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Video Game Writing Samples





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Extract from the **Seven: The Days Long Gone** prologue

*This scene plays out, partially in-game and partially as cutscenes, at the beginning of "AA" isometric RPG **Seven: The Days Long Gone**. It introduces the player to protagonist, Teriel, and his fellow thief, Vaetic.*

TERIEL (33) and VAETIC (29) set off along a busy public promenade towards the Lethe Bar in the main plaza.

VAETIC

What do you want, Teriel? You didn't call me out here for a drink.

TERIEL

Your help on a job. A big job. I know you're not the Guild's favourite thief these days.

Vaetic stops and looks at his friend, plainly irritated.

TERIEL (CONT'D)

(sincerely)

That wouldn't worry me, but I know it bothers you. This could get you their respect again.

VAETIC

I was wondering how long it'd take you to bring that up. Okay, I'll humour you. What's the deal?

TERIEL

It's a simple heist. The target is some toff's toy. Won't be hard to sell to an artefact collector.

VAETIC

If it's so simple, why are you asking for my help?

TERIEL

Because you're the best spotter in the Guild. And it's a two-man job. A couple of idiots have tried it solo, but...

VAETIC

Shit, Teriel - this better not be what I think it is. The Guild warned us they don't want any more failures. Too embarrassing.

TERIEL

The Guild just say that to test you. Don't be a coward, Vaetic. We can pull this off; trust me.

VAETIC

I don't trust you, though. That's the problem. And I'm not a coward.

TERIEL

I know that, but prove it to the Guild. With your spotting and my infiltration skills, we can do it. What do you say?

Teriel and Vaetic reach the Lethe Bar, walk through the entrance towards the rear balcony.

VAETIC

I need a drink. Go on then; say what I think you're gonna say.

Teriel stands on the balcony, drink in hand, and points at an imposing building in the background.

TERIEL

There it is. The Grukbarra Mansion.

VAETIC

I fucking knew it! The fucking Grukbarra Mansion job. You're after the Cypher, aren't you?

TERIEL

(cheerfully)

That's the one. So you're in then?

VAETIC

You cheeky son of a... ugh. Why do I never learn? Look, you better not fuck this up, okay?

TERIEL

I won't. You won't regret this, Vaetic. Meet me on the outcrop south of the mansion at dusk.

Teriel drains his glass, places it on a table.

TERIEL (CONT'D)

I'm going to make preparations. Oh, and one more thing... we'll need a distraction.

FADE OUT.



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Extracts from the **The StoryTale** script

The StoryTale is a fairy-tale platformer featuring the sort of story you might find in a children's book. The brief required a whimsical tone with parabolic elements; I wrote the majority of the text in rhyming couplets.

The magic amulet must be found
Before the birds sing dawn's sweet sound.

The seconds trickle by like sand
But sometimes one can stay time's hand.

In the murk dangers waited
With a thirst for blood that could not be sated.

Interlude: Grandpa used to tell the Princess not to be afraid of misfortune. "Without it, there is no success, and all is grey." He had lived a rich, exciting life. A short one, though.

There must be a sign, a hint, a trace
Of the Princess in this cursed place.

It may be a hassle, but you will find
That it always pays to be kind.

At last the magical amulet was found!
But would it offer power unbound?

It's not always wise to stand and fight
Sometimes it's best to stay out of sight.

Interlude: The world can be a harsh, judgemental place. At some point everyone wishes they could just hide away and watch others go about their business.

Chats from **Seven: The Days Long Gone**

*As well as writing much of the main and side quest dialogue for **Seven: The Days Long Gone**, I wrote a plethora of brief NPC “chats” featuring a variety of diverse characters.*

Guard_1 : These scabs think Peh's lawless. They don't get that we hold it together.

Guard_2 : Someone's gotta. Drugun just sits on his arse away in Hallard. Guess he doesn't care as long as he keeps gettin' artefacts shipped his way.



