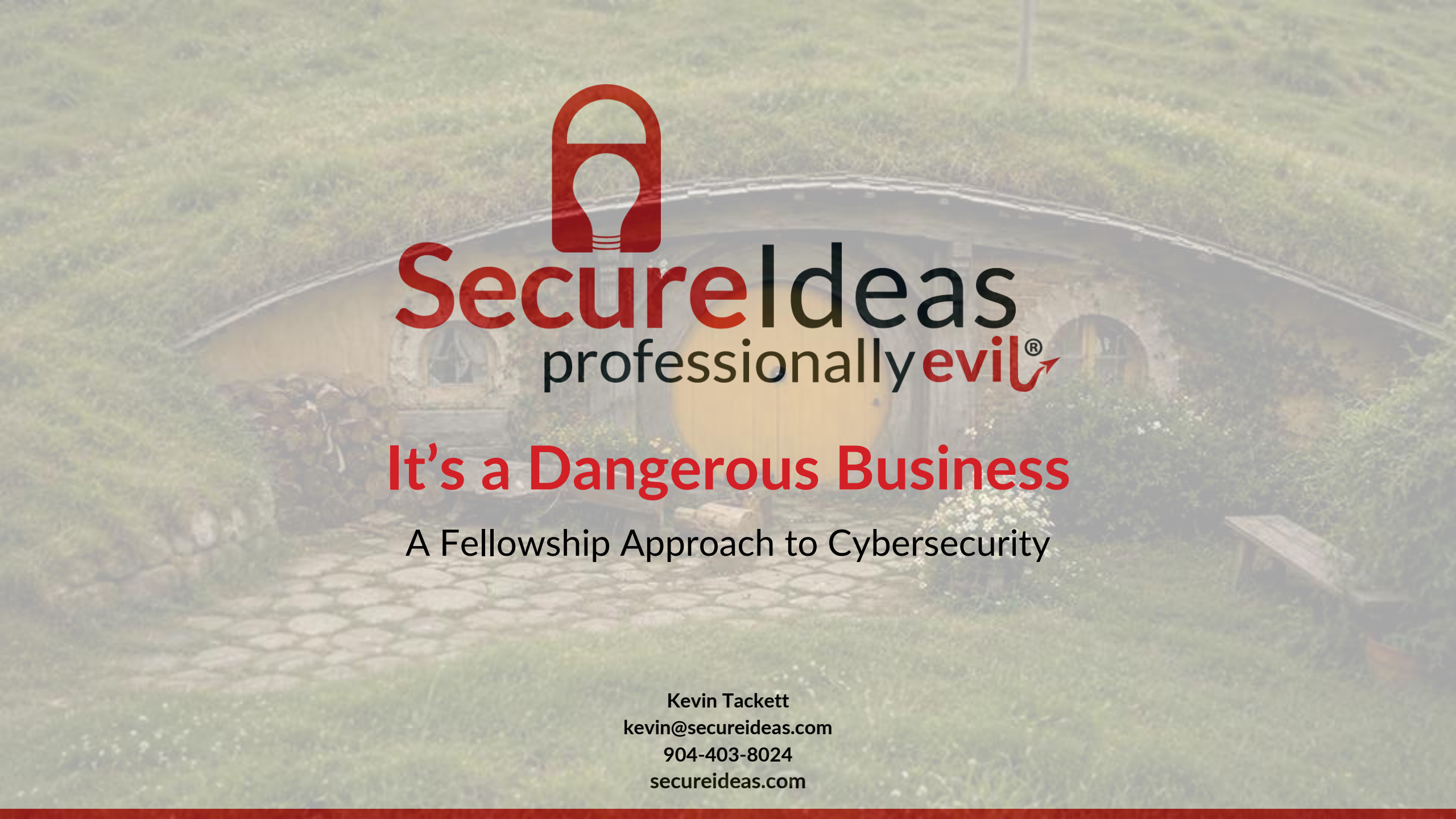


It's a Dangerous Business

A Fellowship Approach to Cybersecurity

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Agenda

- There Lived a Hobbit
- A Wizard is Never Late
- Nine Companions
- Glad You're with Me, Sam
- Even the Wise Can't See All Ends
- The Road Goes Ever On

