

# Trouble in Slumbering Grove

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(word of warning, this document has NOT  
been edited fully)

## Introduction

A call to arms goes out. The GM can use either the cliché tavern scene, or they could try a few other routes...

- Perhaps one or more of the players have some link to the local law or a connection to the ruling powers in the area.
- If you have mystic type characters, then perhaps one or more of them had a dream leading them to the town of Slumbering Grove.
- Perhaps **Farwell Chivral** (*see his note*) has written to one or all the PC's having heard of their exploits. He is an older man-at-arms who serves Sir Alan Braidmore. Farwell is now asking for their aid.
- Perhaps one of the PC's friends or family is affected by the following.

Either way, they will learn that a nearby small village called Slumbering Grove is in trouble. It would appear that locals have been disappearing. Details are a little vague but it is enough that word has spread and they are seeking help. If you have a party that is more driven by monetary gain, then you could sweeten the pot by adding the cash incentive.

## Slumbering Grove

This is a small village that is only a two day journey from where the PC's are. Its primary income is agriculture consisting of livestock and vegetables. The ruling lord in this area is Count Beylard Sedgewick who lives several miles on the outskirts of this small village. He has local militia who keep the peace and they report to a small handful of knights.

The PC's will arrive in the village mid-afternoon. It might occur to someone, if not perhaps the GM should drop a hint that they might want to announce their presence with the local guardian which is Sir Alan Braidmore (*good Bannerette Knight*).

Most small agricultural towns are going to notice a group of well-armed adventurers in their midst and be cautious, especially after so many people have disappeared.

## Sir Braidmore

He lives just outside the village in his small keep. Sir Braidmore has four knights at his command and twenty men at arms. These men are spread thin trying to locate what is going on and having no success. So far twelve people have gone missing, all on the outskirts of the village. Mostly the abductions have been farmers. The attackers have left **NO** witnesses as to what has happened.

Sir Braidmore believes it may be a problem with the Shadowed Hand (*See who is the shadowed hand*). Two months ago, one of their members was found trying to break into his very keep, specifically Sir Braidmore's library.

The man was captured but somehow died while in the dungeons by poisoning. Sir Braidmore is worried that maybe some of his men might have be compromised. Farwell Chivral is a trusted man (man at arms) and can guide the pc's if need be.

## Ask the Locals

The PC's might instead attempt to pick the brains of the locals to see what they have to say. The locals are terrified and say under hushed tones that the Count is powerless as are his men. They do not feel safe. Also rumors about like this abound...

- An evil mage has turned them into pigs and is slaughtering them.
- The Shadowed Hand is taking them for slave labor.
- An Orcish tribe is at odds with a Goblin tribe and the humans are caught in the cross fire.
- The omens and signs are all about, that something evil is going to happen soon and many more will die.

## Who is the Shadowed Hand?

If you have a member of the player's party that is someone with a shady past or shady skill, they might know of this group. The Shadowed Hand is a dangerous guild of Thieves, Spies for hire, and Contract Killers and has spread far and wide. A tell-tale give away is they often wear something on their arm or hand that has the image of a blacked out hand print.

## Scene of the Crime

If the players check out the original crime scenes they will find that each have been a day apart from each other, never in the same part of the county, and all within 5 miles of the village. It has been families of at least three or more people. In each case the whole family was taken. Not one person left behind.

If any trackers are in the party they can try and see roughly how many people were involved. The tracks are too old to follow and the culprits did a great job covering their tracks. But if the players investigate the scene they can learn three things, it was roughly about eight men, best guess probably Humans in boots, and they were weighed down by armor and weapons.

## Another One Gone!!!

The characters are approached by a man at arms along with a distraught farmer proclaiming "*Another family has been taken!!!*" While on patrol the man at arms discovered the scene of the latest abduction. The

Farmer will say that his family was in their house due to the rain when a group of hooded men came in and knocked him unconscious. He will say he did notice that one of the men was covered in robes but that they briefly unfurled to show a heraldic symbol that belonged to *Sir Edgar Hood*.

**GM NOTE:** This is actually a set up by the cult of (*Insert your own evil deity here*) to throw the pesky heroes off the trail and make it look like maybe there is a connection to the Count Sedgewick.

Characters of the more surly nature may have heard rumors via Streetwise that Sir Hood is in the pocket of the *Shadowed Hand*.

Unfortunately he is also the *Nephew to Count Sedgewick*. He is wealthy beyond his normal means.

Sir Hood actually has his own manor house where he lives like a Bannerette Knight even though he is only a Household Knight. Sir Braidmore will accompany the characters to his house. Some mercenaries tend to stay there as his guests. Many of the townsfolk are suspicious of just what Sir Hood is doing with mercenaries.

## Sir Hood's Manor

Sir Hood's manor house is not far away. By the time the characters arrive there it will be early evening and raining heavily. There are guards standing watch on the grounds. Inside the dining hall, there is a meeting between Sir Hood and several members of the Shadowed Hand. Outside the manor, scouting it out is a lone Goblin scout named *Blik*. In very broken Human speech, he will say he is there looking into the human called Sir Hood. According to Blik, Sir Hood and his warriors have been taking some of the Goblins from his tribe. Blik intends to find out if Sir Hood can be stopped and his tribesmen rescued.

