get close to victims and disable them until it is time to feed. Use statistics for **Dragomir's Thrall**.

### **Casimir**

When Casimir is attacked, he runs away screaming through the halls of the castle. Eventually his pursuer catches him and the PCs watch as a servant (use the **Dragomir's Thrall** stats) lunges from the shadows and knocks him unconscious. The servant then attacks the PCs, but as the PCs deal with the servant the Nosferatu strikes Casimir from the shadows, turning him. He then rises on initiative count 7 of the 2nd round as a **Bloodthirsty Legion** and attacks the PCs.

### **Ivan**

Due to Ivan's size, Lord Dragomir has chosen to add him to his growing **Bloodthirsty Legion**. Ivan retains a creepy but bloodstained grin as he staggers to his next victim.

### **Ludmila**

Lord Branek Borsca's mistress is taken in the darkness by the Nosferatu and turned into a **Tenebrant**, a creature who stalks from the shadows. She targets any guest who is alone and if able to get the upper hand, she turns them into a **Dragomir's Thrall**. She will attack a PC if they are more than 30 feet away from the rest of the party.

### **The Singers**

The trio of traveling vocalists are turned into **The Restless**. They make their way to the feast hall where they float about wailing in an inhuman and terrifying song. As PCs enter the the feast hall, the three Restless float down and savagely claw at them.

Once PCs have encountered an infected guest, allow them to speculate as to what is happening, but remind them that the sun has set and things will be much easier to investigate once it rises again. They may take a long rest if they do not continue to investigate for too long. Proceed to **Part 2: Guests Become Prey**.

If players insist on investigating further, allow them to do so, but do not waste too much time. Let them know there is not much more to learn for now.

## Bloodthirsty Legion

Medium Undead

**Perception** 13      **Initiative** 13  
**Saves:**                      **HP** 33  
**Con** +4                      **AC** 14 (Natural  
**Wis** +5                      armor)

**Move:** Walk (Stagger) 25

**Weapon:** Bite. +5 hit. 2d6+3  
piercing.

**Blood Frenzy:** When reduced to 0 HP, roll a DC15 Con save. If the Legion succeeds the save, it is reduced to 1 PH instead.

## Dragomir's Thrall

Medium Undead

**Perception** 9      **Initiative** 6  
**Saves:**                      **HP** 27  
**Str** +5                      **AC** 9 (Natural  
**Con** +4                      armor)

**Move:** Walk (Limp) 25

**Weapon:** Claws/fist. +5 hit.  
1d8+4 slashing or bludgeoning.

**Wail from Beyond:** When the Thrall takes damage, whichever creature dealt that damage takes 1d4+2 psychic if they are within 20 ft (DC 14 Wis save negates).

## Tenebrant

Medium Undead

**Perception** 12      **Initiative** 11  
**Saves:**                      **HP** 25  
**Cha** +2                      **AC** 13 (Natural  
**Con** +4                      armor)

**Move:** Fly (Hover) 30

**Weapon:** The Tenebrant directly targets a victim's mind when it touches them. Touch. +6 hit. 2d4+1 psychic.

**Fading Grasp:** If the Tenebrant deals damage to a creature, it may immediately become invisible unless it was already invisible when it made the attack.

## The Restless

Medium Undead

**Perception** 10      **Initiative** 7  
**Saves:**                      **HP** 18  
**Dex** +4                      **AC** 13 (Natural  
**Cha** +6                      armor)

**Move:** Fly (Float) 25

**Weapon:** Claw. +3 hit. 1d6 + 2  
slashing.

**Uneasy Presence:** Creatures that start their turn within 15 ft. of The Restless take 1 psychic damage from creeping dread (no save can prevent this damage).

## PART 2: GUESTS BECOME PREY

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When the PCs and guests re-awaken at sunrise, fear is near a boiling point. Some strange illness seems to be driving people mad, and all while a powerful snowstorm has sealed them inside Castle Valsk. Some are anticipating the snow will not melt enough to open the doors for another **two days**.

