
STRANGEWOVEN
The House with the Unfinished Door
The Illustrated Journey
A Strangewoven Tale

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Every story brings a thread.

The First Knock

The first thing the house learned to do was knock.

This was unusual, since it had no door yet.

It had no walls, either, and very little idea of where it ought to stand. All it possessed was a floorboard, a brass hinge, and the firm conviction that someone was out there.

So it knocked on the dark.

After a while, someone knocked back.



The Storyteller Arrives

“Hold on,” said a voice. “I’m trying to find the handle.”

The house considered this. A handle appeared beneath the hinge.

“That helps,” the voice said.

A man stepped through a doorway that hadn’t existed a moment before. His beard was touched with silver. His boots carried dust from ordinary roads. Under one arm he held a notebook swollen with loose pages.

He looked around at the darkness beyond the single floorboard.

“Bit of a project.”

The house creaked apologetically.

“That’s all right,” he said. “Most things are.”



The First Story Opens

He sat down and opened his notebook.

A narrow strip of desert sunlight slipped between the pages.

Something on the other side of the light was walking.

The traveler was all bones, beard, and weathered patience. A staff met the trail beside his boots. Nearby, a large, shaggy dog had found something worth investigating, which appeared to be most of the desert.

The man with the notebook watched them through the opening.

“Do they need to come in?” he asked.



He Needs His Road

The house tried to answer by making a room.

It made four walls around the traveler.

The dog barked. The traveler stopped walking.

Beyond his new window, the trail ended in plaster.

The man shut the notebook halfway.

“No. He needs his road.”

The walls fell away. The desert opened again, wide enough for distant storms and towns the traveler had yet to reach.

But where the sunlight touched the little floorboard, it left a thread: rough as a pack strap, warm from the day.

The house curled it carefully around its hinge.



A Second Thread

Then another page stirred.

A truck rolled through a night full of rain. A driver muttered something at a disappearing pair of taillights. From the passenger seat came the answering huff of a dog who had heard this opinion before.

That page left a thread too, dark and strong, humming faintly with tires on wet pavement.

The house laid it beside the first.

“There,” said the man. “They can belong here and still have somewhere to go.”

The floorboard became a floor.



The Garden Thread

More pages opened.

There was a garden where a keeper waited beside animals who no longer hurt. One small dog lifted its head at a sound too distant for anyone else to hear.

A thread soft as the fur behind an old cat’s ears settled across the floor.



A Place to Sit

There was a lantern approaching a kitchen where two bowls still stood beside the sink, although only one was needed now.

The man left that page open a little longer.

The house learned to make a chair.



We’ll Keep Your Place

There were six friends around a table. Someone had forgotten a rule. Someone else was defending an extremely poor plan. A phone rang, and a chair scraped back because a child needed help at home.

“We’ll keep your place,” said one of the others.

A bright, sturdy thread ran beneath the chair the house had made.



The Heart That Tries Again

Somewhere, a clockwork heart missed a beat and tried again.



Toward the Call

Somewhere, a rescue ship turned toward a distress call.



Many Hands

Somewhere, beneath an old bridge, people discovered what other hands had made and began carrying tools down the path.

Their threads arrived smelling of machine oil, unfamiliar air, wet stone, and freshly cut wood.



The Unfinished Punch Line

The house grew windows. It grew a long table with scratches already in it. It grew a hearth, though no one could remember laying the bricks.

Then a dreadful figure appeared between two pages, wearing the earth as though the grave had dressed him badly.

The house’s new shutters slammed.

“Wait,” the man said.

From the page came a wounded voice.

“I hadn’t even reached the punch line.”

The man laughed.

After a cautious moment, the house opened one shutter.

It had much to learn.



Room for the Unfinished

Near morning, the man found a loose scrap caught in the notebook’s binding.

There was almost nothing on it. A few words, crossed out. A shape that might have been a person or a tree. A question with no answer beneath it.

He set it on the table while he looked for a place to put it.

The other threads drew close.

The scrap trembled.

Through its thin paper, the house heard a faint sound: someone drawing breath to speak, then deciding against it.

“You can stay,” the man told it.

No thread appeared.

He waited.

“You don’t have to know what you are yet.”