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Kevin Tackett
CEO

- Secure Ideas, LLC
  - Founded in 2010
- IANS Faculty member
  - Since 2011
- Open-Source Fanatic
  - OWASP Leader
  - Project Builder and Founder
- Speaker, Course Instructor, Author
  - Since 1991
  - SANS, ISC2, OWASP, DEF CON, Blackhat, etc.
- Former Board Member
  - OWASP
  - BsidesJax

- Other Interests
  - Warhammer (40K and AoS)
  - Woodworking
  - Husband and Father

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There Lived a Hobbit

- Home is Comfortable
- Surrounded by our things
- Leaving is hard

We are All Shire-born

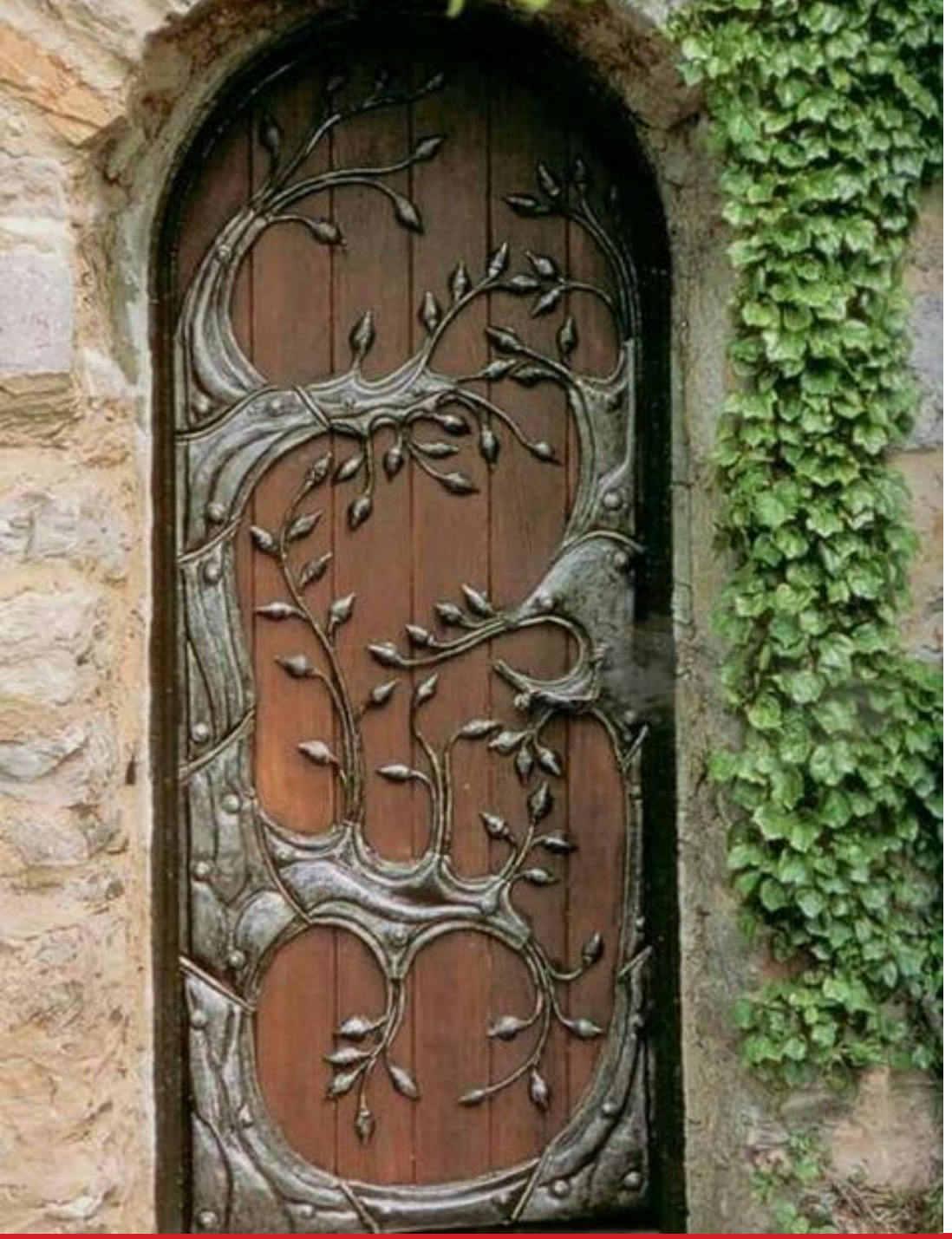
- We have a past
  - Our lives
  - Our experiences
- Backgrounds drive skills
  - Work history
  - Hobbies
  - Education