### Sunrise

As everyone gets dressed for the events of the day, everyone concurs that guests should travel in groups for safety. PCs are a large enough group, so they may explore the castle without any other NPCs, but they are welcome to add any survivors to their group (although most of them are commoners and probably won't be able to help much).

Allow PCs to investigate the castle. When they head to a new location, roll on the **Random Events Table** on **page 13**. After you have rolled 3 times, proceed to **Part 3: The Pale Shadow**.

During their investigation PCs may become increasingly curious about Lord Branek. His last known location was in the family crypts below the castle, where he frequently prayed. Unfortunately, the PCs are not allowed in the crypts.

But after **at least three events** have been rolled on the Random Events Table, the surviving servants agree to allow the PCs to enter the crypts and search for Lord Branek Borsca. Once PCs have agreed to investigate the crypts, proceed to **Part 3: The Pale Shadow**.

**Note:** Players can be pushy and might insist that they need to enter the crypts, or they may use an ability that allows them to get past the locked door.

If they do, allow them to find the decapitated body of Lord Branek Borsca next to an open coffin labeled "**Lord Dragomir Borsca**". This should give them a hint as to what's happening, but do not have the Nosferatu confront them until at least 3 events have been rolled.



<b>Roll 1d12</b>	<b>Random Events Table (re-roll duplicates)</b>	<b>If Ignored...</b>
1	A servant is found pale and shaking, with two small punctures on their neck. They remember nothing.	The servant vanishes within an hour
2	Guests swear they hear weeping from deep below the castle. Servants become too afraid to approach the crypt entrance.	Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table. When attacking the PCs, the NPC is also with a Bloodthirsty Legion.
3	A maid collapses, screaming that something cold crawled into her chest while she slept.	She turns into a Dragomir's Thrall and turns a guest. Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table. The guest and thrall attack the PCs together.
4	A glass of wine suddenly turns dark red and thick like blood.	Guests become paranoid. Tensions rise.
5	One of the guests violently coughs blood, staining the area red. Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table to determine who.	Within an hour, the guest turns (see descriptions on P.8-9).
6	A servant disappears mid-task. Tools clatter to the floor. A faint blood smear leads toward a hidden stair.	Three Bloodthirsty Legion emerge from the stairs and attack all guests and PCs.
7	A guest begins screaming: "He walks again. The dead king walks. Dragomir." Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table to determine who.	The guest goes catatonic and disappears when left alone. They join the Nosferatu in the combat during Part 3.
8	Every candle in a corridor suddenly goes out as the PCs pass. The air turns icy.	If PCs don't investigate, a Tenebrant joins the Nosferatu in the combat during Part 3.
9	Choir-like singing echoes through the banquet hall but no singers are performing.	If PCs don't investigate, two of The Restless join the Nosferatu in the combat during Part 3.
10	A maid is found digging at the stone floor with her bare hands, and says someone is "calling to her from below."	She disappears within an hour and a Dragomir's Thrall joins the Nosferatu in the combat during Part 3.
11	A servant claims she saw Lord Branek walking the halls. If investigated, PCs face a guest who has been turned. Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table to determine who.	The guest attacks the PCs. Then, Two Dragomir's Thralls join the Nosferatu in the combat during Part 3.
12	A guest claims a strange man opened the door to their room, then vanished.	Roll on the "Who is Infected?" table (this should not be the guest who claims they were visited). When attacking the PCs, the NPC is also with a Tenebrant

## PART 3: VENGEANCE - THE PALE SHADOW

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The events at Castle Valsk are rapidly escalating. At this point, surviving guests and servants (and maybe even the PCs) are wondering where **Lord Branek Borsca** is. If PCs haven't uncovered it already, it is revealed by the servants that the lord regularly visits the crypts below the castle to pray to his ancestors.

When the PCs visit the crypts, they find the decapitated body of Lord Branek Borsca next to an open coffin labeled "**Lord Dragomir Borsca**". His head is nowhere to be found.

As they read the coffin's inscription, the temperature in the crypts drops below freezing. Footsteps can be heard closing in, and the PCs witness a tall, shriveled, lanky and pale man quickly skitter in the distance and disappear in the shadows. Whatever it is, it is clear it is now hunting the PCs.

