

Thornbrine

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Plot Overview

In Thornbrine, the protagonist washes up on a beach with bruises around their neck and no memories. Over the next few days players can explore a spooky manor on an island, get to know its curious inhabitants, and solve a century old mystery. However, they have a limited time before their past catches up with them.

Setting

Thornbrine begins on the grey shores of Howling Isle. Howling Isle is home to crumbling cliffs, freezing waters, thick fog and thicker forests; as well as the ancient and towering Thornbrine Manor. This is where the story takes place. For as long as anyone can remember, Thornbrine Manor has been under the care and ownership of Lady Asiya. Boats are sent out once a month for supplies, but otherwise the island is isolated from the outside world. A solitary pillar on the ocean. Unfortunately, the player arrives while the boats are still out, and thus has no way home for the next week.

The Protagonist

Upon the beginning of the story, the protagonist suffers a rude awakening on the shore of a beach. They appear to have survived an attempt on their life, and as a result cannot recall anything about themselves. Trapped on an island with no one they can truly trust, they must use their wits to survive and figure out what happened to them.

The protagonist's name and pronouns can be customized at the beginning of the story. They can be curt, quiet, charming, or anything else the player wishes for them to be. They can spend the entire story just chatting with different people, or they can dedicate their time to exploring the manor. The choice is in the player's hands.

Lady Asiya

The enigmatic lady of the manor.

Her age is uncertain. There are portraits of her predecessors hanging in the halls, but not even the oldest honored guests of Thornbrine Manor can recall them. So far as anyone is aware, Lady Asiya has always been its sole custodian.

When the protagonist arrives at her front door coughing up sea water, she graciously offers to let them stay in her manor until they recover. Is this an act of kindness, or malice? Her motives are difficult to ascertain, but over the course of the story the player can attempt to unravel them through candlelit dinners and walks about the grounds.

Sophus

Years ago, a scholar came to visit Thornbrine Manor seeking a particular tome. They spent a week scouring the library. While they never found the book they sought, the shelves still held a good many rare and unusual volumes, worthy of scholar's curiosity. At the end of the week they begged Lady Asiya for a chance to stay longer and read just one page more. She acquiesced. One more page turned into one more chapter, which turned into one more book and then one more volume of a series. Eventually her ladyship took pity and offered this scholar a permanent position as the librarian. They aren't particularly good at their job, but no other applicants have arrived to take their position, so the manor is stuck with a disorganized prickly insomniac teetering about the aisles of the library.

As of the beginning of the story, Sophus has gone three days without sleep. The protagonist finds them passed out on the floor of the library with their face resting on an open book. Over the next five days the player can be roped into the librarian's search for the key to eternal life.

What's-his-name

Oh. Um. This is awkward. This man claims to know the protagonist, but they cannot for the life of themselves recall anything about him. On account of the amnesia. Most would perhaps take pity on someone who recently forgot everything, but not this lovely fellow. No, he insists that the player should remember him somehow. He is coincidentally on the island for business (that he will not explain) at the beginning of the story.

Was he a friend? An acquaintance? A bitter rival? Who knows! Certainly not the poor unfortunate soul who washed up on a beach half dead not long ago. Over the course of the story the player can attempt to figure out where on earth they met this man, and what he is to them.

Lykke

There are a variety of responses to have in a situation like the player's. Some take pity. Some refuse to. Lykke offers a bit of a mixture. A long-honored guest of the castle and a merchant by trade, she bargains with the player.

She understands that any money the player may have had surely washed away in their near-death experience, but the whole situation amuses her, so she proposes a bartering system instead. Stories for useful items. In exchange for a tale, she offers things like torches that won't blow out, a good knife for safety, and potions of invisibility. The more the player learns about the castle, the more they can trade with Lykke.

Pridbor

Silhouettes at the end of long hallways, howling heard in the attic, candles going out abruptly. With most old manors, this could be chalked up to paranoia or faults with the building, but Thornbrine Manor really is haunted.

Pridbor died 100 years ago and has since wandered these dark and moody halls. Like the player, he is wet, pathetic, and has no idea what happened to him. He clearly has unresolved business. His life and death, while the least of the player's worries, are the center of a mystery spanning decades.

Gossamer

A talking cat? The protagonist has clearly lost their marbles. They hit their head at some point while they were being tossed about the waves, and now they've met a cat that talks.

Gossamer has a great many opinions to share, some of which are even useful. She offers helpful tips about the island and the manor when she isn't laughing at the player's plight.