The Uncomfort

- We have all been out of our depth
  - First Conference?
  - First security role?
  - First security test?
- Many of us are uncomfortable
  - In our skin
  - In groups
  - Etc…





Front Door Problem

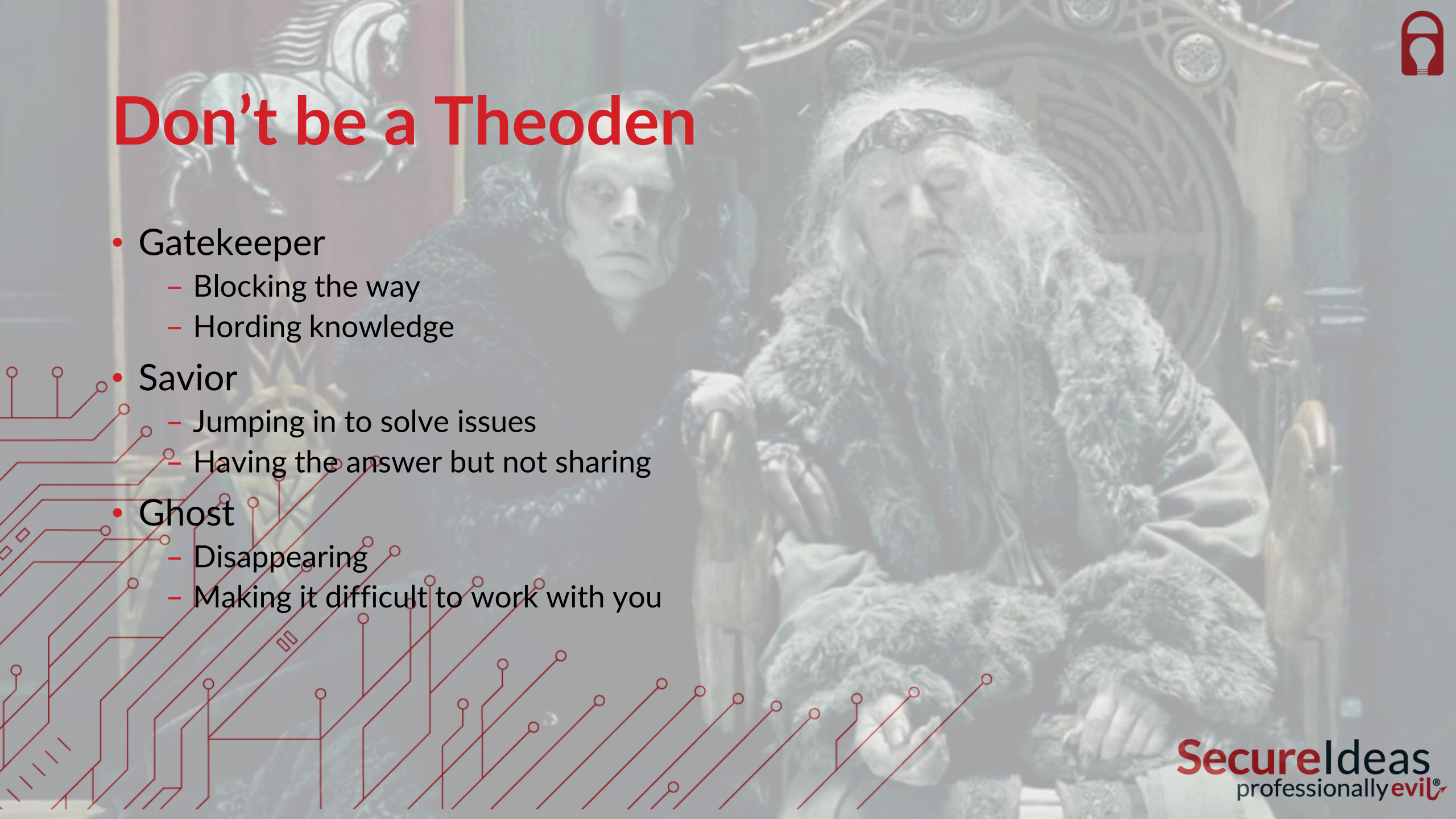
- Entry-level
  - Not many real ones
- Jargon and acronyms
  - TLA's
- Gatekeeping
  - "Google It-itis"
- Tutorials and Talks
  - Starting on step 10