Grieving_woman : Oh Rin, I miss you so much. I'm trying to keep going, but... but I don't know why anymore.

Priest : Be at peace, my child. Your husband is one with nature now, and lives on through Drugun's love.

Grieving_woman : Yes... yes, you're right, father. I will be with him soon.

Priest : I see. I will leave you to your thoughts, child.



Socialite_lady_1 : Oh my, the standard of dress is awfully low at this party.

Socialite_lady_2 : Du Motier didn't mention there was a clown.

Miner_1 : Yeah, I know, I know. The cook 'ere creeps me out as well, though. He keeps lookin' at me funny...

Miner_2 : Ahaha. I've noticed. Think he likes you! We could just go to a different kitchen, you know.



Aristocrat : This is unacceptable! These filthy scabs are sullyng my family's burial tree!

Priest : All will ascend to the Heavens if they are faithful to Drugun, so all are welcome here.

Priest : In what way were they sullyng the tree? Did they touch it?

Aristocrat : Well, no, but they were roaming around it! Dirty dregs. Keep an eye on them, father.



Aristocrat_1 : How are your slaves working out? You have two at present, yes?

Aristocrat_2 : Well, one is proving profitable in the arena, although that won't last long of course.

Aristocrat_2 : The other... well, the wife has taken a liking to that one. I leave her to it.

Item descriptions from **Seven: The Days Long Gone**

*The **Seven: The Days Long Gone** responsibility over which I had greatest creative freedom was that of writing item descriptions. They were written from the perspective of the protagonist's laconic, cynical AI companion.*

Key: How quaint. A physical key used to open an antiquated mortise lock mechanism.

Flame Trap: A horrific device that only humans could have created. When triggered, the victim is engulfed in flames.

Crude Metal Sword: The favoured medium weight, low-damage weapon of many a bandit. In Peh, swords are as common as misery.

Voltaic Hatchet: A powerful but cumbersome axe that hums with electricity. If cleaving someone in two with a simple axe isn't sufficient.

Caustic Pike: A truly unpleasant weapon. This spear is imbued with a lethal neurotoxin. Be sure to hold on to the right end.

Human Meat: Cannibalism was common in humanity's past. If you must connect with your ancestors, here's your chance.

Spoiled Juice: This juice has begun to ferment, and a layer of mould has formed. It should go without saying that you'd be wise not to drink it.

Colon Cleansers: Do I really need to explain what these do to a human? Use your brain for once. I have faith that you can work it out.

Mercenary Armour: You may as well be wearing a tin can. A noisy and cumbersome metal vest that offers minimal protection.

Common Trousers: You may as well walk around in your underwear. These pathetic cloth trousers border on indecent and offer barely any protection.

Hair Lock: Why would anyone want someone else's hair? I'll never understand humans.

Unpaired Sock: It is one of the universe's great unsolved mysteries why single socks go missing so often.

Frying Pan: This rare artefact has inestimable value and... Oh, no, my mistake. It's a frying pan.

Shot Glass: When humans want to poison their bodes with strong alcohol, they use these glasses to do so.

Rubble: It's just a piece of rubble. Honestly, are you going to ask me about every single thing you find?

Lore from **Seven: The Days Long Gone**

*In addition to character creation and dialogue writing, I also contributed to the writing of discoverable lore “books” in **Seven: The Days Long Gone**. The following is a brief sample of two of these lore entries.*

Extract from Offle’s Autobiography

If I had an auryte crystal for every time someone asked me how I made my fortune, I’d be slightly richer than I am now. The story of Blucius Offle is not a complex one. There is no secret behind my rise to wealth. But I have two qualities that very few people in this world possess: perseverance and absolute ruthlessness.

There was a time in my childhood when I had nothing but the rags on my back and a broken food chiller, in which I kept whatever scraps I could steal. I belonged to a gang at the time, and one day we targeted a meat merchant, hoping to eat well for once.

