

The Legend of the Brog

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TREATMENT

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Strange things happen on Halloween. Some are scary: witches and goblins. Some are nice: trick or treats and candy. But how did it all start? There are stories and myths, fables and legends. Some we believe, some we don't. The Legend of the Brog is one of those.

It just might be true.

Imagine...

A Halloween night, a bank is about to close. Two young men are preparing to rob the bank, about to don masks. One of the men is hesitant, doesn't want to commit a crime, but he's desperate, he's lost his job, and his wife has just had a baby. What else can he do? His partner chides him into action, but just before he enters the bank he thinks he sees a small furry creature out of the corner of his eye, a squirrel maybe, or a small dog. But when he looks down there's nothing there. He takes a deep breath, reaches for the door to the bank. But as he touches the door handle, the furry little animal appears again, throws a pumpkin seed, and the bank's windows come to life like a giant TV screen! The robber sees a vision of his future: he and his partner are captured by the police; they go trial, where they're sentenced to 20 years in prison! The robber's wife and baby are crying as he's led away. The vision fades from the bank windows, and the robber changes his mind. He rips off his mask and runs, leaving his partner to rob the bank alone. As the young man runs back to his family, he hears police sirens in the distance. He breathes a sigh of relief. That was close, but he chose the right path. The man slows down and wonders about the furry creature he thought he saw. Probably just a squirrel. He doesn't know...

It was a Brog.

Now imagine you're watching this story unfold, much like the robber's vision on the bank windows, as the scene changes to another...

Halloween night. Kids in costumes gather around an old man (we don't see his face). They share their Trick or Treat treasures as the old man tells them how Halloween really began...

He tells about the Brogs. Furry little creatures, half bear, half frog, with certain powers: a Brog can catch moonlight in its paws and use it later to light the way in darkness. Brogs can spread their magic pumpkin seeds and make things grow, cause good things to happen, and can even show people their future by scattering pumpkin seeds into the air to create a vision: what can happen if people choose the wrong path.

But the kids don't believe in the Brogs. They've never seen one so how can the story be true?

The old man looks around, sees the Brogs hiding in the nearby bushes and trees, cupping their paws together to spread the moonlight. He winks at the Brogs and goes on with his story...

A long time ago the townspeople carved pumpkins and set them out for the Brogs as thanks for helping them see what could be. People used to love the Brogs. They lit pumpkins and placed them on their porches. Then the Brogs would visit and get a treat, and that's how Halloween started. But then people began to fear the Brogs, because they didn't want to see their future, didn't believe, and they stopped putting out pumpkins, and forgot about the Brogs.

But we still have Halloween, the kids insist.

That's right, says the old man. But it almost never happened. Because at one time the Brogs were disappearing, in danger of being killed off by an evil force. But they were saved by their own powerful magic...

And a young boy and girl just like them.

Now the kids listen.

The Brogs scatter pumpkin seeds into the air, and the kids see the story come to life right in front of their eyes...

CLAYTON is 13 years old, and he's not very happy. He's in a car with his mom, ANGIE, on their way to a new town, and a new job for Angie. Clayton sulks, making it obvious that he doesn't want to leave his friends and the life he had to move to a small town he never heard of. Angie understands, tries to explain that she had no choice, she was offered a good job, a terrific opportunity, and it can be a new start for both of them. Clayton doesn't see it that way, he was happy with things just the way they were. It looks like a long, quiet drive ahead.

At a gas station, Clayton and Angie go inside for snacks. A man watches as Clayton moves down the aisles. Clayton senses the man near him, but when he turns to see... there's

no one there! This man is RICE. He appears at various places throughout the store, concentrating on Clayton, but each time Clayton turns to look, Rice is gone! Clayton gets a bad feeling, and wants to leave. He doesn't know that Rice has the power to teleport from place to place. He'll find out much more as the story unfolds.

Clayton tries to tell Angie about the man in the store, but Angie didn't see anyone. She tells Clayton he's just apprehensive about the move. He'll feel better once he makes new friends. Angie doesn't know just how much Clayton will need his new friends.

