

## Back story for Vern of Shadowdale

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Vern was born to Shea and Durgan Smithy at dawn of the Summer Solstice 976 DR. They lived on their farm on the outskirts of Shadowdale with their other 5 sons and daughters. Durgan and Shea had pioneered the farm some 10 years before. They had tried to keep to themselves other than selling excess crops and livestock. Not much is known about where they had come from before settling in Shadowdale.

In the late winter of 977 DR there was a large amount of goblin and orc raiding parties due to the harsh winter and scarce food. The Smithy farm was not spared from the raiding parties. One morning there was smoke coming from the Smithy farm. Some of their neighbors went to investigate and help if they could. They walked into a horrifying scene. They found Durgan and his sons had been pinned alive to the door of their barn with spears and then tortured. The neighbors refused to speak of what they had found done to Shea and her daughters. The house was put to the torch; the livestock was dead or gone. The neighbors were in the process of tending to their dead neighbors when they found baby Vern still alive behind a panel in the cellar of the barn. Other than the dead family this seemed to the neighbors pretty lucky they found him and the marauders did not.

The people of Shadowdale were unsure of what should be done with Vern. When Belishar and Elmira; a traveling Priest and Priestess of Lathander to the Dalelands were tending to the Shrine of Lathander in Shadowdale they heard of the tale of the Smithy farm and baby Vern and remembered that he been born on their holiest of day of the year. They inquired of the people to see if the Church of Lathander could take care of Vern. The lord of Shadowdale accepted this as long as Vern would not be inheriting the land his parents pioneered and be stripped of his family name, unknown to clergy the lord of Shadowdale wanted the farmland for himself to plant a new vineyard. This was acceptable for the traveling clergy. This is how Vern lost his family name of Smithy.

Belishar and Elmira raised Vern in the faith of Lathander and taught him much of what they knew of their faith. As Vern grew he thirsted for more of Lathander and was taken to a temple in Ordulin to the South. Vern grew in stature in the eyes of the people and in the eyes of Lathander. Vern was shown many of the secrets and rituals of the faith of Lathander. Vern also took to weapon training and was found to be skilled using either one of his hands. The Church sent him out with a large mercenary squad sent to help the Dalelands with another group of marauding horde. He was kept to the back and saw the carnage and chaos of battle and knew if he was to help he would have to perform the rites and rituals even under extreme pressure. After this Vern asked to be taught in divine battle magic.

As part of Vern's extracurricular training he was lent to a master metalworker who specialized in making weapons. Even here Vern outshined his fellow apprentices. But the weapons maker was found out to be lycanthrope and had to be put down. This is how Vern learned of the Silver Dawn Cult of Lathander. They took Vern for a month to be sure Vern was not also afflicted with

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this accursed disease. As Vern mourned for his teacher a Morninglord one of the Silver Dawn told Vern of the Sunforge at the Beacon in Whillip.

After this event in the year 1007 DR; Vern asked if he could go on a pilgrimage to the Beacon. The High Priest Belishar sent Vern as a priest to the Beacon to be a good ambassador of Lathandar and His Faith to the other aspects of the sun. And so Vern traveled to Whillip and the Beacon.

Vern was excited to be at the Beacon but soon after it started to fade. 1<sup>st</sup> Vern found out that the Sunforge had been renovated into part of the sanctuary and its lenses had been replaced with a beautiful stained glass window. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vern tired of the constant debating faiths it was clear to him that the Lathander faith was Supreme but those of other faiths did not see it this way. Instead he decided he needed to travel the world and spread the gospel of light to the dark places and set free those who are enslaved by the darkness.