**GM NOTE:** The truth is Sir Hood is abducting Goblins (*but only Goblins*). He and his mercs along with the Shadowed Hand have enslaved the Goblins and forced them to dig in a mine they have claim jumped from a merchant who dealt in iron. It had been manned by five men who are all now slain along with the previous owner, Milton Ferrous, and dumped

deep in the shafts of the mine.

The Shadowed Hand has been the ones to arrange the transport and sale of the goods. They are actually shipping it off to (*Neighboring enemy territory*). The plan is to make as much money off the mine as possible then claim that the dirty Goblins had killed the miners and that Sir Hood and his men had dispatched the goblins. Out in the barn behind the manor there is a batch of fresh goblins (four of them) that the mercs recently rounded up. They are all penned up in a caged cart.

In the end, the characters will learn that as dirty as Sir Hood is, he is not the real culprit in the missing farming families.



## The Real Deal

If the characters attack Blik, he will recognize that they are not part of Sir Hood's warriors and plead for mercy and help in rescuing his tribesmen. If the characters kill Blik, then one of the captured Goblins will speak in broken Human speech that they can help the characters if they spare their lives. Either way one of the Goblins needs to survive to help pass this information to characters.

The Goblins know that a group of shady looking Humans have been skulking around in

the *Forbidden Grotto*. It is in a section of the forest that many avoid due to the creatures that live there, although sometimes Orcs can be found in those parts. The Goblin will offer to lead the characters to the grotto as thanks for stopping Sir Hood from preying on the Goblins.

## The Forbidden Grotto

On their way out there the characters will see signs of an Orcish tribe called the "*Bloodied Stump*". Blik or the other Goblin is familiar with them and hates them. It seems the Goblins and Orcs in the region are at odds with each other.

The Grotto is a wide clearing in the forest surrounding a lone hill. In the side of the hill is a cave opening. The area about the hill is thick with mosses and ferns. Inside the cave opening the characters will find that the walls are covered in crude symbols. Any character with a religious background might recognize that the symbols refer to (*place evil deity here*).

In the ferns right outside the cave, as well as in some of the trees just outside the grotto, there are scouts in hiding ready to defend and alert their masters. The men guarding the grotto are not heavily armed (leather armor, poor quality swords, daggers and bows) but fanatic and loyal to their cause.

Meanwhile, inside the small cave complex beneath the grotto, a group of cultists are getting ready for a massive sacrifice being held by their leader, a woman named *Isolde Pont* (*See write up*). Her plan is to use these sacrifices to summon her master, a demon that would then ravage the village of Slumbering Grove.

## Future Seeds

If anyone searches the cave complex they will find in the remains of a fire a burnt letter and part of a seal that belongs to *Count Richard Ravenswood*. This could spring off into another adventure for the GM to play with.

## NPCs

### Count Richard Ravenwood

This is a neighboring Count who is a serious rival to Count Sedgewick. The two have never liked each other. Seems years ago, when Count Sedgewick was younger he revealed that Richard's Brother Malcolm was corrupt and challenged him in court to trial by combat and won. Since then the Ravenwood family has lived in that shadow of shame.

The new Count Ravenwood has sworn revenge on Baylard. Since then he has thrown in with some dark powers all for the sake of his vengeance. His county is not as wealthy as Sedgewick's but Ravenwood has his own scoundrels who manage to make money for him, in various shady ways.

### Count Baylard Sedgewick

The good Count in his younger days was quite the adventurer. His parent's didn't care for how he would run off to thwart evil or slay a monster but the locals loved him for it and still do. Currently he is a widower and his oldest son was killed some years ago doing much the same heroics his father had done. The Count is currently looking at new prospects for a new wife. Even though he is 55 years old, he is hopeful he can sire more children.

### Sir Alan Braidmore

He is a Bannerette Knight of great distinction. Braidmore and his men do the best they can to keep the county safe, but at times that is a large job for the small force he commands. Sir Braidmore is fiercely loyal to Count Sedgewick and will not stand for any blemish on his lord.

### Sir Edgar Hood

This vile man has always found a way to cheat anyone out of money. He has no honor and uses his relations to Count Sedgewick to get

away with a lot. The Count believes that his nephew is a good boy whom some spread ill rumors about only because of their relations. Sir Hood has secretly allied himself with the Shadowed Hand. In his mind he believes he controls them by what he pays them, but the truth is it's more the other way around.

### Blik

He is a tracker and hunter for his tribe of Goblins and very proud of what he does. Blik is actually fond of humans; he finds them funny in their pink skinned ways. If the characters talk to him, he will go to great lengths to try and help them in hopes they will foster better relations with his people.

### Isolde Pont

She is a former cult leader in the area that everyone believed died two years ago. According to history, a traveling paladin and his companions came through the area and put an end to the vile deeds Isolde and her followers were committing. In the fight, Isolde was run through with a sword and her body lost in a nearby swamp as she attempted to flee.

Unfortunately, survivors of her cult searched for her remains and then performed a ritual to resurrect her. The spell they used was a dark and dangerous one. Unbeknownst to the cultists is that Isolde's body was restored but was instead hosting a minor demon. The demon is pretending to be Isolde in order to deceive the cultists and has plans to bring his own master here and terrorize the region.