

# Shadow Vasov

## Backstory

**Name:** Sometimes goes by 'Preshoc', which translates to 'Death'. He was named this by the scientists who experimented on him and the enemies he fought in the various dimensions he travelled to

**Species:** A variation of southern Felkin\*

**Sex:** ♂

**Age:** 22 years. Does not appear to age

**Height:** 8ft 4in (anthro); 7ft 4in (feral, on all fours)

**Weight:** 310lbs (anthro); 510lbs (feral)

**Siblings:** None

**Native Planet:** X-130

**Misc:** Shadow travels between dimensions and timelines and lacks control over these shifts.

## Worldbuilding Notes

The Felkin species has a reference sheet which you can find [here](#). The Felkin described in this profile is a derivative species that has the power of speech and has a developed culture.

The Felkin are tribal in nature with a strongly developed military culture, and use their military might to defend their towns and cities jealously, including from their neighbours. Their native wildlife includes dangerous animals, and this has also influenced them to protect their population. Despite the heavy-handed nature of these security arrangements, the Felkin do not feel oppressed or unduly tense, and go about their lives quite happily. They generally consider their guards as professionals simply doing their job.

As a species, Felkin like to hoard. This persists into the modern day despite the fact that they live in an environment in which scarcity is rarely a problem, and usually they like to hoard things that they find intriguing. This is such a common problem that there are legal or civil frameworks in place in Felkin culture to avoid undue hoarding.

Another Felkin habit is keeping a respectful distance from one another. They can be vaguely emotionally distant creatures so take their time to become acquainted with one another.

Felkin do not have a particularly structured school system. They mainly school their older

children by circulating scrolls and books around from one family to another. For this reason, social connections are important, especially for families with children. They hold some classes to ensure that Felkin children have basic literacy in:

- Languages
- Maths
- Science
- Culture

Shadow is an original character who appears in a variety of roleplay settings, including *Halo*, *Metro*, *Fallout*, *AWSW*, *Pokemon*, *Skyrim*, and others. He is academically-minded and in his younger days, tended to focus on intellectual matters at the expense of developing a solid social life. In young adulthood his life changed so that he could never integrate with any one community for very long, and for this reason capitalised on his skills and knowledge to contribute to any relationships he developed. This leaves him lonely but largely able to maintain his sense of isolation to a manageable level.

### **Trust & Confidence**

*(newborn)*

Shadow's parents had planned to have a baby for a while. Not only that, they had unsuccessfully tried a few times so when they finally became pregnant they were delighted, and anticipated the arrival of their first baby with excitement! They were a middle class couple, lived in a large town, and had so far lived full, interesting, and healthy lives.

His father was a scientist who worked mostly from a laboratory, while his mother designed armour for the town's guards.

Despite her excitement at becoming a mother, Shadow's mum found the realities of looking after an infant quite boring and longed to get back to work so that she could do something more stimulating. That isn't to say she didn't look after him - she did, but she always found the 'sleep-eat-change or bath-sleep' cycle dull. Shadow picked up on this and developed an underlying anxiety that he wasn't quite enough for her.

### **Freedom & Self-Determination**

*(toddlerhood)*

Shadow became a toddler and with it, developed an ability to act under his own proverbial steam. For many toddlers this is the time of life when they discover what it means to have personal agency, and they practice it by saying "no!" to their mothers. Until this point a

toddler has been 'one' with his mother, to the point where he has felt as if he and she were the same entity. Toddlerhood is a time when he becomes aware of the separateness between them for the first time.

This was somewhat derailed for Shadow. His mother, pleased that at last she could be active again, started attending to work at home. Since she had been bored for so long and wasn't leaving Shadow she had no hesitation in doing this. This meant that she gave Shadow no impression that she wanted him to stay close and that, once again, something else was more interesting.

Rather than pulling away from her himself and experimenting with and enjoying his new-found separateness, Shadow felt a desire to win her attention. Given that his mother was highly educated, after some trial and error he found that she paid more attention when he showed her a sign of his intelligence - proving that he could count, showing off his ability to speak whole sentences, reading, and other similar displays of intellect. His father supported his mother by presenting a similar approach.

He also tried making shows of spontaneity or silliness, but she scolded him when he did that. Even being scolded was better than her paying him no attention at all so he kept doing it, but she wised up and learned not to pay him attention when he did it, so eventually he gave that up. Like any toddler he also had the occasional meltdown, but his mother had little patience for these and dismissed them as more silliness, so he learned not to do that for attention either.

Being an only child he had no siblings whom he had to share with so as such he never developed to become particularly possessive nor generous. The scolding he received from his mother and father whenever he acted 'silly' made him feel ashamed sometimes, especially given that he was too young to keep himself under control. He did his best though.

### **Ambition**

*(young childhood)*

When Shadow was three years of age and old enough to spend a few hours away from his mother at a time, he was taken to daycare. However, that didn't work out.

