

Forestry
Episode #101
"INTO THE WOODS"
by
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SAMPLE SCREENPLAY

FORESTRY

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EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

It's dark, the only light coming from the quarter moon as it slowly rises over a sinister, densely packed forest.

A wolf howls in the distance, and a flock of birds fly out from the trees, startled by--

EXT. LYCANLIEU FOREST - NIGHT

--old, worn sneakers pounding on the forest floor. These shoes weren't made for running, but right now, that's all they're able to do.

EXT. LYCANLIEU - NIGHT

A battered old truck pulls up at the edge of the forest, and as the driver-side door opens, a dozen more cars arrive behind it.

EXT. LYCANLIEU FOREST - NIGHT

The shoes keep pounding as their wearer - 17-year-old LUCAS BLAKESLEY - runs for his life.

His jeans are covered in dirt, his hair is full of leaves, and his shirt is so torn that it looks more like a sash. There are two old, thin scars across his chest.

EXT. LYCANLIEU - NIGHT

A man walks past a sign for the **Lycanlieu National Forest**, a CROSSBOW held casually at his side.

EXT. LYCANLIEU FOREST - NIGHT

Lucas chances a look behind him as he runs.

It's too dark to see anything.

His foot catches a large tree root in his path, and he falls to the ground with a groan.

7 **EXT. LYCANLIEU - NIGHT**

7

The man with the crossbow - 42-year-old RANDOLPH ORION - turns to address the crowd behind him. He's an intimidating man covered in old scars, and the moment he turns, everyone stops to listen.

RANDOLPH
Everyone spread out. There's a lot of ground to cover. But make sure you're never alone.

He turns back towards the forest.

RANDOLPH (CONT'D)
You never quite know what these things are capable of.

8 **EXT. LYCANLIEU FOREST - NIGHT**

8

Lucas picks himself off the ground, and looks down at his hands. They're scratched and bloody from the fall.

He nervously wipes his hands on his jeans, and when he looks at them again, the scratches have almost fully HEALED.

Lucas slumps against a nearby tree and lets out a shaky breath, still staring at his hands in disbelief.

He glances down to the side of his abdomen, at a spot that his shirt is still managing to cover.

Suddenly, faster than humanly possible, he reaches up and grabs an ARROW out of the air, just as it's about to embed itself in his skull. He goes cross-eyed looking at it in shock.

Footsteps in the distance draw his attention, and he notices the faint glow of a dozen torches steadily approaching.

Lucas throws the arrow to the ground, and runs deeper into the forest.

9 **EXT. BELDAMBY - NIGHT**

9

There's a heavy thud as 17-year-old MINERVA TRIGGS drops a small backpack on the ground, nearly crushing some vibrant flowers in the process.

She winces.

MINERVA
Sorry!

She nudges the bag further away from the flowers. The flowers don't respond.

Minerva, satisfied, puts an old lantern down on the ground, before digging through the bag's many pockets.

MINERVA (CONT'D)

I know they're in here somewhere...

Minerva looks... pretty strange for a teenager. Her wild hair is kept out of her face with a crown of flowers, her tights are on inside-out under her sunflower overalls, and her eyes are two different colours - one brown, one green.

MINERVA (CONT'D)

Ah-ha!

Minerva triumphantly pulls her hand out of the bag, holding a STRING OF RED BERRIES. She ties them around her neck like a necklace.

MINERVA (CONT'D)

Okay, I think I'm all set.

She picks up her lantern and her bag, and looks out into the woods ahead of her.

The woods are enchanting. The trees are old and beautiful, the flowers are thriving, and there are bushes full of golden fruit.

A old wooden sign hanging from a nearby tree reads:

**Welcome to the Hidden Woods
Do not eat the fruit
Never give them your name
They cannot lie, but tricks are their specialty
Enter at your own risk**

Minerva looks at the sign, takes a deep breath, starts walking.

10 **EXT. THE HIDDEN WOODS - NIGHT**

10

If the woods looked beautiful from the outside, it's nothing compared to what lies within.

Minerva barely knows where to look as she passes flowers that glow in the moonlight, perfect circles of mushrooms, animals that gather to watch her as she walks, and dozens more enchanting sights.

A particularly vibrant flower catches her attention, and she starts to move towards it, but stops herself.

MINERVA

Don't get distracted. You have a
job to do.

Minerva keeps walking past the flower, and as she does, it
sags a little, as if disappointed.

As she walks, Minerva keeps her eyes firmly ahead, ignoring
the beauty around her as best she can.

Soon she finds her path blocked by a branch, small enough to
push to the side, but with enough leaves to completely
obscure the path ahead of her.

It almost looks like a door.

Minerva considers it for a moment, before pushing through it.

Her breath catches.

MINERVA (CONT'D)

Wow.

On the other side of the branch is a perfectly round
clearing, with a small river flowing through it. The canopy
stops at the edges of the clearing, leaving room for the
moonlight to shine down and make the river sparkle.

It's beautiful.

Minerva can't resist.

MINERVA (CONT'D)

Maybe just a small break...

She rushes over to a large rock near the edge of the river,
dropping her bag and desperately digging through it.

She quickly finds what she's looking for - an old, well-loved
sketchbook - and sits on the rock. She pulls a pencil out
from behind her ear, opens her sketchbook, and starts to
draw.

She doesn't notice when the water begins to bubble.

