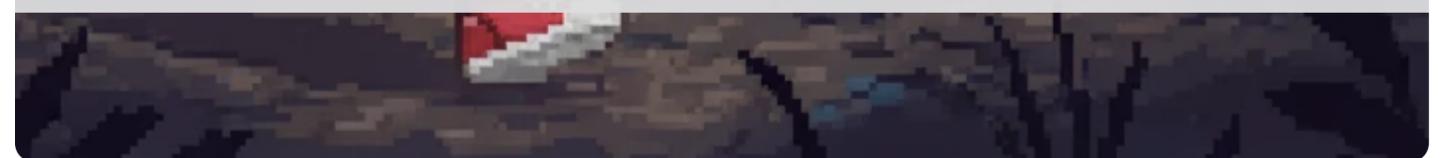




The Whispering Woods: Shadow of the Faceless Man

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Leo and his three closest friends gather at the edge of the dense Blackwood Forest as the sun dips below the horizon. They clutch a crumpled piece of paper detailing a ritual to summon the legendary Tall Man, thinking it is nothing more than a thrilling game.



Under the pale light of a rising moon, the group carves strange symbols into the bark of an ancient oak tree. They recite the incantation with nervous giggles, unaware that the shadows around them are beginning to stretch and twist unnaturally.



Days later, the laughter fades when Sam notices a tall, faceless figure standing perfectly still in the flickering static of his bedroom television. By morning, his room is empty, leaving behind only a single, frantic drawing of a man in a black suit.



Leo, Chloe, and Jax return to the woods to search for their missing friend, their flashlights cutting through a fog that feels impossibly thick. The forest is eerily silent, as if every bird and insect has fled from an unseen presence lurking in the dark.



On her way home from the search, Chloe feels a sudden, bone-chilling cold and the distinct sensation of many eyes watching her from the shadows. She turns to see a towering figure with impossibly long limbs reaching out from behind a streetlamp before she vanishes into thin air.



Leo and Jax find Chloe's discarded phone in the middle of the sidewalk, its screen shattered and glowing with a distorted image. The realization hits them like a physical blow that the legend they invoked is real and it is coming for them all.



Panic sets in as Jax tries to flee the town, but the trees of Blackwood Forest seem to sprout from every alleyway and corner he turns. He is cornered in a dead-end street by long, black tendrils that emerge from the darkness like ink in water.



Terrified and alone, Leo realizes the only way to stop the nightmare is to return to the original ritual site and destroy the symbols. He stumbles through the undergrowth, the air vibrating with a low, rhythmic hum that makes his head throb.



The Slenderman finally reveals himself fully, standing at the center of the clearing with his faceless head tilted toward Leo. Static fills Leo's vision and his ears ring with a deafening screech as the entity steps out of the shadows and into the moonlight.



When the sun rises, the forest is peaceful once more, but the four teenagers are nowhere to be found. The wind rustles the pages of the discarded ritual book, revealing a new, hand-drawn illustration of four figures trapped forever within the dark, sprawling woods.