

Script for the branching dialogue tree
from chapter three of A Warriner to Protect Her

In chapter three Violet "Letty" Dunston and Jack Warriner speak to each other at length for the first time. Jack is softly interrogating her about how and why she ended up on the road in the middle of the night. Letty is strategically answering him while trying to figure out his motives, if he's trustworthy, and who his employer might be. There is also the first bit of their romance.

Prior to this scene the story lays out fairly linearly with the majority being a very short scene with Letty escaping from the Earl and then the Warriner brother discussing what to do about this unconscious girl that Jack brought home. The previous conversations being little more than confused questions.

This scene gives us the opportunity to lay the groundwork for a player's choice to be assertive or stay quiet in response to the questions. The whole scene can easily play out with the player giving basically zero active choices or with them giving more information than what was written in the original book. As well as give us room to set up call back narrative reminders and implement paid opportunities for future premium content, in whichever form is correct.

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**INT. LETTY'S ROOM/GUEST BEDCHAMBER AT MARKHAM MANOR -
DAY**

TITLE: One month and one day remaining...

The bedchamber is large and simply decorated. A plain, mahogany dressing table against one wall and a matching, and an equally enormous wardrobe on the opposite one. The small nightstand and the bedstead are the only other pieces of furniture. The heavy curtains at the leaded windows hung open. The steady patter of raindrops on the glass suggested that the dreadful weather had not improved at all. The window was closed, but not barred or locked.

LETTY is lying in bed. The sensation of falling and is woken with a start. She tries to focus in the daylight, she sees two pairs of identical blue eyes were staring down at her. Frightened, she had intended to scream

LETTY (V.O.)
(Soft mutters)
Who... are these...

JOE
(Kindly)
Shh... Everything is all right.
You are safe here.

She could make out the blurry edges of the speaker's face. Dark hair. Joe is smiling

JACK and JOE: the same dark hair, the same deep blue eyes, definitely related.

JACK is frowning but she remembers those eyes.

JOE
My brother rescued you from the road, you have had a bit of a fever and you are badly bruised, but miraculously you have made a very fast and splendid recovery.

JOE (CONT'D)
What you need to do now is rest. Give your body time to heal. In a few days, you will be as fit as a fiddle.

Letty's mouth feels so woolly, her tongue would not move.

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LETTY
(Unable to speak)

Her eyes flick to the frowning man and he continued to frown, until the smiling man next to him gave him a sharp nudge in the ribs and he forced himself to smile. It did not touch his eyes.

Letty could not quite make out whether the emotion swirling in those fathomless blue depths was concern or annoyance.

JACK
(Stern)
Why were you tied up and wandering
in the woods?

JOE
Leave her be, Jack. You can
interrogate the poor girl once she
is better.

JACK
(Indignant)
Interrogate??

LETTY (V.O.)
Are these men also enemies? I do
not recognize either of them as my
uncle's or the Earl of
Bainbridge's men

LETTY (V.O. CONT'D)
That doesn't mean they are not in
their employ.

A spoon being pressed against her lips and she recognizes the bitter taste of the liquid. Laudanum. The exact same drug her uncle had forced down her throat before he had handed her over to Bainbridge. Letty struggles. She is powerless to stop.

JOE
Here, Letty, take this medicine.
It will help you to sleep.

JACK
(Commanding)
Stop it, Joe. If she doesn't want
it, you shouldn't force it on her

The young man instantly withdrew

JOE
(CONCERNED)
I don't want her to be in pain,
Jack. She needs to sleep.

Enough drops of the liquid had already entered her system because her eyes were suddenly very heavy. She felt another hand touch her face softly. She knew immediately whose hand it was and also knew she liked this man's touch.

JOE (V.O.)
That's a good girl. Close your eyes, sweetheart. Everything will be all right...

INT. LETTY'S ROOM - NIGHT, LATER

It was still dark when she woke properly, but not so dark she could not see. The only illumination in the room came from a solitary candle on the nightstand and the moonlight streaming through the uncovered window panes.