Clayton and his mom settle into a new house, and soon it's time for Angie to start her new job as a real estate agent, hired by a local developer to convince certain land owners to sell so the developer can build on their property. Her first task is to meet with a farm owner who so far has refused to sell. Angie brings Clayton along as a chance to see the area, get to know his new town. Clayton is reluctant, but goes with her anyway.

As they approach the farm, an old man watches from the road, but disappears before they see him. This is HANSON, and he has the power to teleport from place to place, as he does all along the road to his farm. He finally appears on his porch as Angie and Clayton arrive, gives them a warm welcome, takes a special interest in Clayton, who wants to stay in the car. But Hanson cajoles Clayton out of the car and into his house, charms them both with his wit and wisdom. Clayton doesn't want to show it, but he likes the old man. Maybe this place isn't so bad after all.

Hanson questions Clayton about his goals, his likes, dislikes, tells him he'll like it here, invites Clayton to come around any time, says there are some interesting things on his farm, piques Clayton's interest. Clayton says he'll come back for sure, much to Angie's surprise, though she's disappointed when Hanson tells her he won't sell, at any price. He tells her the farm's been in his family for generations, and is more important to the town than anyone realizes. Angie is left to wonder what that means, as Hanson turns his attention to Clayton again, telling Clayton that the farm comes with obligations. Hanson says he is getting old and will soon pass these obligations on to someone younger, someone deserving, and he already has an idea who that might be.

Clayton and Angie leave, with Angie disappointed that Hanson won't sell. But Clayton doesn't really care, he likes the old man, even though he doesn't understand everything the old guy says. Angie is at least relieved to see that Clayton is in better spirits.

They don't see the Brogs hiding in the foliage around the house (kind of like the Munchkins in The Wizard of Oz, when Dorothy lands on the wicked witch), watching as they drive off.

A couple days later, Clayton is on his bike, speeding along, checking out his new town. He stops to talk with a woman working in her garden. She welcomes him and tells him a little about the town, how things aren't what they used to be, even her garden won't grow like it used to. Clayton has a feeling that will change, and the woman hopes so, too.

Clayton rides on, and he's stopped at a construction site. The guy holding the stop sign is the young man who almost robbed the bank. He can see that Clayton wonders if his job is worthwhile, so he tells Clayton "it beats going to jail." Clayton doesn't get it, and rides on when the sign is lowered. Neither of them sees a Brog scamper out of sight nearby.

A little later, Clayton encounters another rider about his own age, but can't see who it is, because the rider wears a helmet and visor. They ride along for a while, going faster and faster, and pretty soon they're racing, each one trying to out-do the other with tricks and speed. The other rider is very good, but it looks like Clayton will win the race until he has to veer off the path and crashes to avoid a small animal (that looks a lot like a Brog). The other rider comes over as Clayton picks up his bike and recovers, takes off the helmet, and Clayton sees that it's a cute girl! Clayton and KATIE become fast friends. As they ride off...

Angie is in her new boss' office, reporting that Hanson won't sell. Her boss is upset, threatens Angie, says she has no idea how important it is to him, and tells her she'll lose her job if she can't convince Hanson to sell. All of which makes Angie very uncomfortable, but she promises to make it happen.

Angie's boss is Rice. Clayton sensed him watching in the gas station. He can teleport from place to place. Now Angie knows he's not a nice man, and senses trouble ahead.

Back to Clayton and Katie, riding along, getting to know each other. They're suddenly threatened by a group of bullies, who try to run them off the road and make them crash their bikes. Clayton realizes they're close to Hanson's farm, and heads there with Katie in order to evade the bullies, who follow close behind. But it's a little difficult for the bullies to get close, because...

The Brogs clear the path for Clayton and Katie, and block it for the bullies!

Hanson watches all the action, teleporting from one spot to another, until Clayton and Katie end up in Hanson's barn, hiding from the bullies. And this is like no barn they've ever seen before: filled with carved, lit pumpkins, and piles of pumpkin seeds. But before they can explore further, the bullies find them! Clayton and Katie prepare for an assault, but...