A Wizard is Never Late

- Mentoring is critical
  - Guidance
- But how do we do it right?



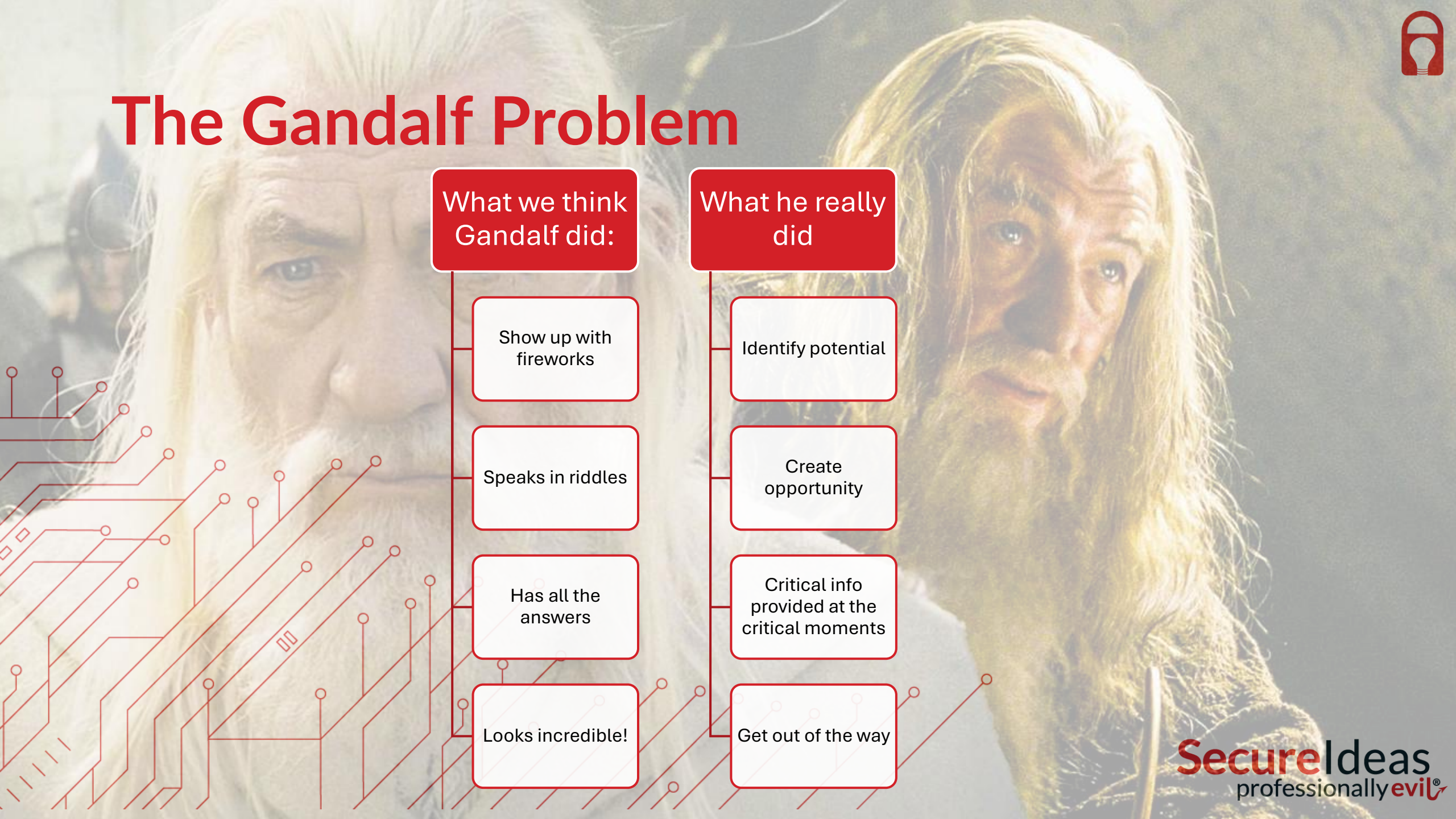
Don’t be a Theoden



- Gatekeeper
  - Blocking the way
  - Hording knowledge
- Savior
  - Jumping in to solve issues
  - Having the answer but not sharing
- Ghost
  - Disappearing
  - Making it difficult to work with you

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The Gandalf Problem



What we think Gandalf did:	What he really did
Show up with fireworks	Identify potential
Speaks in riddles	Create opportunity
Has all the answers	Critical info provided at the critical moments
Looks incredible!	Get out of the way

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Being Gandalf

- Light the path
- Open doors and paths
- Trust people to walk the road
- Occasionally drop fire on a Balrog



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Nine Companions, So Be It

- Council of Elrond built a community
  - A small one ☺
- Not only based on typical metrics
  - Experience
  - References
  - Skills



Least Qualified were Essential



- Sam saved the day
- Merry and Pippin marched the Ents
- Rohan never rides without the search

