The One-Page Novel Plot Outline

ACT I: **ORDINARY WORLD** (START WITH LACK)

1 Really Bad Day  
*Ordinary world, empathy, conflict. Show flaw and lack. Want, Problem, Need.*

2 Something Peculiar  
*Something unique or strange happens, but they dismiss it.*

3 Grasping at Straws  
*Trying to regain control of ordinary world but setbacks mount.*

- **INCITING INCIDENT** (call to adventure)

4 Call to Adventure  
*Something extraordinarily different happens, they can’t ignore. Major setback.*

5 Head in Sand  
*The new interrupts the old and causes conflict. Reveals dissatisfaction with ordinary.*

6 Pull out Rug  
*Trying to fix ordinary world problems while resisting the lure of the supernatural world.*

ACT II: **1ST PLOT POINT** (point of no return)

7 Enemies & Allies  
*Explore new world; meet characters, find their place and role. Introduce all main characters.*

8 Games & Trials  
*Struggle to belong. Frustration and doubt. Trials and challenges. Promise of premise.*

9 Earning Respect  
*Small victory as lead proves capable. Fun and games. Begrudging acceptance.*

- **1ST PINCH POINT** (first battle)

10 Forces of Evil  
*Stakes are raised, antagonists revealed.*

11 Problem Revealed  
*Surprise problem or situation. Demanding answers.*

12 Discovery & Ultimatum  
*New information, vulnerable share. In or out?*

- **MIDPOINT** (victim to warrior)
13 Mirror Stage
Self-realization or a discovery. Victim to Warrior.

14 Plan of Attack
Plan of action to thwart antagonist’s forces or overcome main problem.

15 Crucial Role
Trusted with an important task.

- 2ND PINCH POINT (second battle)

16 Second Battle
They execute the plan, and come in direct conflict with antagonist’s forces.

17 Surprise Failure
The plan goes horribly wrong, faulty information or assumption. Consequences.

18 Shocking Revelation
The antagonist’s full plan/true identity is revealed. Stakes are raised. Guilt and anger.

ACT III: 2ND PLOT POINT (dark night of soul)

19 Giving Up
Lead loses confidence; the forces are too great. What they want is unattainable.

20 Pep Talk
Encouragement from ally. Vulnerable share, inclusion. What’s at stake; choice.

21 Seizing the Sword
Deliberate choice to continue, even if slim chance of success.

- FINAL BATTLE (triumph-knowledge)

22 Ultimate Defeat
Triumph of Villain. All hope is lost. Confront fatal flaw.

23 Unexpected Victory
Secret weapon or ability, deep resolve, new understanding, unlikely ally. Remove glass shard. Sacrifice.

24 Bittersweet Reflection
Temporary victory. Innocents saved. How far they’ve come.

- REBIRTH (return to ordinary word)

25 Death of Self
From ambition to service. Death of former self. Acknowledgment ceremony.
Optional: Hints of future challenges or antagonist lives.