Opening both eyelids, however, proved to be problematic. The left one would not open at all. The room was strange. The bed was warm and comfortable, and every bone in her body hurt like the devil.

Bringing her hand to her face, Letty felt her swollen lip. It was sore still, although the cut caused by Bainbridge's signet ring was healed over.

LETTY (V.O.)
How long have I been out? Hours?
Days?

Further probing led to the discovery of a huge lump on her temple. It was hot and tender, the bruising spread over the front of her forehead and just above her left eye. The lid felt swollen and explained why it was so difficult to open.

LETTY (V.O.)
Owwwww. My head.

She touches her head. Her hair felt gritty and matted with a substance she did not recognize, but suspects it is mud.

LETTY (V.O.)
There's still mud in my hair. I must look awful.

She was also beyond thirsty.

LETTY (V.O.)
What I would give to have a glass
of water and a bath...

For a few minutes she simply lay there, wondering what to do and trying to take in the unfamiliar surroundings.

Letty scanned the rest of the room for clues. There was one large rug on the wooden floor. It looked to be good quality despite its obviously advanced age. The lack of artwork on the walls or little knick-knacks strewn about gave the room a distinctly impersonal feel.

LETTY (V.O.)
Is this an inn or perhaps a
private house? I have no way of
knowing...

LETTY (V.O. CONT'D)
The door is open. So I'm not a
prisoner, not just yet...

Slowly, Letty shuffled her body to a more upright position, pausing to let each new wave of dizziness pass.

LETTY (V.O.)
Ow... Well, I'm still in one
piece. Even after the escape from
the carriage

She used the soles of her feet to push forward a little more until she could grab the top of the cup on the nightstand with her finger and thumb. Judging by its weight, she thought the vessel must be filled with liquid. Her flimsy grip she had on it was not strong enough.

The cup slides out of her fingers and CRASHES to the wooden floor below, taking the precious fluid with it.

The noise created a flurry of activity, accompanied by manly-sounding grunts, on the floor on the other side of the bed.

A bewildered dark head appeared first, blinking eyes heavy with sleep, taking in the surroundings as he dragged one hand over his face and through his unruly hair.

He slurred, peering at her through semi-closed eyes.

JACK
(Sleepy)
You're awake!

Letty does not recognize him as one of her abductors, but there was something oddly familiar about him. Bizarrely, she had the distinct impression she could trust him and that she was safe with this complete stranger. Then she remembers him as the man who had prevented his accomplice from forcing more laudanum on her.

**OPTION 1

A) Sorry

LETTY
(Horsely)
Sorry, I dropped the water

JACK
It's all right.

B) Evade

LETTY
(Horsely)
The drug seems to still have an effect on me...

JACK
It's all right. You'll come out of it soon.

C) Silence

Letty diverts her eyes from Jack standing over her

**OPTION 1 - End

Stiffly, he raises to his feet and stretches his back and neck before shuffling around the bed to the nightstand.

With his back to her he pours a fresh cup of water

Then sitting on the mattress next to her and guides it carefully into her good hand, wrapping his warm palm around her chilled fingers until he was sure that she could manage it alone.

JACK
It's the laudanum, my brother says it makes you thirsty.

**OPTION 2 - start

A) "Drink the water"

Letty greedily drinks every drop. Jack refills the cup without her having to ask.

She sipped the second cup more slowly, feeling self-conscious as he watched her.

LETTY
(Softly clears her throat)
Thank you

B) "Hold the water for later"

LETTY
(Quietly)
Yes... Thank you

JACK
Whenever you're ready. There's no
rush

C) "Refuse the glass"

Letty stares at Jake holding the glass.

LETTY
(Suspicious)
If you're willing to drug a girl
once how do I know you won't
again?

JACK
(Coarse)
I would hope that we wouldn't seem
like that much of a devious group.

JACK
(A little more upbeat)
But I would do the same if I were
in your position.