**Combat begins, and the Nosferatu fights to the death, along with two Famed Ones (add 2 more Famed ones if there are 5 or 6 PCs in the group).**

**Note:** Lord Dragomir acts twice each round: once on initiative 15 and once on initiative 8. He cannot repeat the same type of action on the same round. He can expend his action on either initiative count to automatically end one condition.

If the PCs are defeated, they are added to the legion and are turned into bloodthirsty undead.

If PCs defeat the Nosferatu and its legion, they save the village and the remaining survivors.

**If victorious, award the following items, which PCs find within the crypts:** A *Potion of Speed* and a *Cloak of the Bat*.

It is now up to the players to decide what they wish to do next. Here are some guidelines of events that may occur in Soblonec and beyond in the aftermath of the events of this adventure.

- The PCs may find information about the mysterious relic that turned Dragomir Borsca into the creature. Perhaps they wish to find it in order to destroy it or gain power from it.
- The death of Lord Branek Borsca may cause the area to spiral into a power struggle between nearby lords, factions, or other outside actors.
- The three mysterious armed men who were guests at the castle may have more sinister or mysterious plans. Maybe they even have some connection to one of the PCs or their backstory.
- Miss Malenkova the psychic may have some sinister motives as well. Maybe she also is in possession of some Forbidden Knowledge or Magic. Or maybe she is secretly seeking the ancient relic that Dragomir Borsca worshipped centuries ago. If she perished during the adventure, PCs might find clues to her motives.
- The snowstorm may have darker origins (as suspected by Old Simeon). PCs may need to investigate.
- Old Simeon's story of the hag who cursed him might be true. Maybe the PCs wish to seek her out.
- Young Petru may have a connection to dark powers, which could explain Lord Dragomir Borsca's fascination with him.

Alternatively, you and your friends may want to run some of the many other adventures and mysteries from Phase II Publishing and Deimos Infinitum Publishing!

## Famined One

Medium Undead

**Perception** 8      **Initiative** 12  
**Saves:**            **HP** 18  
**Con** +3            **AC** 9 (Natural armor)

**Move:** Walk (Hunched) 25

**Weapon:** Pull Flesh. +5 hit. 1d6 + 4 slashing.

**Grab and Bite:** The Famined One makes a grapple attempt (+5 total modifier). If successful, it immediately bites the target, automatically dealing 1d4 + 4 PH. The Famined One can then automatically deal 1d4 + 4 piercing each round while the target is grappled..

## \*Lord Dragomir Borsca, Nosferatu

Medium Undead

**Perception** 15      **Initiative** 15, 8  
**Saves:**            **HP** 70  
**Dex** +6            **AC** 17 (Natural armor)  
**Cha** +5

**Move:** Walk (Skitter) 35, Climb 30

**Burn in Hell:** When the Nosferatu takes fire damage, it takes an additional 1d6 fire damage from each instance.

**Savage Hunger:** Whenever the Nosferatu deals maximum damage or scores a critical hit, it regains 2d6 HP and immediately takes another action.

### Actions (choose or roll 1D4)

**1. Blood Drain.** Attack action. Targets a creature who is missing at least 1 HP. The attack is made with a +9 modifier, dealing 2d6\* + 6 necrotic, and the Nosferatu regains 5 HP on a hit.

**2. Feral Frenzy.** Attack action. Strikes with a +9 modifier for 1d8 + 6 slashing, and then may move up to its speed (without provoking opportunity attacks). After moving, it can make another attack against a different creature with a +5 modifier for 1d8 + 6 slashing.

**3. Revelation of Night.** Magic action. Each creature within 15 ft is knocked Prone and takes 2d6 psychic (DC15 Wis save negates the prone condition and halves the damage).

**4. Move Within Shadows:** Magic action. The Nosferatu disappears and reappears within 50 ft. If it appears adjacent to another creature, that creature takes 2d6 necrotic (DC15 Dex save negates).