His parents had already taken a very focused approach to developing him intellectually. While he wasn't so intellectually advanced as to have left his classmates that far behind, his parents' focus on intellect while raising him had neglected his need for development of social skills and in this area Shadow was lagging. Shadow didn't approach the other

children very often and, when he was approached by another child or encouraged by the daycare staff to play or talk with the others, he didn't know what to do. At these times he re-enacted everything he had learned from his parents by focusing on the intellectual - counting, the natural world and anything science-related, and similar subjects - and became confused and frustrated whenever his classmates tried to engage him in fun (and, as he saw it, mindless) activities.

Despite spending a month there he didn't connect meaningfully with anyone. In the end the decision was made for him to spend his days with his mother instead while she worked.

Shadow was highly energetic - more so than was ideal, given that he was spending his days in the armoury study. Sometimes he knocked things over and was quickly taught that he would have to contain himself. He felt rather ashamed at this, as if he had failed a standard that had been set for him, but sometimes he just got too excited and forgot.

He also started to experience something subtly different from shame: guilt. Guilt that if he was too careless or mindless then he would break something important and that that would cause his mother problems. She was as patient with him as she could be and sometimes explained to him why he had to stay calm and keep to himself. Once again he felt that her attention was on her work or that she was keen to get back to it, and that he was a distraction. This feeling contributed to his sense of guilt, and of a resentment that he resolved to keep a secret.

This made for a difficult conundrum for Shadow. On the one hand he had a lot of energy to expend and was excited to see the world (even if it was only his parents' workplaces for the time being), but on the other, he was expected to keep himself under a great deal of control.

His parents were keen to avoid spoiling their son so while they had the means to buy anything he wanted, including games and toys, they avoided indulging him too much.

Shadow's early childhood, as solitary as it was (at least, solitary when it came to others of his own age), meant that he didn't develop a competitive streak. He didn't have anyone to compete with, and his parents would clearly out-compete him easily, no matter what he challenged them to. Because of this Shadow retreated into his own mind and amused himself with his own thoughts and daydreams instead. He liked to daydream about travelling to space, even if Felkin technology hadn't yet reached a stage where space travel was particularly likely during his life.

## **Productivity**

*(older childhood)*

Like most other Felkin children aged six years and above, Shadow went to classes to continue his education. He only stayed a year as his parents had already taught him so well that he breezed through the classes, at least from an academic standpoint.

During this time a new family moved in next door to the Vasovs. They had a daughter who was the same age as Shadow. Her parents learned quickly enough that Shadow was very academically minded, and decided they wanted their daughter to benefit from studying with him. They also spotted that Shadow was more isolated and socially awkward than most youngsters of his age and used this as part of their case to invite him to their home. They spoke to Shadow's parents, saying: "Why doesn't he come around for dinner? You get to work quietly this evening or have a date night, he gets a bit of social time with a female which will help him out when he's older, and she gets help with her homework. Deal?"

Shadow's parents accepted this suggestion, and Shadow got to know their daughter.

Shadow came to realise that the dream of going into space was just that: a dream, and probably would not become a reality within his lifetime. He reluctantly accepted that it was unrealistic but it still appealed to him nonetheless.

Although space exploration was not a viable choice of career, a wide variety of other options were open to him. As a Southern Felkin it was generally assumed that he would grow up to be big and strong enough to do physical work, but his strong track record in academia meant that he could pursue a more cognitive field if he preferred. While he wasn't sure what else he might want to do with his life, Shadow liked to learn all he could so he contented himself with studying.

As Shadow grew older he developed the hoarding habit common among Felkin. However, this wasn't a problem in and of itself as the 'object' of his interest was knowledge. This contributed to his desire to study for study's own sake.

## **Child to Adult Transition**

*(adolescence)*

When Shadow was 13 he came up with a design improvement to the armour his mother was making and suggested it to her: pinching the joints. Over the following years this design feature was built upon and became the second most often used design of its kind in

the military profession. At around the same time he switched from spending his days with his mother to spending them with his father at the lab.

Shadow's teens were an awkward time for him. As he became more capable of independence and ventured further from his parents' sides, he saw other young Felkin. Many of them liked to hang out in groups, and he came to realise that he wasn't doing the same. He chose not to spend time with them as he still had more academic material to learn, but what he did not expect was to feel cold-shouldered as the other teenaged Felkin made it clear that they weren't interested in being around him either.

He continued to spend more time with his parents than stepping out of his comfort zone. He considered his father his role model as they had similar interests, and that gave Shadow the added comfort that whenever he spent time around his father, new knowledge was never far away. When the opportunity arose, Shadow would again study.

Despite Shadow's generally constricted social life he wasn't as awkward with female Felkin as might be expected thanks to his relationship with his neighbour. She developed an interest in sexuality at a similar time to him and, although she felt generally very shy about this, felt that she knew Shadow well enough to know that he would not judge her for any failings or eccentricities in her approach to sex, and she consented to experiment with him. They lost their virginity to one another. In the longer run she decided that she wanted to experiment with other males and as a result, drifted away from Shadow.