I saw a bigger opportunity. I told the merchant about the gang’s plan to mug him. I don’t know what happened to my former gang members - they were probably hung - but that’s irrelevant. The merchant was so grateful that he offered to do me a favour. I asked for him to find someone to fix my chiller so that I could continue to be of use to him. That was the beginning of my enterprise.

Take initiative, exploit anyone, and never stop pushing. Perhaps those are my secrets, but I’m happy to give them to you, since you’ll never be as successful as I am, anyway.

Vetrall Fable

In the deep of night,
At the pale moon’s height,
One should never venture alone.

A creature awakes,
But one noise it makes:
A harrowing, pitiable moan.

Despite rippling bulk
This monstrous hulk
Cries out as if in pain,

Like a man whose lust
For blood has been thrust
Upon him, and driven him insane.



Empires in Ruins introductory cutscene script

*I was approached by indie studio Hammer & Ravens to provide writing support for their upcoming tower defense 4X game **Empires in Ruins**. The introductory cutscene features grizzled protagonist Sergeant Heimer.*

INTRO CUTSCENE

Introductory cutscene. HANS narrates the setup over illustrated story panels.

HANS (V.O.)

Do you like them tales where noble knights save the world? Win the love of a beautiful woman?

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Well, if that's what you're looking for, then piss off back to your mummy, cos this story ain't one of 'em.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

For starters, I'm eighteen assault charges short of being a noble knight...

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... and for some reason my sparkling personality attracts women like shit on a stick.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And now I find myself leading an army of incompetent knuckleheads to the Western Marches...

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... the biggest shithole in this shitty nation. But at least it keeps us away from the Krovan scum.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Ahh, the Western Marches. Can you smell that? That's the stench of poverty and corruption.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The rich tossers - Von-this and Von-that - tax the shit out of dregs who have little more than the shirts on their backs.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And then they rebel. Oh what a fucking surprise. Guess who has to clean up the mess...

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yeah, I probably wouldn't be here if I hadn't thumped the shit outta Baron Von Kilmert's son, but his sneering face was just begging for it.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

So I guess I'll have to get this shit done before I can get back to my armchair and the decent brandy.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Now if you'll excuse me, I need to get moving. My balls have disappeared into my body.

HANS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My name is Hans Heimer - first sergeant in the Koth army - and there are shit times ahead.

FADE OUT:

THE END

Tether story notes and beat sheet

Before the Sci-Fi horror game, Tether, was unfortunately put on hold, I was tasked with coming up with story ideas. Below are some of my story notes, including a sample of an early draft beat sheet.

Setting

The year is 2088. When an asteroid destroyed the Moon ten years previously, the Earth fell into chaos. A multi-national organisation called the United Earth Federation (UEF) has decided that colonisation of Mars is humanity's only hope for survival.

The game takes place aboard the research vessel UEF Sonne, a number of unspecified memory locations, and Lesleigh's home.

Set-up

Prior to the start of the game, Lesleigh received a command from her employer – the UEF – to investigate why communication with the UEF Sonne had ceased and retrieve an experimental device called the Tether. Her long-term friend and senior UEF communications officer, Juan Maceda, will be her guide. The mission is offered to her as a chance for redemption; she is on gardening leave for insubordination.

Lesleigh's relationship with her daughter is strained. Jane is in a relationship with a 20 year-old rebel who is part of an anti-UEF group. Lesleigh is particularly concerned because Jane's father, Dominic, was similarly anti-UEF, and she left him when she became pregnant with Jane.