Jack sets the water on the nightstand

JACK
Whenever you're ready. There's no
rush

D) "Silence"

Letty doesn't move when the glass is offered. Jack places it back on the nightstand.

JACK
Whenever you're ready. There's no
rush

**OPTION 2 - end

JACK
My name is Jack Warriner, in case
you were wondering.

Letty tries to study him more closely while also trying to look
disinterested

LETTY (V.O.)
His skin is so tanned. But his
accent is that of a gentleman, not
course or unrefined. That shirt of
his is also that of a gentleman.

LETTY (V.O. CONT'D)
But what kind of gentleman would
sleep on the floor of an injured
stranger? Perhaps he is separating
me from his servants? Or dismissed
them on purpose?

LETTY (V.O.)
Unless he is my guard and is
merely lulling me into a false
sense of security? He's the sort
of large, imposing man who would
be suited to the job.

** IF option 2A
Letty watched him carefully as she finished the last drops of
her water before passing the cup back to him.

JACK (CONT'D)
More?

Jack refills the cup without waiting for her to answer. Letty
greedily drinks every drop.

** END 2A optional

JACK (CONT'D)
You gave us quite a scare, Letty,
I don't mind telling you.

LETTY (V.O.)
(Surprised)
How did he know my name?

LETTY
(Skeptical)
Letty?

JACK (CONT'D)

I found you in the road. You passed out, no doubt from all of the trauma and the cold, and you've been out like a light since. My brother Joe is training to be a physician. He patched you up, so you probably have him to thank for saving your life.

JACK (CONT'D)

Do you remember how you came to be bound and gagged and wandering alone in the forest?

Before she answered his questions, she had a few of her own before she trusted him with the truth. Her uncle was no fool. He would offer an impressive reward to anyone who found her. His own future depended on her marrying the odious Bainbridge. And if the Earl was looking for her and retrieved her...well, she already knew how cruel he could be.

**Option 3 (false choice)

- A) "You ask a lot of questions"
- B) "That still doesn't answer my question"
- C) "You seem to have that story remembered well..."
- D) *Try to sit up a bit

**Option 3 - end

Letty pretends to think and then shook her head. The motion caused a fresh wave of dizziness which Jack spots.

JACK

Lie still. Try not to move your head too much.

**Option 4 - Start

- A) Thank You

LETTY

Thank you, sir. You are being very kind.

JACK

Just relax for a minute and everything will be fine.

- A1) I think I'm doing better.

LETTY
I shall try. Hopefully I'll have
my head in place more tomorrow?

A2) Perhaps a minute longer

LETTY
...I will, but I'll need some time
before you barrage me with
questions again.

B) Silence

Letty sits in silence.

JACK
I don't expect you to like me at
all. But it would do us well to at
least be on speaking term...

B1) That's fair

LETTY
That's fair I suppose. But I don't
plan on this being a long
conversations.

JACK
I more than understand.

B2) Silence

Letty continues to sit in silence

JACK
It's quite late. Maybe tomorrow
you'll feel better.

Letty attempted a smile in the hope he would not realize she
was already suspicious.

**Option 4 - end

The corners of his own lips curved upwards slightly, giving
some respite from the perpetual frown he had worn since he had
awoken, but it was still not a smile.

JACK
Call me Jack, everybody else does.

He stared at her awkwardly for a few seconds before speaking again.

JACK

Would you like some more medicine?

**Option 5 - start

A) "No"

She shook her head. The black void that came with the laudanum would rob her of any control. Besides, if she needed to escape quickly from here then she needed to be lucid. She also needed to plan an escape route.

B) "Yes" - Scene continues but Letty will receive bonus "medicated" answers for the last option

LETTY

Perhaps a bit. I think some sleep would do me well.

Jack hands her a spoon with barely a drop of laudanum coating the bottom.

**Option 5 - end

**Option 6

/The big convo with looping questions/

A) Where am I?

LETTY

Can you tell me where I am...Jack?

