In a secluded valley, a mischievous youth named Jinx thrived on deception. He delighted in weaving tales of phantom dangers, his laughter echoing like thunder through the pines. One sweltering afternoon, he scaled a craggy outcrop and bellowed, “Shadowbeast! Shadowbeast! The abyss has sent its hound!” The villagers, tending their crops in the sun-scorched fields, paused mid-hoe. Their weathered hands tightened on tools as they sprinted uphill, only to find Jinx cackling at the edge, the air thick with pine resin. “No specter here,” he taunted, “just a jest to break your toil!” The villagers, their brows furrowed like cracked earth, retreated, muttering oaths under their breath.

Hours later, as dusk painted the sky in hues of bruised plum, Jinx repeated his ruse. “Shadowbeast!” he shrieked, his voice a jagged shard of sound. The villagers, though weary, rallied once more, their lanterns flickering like fireflies in the gloom. They found him doubled over in mirth, the forest’s shadows dancing mockingly around him. “Fool’s game,” spat the eldest farmer, thrusting his lantern into Jinx’s face. “No more mercy for your tongue’s venom.” They descended, leaving him to the crickets’ chirr.

When the true horror emerged—a hulking wraith with eyes like molten lead—the boy’s screams were drowned by the wind. He pleaded, “Help! Help! The abyss is here!” His cries clawed at the air, but the villagers, now deaf to his lies, huddled in their huts. The wraith’s claws tore through silence, and Jinx’s final breath was swallowed by the night.