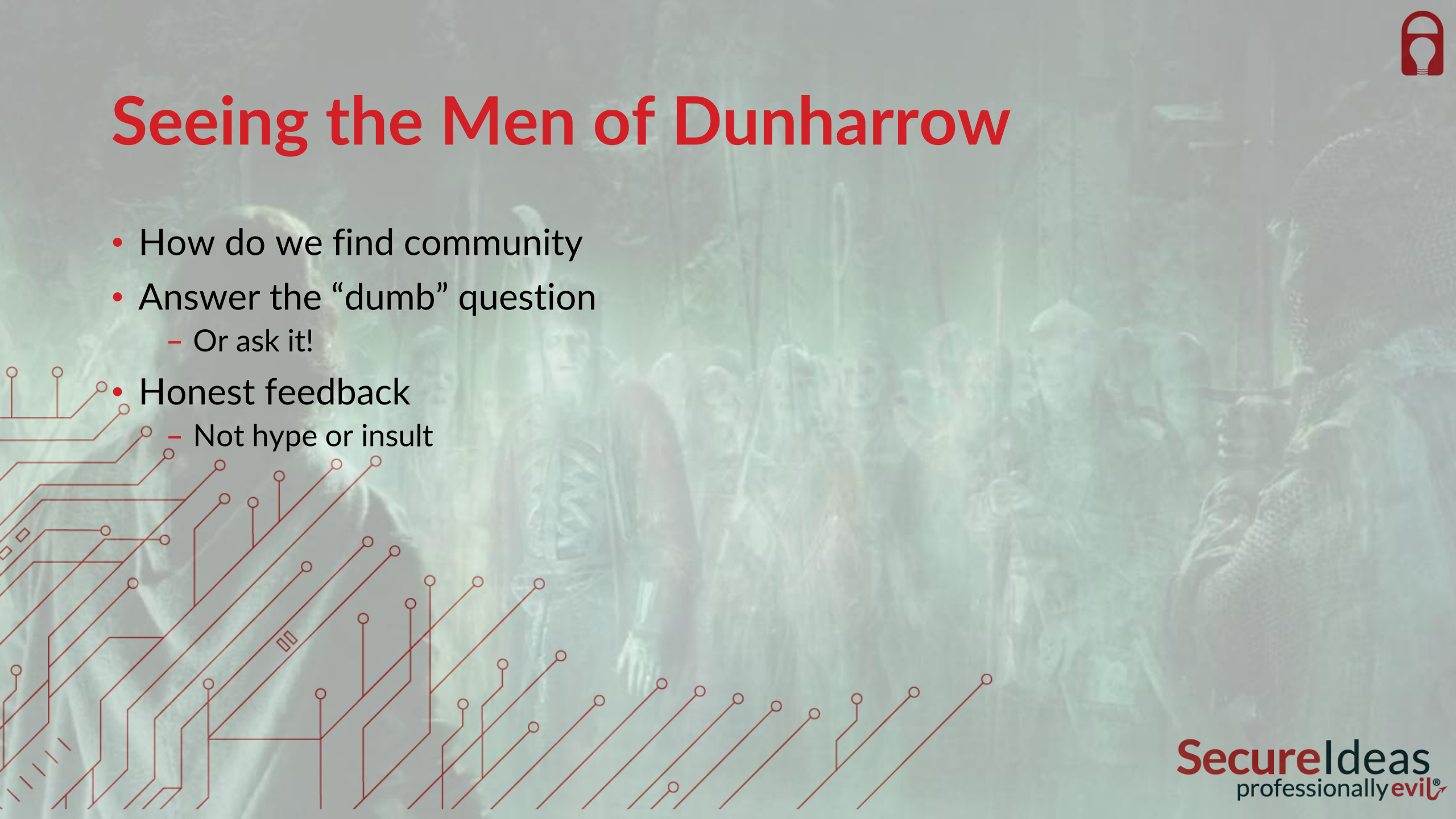
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I'm Glad You're With Me, Sam

- Quiet moments are most important
  - Not the hacking or the Black Gate
- Big events matter
  - but are built on the small
- Community is not networking
  - Relational interactions matter more
  - Networking is transactional
- The "Sam" Principle
  - He didn't carry the ring
  - Carried the rest
- Walk with people



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Seeing the Men of Dunharrow

- How do we find community
- Answer the “dumb” question
  - Or ask it!
- Honest feedback
  - Not hype or insult

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Even the Wise Cannot See All Ends

- No one talks about Boromir
  - Complicated and uncomfortable
- Caused what he was trying to prevent
  - Ended up defending Merry and Pippin



What Boromir Teaches

- Mission has a cost
- Good intentions aren't enough
- Single failure is not the end
- What you do when you break matters



Our Boromir Moments

- Mentors and Mentees Burning Out
- Communities becoming Cliques
- Inclusion on stage
- Gatekeeping unintentionally
  - Making “sure” they are ready



