

# MINIATURIZED ADVENTURE: THE STOLEN CHILDREN

*The children of Glen-kar are disappearing! Rumours speak of alien woodland creatures seemingly made of briar & thorn, with almond-shaped eyes of a single hue, who've taken the youngsters hostage deep into Sleuth Wood, the feared forest nearby. The townspeople are desperate, and willing to offer everything they have in exchange for professional help. How far will you go to save the little ones, even for such a meager recompense?*

## GM BACKGROUND

- ◆ In a time the Land forgot... **Spinster of Shadows' Threads (she/they)**, the Sovereign of Sleuth Wood, was happy.
- ◆ Before your ancestors were born... Spinster's last partner passed away. She's mourned them ever since.
- ◆ In the past decade... Spinster's last child, **Cacophony of Silence (they/them)** died; they were killed ☐ deliberately or ☐ accidentally by some of Glen-kar's inhabitants.
- ◆ A few moons ago... Spinster sent her subjects to kidnap Glen-kar's mortal children to perform **The Ruinreap Ritual**.
- ◆ Now... The PCs arrive at Glen-kar and get involved, mostly ignorant of this tragedy's origin.

## SETUP QUESTIONS & HOOKS

- ◆ The people of Glen-kar possess no riches, so the reward they offer in exchange for help is barely a decent loot. Ask the PCs as a group: *Why did you decide to help the locals anyway?*
- ◆ One PC should write a positive Relationship with Spinster. Ask them: *What's your Relationship with Spinster? How did you acquire it?*
- ◆ Another PC should write a negative Relationship with Spinster. Ask them: *Why do you keep this grudge? Can it be resolved? If yes, how?*
- ◆ Ask a different PC: *What's your special connection to Sleuth Wood? Why do you have it?*
- ◆ If there's any PC who hasn't answered a question yet, ask them: *Why do you suspect the adults of Glen-kar?*

## NPCs

### AWAKENED TREES (N/A)

*Trees who developed limited sapience. Consciousness can be a blessing—or a curse.*

**Drive** eliminate all disturbances to their eternal lethargy

**Resources** restrain & crush with roots, soporific shade

**Resists** any mundane weapon (except axes)

**DMG** 1d8 #close #hand #piercing **HP** 10/\_\_\_ **Armor** 3 vs axes, resists

other mundane weapons

Conditions & **ESCALATIONS**

☐ Annoyed — **CRUNCH INVADERS HARDER & FASTER**

### HEDGE GUARD (VARIOUS)

*A dozen, highly-trained sylvan elf warriors. Cloaked in nature's green. Swift, deadly & remorseless.*

**Drive** fulfill their oathbound duty to their Sovereign

**Resources** bow & arrow & spear, hit-and-hide tactics

**Resists** any direct attacks

**DMG** 1d6 #close #hand #near **HP** 3/\_\_\_ | **Armor** 1 (camouflaged leathers)

Conditions & **ESCALATIONS**

☐ Exposed — **SHOW THEM WHO'S HUNTER AND WHO'S PREY**

☐ Cornered — **STOP PLAYING & FIGHT FOR YOUR LIVES**

### SPINSTER OF SHADOWS' THREADS (SHE/THEY)

*Sovereign of all the Sleuth Wood. Widow & childless. Impossibly tall with long dark green hair.*

**Drive** find some solace to her sorrow & solitude

**Resources** command blight & blossom, read hearts & minds, terrify with their presence

**Resists** anything “young”, attempts at intimidation or coercion

**DMG** 1d10 #near affects everyone #close to each other **HP** 16/\_\_\_ **Armor**

0

Conditions & **ESCALATIONS**

☐ Angry — **DROWN THE INVADERS UNDER THE GREEN**

☐ Hurt — **UNLEASH THE BLIGHT, CONSEQUENCES BE DAMNED**

☐ Hopeless — **SLOW DOWN FOREST TIME TO A CRAWL**

### WILDHEART WILLINGLY TAMED (HE/THEY)

*First of the Hedge Guard. Birdspeaker & Falconmaster. Looks more bird than elf.*

**Drive** Protect Spinster no matter the cost

**Resources** falcon friends, hawk-o-nine-claws (whip)

**Resists** direct blows (the many-feathered mantle)

**DMG** 1d8 #close #hand **HP** 12/\_\_\_ **Armor** 2 (many-feathered mantle)

Conditions & **ESCALATIONS**

☐ Hopeless — **CONFESS THEIR LOVE FOR SPINSTER, THEN FIGHT TO THE DEATH**

### OTHER NPCs

- ◆ **Kiela der Liadin (human, she/her)** — Town mayor. Succeeded her recently deceased mother. *Drive*: Solve the “children crisis” ASAP [secretly guilty, logical, ruthless]
- ◆ **Riri Grandbrand (halfling, he/him)** — Up-and-coming wood merchant. *Drive*: Get rid of Sleuth Wood to turn Glen-kar into a place of industry [ambitious, generous, paranoid]
- ◆ **Bonlyn Herdovar (dwarf, she/her)** — Local stonemason & priestess of Orius, god of Civilization. *Drive*: Increase her god's influence [caretaker, devoted, manipulative]
- ◆ **Mossbones (goblin, they/them)** — Hermit druid. Lives between mortals & Sleuth Wood. *Drive*: Grow a lasting peace between them [honest, kind, loony]

## THREAT: THE RUINREAP RITUAL

*Spinster ordered their servants to bring her mortal children. She intends to use them as the main component of a dreadful ritual.*