An old leather storybook with Once Upon a Time written on the
cover sits under a single spotlight. The book opens to a
story written in intricate handwriting, accompanied by a
painting of a king and queen greeting their adoring citizens
from the tower of their castle.

The story reads:

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Once upon a time, there was a glorious kingdom, run by a valiant king and his beautiful queen. Life could not have been better for the citizens, and all were happy.

The page turns to show the kingdom on fire, shrouded in the shadow of a dragon.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Until one day, a vicious dragon descended upon the kingdom, taking livestock, riches--

The page turns to show the king holding the lifeless body of the queen.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--and the life of the queen, before retreating into the Enchanted Woods.

The page turns. The king is ordering a group of knights into the woods.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The king was furious. He ordered his best knights after the beast, demanding that they bring him its head.

The page turns. A knight is setting out into the forest, with an adoring crowd behind him to see him off.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Knight after knight ventured into the woods, seeking the glory that would come with being the knight to finally slay the dragon.

The page turns. The adoring crowd mourns.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

None were ever seen again.

The page turns. A new knight kneels before the king.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Then, one day, a new knight emerged. She knew that she would be the one to slay the beast, and finally bring peace to the kingdom.

The page turns. The knight rides into the woods, holding her sword aloft.

11

CHARLOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And so, the mighty hero embarked on
a journey to face the fearsome
beast! With nothing but her sword
and her wits, she--

The story stops there, with a line across the rest of the
page, as if the author was nudged while they were writing.

12

EXT. THE ENCHANTED WOODS - NIGHT

12

16-year-old CHARLOTTE EVERETT glares down at her horse,
ADALWIN. In one hand she holds a fiery torch, in the other, a
quill. The storybook rests on her knees.

CHARLOTTE
Careful, Adalwin. It is not easy to
write atop a horse.

Adalwin snorts indignantly. Charlotte rolls her eyes and pats
the side of his neck.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
If you had let me finish, you would
know that I was just about to
mention my noble steed. There would
have been an entire page dedicated
to your glory! Two, even!

Adalwin looks at her hopefully, and she grins back.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
However, that will have to wait.
There is no use in documenting our
victory before the battle has even
begun!

Adalwin looks disappointed as Charlotte puts the storybook
and the quill back into her saddlebag.

Charlotte, with her proud demeanour, light armour, and long
hair pulled back in a sensible braid, looks every part the
brave knight. She pulls out her sword, and holds it
triumphantly.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Come now, Adalwin. Let us find the
beast so that we may become heroes!

Adalwin whinnies, and the two ride deeper into the woods.

13 **INT. STARK HOME - CADEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

13

A heavy boot stomps down on a chair as someone ties the laces.

A sturdy looking backpack is zipped up and thrown over one shoulder.

A torch is smacked against the palm of a hand until it flickers to life.

The bedroom window slides open, and a shadowy figure slips out into the night.

14 **EXT. KELL - NIGHT**

14

The wheels of a bike spin so fast that they blur, as the figure rides through the streets of the quiet town of Kell, illuminated only by flickering street lights and the moon above them.

15 **EXT. KELL - NIGHT**

15

The bike skids to a halt as the figure reaches the edge of the forest.

A sign off to the side reads:

Kell Preserve

--but several layers of graffiti seem to prefer the name:

Hell Preserve

The figure jumps off the bike before it has fully come to a stop, and wheels it over to a large bush. They shove the bike behind the bush, trying to hide it as much as possible.

There's something else hidden in the bush. The figure grabs it.

A WOODEN BASEBALL BAT FULL OF NAILS swings up to rest against the shoulder of 16-year-old CADEN STARK, who blows a perfect bubblegum bubble as they look out into the ominous forest ahead of them.

CADEN

(determined)

Alright, lets do this.

They head into the forest, stepping over years of old police tape, barbed wire, and signs saying DO NOT ENTER.

16

EXT. HELL PRESERVE - CONTINUOUS

16

Hell Preserve is a place deserving of the nickname. The trees look like they might just reach out and grab you, and despite the stillness, it feels as though someone is lurking in the shadows, watching.

Caden tries to appear like none of this phases them as they walk through the trees, but it's hard to be brave in a place like this.

They stop as they come to a small clearing - really nothing more than a patch of dirt in a circle of trees.

They dig into their jacket pocket and pull out a photo of a lone tent in a forest clearing.

The tent is covered in blood.

Caden compares the clearing in front of them to the clearing in the photo, but they look completely different.

Caden huffs and walks out into the clearing, but freezes as the trees rustle behind them.

They whip back around, holding their bat at the ready.

CADEN

Who's out there? Show yourself!

Nothing.

Caden stares out into the forest, then slowly lowers their bat.

CADEN (CONT'D)

(tentative)

Yeah... that's what I thought.

They glance around, trying to hide their nerves, as they back up towards the centre of the clearing.

Caden lets out a breath and shakes themselves out of their fear.

CADEN (CONT'D)

(to themselves)

There's nothing out there but
spooky trees and some wind. Snap
out of it.

They look down at the ground, and use their bat to make a large X in the dirt.

They look back up at the trees surrounding them.

CADEN (CONT'D)

(quiet)

I'm coming for you, Matt.

They swing the bat back over their shoulder, and stalk further into the woods, failing to notice the GLOWING EYES that watch them through the trees.

END OF SAMPLE