Fellowship Fractured

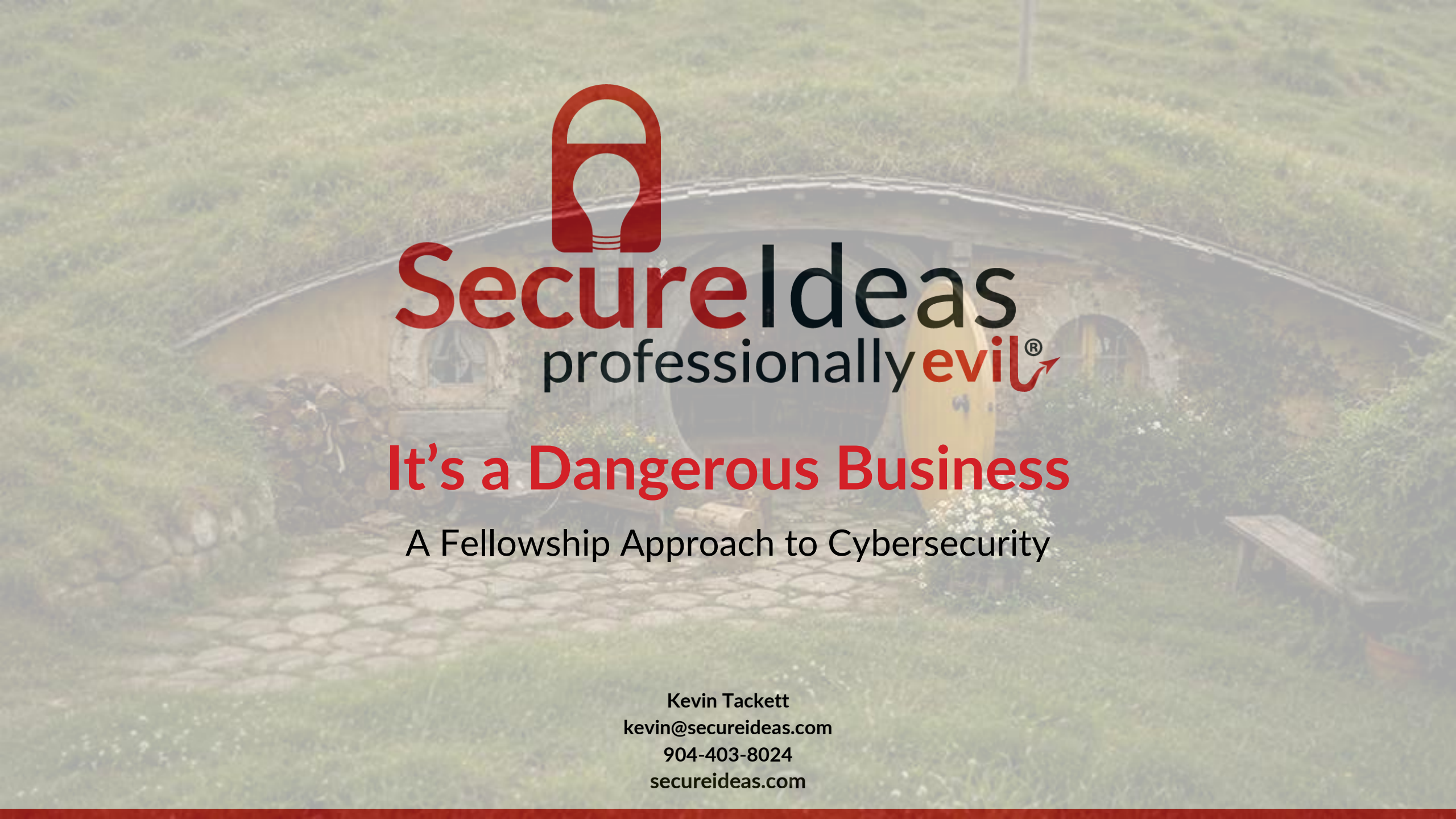
- The nine never walked together again
- Mission Continued
- Smaller groups
- New alliances



The Road Goes Ever On

It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to.





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