Key characters

- **Lesleigh Hayes** – The protagonist and playable character. A 42 year-old reconnaissance engineer who frequently travels into space for her work. She is level-headed, with a stubborn streak and a fierce temper that has got her into trouble on many occasions.
- **Jane Hayes** – Lesleigh's tempestuous 17 year-old daughter. Jane is in many ways a spitting image of a younger Lesleigh: fiery, surly, and attracted to misfits. She harbours a deep-rooted, hidden resentment towards her mother for leaving Dominic Hayes before Jane had a chance to know him.
- **Alec Ruken** – The lead science officer aboard the Sonne, Ruken has discovered and sought solace in the mind-altering effects of the Tether. He is plagued by the loss of his son 18 months ago. He would do anything to get him back.
- **Juan Maceda** – A long-term friend of Lesleigh who works as a communications officer for the UEF. Juan is a stabilising force within Lesleigh's life. He has made no secret of his desire to be more than friends, but has always been gently rebuffed.

Begin in Lesleigh's home, Earth. Bang of a door wakes her. She speaks to Jane through her closed door, explains she has to leave. Aunt Amelia will come to stay. This is her chance for redemption with the UEF.	A C T 1	Set-up. [Negative charge.]
Cut to Lesleigh approaching the UEF Sonne in her shuttle. She talks to Juan Maceda. The atmosphere is light. He reminds her of the mission.		[Positive charge.]
The Sonne is dark, only sustained by emergency power. The ship creaks, but otherwise there's silence. She tries to hail the crew using the internal intercom but it's powered down. <i>Puzzle to restore power to internal comms – Juan assists.</i>		[Negative charge.]
Memory sequence featuring Jane following restoration of internal comms. Should relate to communication in some way. After the memory, Lesleigh is confused and disoriented, Juan concerned.		Memory sequence 1.
With internal comms restored, Lesleigh contacts the crew. None respond other than Ruken. He tries to tell Lesleigh to leave; Juan orders her to keep quiet and continue. Juan suggests Lesleigh find the main generator to restore power.		[Positive charge.]
Juan guides Lesleigh using schematics to the Sonne's main generator. <i>Puzzle to gain access.</i> A section of the generator is bizarrely rusted, like it's ancient, but the rest looks in good condition.		[Negative charge.]
A huge explosion rocks the ship. Gravity is disabled. A computer informs Lesleigh that air is venting through a hull breach. She must race to close a bulkhead.		[Negative charge.]
When the bulkhead is closed, she tries to contact Juan Maceda, but communication has been lost. She looks out a porthole and sees her shuttle floating past as a lump of debris. She's trapped and alone.		Major turning point. [Double negative charge.]
Memory sequence following end of Act 1. Should shed more light on Lesleigh's relationship with Juan Maceda to emphasise the importance of being cut off from him.	A C T 2 P A R T 1	Memory sequence 2.
Lesleigh's goal switches from retrieval to escape.		[Positive charge.]
<i>Section of ship exploration with corresponding puzzles. Goal to find the ship's engineer to repair the generator.</i> Lesleigh finds the engineer trapped in her quarters behind a malfunctioned door.		[Negative charge.]
Lesleigh has to find and use power cores to pass through a succession of doors to reach the engineer with a core in hand. She reassures the engineer, approaches the door.		[Positive charge.]
A temporal tear cracks open and pulls Lesleigh in. Unlike the previous memory sequences, this time she is suspended while memories rush by. <i>Maybe we learn more about the crew here.</i>		Memory sequence 3.
Back on the Sonne, Lesleigh opens the door and finds the sheet white corpse of the engineer. It looks like she has been dead for days. Can read engineer's tragic diary entry about Lesleigh going missing after promising to help.		Turning point. [Negative charge.]
Lesleigh learns (<i>from an audio log or similar, hidden</i>) that the Tether has been wreaking havoc aboard the ship. She surmises that if she can find and deactivate it, she can get home. The log suggests that the junior science officer had concerns about the Tether.		[Positive charge.]
Lesleigh follows a trail that leads to the medical bay, where she finds the junior science officer in a minimally conscious state – effectively a coma. Rukin mysteriously warns her to leave him alone. He threatens to use lethal force to stop her if she continues this path.		Point of no return. [Negative charge.]