

1) Sample from the magical realist RPG, Elemental Flow. Clara visits her hometown, Jacaranda, with her girlfriend Nikki. Agustín, a friend, unexpectedly meets them at the station.

**Clara:** On the way here, I wrote down a bunch of things we can do—

**Agustín:** —You've got Bobby's concert on your list, right?

**Clara:** If by concert, you mean playing guitar at a bar downtown...

**Agustín:** Same thing! He's normally so grounded, but he's been a bundle of nerves about this. He could really use your support!

**Nikki:** Bobby?

**Clara:** Roberto, from school.

**Agustín:** Plus, Vanessa's playing bass, and she's always looking for feedback. What do you say, Nikki?

**Nikki:** ...I mean, I play the violin, but I guess I can try.

**Agustín:** You're a pro, I'm sure you can give them some tips! That seals it, right?

**Clara:** I'll do what I can, Agus. We're only here for a few weeks.

**Agustín:** It's just a night out with friends and some music.

No need to be grumpy about it.

**Clara:** I'm not grumpy, Agus, you just showed up and I'm still tired—

**Agustín:** —Guess I shouldn't have come, then.

I thought it'd be a nice surprise.

**Clara:** Agus...

(Ugh, what's going on? I have such a pit in my stomach...)

(Why do I feel so ill all of a sudden?)

**Nikki:** Clara? Are you okay?

**Clara:** Yeah, just feeling a bit weird. I'm sure it'll pass.

(Or maybe not... Deep breaths, Clara.)

(Deep breaths...)

*The screen fades to black, then Clara finds herself transported somewhere new.*

**Clara:** ...What's going on?

**Clara:** Nikki? Agus?

**Clara:** Why am I in some kind of... red office building?

**Clara:** It smells nice, though. A bit like incense, or burnt wood.

*Clara walks down a corridor into a small waiting room, where she spots someone who looks like Agustín... but his skin is red, his short hair flickering like fire.*

**Clara:** Agus? Is that you? You look a bit—

**Agustín? :** —Bored? Yes, I am.

**Agustín? :** But it makes sense. We're in a waiting room. You're supposed to talk about books and T.V. shows and whatnot.

**Clara:** Okay...

**Agustín? :** Have you heard about a book called *Their Journey*?

**Agustín? :** It's got such a good story, I wish more people would give it a go!

**Clara:** Sorry, I'm still reading it.

**Agustín? :** Really? I recommended it two weeks ago.

**Clara:** I've been busy—

**Agustín? :** —Have you?

**Agustín? :** Busy making a schedule that doesn't involve your friends?

**Clara:** ...Okay, what's this about?

**Agustín? :** Let me spell it out for you, Clara, since we don't seem to be on the same page.

*Clara and Agustín(?) have a conversation encounter. To succeed, Clara needs to use her Talking abilities to express her feelings, despite constant interruptions by Agustín(?).*

**Agustín? :** We just haven't been connecting, Clara, and I think it's your fault.

**Clara:** What?

**Agustín? :** You won't engage with the things that matter to us.

**Agustín? :** When you were still living in Jacaranda, you would read my recommendations right away, and I would watch whatever show you were watching!

**Clara:** Alright, but those were different times.

**Agustín? :** Really?

**Clara:** Yes. I live in Rhodan now. I'm with Nikki. I have more things I care about now. It's hard to keep up with everything.

**Agustín? :** So you ditched *our* stuff.

**Clara:** No, that's not—

**Agustín? :** —Oh, look, my number's been called! We're done with the pointless chatter.

**Clara:** Wait!

*Agustín(?) leaves the room.*

**Clara:** What... what happened? That can't be Agus, but it feels like him...

## 2) Sample from the Sci-Fi BiblioMMO, Tau Station.

**Sergio:** You must be [Player Name], the one Jada messaged me about. Can we talk over there, though? I just don't want to, you know...

*He trails off awkwardly and leads you both to a quiet break area. After a few failed attempts to sit somewhere inconspicuous, he compromises by standing behind a flowering plant, which unfortunately makes him stand out even more.*

**Sergio:** Jada's told you about the conference, right? She thinks everyone here is too wound up... and honestly, I feel the same way. I only started working here this cycle, but I'm feeling exhausted already. I don't know how anyone keeps this up! So when I heard Jada ranting about the good old days, I thought "that sounds like it might actually be fun"!

*The voice he uses for his inner thoughts is strangely deep.*

**Sergio:** I've got the perfect idea, but they're watching Jada, and I think they might be watching me too. And maybe all of the University personnel. So, what I need you to do is get me some Liquid Gold. I've sent you the details to an anonymous account you can use for the payment, just do it quickly, alright? I'm sure you can find some in the commerce hub.

**Player:** Wait, what's Liquid—

*Sergio is off before you can finish your sentence, waving at you as he rushes back to work.*

### **New Goal: Find "Liquid Gold" at the market (Cape Verde Commerce Hub)**

*You browse a few of the compact retail units until one catches your eye. While it mostly houses personal protective equipment, a small corner is dedicated to a collection of metallic doodads and colourful knick-knacks. As soon as you show interest, the owner offers you a wide smile.*

**Bart:** Welcome, friend, to Bart Van de Bock's Bric-a-Brac Stand! If you need protective equipment, it's available in all sizes, colours, and for all genotypes. I've also got some things that are a little more frivolous – you know, to add some entertainment to your containment!