Outside the barn, Hanson appears suddenly in front of the bullies, and scares them off. Clayton and Katie watch from inside, aren't quite sure they actually saw Hanson appearing like that, figure he must have stepped out from behind something. When they blinked.

Hanson offers Clayton and Katie lunch. As they eat, Clayton and Katie ask about the pumpkins and seeds they saw in the barn. Hanson tells a little about the Brogs, how they gather magical pumpkin seeds to do good in the world, but Clayton doesn't really believe the story. He doesn't see the Brogs in the background. Katie has heard some old tales about Brogs, but thought they were just stories for kids. They're both surprised when Hanson tells Clayton that he will be tested very soon.

Tested for what?! Clayton wants to know.

Hanson tells Clayton that the Brogs are in trouble. They're disappearing, and in grave danger. Hanson believes Clayton will pass the test and be able to help the Brogs. Now Clayton is really confused, and he and Katie thank Hanson for lunch. On their way out Hanson assures them that everything will be clear very soon. Clayton jokes that the test will probably come in his first math class, and he'll flunk. They ride away, making jokes to mask their discomfort, and don't see Hanson teleporting along with them. They're still unaware as Clayton leads Katie on a detour...

Right back to the barn!

Katie doesn't want to trespass, but Clayton talks her into it, he saw something in the barn that he wants to investigate. They make sure they're not being watched – don't see Hanson and the Brogs – and go inside, where Clayton searches around for the something he saw earlier. He doesn't see the Brogs placing that something in a spot where he'll find it.

A map!

But the map is old, and they can't figure out where it leads or what it means, and then they hear a noise from outside the barn, decide to leave before they get caught. While Clayton isn't looking, a Brog drops a pumpkin seed in the map just before Clayton folds it up, and he and Katie sneak away. They don't see Hanson watching, of course.

At Clayton's house, they open the map, the pumpkin seed pops out, and the map comes to life! There are a number of X's on the map, all in different parts of the town, and all in front of a door that swings open. But where do the doors lead? Clayton and Katie follow the map to the nearest door, which is right in Clayton's back yard! But it's the door to a big, old dog house! They both get on their hands and knees, and as they crawl through the door, a Brog drops another pumpkin seed, and suddenly Clayton and Katie are in...

An ANIMATED WORLD inside the doghouse!

Full of bright colors and funny looking buildings and trees. And Brogs! Clayton and Katie can see the Brogs now, and the Brogs lead them around their world, show them all the strange, unique, fun things, where everyone is happy all the time. They want to see more, but the Brogs make them aware that Angie is returning home – they can see and hear things going on in the real world – and lead them back to the doghouse door so they can return.

Clayton and Katie greet Angie as though nothing had happened, though Angie gets the feeling they're hiding something. But she immediately likes Katie, and dismisses her suspicions, happy that Clayton has found a friend. Katie leaves, and Angie tells Clayton about her meeting with her boss, Rice, and how she's in trouble if she can't get Hanson to sell. To her surprise, Clayton volunteers to help, as he's developed a friendship with Hanson.

At school, Clayton and Katie are at his locker, trying to make sense of what happened to them in the doghouse. Could they both have hallucinated the same thing? They're looking at the map, which indicates another door right here at the school. But before they can figure anything out, Clayton is attacked by the bullies. They separate Clayton from Katie and shove Clayton into his own locker. No one sees the pumpkin seeds fall from the folds of the map, and when the bullies slam the locker door on Clayton, he finds himself not stuck in the locker, but in...

The ANIMATED WORLD again!

After the initial shock wears off, Clayton is excited to be in this world again. He ventures along cautiously, expecting to see the same things he saw the first time in this world: Brogs having fun and loving life. But there are no Brogs this time. It's quiet, almost eerie. Then he sees why: Rice is there, snatching Brogs and keeping them prisoner! Rice knows Clayton is watching, and turns on him, tells Clayton that he'll soon have all the Brogs in captivity, and they won't be able to do good in the world. Clayton wants to know why Rice is doing this, and Rice threatens Clayton: "You'll never win! You'll never defeat me!" Clayton doesn't understand what or why Rice is saying this, but he knows what Rice is doing is wrong. Rice only laughs, then comes after Clayton in a fit of rage. Clayton runs, and Hanson appears, diverts Rice and takes the brunt of Rice's attack. Clayton wants to help Hanson, but Hanson tells him that he's passed the first test, now he should go back to his world, and points him to the portal back to Clayton's locker. Hanson then turns back to Rice, but Rice is gone, along with his captive Brogs.

Back in the school hall, Katie manages to get the locker open just as Clayton steps through the portal. "That's some locker!" And he tells her what happened. When he describes Rice, Katie knows immediately who he is, explains that he's the developer buying all the farm property in the area, the one trying to get Hanson to sell. Clayton realizes that this must be the

same guy his mother's working for. He's the one responsible for bringing them here. There must be a connection, but neither he nor Katie can figure it out just yet. He tells Katie that Hanson said he'd passed the first test, and they don't know what that means, either. Katie decides to go to the library and check the history of the town, maybe that will lead them to something.

At the library, Katie looks up the family histories for Hanson and Rice, and finds out that they're related, and that Clayton is related to them as well! She rushes out to find Clayton.

In the meantime, Clayton decides to go back into the locker to explore the Brogs' world again, and maybe learn more about what's happening. But when he steps into the locker (after looking around to see that no one is looking), nothing happens. He steps out, then back in, closes the door on himself... nothing. Clayton feels like a fool. He tries to re-create his movements from before – takes out the map, steps into the locker... a pumpkin seed falls from the map and he's...

IN THE ANIMATED WORLD OF THE BROGS!

This time Clayton is super cautious. He peers around every corner before he turns it, listens for sounds of anyone approaching. He couldn't be more careful, so he's doubly surprised when Hanson appears at his side! "How do you do that?!" Clayton wants to know. Hanson explains that he has the power to teleport, then shows Clayton around. The Brogs come out now, and Hanson explains the good that they do in the world, and that he, Clayton, must keep the Brogs from becoming extinct at the hands of Rice, who is trying to capture them all. Clayton doesn't understand why he would be chosen for such a task, it's way beyond him. Hanson only answers that it's been ordained by fate, and there's no changing it.

The Brogs scatter pumpkin seeds into the air, create a vision for Clayton of what the world would be like without them: a bad place, dark, full of corruption and pollution, with Rice in charge, making everything worse.

Clayton can't quite grasp this whole thing yet, but he knows he's part of it now, and Hanson takes him back to the portal to the real world...

As Clayton exits his locker, the bullies spot him, and he takes off to avoid them. He loses the bullies on his bike through a series of cool maneuvers and clever misdirection (and some help from the Brogs), and spots Katie, who is looking for him. They meet up, both breathless, trying to tell each other what they've each found out.

Clayton tells her that he's not worried about the bullies anymore, they're the least of his problems (besides, they seem so dumb and easy to get rid of). He tells her about his

adventures in the locker, the Brogs' world, and that he's seen the future, and it's being destroyed by this guy Rice, who has to be stopped. It's a horrible situation. Katie says "You're not gonna like what I found out, either. Hanson is your uncle, and Rice is your great grandfather!" She explains the lineage of Rice and Hanson, which comes down to Clayton himself, who is now speechless. But they're beginning to make some kind of sense of everything that's happened, and Clayton has a real dilemma: he wants to help, yet feels powerless, he's just a kid and doesn't know what to do, yet there must be an answer, and they must have found all this out for a reason. School is dismissed so the student body can see...

A news conference at City Hall. The Mayor, with Rice at his side, announces that the town can take Hanson's farm under the new law of eminent domain! Clayton's mother Angie is at the press conference, and manages to get a word with Rice, wants to know how this will affect her job. Rice is a little cryptic, but tells her that there's more in store for her than she could ever realize, which only confuses her more.

Clayton spots his mom with Rice, sees her reaction to what he's told her, and he's worried, thinking she's reacting to losing her job, and that they'll have to move again. When Angie tells Clayton what Rice said to her, Clayton and Katie begin to sense that things aren't what they appear to be, that something is wrong in the town, and that Rice is responsible, just as Hanson told him in the animated world.

Then Clayton spots a Brog out of the corner of his eye (at least he thinks he does), and starts after it. Clayton and Katie think they are chasing the Brog, when in actuality... the Brog is leading them! They follow the Brog to...

An old wood mill on Rice's property. They realize where they are, but don't know why, and certainly don't want to get caught by Rice. But Hanson is there, says it's time for Clayton to know the whole story: Hanson is now the keeper of the Brogs. But long ago, Rice was the first keeper of the Brogs. He left one day, over a hundred years ago, to find and use the true power of the pumpkin seeds.

The Brog tosses pumpkin seeds into the air as Hanson continues, creating a vision for Clayton and Katie...

A younger version of Rice is leaving the town; traveling; using the pumpkin seeds to test their true power. HEAR HANSON OVER THE IMAGE... "Instead, Rice found an evil power, which took him over." SEE RICE... Burning the seeds and transforming into the evil character he is now.

Hanson explains that Rice has returned to capture and destroy the Brogs and keep the pumpkin seeds for himself, to use not for good, but for evil. He's collecting and storing all the

pumpkin seeds he can get in his old wood mill, and burning them, as burnt seeds do bad things, as opposed to the good seeds used by the Brogs. Rice captures the Brogs in their own world, and the portal to that prison is inside the wood mill.

Clayton wants to know if it's true about him being related to Hanson and Rice. Hanson explains the lineage and tells Clayton it's time for him to believe that he's the chosen one, the next keeper of the Brogs, and he's got to defeat Rice and save the Brogs. And it must be done on Halloween night, the culmination of the Harvest Festival, when the Blue Moon is full.

Clayton doesn't think he can handle it. Hanson explains that he will try to help, but he's old and weak now, and may not last through the fight. But Hanson assures Clayton that the Brogs will be there to help him if he needs them.

"If I need them!" Clayton is incredulous, and ready to crack under all the pressure, says of course he'll need the Brogs! He's just a kid, how is he supposed to fight an evil guy who's been around a hundred years and knows all the tricks? Clayton doesn't even know karate, or how to box. All he knows is how to ride his bike.

Hanson says "Then start there. Use the talents you were given, instead of wishing you had others. Ride and collect all the pumpkin seeds you can. Collect them before the Harvest Festival ends. You'll need them."

Clayton and Katie begin their quest for the pumpkin seeds, aided by the Brogs. As they ride away, Hanson makes a decision, though he knows it's dangerous, and teleports inside Rice's wood mill.

Rice is there waiting for him.

Pumpkin seeds burn in the background as Rice lures Hanson into...

The Brogs' ANIMATED WORLD. Hanson knows he is no match for Rice, but heroically engages him anyway, and they fight, each using the powers they have. But Hanson, in his weakened state, is finally overpowered. Near death, with his last bit of energy, Hanson grasps a pumpkin seed, which enables him to contact Clayton telepathically...

As Clayton rides past the woman he encountered earlier in her garden, he throws a couple of pumpkin seeds into her yard when she's not looking. The garden immediately starts to grow. As Clayton rides on, he hears Hanson's voice, urging him to find the pumpkin seeds and save the Brogs.

In the animated world, Rice watches as Hanson struggles to get his message to Clayton, then laughs at the dying man's effort. Rice vows to stop Clayton before he can get enough seeds to beat him, and Hanson dies.

Despite the urging from Hanson, Clayton senses that something disastrous has happened, and wants to know exactly what it is before he continues. He believes the answer lies in the Brogs' animated world, so he and Katie consult the map, find another nearby portal and use some of the pumpkin seeds they've already collected to go in. Once there, they watch in horror as the Brogs show Hanson dying, giving his last message to Clayton. But the Brogs scatter as Rice appears and comes after Clayton!

Clayton and Katie run for their lives. Rice sends the bad pumpkins after them, pumpkins that can spit fire and grow vines that can entangle and squeeze the life out of their captives. Through sheer desperation, or luck, or both, Clayton and Katie manage to elude the pumpkins and vines, and with Rice in close pursuit, they make it back to the portal and into their own world.

