

CANDLEWOOD HOLLOW-PROLOGUE SCENE

FADE IN:

EXT. A STORYBOOK FLIPS OPEN TO A PICTURE OF A BUCOLIC FAIRYTALE VILLAGE. THE OPPOSITE PAGE IS INITIALLY BLANK, BUT PROSE APPEARS IN FLOURISHED SCRIPT AS THE NARRATION UNFOLDS.

NARRATOR

Once upon a time, nestled deep in the heart of a shadow-steeped woodland, lay the quaint and curious town of Candlewood Hollow. A wholesome huddle of thatched cottages and cobblestone paths, it was the very last place one might expect an adventure to begin. But then, those are precisely the conditions in which the best stories unfold: in unexpected places, under unexpected circumstances, undertaken by the most unexpected of heroes...

THE PAGE FLIPS.

INT. THE ILLUSTRATION DEPICTS A CHILD'S BEDROOM. SCRIBBLED PAINTINGS HANG FROM THE WALLS AND TOYS LITTER THE FLOOR. IN THE FOREGROUND, A SHADOWY FIGURE TIDIES A SHELF. IN THE BACKGROUND, A LITTLE FACE PEEKS OUT FROM THE BLANKETS SWADDLED ATOP THE BED.

NARRATOR

It was a night like any other—quiet to the point of dreary, peaceful to the point of droll. Not a single raindrop pattered on the cottage roof. Not a sparrow twittered on the windowsill. Not a soul stirred in the streets beyond. Taylor whiled away the evening by half-heartedly tidying an endless mess of toys as (they/she/he) awaited the inevitable summons from a nearby bundle of blankets.

BRIAR

Taylor? I'm s-scared.

TAYLOR

Option 1	Option 2
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Pleased to meet you, Scared. I'm Taylor Buttonsworth, renowned clothier and greatest hero in all the realm. (Begin Tutorial.)	You're not scared so much as bored. Get some rest so I can do the same. (Skip Tutorial.)
Scene continues below	NARRATOR: The blanket bundle threw itself to the bed, huffing as it rolled to face the wall. BRIAR: I wish Ma and Pa were still here. NARRATOR: Guilt weighed on Taylor as (they/she/he) plucked a plush bear from the floor and set it on the pillow beside Briar. TAYLOR: Me too.
Flip Page	Skip to Chapter 1

THE PAGE FLIPS

INT. THE ILLUSTRATION SHOWS THE SHADOWY FIGURE FROM BEFORE
SITTING ON THE EDGE OF THE BED WHILE A LITTLE GIRL POINTS TOWARD
THE NEARBY CLOSET. A PAIR OF GLEAMING EYES PEER OUT FROM BETWEEN

THE GARMENTS.

NARRATOR

Taylor sat on the edge of the bed, where it had begun to flatten from frequent use as a perch. (They/She/He) hadn't meant for story time to become a nightly tradition, but (they/she/he) imagined most traditions began as chance occurrences which—directed by necessity, convenience, or the stubborn will of a child—inevitably hardened into habits.

BRIAR

Thank goodness you're here, kind hero!

BRIAR CONT'D

A merciless tyrant decreed that I'm to be in bed by sundown, but I can't possibly sleep with a monster watching from the closet.

NARRATOR

Taylor chose to ignore the "tyrant" comment, (their/her/his) gaze flicking to the closet in question. Only a clash of garish garments stared back.

TAYLOR

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
You're in luck! I've been aching for a demon to dethrone, a specter to slay, a beast to behead...	For the last time, that's not a monster. It's a mink tippet, and it's fabulous!	If there were such things as monsters, they'd choose loftier lairs than this.
BRIAR: It's not a demon,	BRIAR: That scarf is	BRIAR: If there's no such

nor a specter, nor a beast, but a troll! Just like the one you slew on the Windydale Moors.	nearly as horrid as the troll hiding behind it. Good thing this isn't the first such foe you've faced!	thing as monsters, what about the banshee you banished or the troll you slew?
Positive Effect	Positive Effect	Negative Effect

NARRATOR

A bittersweet ache blossomed in Taylor's chest. The Windydale Troll was the first story (they'd/she'd/he'd) woven for Briar, a desperate attempt to dry her tears where handkerchiefs had failed.

TAYLOR

Another troll, you say? If the past is any indication, this will be a simple task.

BRIAR

Not so simple it can be accomplished without the help of a squire!

NARRATOR

Briar burst from her blanket cocoon wearing the knight costume she'd begged Taylor to make for her. She pulled a crumpled paper from her satchel and handed it to Taylor, who unfolded it to find a crude sketch of the room.

TAYLOR

We don't need a map, Briar. I can

see your closet from here.

BRIAR

Not closet, *Monster Hideout*. And
we can't very well head into
battle unarmed!

BRIAR CONT'D

The treasure trove to the east
should have some weapons we can
use.

INT. A PAPER UNFOLDS OVER THE BOOK, REVEALING A CHILDISH SKETCH
OF THE ROOM. THE LOCATION NAMES ARE ADORABLY MISSPELLED (TREZURE
TROVE, MUNSTER HYDOUT, ETC.)

BEGIN TUTORIAL LEVEL.