**Goal** (Choose one) — ☐ Isolate Sleuth Wood ☐ Raise a forest army ☐ Unlock wondrous & terrible powers

### ASSETS

*Sabotaged ones impact Developments & Reactions*

☐ Fealty of her remaining Sylvan subjects

☐ Goodwill of the forest's inhabitants

☐ Unswerving loyalty of The Hedge Guard

### DEVELOPMENTS

*Happen in order; skip one or more if necessary*

- ☐ 1. Collect materials—including willing innocent sacrifices
- ☐ 2. Persuade her subjects of the wisdom of her decision
- ☐ 3. Beseech the help of Sleuth Wood's land itself
- ☐ 4. Order Wildheart & the Hedge Guard to protect her while she performs the ritual

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- ☐ 5. Steal the mortal children's ☐ capacity for love ☐ hopes & dreams ☐ lives (keep them forever young)
- ☐ 6. Sacrifice her own lifeforce (Spinster's) to complete the ritual; afterwards she's deady weakened until spring arrives

## REACTIONS

*Activate each as a hard GM move*

- ☐ Alter the layout of Sleuth Wood to magically lose the PCs
- ☐ Bid the **Awakened Trees** to destroy Glen-kar
- ☐ Send **Wildheart** & the **Hedge Guard** to hunt down the PCs

## SCENES

*Can happen in any order, if at all. Fights not included*

- ☐ Meet with Kiela and discuss the terms of the PCs' help
- ☐ Persuade Mossbones to intervene on behalf of the PCs with the forests' inhabitants
- ☐ Discover Riri's plans to get rid of Sleuth Wood
- ☐ Confront Kiela about Cacophony's death
- ☐ Convince Wildheart & The Hedge Guard to stand down
- ☐ Find the stolen children; they've been treated very well
- ☐ Heal Spinster's heart
- ☐ Navigate the dangerous maze of Sleuth Wood
- ☐ Receive Bonlyn's help—and a nudge towards destroying Sleuth Wood

## SECRETS

*Can be revealed whenever it makes sense, if at all*

- ☐ The new town mayor, Kiela, was directly responsible for Cacophony's death. She knows the truth of the matter
- ☐ Spinster's lost in her own sorrow & grief, and she doesn't realize the harm she's causing
- ☐ Riri was the main contributor to the reward. He did so mainly out of interest in professionals getting rid of the Sleuth's ruler
- ☐ Mossbones has a great relationship with the Sleuth Wood's inhabitants, and often goes deep into the haunted forest
- ☐ The stolen children have been convinced by Spinster that their sacrifice (and the following ritual) is for the best

- ☐ Bonlyn secretly consider the children's abductions a chance to increase her god's popularity among the people

## LOCATIONS

### GLEN-KAR

[locals weary of foreigners, materially poor, very old] *Small, humble town on the edge of a haunted forest*

#### Features

- ◆ Alchemical & poisonous supplies at Carrion's Apothecary
- ◆ Free food & lodging for the PCs at The Swift Hunter Inn
- ◆ Stories about times long past at Grandpa's Weavings

#### Related Locations & NPCs

- ◆ *Carrion's Apothecary* [crammed, stifling, strange odors] — **Carrion (tiefling, any/all)** [charming, curious, foolhardy]
- ◆ *The Swift Hunter Inn* [cozy, fur everywhere, warm] — **Myrrei (catfolk, they/she)** [adviser, ex-adventurer, moody]
- ◆ *Weavings* [colorful, ordered, soft] — **Wrexim (gnome, he/him)** [archaic, extremely knowledgeable, cantankerous]

### SLEUTH WOOD

[enchanted, haunted, primeval] *A forest untouched by mortal hands, untamed & wild*

#### Features

- ◆ A verdant maze, hard to navigate even for veteran explorers
- ◆ Primeval animals; stronger, deadlier, and very territorial
- ◆ Green life thought otherwise extinct elsewhere

#### Related Locations & NPCs

- ◆ *Leafy Island* [only friendly place in the forest, middle of a lake, tranquil] — **Mossbones** (see above)
- ◆ *The Shrouded Palace* (see below) — **Spinster** (see above)
- ◆ *Grove of Murmuring Trees* [deathly quiet, unnerving, leaves all over] — **Awakened Trees** (see above)

### THE SHROUDED PALACE

[gloomy, hidden, moonlight & shadows] *A non-built building, magnificent result of tree persuasion & cajoling*

#### Features

- ◆ Concealed dangers everywhere! Sylvans, wild beasts & traps

- ◆ Dungeons with fading prisoners from throughout history
- ◆ Tormented ghosts from better times; they wish to transcend

#### Related Locations & NPCs

- ◆ *Dungeons* [dark, forgotten, foul]
- ◆ *Hall of Song* [discordant, joyous, messy] — The Glen-kar children are here, playing, eating, and somehow sleeping
- ◆ *Standing Stones* [lit by dying sun wells, sylvan people in trance, archaic stones] — **Spinster** (see above)

## REWARDS

A handful of assorted coins and a tiny, beautifully intricate black wooden box worth 1 Treasure (it contains Cacophony's crystal)

### HAWK-O'-NINE-CLAWS

*Whip with nine lashes that finish in claws of great birds, killed by careless mortal hands*

When you **TRADES BLOWS** with the *hawk*, you can divide your DMG with up to nine different targets. ✕On a 10+, you can choose to restrain and trap up to nine different targets instead.

### MANY-FEATHERED MANTLE

*Cloak made shed feathers collected over countless seasons*

You can activate the mantle to shapeshift into a giant eagle; the effect lasts for a scene. When you return to your natural form, mark a Condition.

### UR-SPRIG OF THE GREEN

*Timeworn, seemingly mundane twig freely given by one of the first treants*

You can activate the *ur-sprig* to **PULL the STRINGS+WIS** of the unseen spirits of nature to manifest and do your bidding. Each time beyond the first, you need to mark a Condition to activate the *ur-sprig*.