**Player:** I'm looking for Liquid Gold.

*As soon as he hears the words, Bart's friendly demeanour drops, as does his jaw. He barely manages to blurt out his next words.*

**Bart:** I wouldn't, I mean – what makes you think I'd sell something like that? Have you really come to Bart's Bric-a-Brac looking for something so... inappropriate?

**\* Player Choice 1:** Oh. I thought it was a type of alcohol.

*Bart seems to relax a little.*

**Bart:** A drink? Well... It could be, I suppose. Let me think...

A trader low on credits paid me with a few bottles of gold flake absinthe, maybe that's what you're looking for. Let me ring you up. But please... don't call it Liquid Gold, alright?

*You give him the anonymous account's details and receive half a dozen golden-labelled bottles in exchange.*

**\* Player Choice 2:** Isn't it food of some sort?

*Bart seems to relax a little.*

**Bart:** Something edible? Well... It could be, I suppose. I have a colleague who tinkers with food printers in her spare time, and she's got a recipe for everything. Let me see if she knows what you might be looking for...

*He busies himself with his CORETECHS for a few moments, then looks back at you triumphantly.*

**Bart:** It looks like her lemon mini scones topped with gold flakes have been all the rage — I'd wager that's what you're looking for. If you wait a few minutes, I'll send the recipe to the food printer and get you a few dozen.

*You give him the anonymous account's details and receive a few nicely-wrapped boxes in exchange.*

**\* Player Choice 3:** I don't understand, what's Liquid Gold?

*Bart seems to relax a little.*

**Bart:** Hm... If you don't know what it is, then you're probably looking for something else with a similar name. Let me think...

There is a mild attention-enhancing sim that the researchers have been very keen on, very keen... You know, I reckon that's what you're looking for. I've still got some left, so you're welcome to the lot of them. Just... don't call them Liquid Gold, alright?

*You give him the anonymous account's details and receive a few dozen doses of attention-enhancing stims in gold vials.*

3) Sample from an unreleased game aimed at teenagers, via SMS-style interface. Note that typos/errors are intentional for phone chat verisimilitude.

-6:30am-

**Hema** helloooo

**Hema** we've got another fine morning of drizzle in our hnads

**Hema** Hands

**Hema** hi my name is hema and im toot ired to text properly

*(pause)*

**Hema** why's the coach so excited about laps?

**Hema** Who knows

**Hema** waaaaaaait

**Hema** I can see you in the bleachers!

**Anetta** you see nthing ;)

**Hema** hahaha

**Hema** i guess if I have an audience i shouldn't disappoint

**Anetta** she goes lke the wind

**Anetta** running in circles and jmping over hurdles

**Anetta** lke a gazelle

-7:10am-

**Jessie** Wait did you two have a sleepover?

**Jessie** An honest-to-goodness PJ party?

**Anetta** jst stayed over

**Anetta** no big deal

**Anetta** =P

**Jessie** ...

**Jessie** \*sick\*

**Jessie** It's kinda weird how you stop doing that kind of stuff just as you get old enough for it to matter

**Anetta** yeah

**Hema** giving up the things you love so you can do more of

the things you think other people think you should be doing--it's the essence of adolescence!

**Anetta** that rhymed!

**Hema** wait

**Hema** oh shit you're right

**Jessie** "oh shit you're right"

**Jessie** the poetry just keeps flowing ;)

**Hema** hahaha

**Anetta** lol

-7:28am-

**Tanya** I hope you've not Tired yourselves out before Class Starts.

**Hema** nope, we're all good =)

**Hema** Just the old morning catch-up

**Anetta** not mch to catch up on tho

**Hema** then maybe its the morning check in

**Hema** Sound off!

*(pause)*

**Hema** come on dont leave me hanging

**Kalil** Kalil here. Everything's just great!

**Kalil** I'm chipper and full of energy at 0728 hours

**Kalil** Ready to enjoy life to the fullest.

*PLAYER choice 1 - I'm here!*

**Player** PlayerName, human adolescent number two, reporting in

**Player** for Team Adolescence

**Hema** you brought it back already

**Jessie** Adolescence is \*officially\* in!

**Anetta** a dull essence

**Kalil** Adolescence, noun, growing to maturity

**Kalil** Yup mature

**Kalil** That's us to a tee, wouldn't you say?

*PLAYER choice 2 - Let's drop it.*

**Player** Let's drop it okay?

**Player** I don't think we're all up for this right now

**Player** At this hour and after everything

**Kalil** So you're going with the cliché...

**Kalil** "Time heals all wounds"

**Anetta** a protoplaser would be more efficient

**Anetta** but i dnt think you know how to use one

**Hema** well I'm looking forward to today

**Hema** Thursdays mean inexplicable stew for lunch

**Hema** and its INFERIOR vegetarian equivalent

**Hema** plus a bunch of bad soaps and comedy to watch

**Jessie** Are you saying it can somehow get worse than mystery stew?

**Anetta** sad truth

**Hema** maybe you should try it and see

**Hema** but don't actually try it its gross