Shadow also drifted, and sought out the other female Felkin in his immediate community and classes. He developed a series of crushes but the crushes were seldom returned. He tried becoming friends with them but rarely enjoyed their interest in him in return.

### **Closeness in Relationships**

*(young adulthood)*

Having such a socially impoverished childhood left Shadow as an isolated adult. He felt this on a day to day basis as a hole in his life, and he became used to it. With so little in the way of long-term friendships to draw on, Shadow continued to focus more on academia and productivity than anything else.

Shadow sought, and got, employment in scientific research, military research and schematics, astrology, physics, and biological research and testing. He threw himself into a cycle of work - finish project - find another project to do. This cycle could never be completed as there was always more he could do. When he had relaxation time he would

use it to read about subjects that interested him.

He and his female Felkin neighbour continued their relationship on and off, but it remained very much on the surface level. Shadow generally found that female Felkin had little interest in him, so he stopped trying.

Everything changed abruptly for Shadow when he was 21 and he was abducted. He found himself in space at last, in a space station, but not under happy circumstances. His prison was a research station and the scientists openly discussed their goals. As Shadow listened he realised that they were working on improving and augmenting every biological resource that Shadow (and many other subjects) had.

The scientists occasionally united Shadow with these other subjects, although it was only one at a time, for a short period each time, and for the purposes of testing the scientists' work on augmented gametes. In short, these were breeding tests. Shadow and the female (sometimes Felkin, often not) he would find himself with would be coerced to mate, and then part ways. This horrified Shadow and fostered guilt and pity towards the females with whom he was paired, and a burning hatred towards the corporation that ran the station.

Shadow had no way of knowing the outcome of these breedings, but his gametes had been altered so that they almost completely took over the genetic instructions for his offspring. Most of his offspring with non-Felkin partners were born 80-90% Felkin themselves. Only a few genetic details from their mothers were passed on and these were generally cosmetic details such as eye colour, the shape of the iris, fur patterns and colours, and other such traits. A few of his offspring presented as more fully hybridised than this.

A few years after the above situation settled down he began to experience events that he dubbed "Jump events". He would be surrounded by black-grey smoke. Within seconds he would be transferred to a different time and space. A little research appraised him of the fact that these places were not his home planet, or at least, not his version of his home planet. Instead they were different timelines and dimensions.

Shadow found this disorientating, however the knowledge he had been imbued with helped him to overcome this rather quickly. From then on he made a commitment to learn what he could about the world he had materialised into, solve any problems he could, and then wait for his next Jump Event. Sometimes the problems he solved were small and would benefit only one person. At other times he involved himself in large-scale disputes, up to and including influencing the courses of space-travelling empires.

## **Passing on Responsibilities**

*(older adulthood)*

Shadow is in a very strange position that won't allow him to live through his middle age in any way that could easily be described as normal.

He has all possible professional training and aptitude so could, in theory, provide support to many younger people in any field at all. He often endeavours to do this in the various timelines he Jumps into, but the nature of the Jumps means that he doesn't have the time to provide long-term support. Generally his Jumps are at least 2 years apart and the longest has been 13 years, but ultimately Shadow never knows when the next one will happen.

Shadow is also ageless and appears to only be 22 years of age, so the people he meets don't always see him as capable of being a seasoned mentor. He does his best to overcome this by helping out with a relatively small issue so that he can demonstrate his expertise. Some allow him to help on bigger issues as time goes by and he proves himself, while others insist on writing him off. Shadow does not put too much work into fighting to be recognised if he believes it's too much of an uphill struggle, so will sometimes walk away from people who do this.

Although it is possible that he has children in some timelines, he is unable to contact any of them, nor he them, so cannot guide them forwards in their lives.

## **End of Life**

*(old age)*

Shadow's body and brain were halted at the time of the experiments that he was put through. As a result he cannot age to a point where he starts to lose mental agility via ageing. His body remains strong too and this means that he doesn't have to think about physically withering away as most people do.

Most characters, on reaching this life stage, are concerned with how satisfied they are with the way they lived their lives. This is not so relevant for Shadow due to his agelessness.

Shadow knows that he will die one day but that it is not going to happen any time soon. He is living a very full life - though not a socially well-integrated one by any means - so if and when he does eventually die it is likely that he will feel as if he performed a lot of helpful tasks for people but that he is ultimately isolated.



It is also worth noting that Shadow's mind is that of a Felkin: he was born to be a creature that lived for 100 years, give or take, not many millenia. It is therefore possible that he may develop a mental health disorder a few hundred years after his birth due to living far longer than his species' natural lifespan. This is likely to include anxiety, depression, anger, and dissociation.

## **Credits**

Based on theory by:

Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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*\*Please note that the interpretation of the Felkin species depicted here is significantly different to XenoForge's species standard. XenoForge gives her consent for these differences so long as the derivative nature of the Felkin depicted in this profile is explicitly acknowledged.*

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy