

A NAVRITTO STORY

The Last Porch Light *on Marlow Street.*

✦ NAVRITTO STORIES · MYSTERY & THE STRANGE

The Last Porch Light on Marlow Street

Written & illustrated by Navritto.

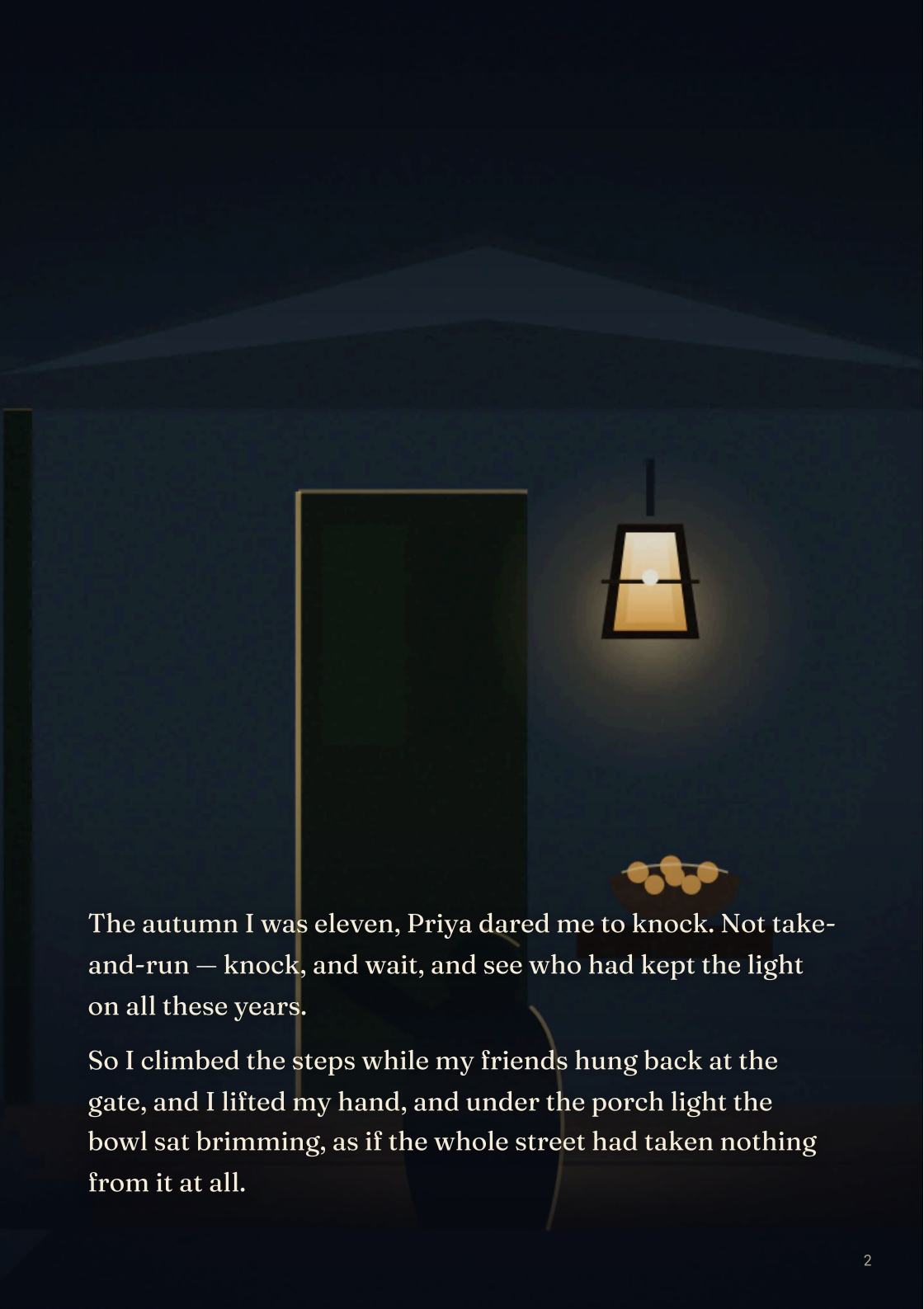
© 2026 Navritto Solutions Private Limited. All rights reserved. This story and its illustrations are original works and may not be reproduced or redistributed without permission.

First edition, 2026 · Published by Navritto Solutions Private Limited · navritto.com
CIN U62090HR2026PTC145030
Read online and download more books at navritto.com/stories



Every street has one house the other houses pretend not to notice. On Marlow Street it was the gray one at the end, where the porch light had not gone out in anyone's memory.

The bowl on its step was always full — good candy, the kind parents buy and then ration — and no one ever came to the door. You took a piece, you said thank you to no one, and you walked on quickly without quite knowing why you hurried.



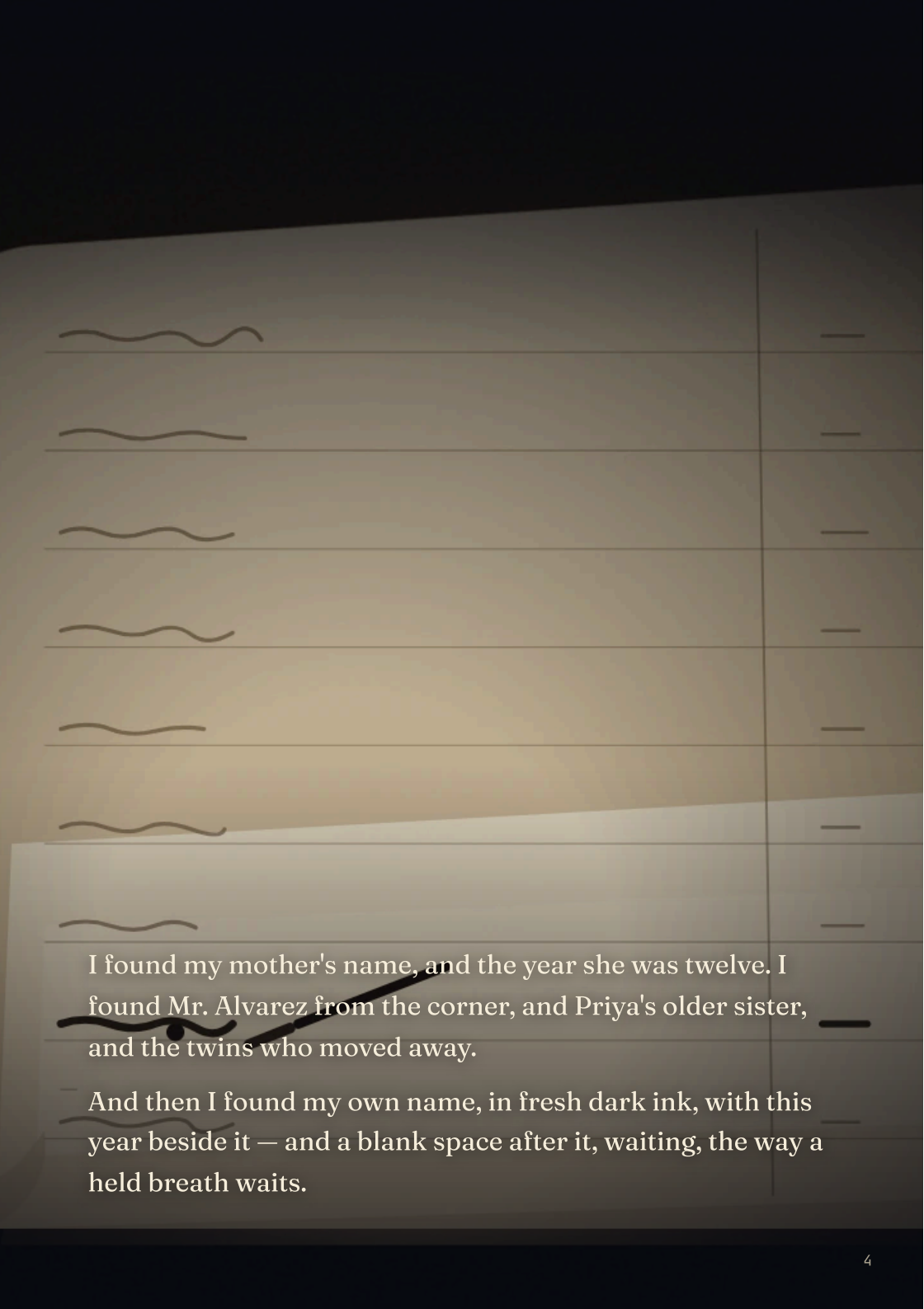
The autumn I was eleven, Priya dared me to knock. Not take-and-run — knock, and wait, and see who had kept the light on all these years.

So I climbed the steps while my friends hung back at the gate, and I lifted my hand, and under the porch light the bowl sat brimming, as if the whole street had taken nothing from it at all.



The door wasn't locked. I only meant to peek. Inside, on a small table in the hall, a candle burned beside an open book — a great leather ledger, its pages soft with age, filled top to bottom in careful handwriting.

They were names. Hundreds of them. Beside each one, a year. I understood, the way you understand things in dreams, that it was a list of every child who had ever stopped coming to trick-or-treat — the exact autumn each of them grew up.



I found my mother's name, and the year she was twelve. I found Mr. Alvarez from the corner, and Priya's older sister, and the twins who moved away.

And then I found my own name, in fresh dark ink, with this year beside it — and a blank space after it, waiting, the way a held breath waits.



I did not fill in the blank. I put a piece of my own candy into the bowl instead of taking one — which no one in the history of Marlow Street had ever thought to do.

Then I stepped back out under the light, down the steps, past my friends, and I did not hurry. For once I wasn't afraid of the quiet house. I think, for the first time, it was a little afraid of me.



In the morning, the porch light on the gray house was dark.

My mother, who had hurried past that house her whole life, stood at our window with her coffee and said, soft and strange, “Well. It's off. It's finally off,” — as if a sound she'd heard so long she'd stopped hearing it had suddenly stopped.



I'm grown now, and I understand what the light was for. It wasn't keeping anyone out. It was keeping something lit a little longer — the part of you that still believes a knock might be answered, that still half-expects a little magic on a cold night — for anyone who still wanted it.

So I bought the gray house. The bowl on my step is always full. And every Halloween I leave the porch light on, for the children who haven't yet written the year beside their names.

✦ THE END

Thank you for reading a Navritto Story. Find more illustrated stories — free to read and download — at **navritto.com/stories**.