The scrap eased flat against the wood.

Behind the table, an alcove opened. It contained an empty shelf and a window looking onto weather that had not been invented.

The man placed the scrap there.

Only then did a slender thread uncurl from its edge.

It had no settled color. When the house touched it, it felt like the moment before rain.

The house gave it room.



Too Tight

By daylight, threads covered everything.

They looped over the mantel, gathered around the table legs, and snagged on the man’s boots. He had to lift three of them to reach his chair.

The house, eager to be useful, pulled them tight.

Every window shook.

Desert sand blew across a kitchen floor. A ship’s alarm sounded beneath the bridge. The clockwork heart began beating in time with a truck engine, faster and faster.

The unfinished scrap lifted from its shelf.

The man caught it before it reached the fire.

“Easy,” he said.

The house pulled harder. Surely, it thought, if they were to belong together, they ought to fit.

On the desert trail, the traveler’s staff struck the ground and made no sound.

At the gaming table, all six friends spoke in the same voice.

The man laid both hands on the threads.

“Let go.”

The house stopped.



We’ll Start There

In the silence, a loose end slipped from the mantel.

Then another.

The alarm faded. The friends began arguing again, each in their own familiar way. The traveler took a step, and the knock of his staff returned.

The man sat on the floor among the loosened strands.

He spent a long time untangling them.

When he found a knot, he worked it gently. When two threads crossed without trouble, he left them alone. He laid the soft strand beside the rough one and passed another underneath. The house watched his hands.

By afternoon, they had made something small enough to fit beneath a cup.

It was crooked.

The cup stood perfectly well on it.

“We’ll start there,” he said.



The Great Weave

They worked through many evenings.

The house learned where to hold and where to leave slack. Some strands ran side by side for a while. Some met only once. Others disappeared beneath the growing weave and returned much later, carrying something unexpected.

No one trimmed the unfinished edges.

Eventually, a great woven piece hung above the hearth.

From a distance, it looked like a landscape seen through rain. Up close, there were trails in it, and stars, and the grain of a familiar table. One corner was dark enough to lose yourself in. Beside it, a small light held steady.



A Name for the House

The man stood back.

“Strange,” he said affectionately.

The house creaked.

He smiled.

“Yes. Woven, too.”

Above the unfinished doorway, letters slowly pressed themselves into the wood.

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The last letter settled with a quiet click.

For a moment, the man thought the house was finished.

Then someone knocked.


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The First Reader

The visitor stood outside with a book held close against their chest.

“I heard there were stories here.”

The man moved a stray thread out of the doorway.

“There are.”

“What kind?”

He glanced behind him.

Through one window, a skeletal traveler had stopped to photograph the dawn. Through another, a distant ship opened its bays. At the table, the empty chair waited patiently for its friend to return.

“Come and have a look.”

The visitor stepped inside.


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The Reader’s Thread

They passed several windows before stopping at the garden.

For a long while, they said nothing.

Then they sat in the chair beside it.

“My dog used to do that,” they whispered.

Across the garden, a small sleeping animal kicked its feet in a dream.

A new thread appeared beneath the visitor’s hand.

The house had never seen one arrive from that side before.

It reached toward the great weave, then waited.

The visitor ran a thumb over the thread. At last, they let it go.

It settled beside the soft strand from the garden.

That evening, the man found the house had made another chair.



Room for More

There have been many visitors since.

Some come for a fright and stay because something frightful makes them laugh. Some follow a road. Some sit quietly by a window until they are ready to go home.

The weave changes with each of them. A passage worn thin by one reader’s thumb becomes another reader’s favorite place. A tale waits years for the person who needs it. The empty shelf slowly fills, and the house makes another.

The man still arrives with dust on his boots and loose pages under his arm.

Sometimes he brings a whole story.

Sometimes, only a question.

The house knows what to do with those now.



Open Ever Since

Tonight, there is a space at the table. Beyond the windows, the worlds go on living. Above the hearth, a loose thread has stirred at the sound of your arrival.

You may have noticed that the doorway is still unfinished.

The man has noticed too. Once, he measured it for a door.

Then a new story came knocking, considerably taller than expected, and he put the measuring tape away.

He has kept it open ever since.


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