JACK

You are in my home. Markham Manor. In deepest, darkest, dankest Nottinghamshire. Retford is the nearest village, almost three miles away, but if it's a proper town you need, then Lincoln is probably the closest.

LETTY (V.O.)

That put me in the north of England. Just. A long way from Gretna Green at least.

JACK

I found you near the woods a good mile away. Soaking wet and frozen stiff.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I reckon you had been out in the storm for a couple of hours before I came along. I have no idea where you sprang from either and since nobody has come to claim you, I think we can assume whoever tied you up was not able to follow your tracks.

JACK (CONT'D)

My brother Jamie has battened down the hatches in your honour, in case they come visiting, and is taking turns with my youngest brother Jacob to keep watch, so you are safe.

B) What day is it?

LETTY

What day is it?

The passing of time was her only hope now, yet she had no idea how long she had been here.

JACK

It is past midnight so it must be Friday.

Letty risked another tenuous shake of the head. She could not work out how much longer she needed just from that information.

C) What is the date?

LETTY

The date?

Intelligent eyes sought hers and she had the uncomfortable feeling that he could see into her very mind.

JACK

I suppose that would make it the fourth. Given the time now.

LETTY

I see.

D) Silent (Remove this choice if left til last)

LETTY

(Shifts silently)

JACK
I'm sure you have a few questions
of your own?

**Option 6 - End

JACK
Yet you have not enquired as to
the month, so I must assume you
remember some things. Are you sure
you have no memory of what
happened?

Letty looked down towards her hands. This man had been nothing
but kind to her so lying to him made her uncomfortable—but
there was no guarantee he wouldn't be tempted by a ransom, so
with no other choice she did it anyway.

LETTY
I do not recall the accident at
all.

She would never, ever forget it. Her heart began to knock
against her ribs at the falsehood and her palms felt sweaty.
What she was claiming did not sound plausible to her own ears.

JACK
Do you remember any details about
your family, Letty, so that I
might be able to inform them of
your predicament?

Letty would rather die than admit the truth. If her uncle knew
where she was then her life might as well be over. Correction—
it likely would be over and pretty sharpish, too, if he and the
Earl of Bainbridge's hideous plan came to fruition in the next
few weeks. No matter what, she needed to stay hidden until
then. She stared down at her hands again and shook her head.

**Option 7

A) Truth

LETTY
I was on the run... escaping. I
jumped... from the carriage. But
it was dark so I didn't know where
to go.

LETTY
I am afraid I do not... My head
feels so dizzy.

B) Evade

LETTY
I am afraid I do not... My head
feels so dizzy.

**Option 7 - end

**IF option 5B is true

LETTY
I think the medicine is catching
up to me

** 5B - end

LETTY (CONT'D)
(Mumbling)
Perhaps I will feel better with a
little more sleep.

JACK
Perhaps I should fetch my brother
so he can check on you. You have
been very ill.

LETTY
There is no need to wake him at
such a late hour. I have already
inconvenienced you and your family
enough. I shall sleep for another
few hours, I think.

He hesitates for a few moments as he decided whether or not to grant her request.

JACK
(Gruffly)
I will be right here next to you
should you need anything.

he said gruffly, perhaps a touch begrudgingly. Then she heard the rustle of blankets and the sound of him easing his big body back down on to the hard, uncomfortable floor.

Letty was peculiarly grateful that he did not intend to leave her alone in her current state. She felt too vulnerable and his solid presence was strangely reassuring.

**Option 8

A) I'm Sorry

LETTY
I am so sorry for being so
burdensome.

she added lamely, hoping to convey to him her appreciation for all that he was doing for her despite the fact she was lying through her teeth.

B) Alright

LETTY
Duly noted...

C) Silence

LETTY
heavy sigh

**OPTION 8- ends

He grunted in response, but offered no soothing words to contradict her nor did he make any attempt to prolong any conversation between them. She heard him punch the pillow into shape and hoist the covers over himself as he settled into a suitably comfortable position to sleep in.

-End of Chapter 3 conversation