Now they've got to get ready for the Harvest Festival, not knowing how or when they'll be confronted by Rice, or how they'll defeat him. So they amass all the pumpkin seeds they can, and decide to wear disguises, Katie as a Brog, Clayton as a Pumpkin Head. But Rice is one step ahead of them with a disguise of his own. He's completely unrecognizable dressed as an evil Pumpkin Head, only the fire he spits is real.

Clayton and Katie finally figure out that the evil Pumpkin Head following them is Rice, and know that they've got to distract him if they're going to get into the mill and free the Brogs. They start tossing their remaining pumpkin seeds at Rice, who is only too happy to burn them by spitting fire and creating bad pumpkins on contact. Clayton tosses a few pumpkin seeds at some nearby pumpkins, and they come to life to battle the bad pumpkins. A spectacular pumpkin battle lights up the sky, with flying jack-o-lanterns spitting fire.

With the pumpkin battle as a distraction, Clayton and Katie almost make it to the mill, but Rice appears, stops them at the last minute. Really desperate now, Clayton and Katie try to enter from another direction, but Rice stops them again. But just as Rice is about to grab them, a man in a Wizard costume intervenes. Frustrated, Rice goes after Clayton and Katie, but the Wizard steps in his way again. Clayton doesn't know who this Wizard guy is, but he's grateful for the help, and uses the distraction to finally get into the mill by crashing through the roof with his bike.

Inside the mill, Clayton searches for the portal to the Animated World so he can free the captured Brogs, but Rice teleports in, and they continue their battle, with evil pumpkin heads spitting fire all around and growing their vines, sealing the doors and windows closed so no one

can get in or out. The vines entangle Clayton and Katie, trapping them before they can get to the Brogs. Rice believes he has won, and decides to deal with Clayton and Katie later, leaving them trapped in the mill until he returns from the Harvest Festival, where he intends to cement his leadership of the town by wowing the crowds with his power and charisma.

While Rice is gone, Clayton and Katie manage to free themselves from the vines, but the evil pumpkins won't let them escape easily, and they spit fire and grow more vines. Finally, the mill catches fire from the spitting pumpkins, and it looks like Clayton and Katie are trapped without a way out. Clayton looks around hoping for a miracle, but all he sees are burnt pumpkin seeds and flames. But then a Brog appears with one good pumpkin seed. Clayton doesn't think it's enough, but other Brogs appear, and one by one, they cup their paws, catching moonlight that shines from the hole in the roof that Clayton crashed through on his bike. The moonlight empowers the pumpkin seed that Clayton holds, and it opens the portal to the Brogs' world. Clayton and Katie rush through just as the mill collapses in flames.

As Rice speaks to the townspeople, he sees his mill collapse, and believes that Clayton and the Brogs are finished. But suddenly, they all appear from another portal. Clayton confronts Rice, and before Rice can make a move, tosses some good pumpkin seeds into the air. Pumpkins come to life all around them, their vines growing and entangling Rice, holding him in front of the town. Then the Brogs cup their hands, directing the moonlight at Rice, who begins to writhe in pain. Suddenly, the evil spirit that had consumed him leaves, and Rice collapses. Aging quickly, with his last words Rice tells Clayton to carry on as the keeper of the Brogs, and then disintegrates in front of everyone, turns to dust and blows away. With the crowd stunned, the Wizard steps forward, reveals himself to be... Hanson! He explains to Clayton and Katie that he did indeed die, but only in the Brogs' animated world. He had to die so that Clayton could assume the power to become the keeper of the Brogs. Hanson tells them that his time on earth is limited now, but he probably has enough left to see Clayton make a better world with the Brogs.

Brogs are all around now. They toss pumpkin seeds into the air, changing the vision to...

The campfire. The old man is still telling the story, but now we can see that the storyteller is an older version of Clayton. The Brogs are there, holding moonlight in their paws. Old Clayton tells the kids that the Brogs are everywhere, and in order to use their magic and do good in the world, they will need to always be protected. He looks to the kids and asks...

Which one of you will be the new chosen one?